

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/20/0297

Site Address: High Street Chapel
High Street
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 8DN

Development: Refurbishment of chapel hall, including reconstruction of toilet block with re-instatement of pitched roof and part new pitched roof, demolition and reconstruction of west gable end wall and repainting of mural and re-render walls

Case Officer: Caroline Pulley

Site Visit: 10th December 2020

Application Expiry Date: 3rd November 2021

Consultation reply date expired: 5th August 2022

APPLICATION SITE

The application relates to High Street Baptist Chapel Hall, located off High Street in Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre. The Chapel is a Grade II Listed Building located within the Town Centre Conservation Area. Its stepped portico main entrance is accessed from High Street. The hall is positioned to the rear and is attached to the main chapel walls by a single storey pitched annexe. Its primary elevation fronts north onto a paved footpath and is finished with a rough cast render. The rear facing southern elevation abuts on to a small public car park and is finished with a cream smooth render. The western gable end containing a painted mural, faces onto a new bus station.

The application site lies within the settlement boundary, and retail centre boundary, as designated within the Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan (LDP) 2006-2021.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks listed building consent to carry out internal and external works to the chapel hall as part of a repair and refurbishment scheme which includes a toilet extension, internal wall insulation, replacement windows and doors, new roof coverings, repair works, demolition of the west gable wall and refurbishment of the external walls of the hall to minimise water penetration.

The toilet extension would be sited along the southern rear elevation of the building and would replace an existing single storey extension. It would measure 9.4m wide and would project 1.7m beyond the existing rear wall of the hall. Its roof would cut back into the roof slope of the annexe at a maximum height of 5.9m and would be covered in Welsh slate. Its pitched roof would feature a Velux sun tunnel and two Velux conservation rooflights in both its eastern and western side facing roof slope. The external walls of the extension would be finished in the same materials as the hall (i.e. cream rough cast lime render).

The proposal also includes the demolition of the gable wall at the western end of the hall building and construction of a new rendered wall. The new wall would form a flat faced gable end. A replacement Merthyr Townscape Mural would be painted over the wall to resemble the appearance of the existing Mural. The residual area surrounding the new gable wall would be made good with the installation of new paving to match the pattern of the recently installed paving at the new bus station development.

The following internal and external works are also the subject of this listed building application:

Internal works:

- Insulate internal walls with 65mm Kingspan K118 composite plasterboard and insulation.
- Remove the suspended ceiling and insulate roof space with 100mm Rockwool quilt laid to void of ceiling joist and 150mm Rockwool quilt laid above and opposite. A new plasterboard ceiling would be provided in the Chapel annexe as indicated (Drawing 09). Create a store room at ground floor and an office and store at first floor.
- Remove the ground floor store rooms located next the west end wall of the hall.
- Block up existing doorway between the main hall and the annexe to allow the toilet area to be extended.
- Demolish internal partition walls to improve layout and efficiency of space.
- Reduce the length of the kitchen in the Chapel annexe.
- Demolish south wall to school room/annexe to create floor space for the new toilets.

External works

Northern front elevation

- Repair canopy over the main entrance door. Clean, re-putty and re-decorate bulls eye window. A schedule of works for the repairs to entrance porch cornice has been provided.
- Replace hardwood entrance door to main hall building with a new hardwood door to match existing.
- Remove existing asbestos slate roof and re-cover roof slope with purple/blue Welsh slate. Provide black Terra-cotta weaving ridge tiles.
- Install black Terra-cotta weaving shed ridge tiles to roof.
- Install two Velux sun tube rooflights within roof slope of the Chapel annexe.
- Repair softwood fascia, barge and soffit with dentil detail where possible, or fit new fascia and dentil soffit as like for like with new ventilation soffit.

- Replace existing windows in main hall building with new hardwood double glazed windows (four 9 pane windows and one 6 pane window) with retention of lead panes.
- Fit 4 new cast iron down pipes to main hall building. The details provided indicate two cast iron pipes being refurbished and two new down pipes being installed to match existing.
- Relocate Chapel annexe downpipe. Increase number of downpipes to hall elevation from 2 to 4. Proposal seeks to re-use two existing downpipes and install two new cast iron downpipes and hoppers.
- Pitched roof annexe – Replace existing door with new hardwood door and existing sash window and existing casement window with two new hardwood sash windows (W1 and W2).
- Renovate lead capped ventilation box to original detail.
- Re-render walls in rough cast lime-based Sika Parex render with a harling topcoat and provide a brown fine down render finish to plinth.
- Install a new stainless steel heating pipe to northern elevation of the Chapel annexe.

Southern Rear Elevation

- Recover roofs in Welsh purple/blue slate and install three Velux sun tube rooflights to roof slope of annexe.
- Install black Terra-cotta weaving shed ridge tiles to roof.
- Repair softwood fascia, barge and soffit with dentil detail where possible, or fit new fascia and dentil soffit as like for like with new ventilation soffit.
- Replace existing windows in main hall building with new hardwood double glazed windows (five 9 pane windows and one 4 pane window).
- Fit four new cast iron down pipes to main hall building.
- Re-render walls in rough cast lime-based Sika Parex render and provide a brown fine down render finish to plinth. Install Terra-cotta weaving shed ridge tiles to roof.
- Re-render walls in rough cast lime-based Sika Parex render with a harling topcoat and provide a brown fine down render finish to plinth.

West Elevation

- Demolish west gable wall as mentioned earlier. Construct new wall with 100mm blockwork skin, rendered in fined down lime mortar.
- Renew softwood fascia and soffit to match existing.

East Elevation

- Re-render wall in Sika Render.
- Renew softwood fascia and soffit to match existing.

The application is accompanied by a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA).

An application for planning permission is currently being considered by the Council under application reference P/20/0296.

PLANNING HISTORY

The most recent planning history relating to the site is as follows:

- P/15/0391 - Installation of new boundary walls, railings, gates and wheelchair accessible ramp and reinstatement of pediment stone cross
Planning Permission Approved – 17.02.2016
- P/15/0390 - Repairs to church roof, walls and rainwater goods. Installation of new boundary walls, railings, gates and wheelchair accessible ramp and reinstatement of pediment stone cross
Listed Building Consent Approved – 17.03.2016

CONSULTATION

Glamorgan Gwent Architectural Trust:	No objection.
Civic Trust for Wales:	No response.
The Victorian Society:	No response.
The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings:	No response.
Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments:	No response.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, a press notice was published within the local paper and site notices and were displayed within the vicinity of the site. Letters were also sent to neighbouring properties.

No letters of representation were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Policy

The Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 sets out a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

Section 16. – (1) Subject to the previous provision of this Part, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State may grant or refuse an application for listed building consent and, they grant consent, may grant it subject to conditions.

(2) In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State 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.

(3) Any listed building consent shall (except in so far as it otherwise provides) ensure for the benefit of the building and of all persons for the time being interested in it.

Section 66. - (1) In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State 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.

(2) Without prejudice to section 72, in the exercise of the powers of appropriation, disposal and development (including redevelopment) conferred by the provisions of sections 232, 233 and 235(1) of the principal Act, a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings.

Welsh Office Circular 61/96: Planning the Historic Environment: Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Part 1 Paragraph 11 requires local planning authorities considering applications for works which affect listed buildings to have special regard to its character and setting.

National Planning Policy - Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, February 2021)

Section 6.1 recognises the importance of protecting the historic environment and paragraph 6.1.10 states that *'For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'*

Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment (May 2017)

Paragraph 1.25 states *'The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape.'* Paragraph 1.28 explains that there will be cases where a proposal will enhance the setting of a historic asset and this will be treated as a benefit resulting from the development'.

Local Policy - Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2016-2031:

Policy SW11 – Sustainable design and Placemaking
Policy CW1 - Historic Environment

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The application relates to a hall and annexe attached to the western rear elevation of a Grade II Listed Chapel located within Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre. The information

provided the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) highlights that the Chapel was originally built with a rear single storey annexe housing a school room. It explains that the room has been significantly altered over time with partition walls constructed into corridors, a minister's office and part of the toilets. It highlights that the hall to the west of the annexe was constructed as a later addition in 1928.

The HIA highlights that repairs to the chapel hall are urgently required to prevent further decay of the building fabric. The proposed changes therefore include a series of repair, renewal, restoration and reconstruction work aimed at ensuring the long term, sustainable and viable use of the building. As part of this, the proposal seeks to make a number of internal and external alterations to the hall and annexe building to reinstate historic features and ensure that both the chapel and the hall continue to meet modern customer expectations, by providing an enhanced internal environment, improved accessibility for customers, and enhanced operational function.

To achieve this, the development proposes to carry out internal alterations to the building to provide improved toilet facilities for the patrons of the Chapel and the hall and a first floor office and store. It also seeks to improve the thermal efficiency of the building by installing new double glazed hardwood windows to the northern and southern elevations, wool insulation in the roof and Kingspan insulation along the internal walls of the hall building. Other prominent alterations include the re-roofing of the building in Welsh Slate, the re-rendering of the external facades of both the annexe and hall in lime render, the demolition and re-building of the hall's west gable wall as well as the demolition and re-construction of a modern toilet extension along the southern rear elevation of the annexe.

The primary consideration for any works affecting a listed building relates to the effect of the works on the character and appearance of the listed building.

The internal changes would not have a significant impact on the character and appearance of the listed building. As highlighted in the Heritage Impact Assessment, the layout of the original school annexe has already been lost through the construction of partition walls and the construction of the modern rear toilet extension. As such, the removal of the internal walls in the annexe to provide a slightly smaller kitchen area and a larger toilet area would not result in any significant loss of historic value. The removal of the suspended ceiling in the hall building is also welcomed and it is not considered that the construction of an office and store at first floor would cause harm to the historic fabric of the building. While it is acknowledged that it is not ideal to cover the internal walls of a listed building with internal insulation, the reasoning behind this aspect of the proposal is fully understood and it is not considered that any significant features would be lost because of the works.

Externally, the proposal to form a new toilet extension alongside the rear of Chapel annexe building is not considered to significantly affect the historic asset. The existing extension is of a modern construction and is finished poorly with a mixture of block and brickwork, which detracts from the overall character and appearance of the listed building. It should also be noted that the design of the proposed extension has been improved through the course of this application. Several discussions have taken place with the agent and the developer and this has led to an amended pitched roof design, which is more appropriate to the character of the listed building.

It is important to note that as a result of this scheme, the external facades of both the hall and annexe would have a new lime render finish which would help to unify the appearance

of the building. Currently, there are variations between the type of render between the northern and southern front and rear elevations of the hall and the annexe. As such, the application of a new rendered finish would help to provide continuity across the elevations, which would improve the overall appearance and condition of the building, which is welcomed. It is also noted that the scheme proposes to unify and restore the roof of the building by recovering all of the roof slopes in blue/black Welsh Slate. This would remove the concrete tile roof covering the school annexe and the asbestos slates currently present along the northern roof slope of the hall building, which is welcomed. The replacement double glazed windows are considered acceptable. However, a condition to control the methods of fixing and finishing are appropriate to preserve the special interest and architectural merit of the building.

The west gable wall of the hall building containing a mixed array of gable ends from demolished industrial terraced housing needs to be demolished due to its poor structural condition. The HIA highlights that the hard cement rendered wall is badly cracked and is spalling from the structurally unsound wall, which is believed to be part concrete blockwork infilled on stone masonry laid in aged black lime mortar. The new wall would be constructed with a rendered flat faced gable end. A replacement Mural would be painted to match as close as possible, the existing townscape painting of the town. Although it is noted that this aspect of the scheme would materially alter the current appearance of the hall building, it is considered that the rebuilding of the wall would not significantly harm the character of the historic asset.

Other works include the repair of the entrance porch cornice, the cleaning, replacement and addition of new and replacement cast iron guttering and downpipes. These works being like for like replacements and repairs are deemed acceptable.

Overall and in light of the revisions that have been made to the scheme and having considered the proposed alterations in detail, it is considered subject to a number of conditions relating to specific finer details, that the proposal would preserve the character of the hall and conserve its quality long-term, as part of the listed building.

The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Accordingly the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: BE APPROVED subject to the following CONDITIONS

CONDITIONS:

1. The development hereby granted consent shall be begun not later than the expiration of five years beginning with the date of this consent.

Reason - To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Drawing number 07A East Elevation & West Elevation Proposed received on 26.09.2022
- Drawing number 06G North Elevation, South Elevation Proposed received on 26.09.2022
- Drawing number 13B Roof Plan Pitched Roof Toilets Proposed received on 26.09.2022
- Drawing number 14B Hall Windows Proposed received on 26.09.2022
- Drawing number 05H Pitched Roof to Toilets: Ground Floor Plan Proposed: First Floor Plan Proposed received on 26.09.2022
- HIA Summary received on 26.09.2022
- Heritage Impact Statement - Original Submission received on 10.06.2022
- Heritage Impact Assessment - Supplement received on 10.06.2022
- Building Condition Report received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number 04A Proposed Section AA & West Elevation received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number 08 Site Paving Plan Existing and Proposed received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number 09 Section BB Pitched Roof received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number 16 Hall Windows Sills/Insulation received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number 18 Wall to Roof Detail Proposed Elevation of Wall Pilaster received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number 19 Wall Finishes Proposed Elevation of Wall to Pilaster received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number 20 Wall & Window to Floor Detail Existing and Proposed received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing 'The Conservation Rooflight' Rev B received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number GGL-EDN-0114-1104 Velux received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number TLR-VGB-0213-2001 Sun Tunnel received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number 11 Proposed Replacement Mural received on 10.06.2022
- Drawing number 12 Proposed Replacement Mural received on 10.06.2022
- Parex Render Details received on 10.06.2022
- Bat Survey Report received on 10.06.2022
- Entrance Door and Canopy Over Detail received 10.06.2022
- Entrance Door Cornice Details received on 10.06.2022

Reason -To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. **Before work commences** samples and details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:
- (a) Welsh slate.
 - (b) Render (including colour)
 - (c) Replacement doors proposed to northern elevation
 - (d) Rainwater goods
 - (e) Fascias and dentil soffits

All works shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of the building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

4. Prior to installation, vertical and horizontal sections (scale 1:1 or 1:5) of new windows listed as openings W1 and W2 on drawing number 15 shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The new windows shall be installed in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason - To ensure that the appearance of new windows are acceptable on the character of the listed building in accordance with Policy CW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan.

5. The timber windows and doors hereby permitted shall be fitted with timber beading and the window and door seals shall match the colour of the window and door frames.

Reason - To protect the fabric of the listed building in accordance with Policies CW1 and SW11 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan.

6. **Prior to works commencing on site**, a programme of historic building recording and analysis shall be implemented in accordance with a written scheme of investigation that is first submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason - To secure and safeguard the provision for inspection and recording of matters of architectural/archaeological/historical importance associated with the building/site that may be lost in the course of works.

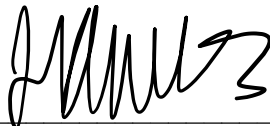
7. **Before work commences** on the installation of the internal wall insulation, a Method Statement detailing how the insulation is to be fixed to the existing internal walls shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The method statement shall include a 1:2 detail showing the thickness of the insulation and whether there is a breathable membrane between the existing wall and the insulation. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - To ensure that special regard is paid to protecting the special architectural and historic interest and integrity of the building under Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

8. The roof lights on the extension shall not protrude above the level of the slates.

Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the roof lights are acceptable on the character of the listed building in accordance with Policy CW1 of the Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Local Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE:

14/11/22