

Planning Statement

Application for Technical Details Consent

Site: Former Methodist Church, Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint, BN6 9SA

This submission relates to site reference DM/25/0958, which granted planning permission in principle for the development of up to six residential dwellings (maximum floorspace of 1,000 sqm) at Former Methodist Church Hall, 42 Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 9SA. Planning permission in principle was issued on 11 July 2025.

Permission in Principle establishes the acceptability of development on the site in respect of location, land use and the amount of development only. These matters have therefore already been considered and accepted through the grant of permission in principle for up to six dwellings on the site.

The next stage in the planning process is the submission of an application for Technical Details Consent. This application provides the detailed information necessary to enable the development to proceed and includes full existing and proposed architectural drawings together with a Design and Access Statement and supporting technical information where required.

The Site and Proposal

The application site comprises the Former Methodist Church Hall located at 42 Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint. The site lies within the defined built-up area boundary of Hurstpierpoint and is also located within the Hurstpierpoint Conservation Area.

The site extends to approximately 0.1 hectares and currently contains a church building together with a number of single-storey ancillary structures and an associated parking area. Vehicular access to the site is taken from Cuckfield Road to the west.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, with dwellings located to the north, south, east and west of the site. Boundary treatments around the site comprise a mixture of brick walls, fencing and hedgerows. The existing building is of a relatively contemporary church design, constructed in brown brick with clay roof tiles and uPVC windows and doors.

The building was previously used as a church and community facility but has not been in active use since 2023.

Permission in Principle (ref. DM/25/0958) was granted on 11 July 2025 for the development of up to six residential dwellings across a maximum floorspace of 1,000 sqm at the Former Methodist Church Hall, 42 Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint. This established the acceptability of residential development on the site in respect of the location of development, land use and the amount of development.

These matters have therefore already been accepted in principle. The current application seeks Technical Details Consent in order to address the detailed design and technical matters associated with the development.

The proposal involves the conversion of the existing Methodist church building into six residential flats. The development primarily utilises the existing built form of the church building, with internal alterations and modest external works required to facilitate the residential use.

The proposed development would provide a mix of one, two and four bedroom flats arranged across the existing building. Most of the units are arranged as two-storey apartments, with one single-storey unit and one unit arranged over three levels in order to make efficient use of the existing building form.

The proposal introduces an additional upper level within the existing roof volume to create further accommodation while retaining the existing building footprint. The works increase the gross internal floor area from approximately 381 sqm to approximately 549 sqm, while maintaining the overall scale and external character of the building.

Externally, the proposal involves limited alterations designed to respect the character of the existing church building, including new rooflights, replacement windows and minor alterations to entrances. No changes to the existing site boundaries or landscaping are proposed.

Existing access from Cuckfield Road would be retained. Four existing parking spaces at the front of the site would remain, and secure cycle storage and refuse facilities are proposed within the site.

Overall, the proposal seeks Technical Details Consent for the conversion of the existing church building to provide six residential dwellings, consistent with the amount of development previously established through the grant of Permission in Principle.

Residential Amenity

The proposal is for residential use within the settlement. The surrounding area is residential in character and there would be no conflict with established residential uses.

The proposal would not introduce any unacceptable amenity impacts.

Standard of Accommodation

The existing gross internal area is 381.3 m².

The proposed gross internal area will be 549.3 m². The net increase in gross internal area is 168 m².

The proposed development provides six flats:

Flat 1 is a 2B3P unit of 68.7 m², meeting the requirement of 61 m².

Flat 2 is a 4B7P unit of 123.7 m², meeting the requirement of 115 m².

Flat 3 is a 2B4P unit of 89.7 m², meeting the requirement of 79 m².

Flat 4 is a 2B4P unit of 89.4 m², meeting the requirement of 79 m².

Flat 5 is a 1B2P unit of 61.9 m², meeting the requirement of 58 m².

Flat 6 is a 1B2P unit of 61.7 m², meeting the requirement of 58 m².

All units exceed the standards set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards.

All units contain an area of private garden ground.

The proposal has been designed to a high standard, with all units compliant with the Nationally Described Space Standards. The development would provide high-quality internal living environments suitable for long-term residential use.

Sustainable transport

There would be four parking spaces on site. The site is centrally located and there are bus stops directly adjacent to the site.

The site is approximately 2.2 km from Hassocks railway station.

Heritage

Previously, during the Permission in Principle stage, the Council's Conservation Officer identified less than substantial harm due to the potential impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Due to the nature of the Permission in Principle

application, heritage matters were not fully assessed at that stage and were reserved for consideration at the Technical Details stage.

The principle of the change of use has therefore already been accepted. The remaining consideration relates to the visual impact of the proposed works and the resulting impact on the Conservation Area.

It is considered that the physical works proposed represent an improvement to the Conservation Area and would not cause harm. Should any harm be identified, it must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal in accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF.

There is a clear public benefit in the provision of six residential units. The proposal would also result in additional economic activity during the construction phase and ongoing spending within the local economy by future residents.

BNG

The proposal is considered to fall within the de minimis exemption under the Biodiversity Gain Regulations

Conclusion

The principle of residential development on the site has already been accepted through the grant of Permission in Principle under reference DM/25/0958. The current submission therefore seeks Technical Details Consent for the detailed design and technical matters associated with the delivery of six residential dwellings.

The proposal represents a sensitive conversion of the existing church building which retains the established built form and makes efficient use of previously developed land within the built-up area of Hurstpierpoint. The scheme provides high quality residential accommodation that exceeds the Nationally Described Space Standards and includes appropriate parking, cycle storage and refuse provision.

The physical works proposed are modest and respectful of the existing building and its surroundings. The proposal would preserve the character of the area and would not result in unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity.

Overall, the proposal represents an appropriate and well-considered form of development which accords with the amount of development previously established through the grant of Permission in Principle. The application therefore provides the necessary detail to enable the development to proceed and it is respectfully requested that Technical Details Consent be granted.

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