

Design & Access Statement

Development Proposal: Conversion of former Holy Trinity Church, Denby Dale, to a community workshop for woodworking & related crafts; erection of small outdoor classroom building.

Address: Holy Trinity Church, Trinity Drive, Denby Dale, West Yorkshire

Applicant: Robert Barber. Chair. Denby Dale and District Men's Shed Association

Date: 10.10.25

1. Description of Proposal & Background

- Use of the existing church building as a community workshop for woodworking, metalworking, and related crafts.
- Construction of a single-storey "shed-like" classroom in the garden/outdoor area to be used as a craft classroom for seasonal/outdoor activities.
- Installation of a wood dust/chip extractor located on the south side of the church.
- Siting a 20ft steel storage container in the west corner of the car park.
- No external alterations proposed to the exterior of the church building (no change to footprint, windows, roof etc.).

2. Site Context & Appraisal

- **Location & Access:** The site is accessed via Trinity Drive, an unadopted roadway approximately 3 metres wide, shared with three dwellings. The road is straight, with good visibility along its length, including pedestrian refuge points. There is no separate pavement/causeway. The junction of Trinity Drive with Dearnside Road has limited visibility, as noted in pre-application advice. The roadway has been in continual use since 1939. Local speed limit is 30 mph and the area within the junction is generous, allowing plenty of space to manoeuvre safely.
- **Public Rights of Way:** Footpath DEN/68/20 crosses/uses part of Trinity Drive, offering pedestrian access.
- **Parking and Vehicle Access:** The site includes on-site parking spaces for at least 8 cars. There is sufficient space for commercial delivery vehicles to access and turn within the site safely, without requiring manoeuvres on public roads.

- **Heritage / Character:** The church is not listed. The building has historic value as a community landmark since 1939. The surroundings include domestic dwellings; the garden setting is green, with existing boundary planting.
- **Landscape & Trees:** Existing vegetation will be largely retained. No trees are proposed for removal. Garden paths and green character retained and improved to meet the requirement for community use.

3. Design Principles & Policy Compliance

- The design will respect Kirklees Local Plan Policies regarding change of use, community facilities (F2 or relevant class), design and access, highways safety, parking standards, and probably supplementary guidance such as the Highway Design Guide SPD.
- The new classroom structure will be subordinate in scale, reversible, constructed in materials sympathetic to the surroundings (e.g. timber cladding, modest single-storey pitched roof), so as not to detract from the existing church building or local character.
- The design ensures safety, accessibility, minimal environmental impact, existing context respected.
- The garden building is screened from the adjacent allotments by a bank of trees and from the dwelling to the north by a 2M high wooden fence.
- The wood dust/chip extractor will be located in the niche between the vestry and the church. This will mitigate the transfer of sound towards the dwellings on Trinity Drive and on Kenyon Bank. The proposed location of the garden classroom will also mitigate the transfer of noise towards the single dwelling to the west of the church.
- The steel storage container will be screened from the adjacent dwellings/ gardens by a high and dense privet hedge, other existing and new planting. It is required to service the storage needs of our Community Share Shed. Library of Tools and other Household Items. It will be connected to power, but not other services.

4. Access

- **Vehicular Access:** Via Trinity Drive, shared unadopted track. Straight alignment aids visibility for users. Junction visibility is recognised as limited, but mitigated by historic use, speed limit (30 mph), low expected traffic intensity and the large space allocated to the junction.
- **Pedestrian Access:** Public Right of Way DEN/68/20 (footpath) provides pedestrian link. Refuge points along Trinity Drive assist pedestrian safety.
- **Parking & Servicing:** On-site parking for 8+ cars. Suitable turning space for commercial delivery vehicles ensures servicing can occur without on-street or off-site manoeuvres.

- Disabled Access: Level or near-level access to both main building and new classroom. There is a ramp to the main entrance and internal arrangements will meet relevant accessibility standards under Building Regulations.

5. Scale, Appearance & Layout

- Church Building: No external alterations. Internal adaptation only (new floor layout, division of space, furniture, possible mezzanine etc.).
- Outdoor Classroom: Single storey, timber framed. Approximate footprint of the classroom is 6M x3.5M and the open covered work area is 10M x 3M , ridge height not to exceed 3.2M. Clad in timber panels, roof with pitched design (felt or lightweight metal), matching style and colour palette that is subdued and unintrusive.
- The classroom will be located in the garden area, at the rear/south side, maintaining separation from dwelling boundaries, and using existing planting/fencing to screen where appropriate.
- Landscape to preserve existing green character; minimal hard surfacing beyond necessary access; planting to soften edges.

6. Sustainability & Safety

- Activities will be low intensity, generating limited traffic. Renewable or low-energy fittings inside where feasible (lighting, heating).
- Safety measures for workshop: correct ventilation, safe storage of tools/machinery, secure access control during unsupervised times.
- Measures to ensure the access via Trinity Drive remains safe for both vehicles & pedestrians (use of refuge points, cautious vehicle speeds and good visibility).

7. Community Access & Involvement

- The workshop is intended for local community use, promoting skills development, social cohesion, wellbeing.
- Pre-application consultations have already identified visibility concerns at the junction, which are acknowledged and addressed.
- Parking/traffic impact is minimized by encouraging local users to walk or use public transport where possible.

8. Conclusion

This proposal represents a low-impact, community-led reuse of a former church building, preserving its external appearance while providing new social value. The new outdoor classroom is small in scale and well-screened. The site benefits from established access via Trinity Drive and PROW DEN/68/20, ample parking and delivery vehicle turning/ capacity, making it suitable for the proposed use without adverse effects on the surrounding area.