

To whom it may concern

As a local resident, I wish to express my concerns with regard to the current planning applications for 75 New North Road:

2021/62/93687/W Change of use from nursery (Use Class E) to education and public worship or religious instruction (Use Class F1)

2021/65/93688/W Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations, installation of rear disabled access ramp (within a Conservation Area)

The core of my concerns are as follows:

- The proposed opening hours and the potential number of daily visitors
- increased traffic and additional pressure on parking
- This proposed interior changes to a heritage asset.

At present, though busy during the day, New North Road is much quieter in the evenings. The proposed hours of opening – between 06:00-23:30, 7 days per week - would be a significant change the area at night time. Despite some businesses in the area, New North Road is largely residential, and the businesses that do operate in the area do so in normal business hours which preserves a residential feel in the evening. The application suggests between 120-138 people will visit the property each day with the majority of these in the evening, this considerably extends the current 'working day' on New North Road. I am concerned that any organisation which has large numbers of visitors in the evening will affect the quality of life for local residents. This proposal will lead to significantly higher 'comings and goings' and the associated noise and disturbance for neighbouring properties at night time. This is very different from the property's previous use as a nursery, which was restricted to 40 children per day and operated during normal business hours.

The impact on the character of the area can already be felt in the evening as it is considerably busier than before. The building has flashing lights in the windows and is lit from outside when open. This is considerably out of character with the surrounding properties. The application makes no reference to this or any signage which I would suggest needs to be a key consideration in a conservation area.

I am anxious that the proposal will lead to increased traffic at already busy periods. The traffic issues on New North Road are already well documented and the council's £12m road widening scheme starts just 300m from 75 New North Road. I believe that serious consideration needs to be given to proposals which bring more traffic to the area – from both an environmental and public health perspective. The core hours of operation directly coincide with the already extremely busy rush-hour on New North Road and will add further pressure.

After reading the application and transport statement, it strikes me that the property has insufficient parking for the proposed use and I am worried that the increased number of visitors to the area will result in additional pressures on parking. There are already extensive parking controls in the area and most residents pay for parking permits for themselves and visitors, despite this, it can often be difficult to park near our homes.

One of my biggest concerns in the planning application relates to the alterations to the building. 75 New North Road – along with the other villas on the road - is part of our town's history and heritage and like many of the buildings on the road it is totally unique. As far as I can ascertain from looking at previously planning applications, none have undergone the level of structural change that is proposed by this application and I would assert that these proposals will adversely affect the character of the building and therefore it's special architectural and historic interest. This will result in substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset.

The significance of removing internal walls at lower ground and first floor level should not be understated, this building is not at risk and its current form remains very close to its original construction. The building was never intended to provide 'large hall' spaces, altering the building to create these requires a level of change that should be seen as unacceptable. The layout of the lower ground floor is part of the building's story and indicate how the house would have originally been used, removing these walls destroys the link to the building's past. Despite the 'previous alterations' referred to in the application, the original layout is intact. The widening of doorways and insertion of stud walls (both of which are reversible) does not in any way justify the major alterations proposed. The layout is an intrinsic part of the property's historical significance and features which led to the property initially being identified for preservation – this would be lost forever if this application is approved. This goes against the generally accepted conservation approach where owners of listed properties are merely the custodians of these heritage assets and our role is to conserve these for future generations.

Finally, I would like to highlight that this proposal goes against the grain of recent developments on New North Road, where several businesses have been returned to residential use; be that as family homes (89 New North Road) or high-quality flats (97 New North Road and the former Kirklees College building). I am concerned that some of the properties on the road that are not residential are not well maintained and project an image of neglect. I am committed to the preservation of the town's assets and most of the recent planning applications in the area have sought to restore and upgrade the houses in a way which preserves them for future generations. The residential properties on New North Road are the best looked after and create the best image of Huddersfield to visitors coming down the main thoroughfare to the town centre.

In summary, I ask the Strategic Planning Committee to consider the following when evaluating this proposal:

- The proposals would adversely affect the character of the building and therefore it's special architectural and historical interest.
- The external appearance, with coloured internal and external lighting (not referred to in the application), represents a significant change to the look and feel of the area in the night-time and is out of line with the character of the area. Furthermore, the application also contains no reference to external signage.

- The number of daily users is a significant increase on the previous limit (40 per day) imposed as a condition of the change of use to a Nursery in 2003. The 120-138 daily users identified in the application increase this by +200-245%.
- The proposed opening hours and the suggested times of operation – particularly in the evenings - will have a significant and negative effect on the quality of life for residents living in the area. This is in connection to noise and disturbance through increased traffic and visitors throughout the day and night.
- This proposal will inevitably lead to increased traffic on New North Road and the surrounding streets. This will also extend the times at which people are coming and going on the road and therefore impact on local residents' quality of living in the evening. The Transport Statement does not allay any of these concerns.
- The intended operation times will lead to increased traffic at the busiest period in the day on a road which has already been identified by Kirklees Council as having insufficient capacity during busy periods.
- The property has insufficient parking for its intended use and the number of users indicated. This will increase demands on the limited parking currently available.
- The structural adjustments required to make the property suitable for the proposed use are significant, substantial and irreversible. There is no justifiable reason why this property should to retain all current features.

Yours sincerely