STONEHOUSE & CO
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

Timeout Education

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

NOV 2026

1. Purpose and summary

This statement accompanies the planning proposal to bring Moorend House back into educational use. The building was originally a school and received planning permission in 2013 for change of use to offices (reference 2013/62/93940/E). It is now vacant. The proposal is to establish specialist education for up to 50 learners: up to 30 primary-aged pupils and up to 20 post-16 students. The statement explains the design approach, the arrangement of the two provisions, access, inclusive use, transport and the relationship of the proposal to its surroundings.

The proposed use reuses an existing institutional building for education, its original purpose. The operational model described here uses defined teaching and outdoor areas, controlled shared facilities, supervised circulation and staggered arrival and departure arrangements. The assessment is based on the proposal details supplied by the applicant and the existing planning record.

2. Site and context

Moorend House is an existing stone building with a dual-pitched roof finished in grey slate tiles, set within its own grounds and accessed from Snelsins Lane. Kirklees Council's delegated report for application 2023/62/91892/E describes the area as containing a mix of residential and industrial properties with varied materials and architectural styles. That report records that the site is not within a conservation area and that no listed buildings or public rights of way are in close proximity. It also confirms the 2013 office-use permission and subsequent office extension permissions.

The delegated report identifies the site as unallocated on the Kirklees Local Plan Proposals Map and within the Strategic Green Infrastructure Network. The applicant's policy-map search additionally identifies a Biodiversity Opportunity Zone and a Mineral Safeguarding Area shown as SCR with Sandstone and/or Clay and Shale. These mapped designations inform the policy assessment below; the proposal is a reuse of the existing building and does not include mineral extraction or new built development in the mapped network.

3. Proposed use and layout principles

The building will accommodate two distinct specialist education provisions. Each will have a dedicated entrance, teaching accommodation and defined outdoor space. Teaching, pastoral, toilet and outdoor areas will be allocated to each provision wherever practicable. The dining hall, sports hall and other shared facilities will be used to separate timetables, with planned movement routes and transition periods to reduce unnecessary crossover. Any joint activity will be purposeful, supervised and risk assessed.

The school will provide education for learners with social, emotional and mental health needs. Individual learning pathways will be informed by EHCPs, previous settings, baseline assessment, pupil and parent voice, and relevant professional advice. The post-16 curriculum may include vocational learning alongside English, mathematics, personal development, independent living and employability. Practical activity will only take place where the finished space and equipment provide suitable supervision, storage, ventilation, extraction and fire precautions.

The proposal is principally an internal adaptation and change of use of an existing building. No external extension or alteration is included in the project description supplied for this statement. The building's existing stone and slate character will therefore remain the principal visual expression of the site.

4. Design response

4.1 Use and relationship to the building

The former school is suited in principle to educational reuse because its established institutional character and existing accommodation can support teaching and associated facilities. The proposal makes productive use of a vacant building and returns it to an education function. Its internal organisation will provide clear identity and separation for the primary and post-16 provisions while allowing controlled shared use of larger facilities.

4.2 Scale, appearance and landscape

The proposal retains the existing building envelope as described in the application information. The existing stone construction and grey slate roof are part of the building's established appearance. As the submitted proposal does not include external building work, it does not introduce a new building form or materially alter the site's built silhouette. The design response to the Strategic Green Infrastructure Network is therefore to retain the existing building and use the established site, with no new built footprint proposed.

External areas will be defined and supervised for the two provisions. This supports safe and legible use while retaining the established arrangement of the site. The information supplied does not identify new landscape works; this statement does not rely on unsubmitted planting or habitat measures.

4.3 Amenity and operation

Normal education will take place during weekday daytime term-time hours. Primary learner hours are 09:15–14:45 and post-16 learner hours are 09:30–15:00. Occasional staff training, parent meetings or school events may take place outside the core learner day and will be managed to protect neighbouring amenity. No routine evening community use or letting is proposed.

Outdoor activity will be timetabled and supervised. Staggered arrivals, departures and staff finishing times will reduce concentrated movement peaks. Deliveries will be scheduled outside learner arrival and departure periods wherever practicable. Waste collection will be arranged so it does not conflict with learners, neighbouring properties or vehicle turning.

5. Access and movement

5.1 Vehicle access and circulation

The existing access from Snelsins Lane will serve the proposed use. The submitted operational approach retains the internal entry and turning area beyond the gates. Vehicles will turn within the grounds and leave in forward gear. The driveway and turning area will be kept clear during drop-off and collection, and staff vehicles will remain on site during the working day within the parking layout shown by the architect.

Learner travel will use shared transport where suitable and consistent with individual travel and safeguarding arrangements. Arrival instructions will be provided to taxi and minibus operators, and reviewed if queuing or conflict occurs. The operating schedule separates primary and post-16 arrival and departure times. Visitor appointments will normally be pre-arranged with reception sign-in, identity checks and supervised access where appropriate.

The Kirklees delegated report on the 2023 office extension records that the Council's Highways service raised no objection to that extension and that it did not materially intensify the office use or alter parking arrangements. That decision relates to the earlier office proposal. The present education proposal is assessed on its own operating arrangements, including learner transport, staff parking, on-site turning and staggered movement. Please also refer to the separate report.

5.2 Pedestrian access and safeguarding

The operating model provides dedicated entrances and access-control arrangements for each provision, clear zoning of learner, staff, visitor and service areas, secure boundaries and supervised use of external areas. Planned routes and transition times will manage movement between teaching and shared accommodation. Emergency, first-aid, lockdown and evacuation procedures will be supported by the final layout and fire strategy.

5.3 Inclusive access

The proposal is for specialist education and will be organised around individual learner needs. There is level access to two entrances: the lower ground floor Post-16 entrance and the main primary school entrance. The submitted operational approach includes defined provision areas, controlled entrances and supervised movement. The internal arrangement and access arrangements will be implemented in accordance with the submitted drawings and relevant statutory requirements.

6. Planning policy assessment

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Kirklees Council's delegated report identifies the Kirklees Local Plan, adopted 27 February 2019, as the statutory development plan. The relevant local policies and national policy themes are set out below.

6.1 Kirklees Local Plan

- LP1 – Achieving Sustainable Development: supports a positive approach to proposals that contribute to sustainable development. Reuse of a vacant former school for education makes use of an existing building and provides a local specialist education facility.
- LP2 – Place Shaping: the proposal makes use of the existing institutional building and provides a defined, managed use compatible with the established mixed context described in the 2023 delegated report.
- LP21 – Highways and Access, and LP22 – Parking: the operational approach retains on-site circulation and turning, keeps the driveway clear at peak periods, provides on-site staff parking within the architect's layout and staggers learner movements.
- LP24 – Design: no external extension or alteration is proposed in the project description. The existing stone and slate building is retained. The layout and operation provide clear separation, supervision and legible movement within the existing premises.
- LP30 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity: the site is identified in the supplied mapping as within a Biodiversity Opportunity Zone. The proposal reuses the existing building and does not include a new building footprint. External activity will use defined and supervised areas. The existing Kirklees biodiversity technical advice and applicable biodiversity net gain requirements remain relevant to any development that falls within their scope.
- LP31 – Strategic Green Infrastructure Network: the 2023 delegated report identifies the site within this network. Reuse of the existing building without an external extension or new built footprint avoids physical expansion into the network. The proposal should be read with the policy's aims to protect and enhance the network.
- LP52 – Protection and Improvement of Environmental Quality: the daytime education pattern, supervision of outdoor activity, managed arrivals and deliveries, and controls for plant or extraction provide an operational framework for limiting effects on neighbouring amenity and environmental quality.
- LP13 – Town Centre Uses: the previous delegated report treated offices as a main town centre use. The present proposal is for education within Use Class F1(a), not office use, and the proposal is assessed as an education use.

A planning policy search of the Kirklees Local Plan identifies the site within a Mineral Safeguarding Area labelled SCR with Sandstone and/or Clay and Shale. The proposal does not seek mineral extraction and involves reuse of the existing building without a new built footprint. On that basis, it does not propose development to win or work the safeguarded mineral resource.

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

The applicable national policy is the National Planning Policy Framework published on 17 August 2026. The Framework directs plan-led decisions and supports sustainable development. Its relevant themes for this proposal are effective use of land and buildings (Chapter 12), well-designed places (Chapter 14), sustainable transport (Chapter 15), healthy communities (Chapter 16), pollution and public protection (Chapter 17), and conserving and enhancing the natural environment (Chapter 19).

The proposal reuses an existing vacant building for an education purpose, retains its established external form, sets out a managed access and movement approach, and defines operational measures for supervision and neighbouring amenity. Its relationship with the mapped green infrastructure and biodiversity designations is addressed through the absence of a new building footprint and the use of defined external areas. These characteristics are consistent with the relevant national policy themes, read alongside the adopted development plan.

7. Conclusion

This Design and Access Statement supports the change of use of Moorend House from offices to specialist education within Use Class F1(a), with internal alterations. It explains how the existing building will accommodate up to 50 learners across separate primary and post-16 provisions, how shared facilities and external areas will be managed, and how access, parking, safeguarding and day-to-day operations will be organised.

The proposal returns a former school to educational use within the existing building. Its approach responds to Kirklees Local Plan Policies LP1, LP2, LP21, LP22, LP24, LP30, LP31 and LP52, and to the relevant provisions of the current NPPF. The site’s Strategic Green Infrastructure Network, Biodiversity Opportunity Zone and Mineral Safeguarding Area context has been considered in relation to the proposal’s reuse of the existing building and absence of a new building footprint.

On the information presented, the proposal represents a suitable and carefully managed educational use of Moorend House.