

Planning Statement

The Priory, Whitechapel Road, Cleckheaton, BD19 6HR

This statement accompanies a full planning application for the proposed demolition of existing building and construction of 8 apartments at the former Priory pub off Whitechapel Road.

The development proposals have been designed in close partnership with Kirklees Council's Adult Services learning disabilities team with a view to meeting the needs of current and future supported living residents. Features such as outdoor communal gardens and a summer house with ample management space and mixed-use rooms have been included to promote community whilst retaining independent living for the future residents.

Site Location and Context

The proposed development is located in Cleckheaton, a well-established town within the Kirklees district that offers excellent connectivity and local amenities.

The site is positioned near Whitechapel Road, benefiting from easy access to public transport links, including bus routes and nearby railway stations. The local area is home to a range of services, including healthcare facilities, schools, shops, and recreational spaces, making it an ideal location for residential development. The development will contribute to the ongoing regeneration and housing growth within the area, meeting local housing demand while integrating seamlessly into the existing urban fabric.

Heritage and Conservation

A comprehensive heritage statement has been carried out by Pegasus ref 24-28888. The report determines that the former Priory pub, originally the Brown Cow Inn, dates back to the late 18th or early 19th century but does not hold listed status or reside within a conservation area. While it has some historical context due to its proximity to the Grade II listed Whitechapel Church, there is no direct historical association between the two structures. The building has undergone significant modifications over time, diminishing its architectural significance. The proposed development respects the local heritage setting while enhancing the site's overall functionality and aesthetic appeal.

Compliance with Local and National Planning Policies

The proposal aligns with the following key planning policies:

- **Kirklees Local Plan:** Supports residential development in sustainable locations, ensuring housing delivery in accordance with the area's growth targets.

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** Advocates for the efficient use of land, sustainable development, and the provision of a range of housing types to meet community needs.
- **Affordable Housing Policy:** While the scheme is below the threshold for mandatory affordable housing provision, the site delivers much needed specialist supported living units for people with learning and physical disabilities.
- **Sustainability and Energy Efficiency:** The apartments will incorporate sustainable design principles, including energy-efficient heating systems, insulation standards that exceed Building Regulations, and renewable energy solutions such as electric vehicle charging points and solar external lighting.

Design and Layout

The proposed development has been designed to complement the surrounding architecture and new build development, while optimising space and light. Key design features include:

- A contemporary yet sympathetic design that integrates well with the local character.
- High-quality materials to enhance visual appeal and durability.
- Landscaped communal areas to enhance residents' quality of life.

Sustainability and Climate change

Local Plan policy 26 states renewable and low carbon technologies should be incorporated effectively into building design. Although the submitted scheme is residential and small in size there are many opportunities to create a low carbon sustainable development.

We propose to provide electric vehicle charging points for residents and care staff as well as cycle storage to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel. Recycling bins and solar street lighting will also be installed to promote waste reduction and ensure the energy required to run the scheme is kept to a minimum. Properties will be connected to solar panels, reducing energy bills across the scheme.

The application will be supported by a detailed landscaping plan, increasing the amount of green space in the area and promoting biodiversity externally whilst maintaining an attractive design.

The Kirklees Specialist Accommodation Strategy 2022 - 2030

This strategy acknowledges the challenge of meeting needs of more vulnerable residents and their intent to work with registered providers on specialist accommodation. The Council have developed the strategy to build long lasting, local and affordable homes which meet the needs of the individuals within them.

The strategy outlines:

'We want specialist supported accommodation to be affordable; we recognise that in the past we have placed people in more traditional care settings because it has been the only option. We have begun and will continue to develop in partnership with our provider market better

value, better outcome models of care that are more flexible. We are also developing our own capital activity much of which supports the objectives of this strategy’ (page 8).

The proposed development meets all five objectives of the specialist accommodation strategy, contributing 8 bespoke apartments to the 2030 target of building safe and affordable independent but supported accommodation for adults in the local area.

Whilst the Cleckheaton scheme is being developed in partnership with the Council recognising the unique needs of the identified client group, it is also important to both Highstone and Kirklees to realise the low carbon potential of the project to create ongoing sustainable and affordable living. Highstone are committed to the low carbon agenda, and we have a vision that accommodation needs to be more flexible and help reduce the potential for fuel poverty. This may include things like eco-friendly design approaches to accommodation and people with different care needs living in one development or one series of developments.

Conclusion

This proposal for 8 apartments at The Priory, Whitechapel Road, Cleckheaton represents a sustainable, well-designed, and policy-compliant residential development. It meets local housing needs, enhances the environment, and contributes positively to the local economy. The scheme aligns with strategic planning objectives and offers a high standard of living for future residents. We respectfully request the approval of this application.