

**Internal and external alterations to facilitate the use of  
the building as a dwelling (Listed Building Consent)**

**Report Item No  
A3**

**Worthington Methodist Church  
Main Street Worthington  
Leicestershire  
LE65 1RP**

**Application Reference:  
23/01596/LBC**

**Grid Reference (E) 440882  
Grid Reference (N) 320482**

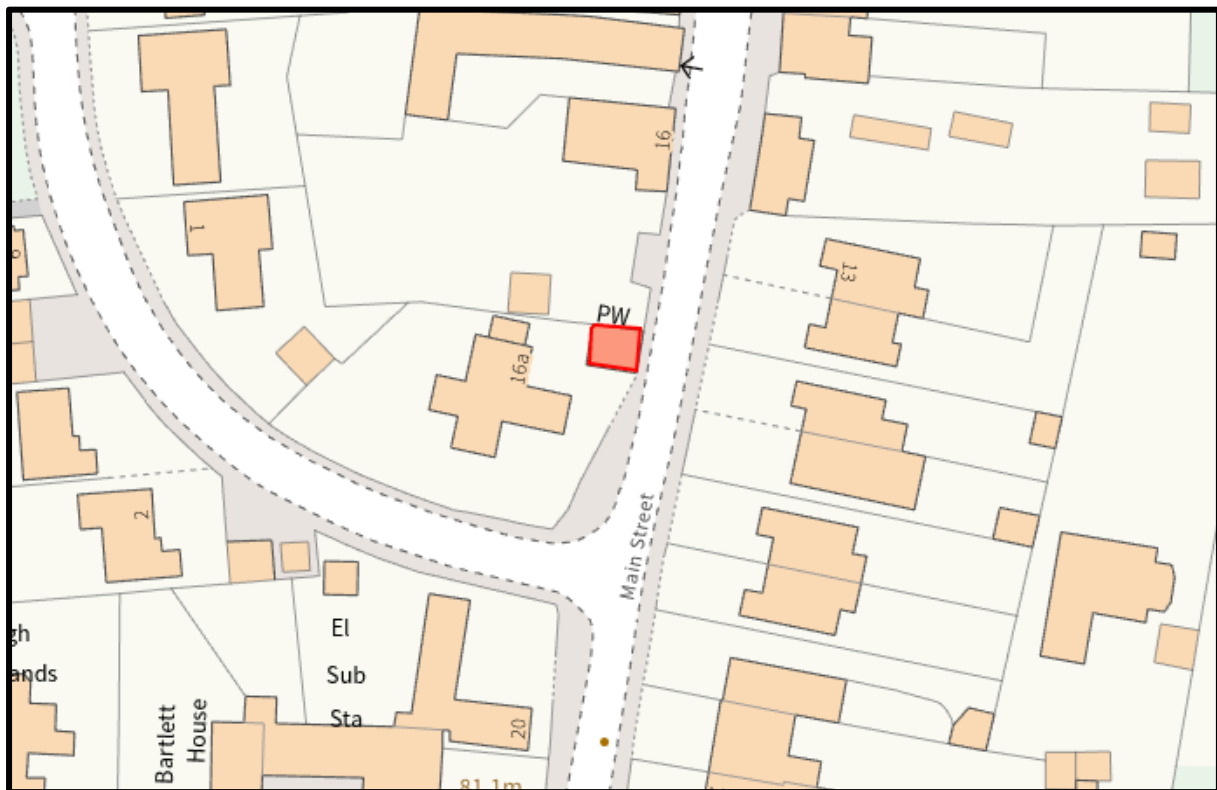
**Date Registered:  
01 December 2023  
Consultation Expiry:  
13 June 2024  
8 Week Date:  
26 January 2024  
Extension of Time:  
None agreed**

**Applicant:  
Mr J Boam**

**Case Officer:  
Karina Duncan**

**Recommendation:  
PERMIT**

**Site Location - Plan for indicative purposes only**



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**Reason the case is called to the Planning Committee:**

The application is brought to the Planning Committee for determination under the requirement of the constitution as the applicant for this application is related to a serving Member of the Council and objections have been received in relation to the application.

**RECOMMENDATION – PERMIT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT, subject to the following conditions:**

1. Approved Plans
2. Notwithstanding the submitted details or condition 1 above, prior to any further works taking place full details of restoration and/or repair details, including details of materials and methods, for the following works shall first be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- (a) internal timber cladding which shall be good quality timber wainscotting;
- (b) dado rail (above east (front) wall);
- (c) internal limewashed plaster;
- (d) coat hooks (east (front) wall);
- (e) timber cornice (east (front) wall);
- (f) required maintenance and/or repair of existing windows;
- (g) required repair and/or making good of existing staircase.

All works shall be undertaken in accordance with the agreed details and thereafter retained.

3. Notwithstanding the submitted details or condition 1 above, full details of the following shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any further work taking place:

- (a) the finish to be applied to the external faces of the partition walls and how this would reflect the finishes in the principal internal space;
- (b) amended proposed ground floor plan showing an alternative bathroom wall layout to ensure that the partition wall closest to the entrance forms a straight line;
- (c) the balustrade serving the bed deck area;
- (d) the cavity drainage system;
- (e) full details of an alternative structural support method for the first floor bed deck area which shall utilise existing posts where possible. This should be supported by a structural appraisal and an alternative column design which utilises O-section columns;
- (f) construction and materials details for the bin enclosure which shall ensure that the enclosure is not fixed or mounted to the principal elevation of the listed building.

All works shall be undertaken in accordance with the agreed details and thereafter retained.

4. Submission of a Written Scheme of Investigation to record the evidence of the evolution of the heritage asset to be submitted and agreed in writing prior to any further works taking place.

**Informatives:**

1. Positive/proactive statement
2. Biodiversity Net Gain exemption informative
3. Applicant reminded to comply with conditions attached to 23/01595/FUL

## MAIN REPORT

### 1. Proposals and Background

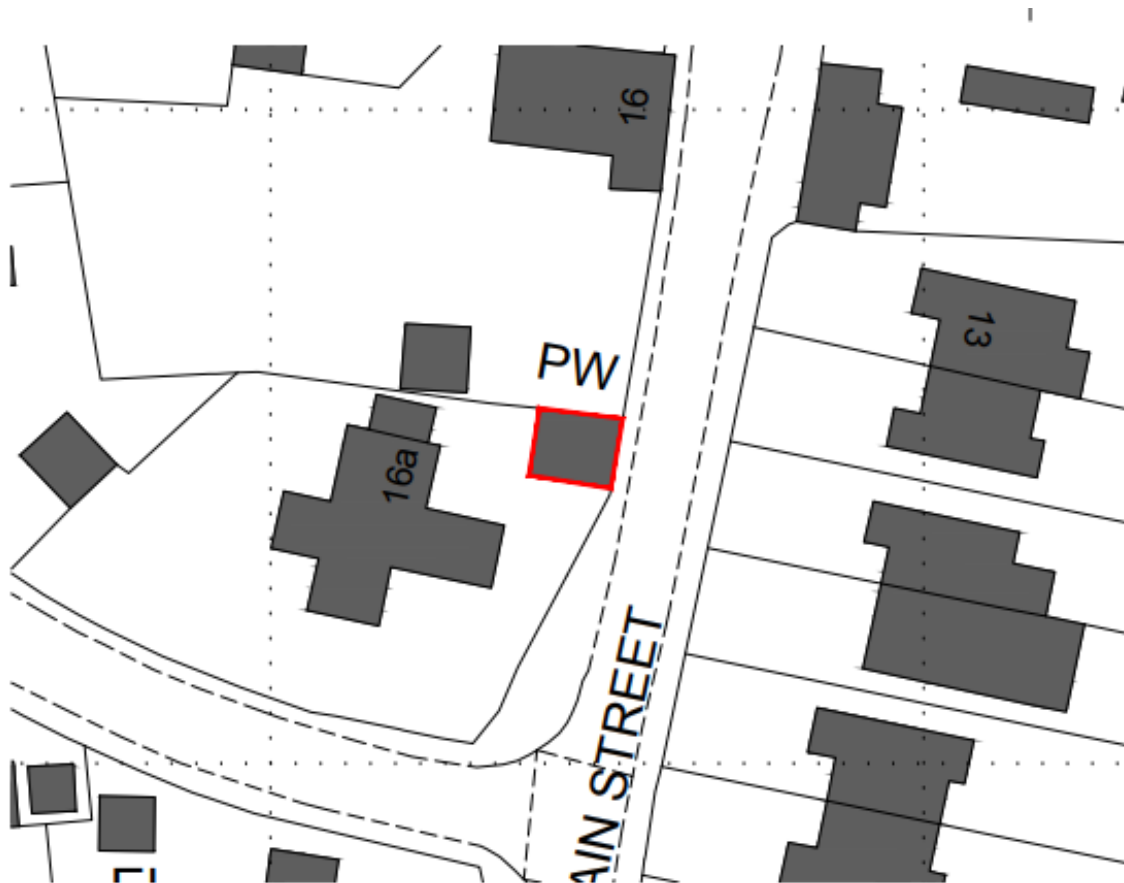
This application seeks listed building consent for internal and external alterations to facilitate the use of the building as a dwelling. Worthington Methodist Church is a Grade II listed building.

It should be noted that works to the building including the removal of timber cladding internally have taken place prior to obtaining the necessary listed building consent. This is a matter which has been referred to the Council's Planning Enforcement Team.

Amendments to the scheme have been made throughout the course of the application which now show the provision of external vents and the installation of a bin enclosure adjacent to the principal elevation of the existing Church.

The application site is located within the defined Limits to Development as per the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan (2021).

### Site Location Plan



Aerial Imagery of Site Location



Amended Proposed Elevations

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FRONT ELEVATION

SIDE ELEVATION

SIDE ELEVATION

REAR ELEVATION

0m 1m 2m 3m 4m

SCALE BAR 1 : 50

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DESIGN: PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE SCHEME  
METHODIST CHAPEL, MAIN STREET,  
WORTHINGTON  
Client: MR BOAM

Revisions:	Drawn:	Checked:
Rev. Date	Drawn	Checked
A JAN 2024 LDA	LDA	LDA
Changes outlined with additional information to address planners' comments.		

**LIFE-DESIGN ARCHITECTURE**

THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH SUPPLEMENTARY / SITE SPECIFIC CONSTRUCTION NOTES AND MATERIALS SPECIFICATION.

Drawing: PROPOSED DETAILS SHIT 2  
Date: DEC 2022  
Scale: 1:50  
Area: Drawn / LDA  
Checked:  
Dwg No: LIFE-22-999-004A

[illegible]

### Relevant Planning History

An associated application for full planning permission (23/01595/FUL) for the change of use of Worthington Methodist Church to a single residential dwelling is pending consideration and is Item A2 on the agenda.

16 neighbours were initially notified on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

A press notice was published in the Leicester Mercury on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024.

The following summary of representations is provided. All responses from statutory consultees and third parties are available to view in full on the Council's website.

**Objections from:**

Worthington Parish Council

**Comments made by:**

NWLDC Conservation Officers.

**Third Party Representations**

Three letters of objection have been received with the comments raised summarised as follows:

Grounds of Objections	Description of Impact
<b>Heritage</b>	Comments state that Historians are awaiting confirmation of the intention of the cladding etc, however the heritage statement states that aside from the pews, all other historic elements should remain in-situ. The internal timber cladding has been stripped off and disposed of.
<b>Other matters non-material to the determination of this listed building consent application</b>	The impacts of bin storage upon the use of the footpath. Comments relating to where bins would be stored.
	Lack of a garden and no land available for an air source heat pump or vessels for oil or gas. Lack of detail relating to the proposed heating system.
	Lack of car and cycle parking and highway safety impacts.
	The building is not suitable for conversion to a dwelling.
	Overlooking impacts and reduced privacy for neighbours opposite.
	Whether the owners have any right of access.
	Disruption caused during construction works.
	Fire safety relating to the single point of entry and exit.

One of the three letters of objection also offers support for the proposed conversion in principle.

## **4. Relevant Planning Policy**

### **National Policies**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (2024)**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

The following sections of the NPPF are considered relevant to the determination of this application:

Chapter 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

### **Local Policies**

#### **Adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan (2021)**

The North West Leicestershire Local Plan forms part of the development plan and the following policy of the Local Plan is relevant to the determination of the application:

Policy He1 - Conservation and enhancement of North West Leicestershire's historic environment.

### **Other Guidance**

Historic England advice note, 'Making changes to heritage assets' (2016).

### **Relevant Legislation**

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## **5. Assessment**

Policy He1 of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan (2021) states that to ensure the conservation and enhancement of North West Leicestershire's historic environment, proposals for development, including those designed to improve the environmental performance of a heritage asset, should:

- a) Conserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets within the district, their setting, for instance significant views within and in and out of Conservation Areas;
- b) Retain buildings, settlement patterns, features and spaces, which form part of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting;
- c) Contribute to the local distinctiveness, built form and scale of heritage assets through the use of appropriate design, materials and workmanship;
- d) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits.

Paragraph 203(a) of the NPPF states that planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. It further states (at paragraph 212) that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 213 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration



or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

The proposed development must also be considered against Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) which sets out a general duty for decision makers and states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Historic England's advice note (Making Changes to Heritage Assets) says that the "loss of historic fabric following repairs" should be "proportionate to the nature of the works". It goes on to say that "original materials normally only need to be replaced when they have failed in their structural purpose" and "the loss of historic fabric following repairs ... [should] be proportionate to the nature of the works".

### *Assessment*

This application for listed building consent will consider all proposed external and internal works requiring listed building consent to facilitate the proposed conversion of the building to a dwelling. The assessment of this application is limited to assessing the proposal in the context of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Any objections relating to other more general planning matters (such as parking, highway safety, amenity impacts etc.) are not matters which can be considered as part of this report.

The interior of the building comprises three spaces. The principal double-height space is to the rear (west) of the building. To the front (east) there is an entrance space at ground floor and a balcony space at first floor.

The following section of this report will summarise the extent of the proposed changes to the building:

- (a) Extension of gallery to form a 'bed deck area' at first floor level and installation of C-section columns as support;

The scheme proposes to install a 'studio type living arrangement', with service functions on the ground floor and a bedroom occupying the mezzanine. The Conservation Officer also considers the extension of the mezzanine is acceptable.

The Council's Conservation Officer has, however, advised that the proposed four C section columns would harm the internal appearance of the listed building and would not "follow the character" of the existing O-section columns. The Council's Conservation Officer has stated that the 'front' of the deck should be supported by the existing columns if they are suitable to receive the new imposed loadings and that the 'back' of the deck should be supported by a steel beam. It has been advised that if this is not feasible, then the 'back' of the deck should be supported by two O-section columns. Accordingly, notwithstanding the details submitted, full details of an alternative structural support method for the first floor bed deck area, is recommended to be secured by way of a condition in order to mitigate the identified heritage harm.

(b) Insertion of partition walls to form a ground floor bathroom;

No objection to the provision of the partition walls has been raised by the Council's Conservation Officer, however, the Council's Conservation Officer has advised that the layout of the wall which wraps around the bath should be amended to be a straight wall which would require the applicant to specify a bath of a smaller width. An amended plan is therefore recommended to be secured by condition to ensure this amendment is made. It is also recommended that details of the finish that would be applied to the external faces of the partition walls and how this would reflect the finishes in the principal internal space are secured by condition.

(c) Installation of a wall lining system;

There is correspondence on the application file to suggest that the applicant originally proposed to finish the wall lining system with a 40mm base coat of hemp insulated lime plaster and a finishing coat of lime plaster. The installation of the wall lining system would enable the occupation of the building for residential purposes by ensuring that rising damp is controlled. However, whilst the Council's Conservation Officer has confirmed that a wall lining system to the lower proportion of the internal walls (i.e. where external ground levels are higher than the internal) would be acceptable in-principle, no details have been provided of this system. On this basis, the Council's Conservation Officer has advised that this detail should be secured by way of planning condition.

(d) Installation of external vents to serve the proposed bathroom and kitchen;

It has been confirmed by the Council's Conservation Officer that the installation of the two proposed external vents are acceptable. The details submitted show that the vent discharging out of the wall would be a cast iron conservation vent (cast iron air brick company). The vent discharging out of the roof has been specified as a 'Uni-plain tile vent by "KLOBER." Both specifications are considered to be acceptable.

(e) Installation of a proposed balustrade and extension to mezzanine detail;

No objection to this element of the proposal has been raised by the Council's Conservation Officer. Full details of the proposed balustrade and the mezzanine extension detail, including the detail of how the extended mezzanine would be built-up, design details of the gallery front, and the section detail showing how the floor would be viewed externally through the existing side facing windows are recommended to be secured by condition.

(f) Works to existing stairs;

The submitted plans show that the existing stairs would be retained, but that they would receive an 'overhaul' and making good of any defective elements to ensure that they are suitable for the proposed reuse.

No objection to this element of the proposal has been raised by the Council's Conservation Officer, however, detail of the precise works proposed to the stairs has been submitted and therefore these details are recommended to be secured by condition.

(g) Insulated structural floor;

No objection to this element of the proposal has been raised by the Council's Conservation Officer on the basis that the floor would be replacing a modern concrete floor which is non-

original. The Conservation Officer has confirmed that no planning condition is required to be imposed to secure any details of the proposed insulated structural floor.

(h) Installation of a cavity drainage system;

No objection to this element of the proposal has been raised by the Council's Conservation Officer. Full details of the proposed cavity drainage system are recommended to be secured by condition.

(i) Repair and maintenance to windows;

No objection to this element of the proposal has been raised by the Council's Conservation Officer. Full details of the required repairs and maintenance are recommended to be secured by condition.

(j) Installation of external bin enclosure.

It is considered that the level of harming arising to the Listed Building, as a result of the proposed bin enclosure, would be less than substantial and likely to fall at the lower end of the scale. In such scenarios, Paragraph 213 of the NPPF, requires that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. In this case the alternative would be for bins associated with the proposed dwelling to be permanently sited to the front of the building outside of any form of bin store. This arrangement would in itself be unsightly to the front of the building and within the street scene, and, in the opinion of Officers, is more likely to result in bins being left in an untidy manner along the public footway in front of the building. As such, whilst both visual and heritage harm would arise as a result of the proposed design and siting of the bin enclosure, this harm is considered to be justified in this case and would be outweighed by the public benefits of the building being converted to a dwellinghouse which would secure the ongoing use of an existing empty Listed Building. Furthermore, it is likely that the majority of other alternative uses for the building (such as commercial or other community uses) would also require external bin storage provision.

Full details in terms of the precise materials and construction, which should ensure that the enclosure is not fixed or mounted to the principal elevation of the Listed Building, are recommended to be secured by condition.

(k) Removal of internal timber cladding;

Prior to the commencement of works to the Listed Building, a dado rail was mounted to the internal walls with wide 'bead and butt' cladding installed above the dado rail. Modern 'beauty board' cladding was also installed below the dado rail. This timber cladding has been removed from the walls of the building prior to obtaining listed building consent.

The Council's Conservation Officer has confirmed that harm has arisen as a result of the removal of cladding from above the dado rail. The Council's Conservation Officer has confirmed that it is likely that the blue limewashed plaster was 'intended to be seen' at an early phase in the evolution of the heritage asset, however, the Council's Conservation Officer confirms that the cladding above the dado rail constituted historic fabric.

The Council's Conservation Officer has also confirmed that harm has arisen as a result of the removal of modern cladding from below the dado rail, but that this cladding did not constitute

historic fabric and that it is unlikely that the plain plaster was 'intended to be seen' at any phase in the evolution of the heritage asset.

The Council's Conservation Officer has advised three remedy options in this case, the most preferable being to restore the traditional cladding below the dado rail and repair the blue limewashed plaster. It is considered that the repair of the plaster and the restoration of the traditional cladding below the dado rail would outweigh the harm identified relating to the removal of the cladding as set out above, particularly given that the traditional cladding would also be replaced.

Whilst the Local Planning Authority requested that plans of the internal walls be submitted showing traditional cladding below the dado rail and noting that all of the blue plaster will be repaired, these plans have not been provided by the applicant. On this basis, owing to the fact that the proposal would be unacceptable should the restoration and repair works set out above not be secured, such restoration and repair works, including full details relating to materials and methods, are recommended to be secured by condition.

(l) Other works recommended by the Conservation Officer

The Council's Conservation Officer has advised that the removal of cladding has revealed evidence relating to the evolution of the heritage asset, specifically relating to a former pulpit and two dado rail positions. It has been advised that the lower dado rail position should be restored as this appears to be the earlier position and the position that existed prior to the removal of the cladding taking place. The Council's Conservation Officer has also confirmed that evidence of the evolution of the heritage asset should be recorded to an archaeological standard and to an agreed Written Scheme of Investigation which is recommended to be secured by condition.

The Council's Conservation Officer has also advised that the dado rail, the coat hooks, and the timber cornice above the front (east) wall should be restored as these were small-scale features that contributed strongly to significance. Such works are recommended to be secured by condition.

## **Conclusion**

The works taken place relating to the removal of timber cladding internally has resulted in heritage harm to the listed building which has not been supported by clear and convincing justification as required by Paragraph 213 of the NPPF. Furthermore, the removal of the cladding fails to retain features which form part of the significance of the heritage asset as required by Policy He1(b) of the Local Plan (2021). It is, however, considered that in this case the repair of the plaster and the restoration of the traditional cladding below the dado rail would outweigh the harm identified relating to the removal of the cladding as set out in the above report. Such works are recommended to be secured by condition.

With regard to the proposed bin enclosure, this element of the proposal would also result in less than substantial heritage harm, however this harm is considered to be sufficiently justified in this case and would be outweighed by the public benefits of the building being converted to a dwellinghouse which would secure the ongoing use of an existing empty listed building. As such, this element of the proposal is considered to accord with Policy He1(2) of the Local Plan (2021) and the requirements of Paragraph 215 of the NPPF.

All other elements of the proposal to facilitate the proposed conversion of the building are considered to be acceptable, subject to securing further details by way of appropriate worded conditions. As such, on the basis of the above and subject to the imposition of planning conditions, this application for listed building consent is recommended to be approved.

**RECOMMENDATION – PERMIT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT, subject to conditions.**