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Job reference: 2025 enquiry 61

Address: **Change of use from a vacant former St Patricks Catholic club (F1f use) to form mixed use open planned foodcourt units (Eb use) on ground floor (which can be subdivided in smaller units to suit); sky restaurant (Eb use); 60 bed hotel (C1 use) with external alterations including an extension to roof to provide upper floors, single storey ground floor extension, and other alterations (within a Conservation Area).**

Date: 7-10-2026

Extra notes: **Health Impact Assessment report**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Assessment

This Rapid Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and the typical kirklees HIA form has been prepared in support of proposals for the redevelopment and reuse of the former St Patrick's Catholic Club in Huddersfield as an integrated mixed-use destination known as the Octa Hub.

The purpose of the assessment is to identify the potential effects of the proposed development upon the health and wellbeing of the local population and to demonstrate how the scheme can maximise positive health outcomes whilst appropriately managing any potential adverse effects.

The assessment has been prepared having regard to the Kirklees Council Rapid Health Impact Assessment for Spatial Planning guidance, which has been developed by Kirklees Public Health to assist applicants in assessing the health implications of planning proposals. The Council identifies the Rapid HIA as a proportionate assessment based principally upon desk-based evidence and professional knowledge.

The assessment should be read alongside the other documents accompanying the planning application, including the Design and Access Statement, Transport/Highways information, Noise Assessment, Heritage Assessment, Environmental information and other technical reports where applicable.

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2.0 THE OCTA HUB

2.1 The Concept

The Octa Hub is conceived as a multi-functional destination combining four complementary elements:

SHOPPING

Retail and commercial activity supporting the vitality of the area.

EATING

Restaurants, food and beverage uses providing opportunities for social interaction and access to a range of food choices.

MEETING

Spaces which encourage social interaction, community activity and informal meetings.

SLEEPING

A boutique hotel providing visitor accommodation and supporting the wider evening and hospitality economy. The concept is deliberately based upon the creation of a destination rather than a single-purpose building. The proposal seeks to bring a significant existing building back into productive use and create an active destination capable of supporting employment, social interaction, leisure, hospitality and visitor activity.

3.0 POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework(NPPF)

The current NPPF places health and wellbeing firmly within the planning system. The NPPF's overarching sustainable development objectives include a social objective to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, together with accessible community facilities, public service infrastructure and open spaces supporting health, social and cultural wellbeing.

Chapter 16 of the current NPPF specifically addresses Promoting Healthy Communities.

Policy HC1 – Planning for healthy communities promotes healthy and inclusive places, social interaction, walking, wheeling and cycling, mixed-use development

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and measures which help prevent ill-health, reduce health inequalities and support social interaction.

Of particular relevance to the Octa Hub is Policy HC4 – Proposals for new and improved community facilities, public service infrastructure and development providing public health benefits.

HC4 states that substantial weight should be given to:

- new or improved community facilities; and
- development making a demonstrable contribution towards promoting good health, preventing ill-health, reducing health inequalities or supporting social interaction.

The policy expressly identifies examples including recreation facilities, meeting places and opportunities to purchase healthier food. The Octa Hub directly engages with these objectives through its combination of eating, meeting, sleeping, leisure, hospitality, employment and social uses.

4.0 KIRKLEES LOCAL PLAN

The Kirklees Local Plan was adopted on 27 February 2019 and remains part of the adopted development plan for the Borough.

4.1 Policy LP47 – Healthy, Active and Safe Lifestyles

Policy LP47 requires proposals to demonstrate how they contribute to creating environments which support healthy, active and safe communities and reduce health inequalities.

The policy identifies, amongst other matters:

- access to open space, sport and recreation;
- opportunities for walking and cycling;
- sustainable travel;
- access to healthy food;
- improved air quality;
- energy efficiency and low-carbon development; and
- development which minimises crime.

The Octa Hub provides a mixed-use environment capable of contributing positively to several of these objectives.

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4.2 Policy LP48 – Community Facilities and Services

Policy LP48 supports proposals which protect, retain, enhance or provide new community facilities and services. The policy also seeks accessible facilities which can be reached by walking, cycling and public transport and encourages adaptable mixed-use buildings. The redevelopment of the former St Patrick's Catholic Club provides an opportunity to retain the building as an active community-facing destination whilst introducing complementary commercial, hospitality and leisure uses.

4.3 Policy LP49 – Educational and Health Care Needs

Policy LP49 requires consideration of the relationship between development and health and education provision, including accessibility to facilities by sustainable transport. The Octa Hub does not propose a new healthcare facility and is not expected to generate a requirement for a new healthcare facility in its own right. Nevertheless, the proposal has been assessed against the wider health and wellbeing objectives of the development plan.

4.4 Policy LP51 – Protection and Improvement of Local Air Quality

The proposal will be expected to avoid unacceptable impacts upon local air quality. The use of an existing urban building and the emphasis upon accessible mixed-use activity provides an opportunity to reduce unnecessary journeys by car. Transport and parking matters are addressed separately within the application documentation.

4.5 Policy LP52 – Protection and Improvement of Environmental Quality

Environmental quality, including noise and disturbance, is an important component of health and wellbeing. Potential effects associated with evening, restaurant and hospitality uses will therefore be controlled through appropriate design, management and the relevant technical assessments.

5.0 LOCAL HEALTH STRATEGY

The Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022–2027 remains a relevant strategic consideration. Kirklees' current strategic vision includes creating physical and social infrastructure and environments which enable people of all ages to maximise their health opportunities and make the healthy choice the easier choice. The Council's wider strategic priorities also seek a district combining a strong sustainable economy with a high quality of life, thriving communities, prosperity and better health. The Octa Hub has been designed around precisely this relationship between economic activity, social interaction, physical environment and wellbeing.

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6.0 HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Assessment Methodology

The assessment considers the principal determinants of health which can be influenced by planning and development. The Kirklees Rapid HIA framework recognises that health impacts may be positive, negative or uncertain impacts and that recommendations should be made to maximise positive effects and minimise potential negative effects.

The assessment below therefore considers:

- housing and accommodation;
- access and sustainable transport;
- physical activity;
- food and nutrition;
- social interaction and community cohesion;
- employment and the local economy;
- access to services and facilities;
- safety and security;
- environmental quality;
- climate change and energy;
- vulnerable groups and health inequalities.

7.0 HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION

Impact: POSITIVE

The proposed boutique hotel element will provide visitor accommodation within an established urban location. The provision of accommodation as part of a wider mixed-use destination supports the town centre economy and enables visitors to stay close to restaurants, entertainment, retail and other facilities. The proposal does not involve the creation of conventional residential accommodation and therefore is not expected to generate the same health implications associated with a large residential population.

Enhancement Measures

Provide accessible accommodation where required by Building Regulations. Ensure clear and legible circulation. Provide appropriate lifts and accessible common areas. Incorporate good natural and artificial lighting. Provide appropriate acoustic separation.

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8.0 ACCESS AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Impact: POSITIVE / MANAGEABLE

The Octa Hub is intended to function as an accessible urban destination rather than an isolated out-of-centre development. Its mixed-use character creates the opportunity for linked trips, reducing the need for individual journeys between separate destinations.

The proposal will encourage access by:

- walking;
- public transport;
- cycling where practical;
- taxi/private hire; and
- private cars.

The concentration of complementary uses within a single destination can help reduce unnecessary travel.

Mitigation / Enhancement

The final access, servicing, car parking and cycle provision will be designed in accordance with the relevant highway requirements and supported by the Transport/Highways documentation accompanying the application.

9.0 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Impact: POSITIVE

The proposal has the potential to encourage incidental physical activity through walking to and within the development;

- movement between different uses;
- use of stairs where appropriate;
- pedestrian connections;
- and the concentration of activities within an accessible urban location.

The design will avoid creating unnecessary barriers to movement and will provide inclusive access. The opportunity to make stairs visually prominent and attractive, where appropriate, can encourage their use rather than relying exclusively upon lifts. This supports the principle identified within Kirklees' health strategy of creating environments which make healthier choices easier.

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10.0 FOOD AND NUTRITION

Impact: POSITIVE

Food and hospitality form an important part of the Octa Hub concept. The development will provide opportunities for people to purchase food and eat within the building or takeaway to suit. The proposal can support healthy food choices through the availability of a range of food options. The current NPPF specifically identifies opportunities to purchase healthier food as an example of development which can contribute towards good health.

Enhancement

Operators should, where reasonably practicable:

- provide healthy food options;
- provide appropriate drinking water;
- identify allergen information;
- provide a range of food choices; and
- avoid unnecessarily restrictive layouts which prevent inclusive access.

11.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION AND COMMUNITY COHESION

Impact: STRONGLY POSITIVE

This is considered one of the principal health benefits of the Octa Hub. The MEETING component has deliberately been incorporated to create opportunities for social interaction.

The building can provide places where people can:

- meet friends;
- dine and drink together;
- interact socially;
- attend events;
- participate in leisure activities;
- meet for business or informal purposes; and
- interact with other members of the community.

The NPPF identifies social interaction as an important component of healthy and inclusive places, including through mixed-use development and meeting places. The reactivation of an existing building which has previously served a community role also provides an opportunity to reinforce local identity.

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12.0 EMPLOYMENT AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Impact: POSITIVE

The Octa Hub is expected to generate employment across:

- hospitality;
- restaurants;
- foodcourt;
- management;
- cleaning;
- maintenance;
- hotel operations;
- retail;
- security;
- administration;
- events;and
- associated supply chains.

Employment can make an important contribution to health and wellbeing through income, social interaction, purpose and participation in the local economy. The proposal therefore has the potential to deliver wider socioeconomic health benefits.

13.0 ACCESS TO SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Impact: POSITIVE

The mixed-use nature of the proposal means that a number of activities are brought together within one destination. This can reduce the need for separate journeys and create a more active and accessible environment. The approach is consistent with Kirklees Policy LP48, which supports accessible community facilities and services.

14.0 SAFETY AND SECURITY

Impact: POSITIVE / MANAGEABLE

The introduction of active uses throughout the building can improve natural surveillance and reduce the perception of an inactive or vacant building. The presence of people during different periods of the day and evening can support passive surveillance.

The design will seek to provide:

- clear entrances;
- legible circulation;
- appropriate lighting;
- visible routes;

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- secure access to private areas;
- appropriate management of hotel accommodation; and
- separation between public and staff/service areas.

These measures are consistent with the objectives of LP47 and the NPPF's healthy and safe communities policies.

15.0 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

15.1 Noise

Impact: MANAGEABLE

Restaurant, hospitality and evening uses have the potential to generate noise. This is recognised and will be addressed through appropriate acoustic design, management and the separate Noise Assessment where required.

Measures may include:

- acoustic separation;
- controlled plant;
- management of amplified music;
- controlled servicing;
- appropriate operating hours; and
- management of customer dispersal.

The objective will be to ensure that the development does not result in unacceptable effects upon neighbouring occupiers.

15.2 Air Quality

Impact: NEUTRAL / POTENTIALLY POSITIVE

The proposal reuses an existing urban building and concentrates complementary uses within one destination. Sustainable transport measures and appropriate servicing arrangements will assist in controlling unnecessary vehicle movements. The proposal will comply with relevant environmental and air-quality requirements.

15.3 Lighting

Impact: MANAGEABLE

External and internal lighting will be designed to provide safe movement and security whilst avoiding unnecessary glare or disturbance.

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16.0 CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

Impact: POSITIVE

The reuse of an existing vacant building represents an efficient approach to land and building resources. The proposal will seek to improve the building's energy performance through refurbishment and appropriate building services.

Where practicable, measures may include:

- improved insulation;
- efficient lighting;
- efficient heating/cooling;
- controls;
- low-energy equipment;
- renewable energy technologies where appropriate; and
- measures to minimise overheating.

This is consistent with the environmental and health objectives of LP47 and the national planning objective of creating sustainable and healthy places.

17.0 VULNERABLE GROUPS AND HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Impact: POSITIVE / MANAGEABLE

The proposal has the potential to provide benefits for a broad range of users.

Particular consideration will be given to:

- older people;
- disabled people;
- people with mobility difficulties;
- families;
- visitors;
- people with sensory impairments; and
- people who may otherwise experience social isolation.

Inclusive design principles will be incorporated throughout the scheme.

The proposal's emphasis upon meeting, social interaction, accessibility and a range of activities can help reduce barriers to participation.

18.0 CONSTRUCTION PHASE

Impact: TEMPORARY / MANAGEABLE

Construction works have the potential to create temporary effects including:

- noise;
- dust;

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- vehicle movements;
- temporary access restrictions; and
- construction traffic.

These impacts can be controlled through an appropriate Construction Management Plan and compliance with relevant environmental controls. Such impacts are temporary and should not prevent the long-term health benefits associated with the completed development.

19.0 MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN

The following measures should be incorporated into the detailed development:

- Accessibility
- Inclusive entrances and circulation.
- Lift access where required.
- Accessible WC provision.
- Accessible hotel accommodation.
- Clear wayfinding.
- Active Travel
- Encourage walking and cycling.
- Appropriate cycle storage.
- Safe pedestrian routes.
- Integration with existing transport networks.
- Social Interaction
- Attractive communal spaces.
- Flexible meeting areas.
- Dining and leisure spaces.
- Opportunities for events and community activity.
- Healthy Food
- Range of food choices.
- Healthy options.
- Allergen information.
- Accessible dining areas.
- Safety
- Good lighting.
- Clear entrances.
- Active spaces.
- Natural surveillance.
- Controlled access to private hotel areas.
- Environmental Health

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- Acoustic control.
- Appropriate ventilation.
- Air-quality considerations.
- Energy efficiency.
- Construction management.

20.0 OVERALL HEALTH IMPACT

The assessment identifies predominantly positive health and wellbeing impacts arising from the proposed Octa Hub. The strongest positive effects are considered to arise from:

- social interaction and reduced social isolation;
- employment and economic participation;
- access to food and hospitality;
- physical activity and active travel;
- bringing an underused building back into active use;
- creation of an accessible mixed-use destination;
- improved activity,
- natural surveillance and community presence;
- inclusive access to leisure, and
- hospitality and meeting opportunities.

Potential adverse impacts, principally relating to noise, servicing, traffic, construction and evening activity, are considered capable of being appropriately managed through the accompanying technical assessments, detailed design and planning conditions.

21.0 CONCLUSION

The Octa Hub represents a form of development which places health, wellbeing, social interaction and economic activity at the centre of the regeneration concept. The scheme is consistent with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework concerning healthy and inclusive places and is particularly relevant to NPPF Policy HC4, which gives substantial weight to development providing community facilities and demonstrable public health benefits.

At the local level, the proposal responds positively to Kirklees Local Plan Policies LP47 and LP48, which seek healthy, active and safe communities and support accessible community facilities and services. The proposal also supports the wider ambitions of the Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy by creating physical and

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social infrastructure which provides opportunities for people to participate, interact and make healthier choices.

Importantly, the Octa Hub is not simply a collection of unrelated uses.

The **Shopping + Eating + Meeting + Sleeping** concept creates a mutually supportive destination in which the individual components reinforce activity, social interaction, employment and wellbeing. The redevelopment therefore provides an opportunity to transform an underused vacant building into an active destination contributing to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Huddersfield. Subject to the mitigation and enhancement measures identified within this report and the accompanying technical documentation, the proposal is considered capable of delivering a net positive contribution to health and wellbeing.

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