

KIRKLEES METROPOLITAN COUNCIL INVESTMENT & REGENERATION SERVICE

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

DELEGATED DECISION TO DETERMINE PLANNING APPLICATIONS - REGULATION 3 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING GENERAL REGULATIONS 1992 (AS AMENDED)

Reference No: **2026/48/90649/W**

Site Address: New Mill Junior School, Royds Avenue, New Mill,
Holmfirth, HD9 1LJ

Description: Change of use of former Caretaker's house to provide
additional resourced provision and internal alterations

Recommending Officer: Joshua Merriman

DECISION – Grant Under Regulation 3

I hereby authorise the approval of this application for the reasons set out in the officer's report and recommendation annexed below in respect of the above matter.

Kirsty Nicholls

AUTHORISED OFFICER

Date: 13-May-2026

Officer Report – 2026/90649

Site Description

The application site refers to New Mill Junior School, Royds Avenue, New Mill, Holmfirth, HD9 1LJ, a large education purposed building located on a large site containing an expanse of Urban Green Space, the school building itself, and the former caretakers outbuilding which is the subject of this application. The site benefits from access off Royds Avenue, as well as parking spaces to the North of the outbuildings, and an existing Council owned informal car park to the East of the application building.

Description of Proposal

The Scheme

The application is seeking planning permission for Change of use of former Caretaker's house to provide additional resourced provision and internal alterations.

The additional resources will include two classrooms, a WC, staff WC, kitchen, utility room, store, conservatory, regulation room, sensory room, and circulation room.

Supporting Information

In addition to the submitted plans the following documents have been submitted to support the application:

- Climate Change Statement

History of Negotiations / Amendments Received

No amendments have been requested by Officers.

Relevant Planning History

There is no relevant planning history at the application site.

Representations

Publication of the application has been undertaken in accordance with the Council's Development Management Charter (July 2024).

The application has been publicised on the Council's website and by site notice. The expiry date of the publicity period was the 30/04/2026.

Letters of Comment

- Holme Valley Parish Council have expressed no comment on this application, deferring to Kirklees Officers.

Consultation Responses

No consultations considered necessary.

Allocation and Policy

The site is allocated in Urban Green Space within the Kirklees Local Plan (adopted 2019). The site is also located within a bat alert layer.

The following legislation, policy and guidance is considered relevant to the determination of this application:-

Kirklees Local Plan

- LP1 Achieving Sustainable Development
- LP2 Place Shaping
- LP21 Highway and Access
- LP22 Parking
- LP24 Design
- LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- LP52 Protection and Improvement of Environmental Quality
- LP61 Urban green space

Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan was adopted on 8th December 2021 and therefore forms part of the Development Plan. Policies within the plan relevant to the consideration of this application are listed as follows:-

- Policy 1 – Protecting and Enhancing the Landscape Character of Holme Valley.
- Policy 2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Built Character of the Holme Valley and Promoting High Quality Design.
- Policy 12 – Promoting Sustainability.
- Policy 13 – Protecting Wildlife and Securing Biodiversity Net Gain.

The application site is located within Landscape Character Area 8 (Settled Slopes of the Holme Valley) of the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan. The key characteristics of which are below:

- Strong rural setting and agricultural character with pastoral farmland on the rising valley slopes.
- There is a strong connection to the surrounding rural landscape from long distance and panoramic views over the wooded valley floor to the opposing valley sides as well as glimpsed views of the rural backdrop through gaps between the built form, especially within Totties and Scholes.
- Stone walls and hedgerows form field boundaries and line single lane roads.
- Short sections of the Kirklees Way, the Barnsley Boundary Walk and the Holme Valley Circular Walk cross the area. A short section of National Cycle Route no. 627 also crosses the north-east of the area.

National Policies and Guidance

National planning policy and guidance is set out in National Policy Statements, primarily the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published December 2024, the Planning Practice Guidance Suite (PPGS) first launched 6th March 2014 together with Circulars, Ministerial Statements and associated technical guidance.

A consultation draft of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published on 16 December 2025. As a consultation, the document is at an early stage and subject to change. Accordingly, for the purposes of this application, no weight is given to the current consultation document.

The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and is a material consideration in determining applications.

- Chapter2 Achieving sustainable development
- Chapter12 Achieving well-designed places
- Chapter14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Chapter15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Documents / guidance

Kirklees Highway Design Guide (adopted November 2019)
Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan – 2021

The Biodiversity Net Gain Technical Advice Note

Legislation

The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that in considering planning applications the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise

Assessment

The following matters are considered in the assessment below –

1. Principle of development
1. Impact upon the character and appearance of the area
2. Impact upon residential amenity
3. Impact upon highway safety
4. Climate Change
5. Other matters – e.g. trees/ecology (e.g. bats)
6. Representations
7. Conclusion

1 – Principle of Development

Sustainable Development

Policy LP1 of the KLP states that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF.

Paragraph 11 concludes that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted. This too will be explored.

Policy LP2 of the KLP sets out that all development proposals should seek to build on the strengths, opportunities and help address challenges identified in the Local Plan.

The dimensions of sustainable development will be considered throughout the proposal.

In terms of making alterations to a property, Policy LP24 of the KLP is relevant, in conjunction with Chapter 12 of the NPPF, regarding design. In this case, the principle of development is considered acceptable, and the proposal shall now be assessed against all other material planning considerations, including visual and residential amenity, as well as highway safety.

The site is designated as Urban Green Space (UGS) in the Kirklees Local Plan and therefore, Policy LP61 is relevant. The area of UGS is designated for education uses providing New Mill Junior School with school buildings, grounds, playing fields, and car parks within the UGS area. Officers do not consider there to be a loss of UGS as a result of the works, and it is therefore considered that the proposal complies with Policy LP61 of the Kirklees Local Plan.

Despite the proposed change of use of the building will cause a loss in housing, as the dwelling is no longer in use and is a vacant property, the community benefits for a public school and the public benefits derived from the change are considered to overcome this loss in housing on balance.

These issues along with other policy considerations will be addressed below.

Considering the above policy, the principle of the development is considered to be acceptable.

2 – Impact on character and appearance of the area

Visual Amenity

Section 12 of the NPPF discusses good design. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, it creates better places in which to live and work and helps to make development acceptable to communities. Local Plan Policies LP1, LP2 and most importantly LP24, are all also relevant. All the policies seek to achieve good quality design that retains a sense of local identity, which is in keeping with the scale of development in the local area and is visually attractive.

Local Plan Policy LP24(a) states that all proposals should promote good design by ensuring the following: *‘the form, scale, layout and details of all development respects and enhances the character of the townscape, heritage assets and landscape’*.

There will be no external changes to the property itself, with changes only being internal, therefore, it is considered that there will be no significant impact upon the surrounding street scene and visual amenity as a result of the development.

Considering the above assessment, the proposed changes to the existing outbuilding are considered to be acceptable with regard to visual amenity.

3. Impact on Residential Amenity

Sections B and C of LP24 states that alterations to existing buildings should:

“...maintain appropriate distances between buildings’ and ‘...minimise impact on residential amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers.”

Further to this, Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning decisions should ensure that developments have a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

As the outbuilding is existing and has been previously utilised as a dwelling with no significant impacts upon neighbouring amenity, it is considered that the alternative use of the building as an extension to the nearby school would have lesser impacts than previously experience regarding overlooking and privacy. With regard to noise and the movement of people in and around the building, this is not considered to be a significant increase to what would already emanate from the school grounds and thus this is not considered to be significant.

As the footprint of the building will not increase, there will be no significant impacts upon light, outlook, overshadowing, or overbearing.

The proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policy listed above and is acceptable regarding residential amenity

4. Impact on Highway Safety

Policies LP21 and LP22 of the Kirklees Local Plan and Chapter 9 of the NPPF relate to access and highway safety and are considered to be relevant to the consideration of this application. The Council’s adopted Highway Design Guide and Key Design Principle 15 of the adopted House Extensions & Alterations SPD which seek to ensure acceptable levels of off street parking are retained are also considered to be of relevance.

Principle 19 of the Council's adopted House Extensions & Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) requires the provision for waste storage and recycling must be incorporated into the design of new developments in such a way that it is convenient for both collection and use whilst having minimal visual impact on the development.

Although nothing specific is detailed within the submitted plans, it is considered that there is adequate space on site for waste storage.

There will no longer remain a residential use in the building, however, the hard-standing parking area servicing the dwelling will not be reduced in scale. It is considered that no additional parking provision is required as a result of this development and these parking spaces will continue to be used to service the school grounds. Considering this, the current parking provision is acceptable to remain. Furthermore, the proposal is set back from the closest highway and is not considered to have any significant impact upon highway safety.

It is therefore considered that in terms of access and highway safety/parking the proposed extension would comply with Policies LP21 and LP22 of the Kirklees Local Plan, Principle 15 of the Council's Street Design Guide and Chapter 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Furthermore, it is considered that the proposal would also comply with Principle 19 of the adopted House Extensions & Alterations SPD.

5. Climate Change

On 12th November 2019, the Council adopted a target for achieving 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2038, with an accompanying carbon budget set by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research. National Planning Policy includes a requirement to promote carbon reduction and enhance resilience to climate change through the planning system and these principles have been incorporated into the formulation of Local Plan policies. The Local Plan predates the declaration of a climate emergency and the net zero carbon target. However, it includes a series of policies, which are used to assess the suitability of planning applications in the context of climate change. When determining planning applications, the Council will use the relevant Local Plan policies and guidance documents to embed the climate change agenda.

Considering the scale and nature of the proposed development, especially that it is for private use, it is considered that the proposed development would not have an impact on climate change that needs mitigation to address the climate change emergency. The proposed development would therefore comply with Chapter 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. Other Matters

Impact upon Ecology

Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework is relevant, together with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which protect, by law, the habitat and animals of certain species including newts, bats and badgers.

Policy LP30 of the Kirklees Local Plan requires that proposals protect Habitats and Species of Principal Importance. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site is located within an identified bat roosting area, the proposals are relatively modest, and in this case would not impact upon the existing roof space which has the potential for providing a roost for bats. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that the proposals would have a significant impact on the bat population. An informative would be included making the applicant aware that if bats are discovered on site during the works, any development shall cease, and the applicant is advised to contact Natural England for advice on how to move forward. Subject to informative the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this regard.

7. Representations

Holme Valley Parish Council have expressed no comment on this application, deferring to Kirklees Officers.

Officer comment: *Noted*

8. Conclusion

The NPPF has introduced a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The policies set out in the NPPF taken as a whole constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice.

This application has been assessed against relevant policies in the development plan and other material considerations. It is considered, the proposed development would constitute sustainable development and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation
PERMISSION

CONDITIONAL FULL

Decision Authorisation: Delegated Powers

Application Number: 2026/90649

Officer Recommendation: Conditional Full Permission

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: Pursuant to the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specifications schedule listed in this decision notice, except as may be specified in the conditions attached to this permission, which shall in all cases take precedence.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what is being permitted and to accord with Policies LP01, LP02, LP21, LP22 & LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan, Principles 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 15 of the Council's adopted House Extensions & Alterations Supplementary Planning Document and Policies within Chapters 2, 9, 12 and 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework

NOTE: Due to its location, a bat roost may be present on site. Bats are a European protected species under regulation 42 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is an offence for anyone intentionally to kill, injure or handle a bat, disturb a roosting bat, or sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not. If bats are discovered on site development shall cease and the applicant is advised to contact Natural England for advice.

Plans and specifications schedule:-

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date Received
Location Plan	-	-	18/03/2026
Existing Site/Block Layout	P101	-	18/03/2026
Existing Floor Plans	P102	-	18/03/2026
Proposed Site/Block Layout	P104	-	18/03/2026
Proposed Floor Plans	P103	-	18/03/2026
Application Form	-	-	18/03/2026

Plan Type	Reference	Version	Date Received
Climate Change Statement	-	-	18/03/2026

Pursuant to article 35 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Local Authority have, where possible, made a pre-application advice service available, complied with the Kirklees Development Management Charter 2024 and otherwise actively engaged with the applicant in dealing with the application. No amendments were sought as it was considered that the proposal was acceptable as submitted.

Report Dated:

01/05/2026