Why and why not

In short replies to affirmative statements, we use why?

In short replies to negative statements, we use why not?

Compare:

‘Jane has decided to quit her job.’ ‘Why?’ (NOT Why not?)
‘Jane didn’t like the proposal.’ ‘Why not?’ (More natural than ‘Why?’)
The structure ‘why should’ can be used to express surprise.

I wonder why anyone should want to do something like that.
This structure can also be used to suggest anger or refusal.

‘Lend me a pound.’ ‘Why should I?’
Why can be followed by an infinitive without to. This structure is used to suggest that an action is unnecessary.

‘Why wait for him? He will not come.’ (NOT Why waiting for him?) (NOT Why to wait for him?)
‘Why not + infinitive without to’ can be used to make suggestions.

‘Why not arrange a party in his honor?’ (This is a polite way of saying: I think we should arrange a party in his honor.)
‘Why not buy now and pay later?’
‘Why not make it up with him?’
‘Why not consult a specialist?’
‘Why don’t…’ can be used in the same way.

‘Why don’t we arrange a party in his honor?’ (NOT Why don’t arrange a party in his honor?)
‘Why don’t you make it up with him?’ (NOT Why don’t make it up with him?)