

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/20/0023

Site Address: Capel Salem Kingdom Hall
20 New Castle Street
Merthyr Tydfil
CF47 0BH

Development: Variation of condition 2 of Listed Building Consent P/19/0140 to remove cupola on roof and replace with roof light on rear roof slope. Change of front door design and alterations to the front and side elevation window design

Case Officer: David Cross

Site Visit: 29th January 2020

Application Expiry Date: 7th May 2020

Consultation reply date expired: 17th February 2020

APPLICATION SITE

This application relates to the former Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses and No. 20 New Castle Street, both of which are Grade II Listed Buildings, located within the Thomastown Conservation Area and adjacent to the Town Centre Conservation Area. The Kingdom Hall was previous known as Capel Salem and was constructed in 1855 by The Wesleyan Reformers. It is thought that No. 20 New Castle Street would have been constructed around the same time as the chapel, along with the other properties in the street, which were occupied as dwellings. The Kingdom Hall has been listed as it retains its overall character and for its group value with other listed houses (including No. 20) along New Castle Street.

The chapel building was used as a place of worship until it was sold to The Jehovah's Witnesses in 1999, when it was then used as their meeting hall. Possibly around the same time, No. 20 was linked to the chapel, with an internal doorway provided at ground floor level and a new doorway provided to the gallery at first floor level. The Jehovah's Witnesses subsequently vacated the buildings to larger premises and alternative uses have since taken place, including a computer centre and a dance studio. However, both the chapel and No. 20 have now been vacant for a number of years, which has led to the deterioration of the building fabric.

Setting of the listed building

The Kingdom Hall and No. 20 New Castle Street are located on the edge of the town centre, on the corner of New Castle Street and Tramroad Side. Adjoining the site to the east and along the opposite side of the road are two storey terraced dwellings that directly

front on to New Castle Street, each incorporating round headed doorways and stucco pilasters. The majority of these dwellings are also Grade II listed buildings. To the south, the chapel adjoins Tramroad Terrace, which comprises a row of modest cottages stepped back from the highway with a raised walkway and stone boundary walls to the front. Opposite the site to the west, is the former Town Hall, which is a Grade II* listed building.

Exterior features

The former chapel has a pennant stone exterior dressed with ashlar surrounds on the corners of the building and around the window openings, which appears to be in a fairly good condition. Some areas of the elevations included render along the plinths and on the upper section of the western gable, which show visible signs of deterioration and cracks.

The northern aspect of the chapel forms the principal elevation of the building, which comprises three bays. The central gabled bay has 2 small round headed windows over a round headed doorway with keystone and moulded surrounds. Each of the outer bays includes a larger round headed window. The western aspect of the building which directly abuts Tramroad Side includes three round headed windows. Part of the southern elevation, which projects in front of Tramroad Terrace includes two small windows.

The main roof is of welsh slate, pitched from a single ridge running the entire length of the building. The roof appears to generally be in fair condition, with some localised broken and slipped slates. There is a brick built chimney on the boundary of the chapel and No. 20, which appears to be structurally sound, but requires minor repairs and the removal of buddleia. The original windows have been replaced with simple style fixed glazing, some of which include opening casements and modern patterned glass. The double doors at the main entrance to the chapel are solid wood with a diagonal boarded pattern, situated below a semi-circular fanlight.

The former dwelling (No. 20) has a rendered front elevation with visible signs of cracking and blistering paintwork along the plinths. The main entrance includes a modern 6 panel door set within a round headed doorway, with stucco pilasters and a moulded archivolt. A semi-circular fanlight is also situated above the door but has since been replaced with a solid panel. There is one ground floor window to one side of the entrance, with two windows at first floor, all of which appear to be modern replacements. The rear elevation of No. 20 has been heavily altered over time, with modern 20th Century two storey and single storey extensions with a lean-to roof, which are generally in poor condition.

Interior features

Whilst the internal layout of the chapel resembles its former use as a place of worship, with its open plan and upper gallery, the majority of the original features appear to have been lost. The existing floors have been replaced with laminate flooring, the plastered walls are lined with timber boarding and the two windows on the southern elevation have been bricked up internally. Throughout the main body of the hall, a modern suspended ceiling has been introduced with fluorescent lighting, the weight of which has caused some damage to the roof trusses. Behind this suspended ceiling is a decorative plasterboard ceiling, which appears to be a replica of the original. It is understood that the upper gallery is likely to be a replacement with the supporting metal column having been re-used but positioned in different locations.

It appears that the majority of the internal areas of the former dwelling (No. 20) have been altered with new partition walls introduced at both ground floor and first floor levels. Staircases have also been constructed at ground floor and first floor levels, together with new doorways created to provide internal links to the chapel hall and upper gallery. Modern toilets and kitchen facilities have been provided within the rear extension.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Listed building consent has been granted (P/19/0140) for the conversion of the former Kingdom Hall and No. 20 New Castle Street to accommodate six 1 bedroom flats. This involves the restoration of the external fabric of the buildings and alterations to their internal layout. The approved scheme also includes the demolition of part of the two storey extension to the rear of No. 20 and the construction of a first floor rear extension.

This application seeks permission to vary condition 2 of the listed building consent P/19/0140, which relates to the list of approved plans, to enable minor amendments to the scheme.

It is proposed to remove the cupola on the roof (was a new feature on the approved scheme) and instead install roof lights on the rear roof plane to meet appropriate building regulations relating to fire safety. The existing front door serving No. 20 would be removed and replaced with a new door of a design that better reflects the historic character of the area. Additionally, it is proposed to amend the details of the window panels on the Kingdom Hall that screen the profile of the new internal first floor level.

The roof light would measure 1m wide by 0.8m high and would be located in a central position of the rear roof plane approximately 0.3m below the ridge line. The roof light would be utilised as an A.O.V (Automatic Opening Vent) to extract smoke from the main lobby area in the event of a fire.

The proposed front door would be of a timber construction and would include two elongated arched panels at the centre, together with new iron hinges and letterbox. The existing fan light above the door would be retained as existing, with new laminated safety glass inserted as previously approved.

Amendments are proposed to the installation of the glass panels in the existing window openings which screen the profile of the first floor level. In order to prevent the spread of fire between floors, a dense blockwork is proposed to seal the gap between two lintels. A glass panel with an aluminium frame would then be attached externally to maintain the appearance of a continuous window with the glazed sections above and below.

With reference to the relevant sections highlighted below, condition 2 states: *The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:*

- *Drawing No. 9433/05 Rev P2 - Demolition and Infill Plans (Received 09.07.2019)*
- *Drawing No. 9433/06 Rev P1 - Existing and Proposed Front Elevations (Received 28.05.2019)*
- *Drawing No. 9433/07 Rev P3 - Existing and Proposed Rear Elevations (Received 09.07.2019)*
- *Drawing No. 9433/08 Rev P1 - Existing and Proposed Side Elevations (Received 28.05.2019)*

- Drawing No. 9433/09 Rev P1 - Existing and Proposed Section A-A (Received 28.05.2019)
- Drawing No. 9433/10 Rev P2 - Existing and Proposed Sections B-B (Received 04.07.2019)
- **Drawing No. 9433/11 Rev P3 - Existing and Proposed Sections C-C & D-D (Received 09.07.2019)**
- Drawing No. 9433/12 Rev P3 - Proposed Ground and First Floor Plan (Received 09.07.2019)
- **Drawing No. 9433/13 Rev P2 - Window Details (Received 04.07.2019)**
- **Drawing No. 9433/14 Rev P1 - Window Details (Received 28.05.2019)**

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

It is proposed to vary condition 2 to refer to the amended plans as follows: The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Drawing No. 9433/05 Rev P2 - Demolition and Infill Plans (Received 09.07.2019)
- **Drawing No. 9433/06 Rev P3 - Existing and Proposed Front Elevations (Received 12.03.2020)**
- **Drawing No. 9433/07 Rev P5 - Existing and Proposed Rear Elevations (Received 12.03.2020)**
- **Drawing No. 9433/08 Rev P3 - Existing and Proposed Side Elevations (Received 12.03.2020)**
- Drawing No. 9433/09 Rev P1 - Existing and Proposed Section A-A (Received 28.05.2019)
- Drawing No. 9433/10 Rev P2 - Existing and Proposed Sections B-B (Received 04.07.2019)
- **Drawing No. 9433/11 Rev P5 - Existing and Proposed Sections C-C & D-D (Received 12.03.2020)**
- Drawing No. 9433/12 Rev P3 - Proposed Ground and First Floor Plan (Received 09.07.2019)
- **Drawing No. 9433/13 Rev P5 - Window Details (Received 12.03.2020)**
- **Drawing No. 9433/14 Rev P2 - Window Details (Received 12.03.2020)**

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

PLANNING HISTORY

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| P/19/0140 | <p>- Conversion of building to 6 No. 1 bedroom flats, demolition of two storey rear extension, construction of first floor extension, installation of cupola on the roof, renovation of building exterior and internal alterations.</p> <p>Listed building CONSENT granted on 16.09.2019</p> |
| P/19/0139 | <p>- Conversion of building to 6 No. 1 bedroom flats, demolition of two</p> |

storey rear extension, construction of first floor extension, installation of cupola on the roof, renovation of building exterior and internal alterations.

Permission GRANTED on 21.08.2019

CONSULTATION

Planning Division's
Conservation Officer - No objection.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to neighbouring occupiers and a site notice was displayed within the vicinity of the site.

No representations were received as a result of this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

Paragraph 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, if 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”.

Paragraph 72 – *“(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation Area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”*

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.

Part 3 Paragraph 69 requires applicants to justify their proposals. They will need to show why works which would affect the character of a listed building are desirable or necessary. They must provide the local planning authority with full information, to enable them to assess the likely impact of their proposals on the special architectural or historic interest of the building and on its setting.

National planning policies

Planning Policy Wales (PPW), Edition 10, December 2018:

Para 6.1.10 - 6.1.13 discusses listed buildings and explains that '*...there should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of a listed building and its setting, which might extend beyond its curtilage. 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... the aim should be to find the best way to protect and enhance their special qualities, retaining them in sustainable use. The continuation or reinstatement of the original use should generally be the first option, but not all original uses will now be viable or appropriate. The application of planning and listed building controls should recognise the need for flexibility where new uses have to be considered in order to secure a building's survival or provide it with a sound economic future... the demolition of any listed building should be considered as exceptional and require the strongest justification....applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals, show why the alteration or demolition of a listed building is desirable or necessary and consider the impact of any change upon its significance*'.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment, 2017:

Section 1.14 of TAN 24 refers to conservation principles and '*... recognises that the whole of the historic environment is a finite and shared resource. Every place has its own history, which has shaped its character and leaves tangible traces in its present form and fabric. This historic character makes each place unique and gives it a distinctive identity. Historic character should be taken into account in the management of change in order to sustain local distinctiveness and a sense of place. The use of an objective, structured approach to identify the elements of historic character and creating an evidence base is vital...*'

Local planning policies

Merthyr Tydfil Local Replacement Development Plan (LDP) 2016 – 2031:

Policy CW1 (Historic Environment) states: *The integrity of our historic environment assets will be conserved and enhanced.*

Development proposals will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated they would preserve or enhance the architectural quality, character or the historic or cultural importance of our designated historic environment assets.

Development affecting undesignated historic environments assets including, Locally Listed Buildings or structures, Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales, Urban Character Areas and Archaeologically Sensitive Areas should have regard to their special character and archaeological importance.

Policy SW11 (Sustainable Design and Placemaking) indicates amongst other criteria, that development will be required to be appropriate to its local context and integrate effectively with the historic environment, to enhance the general street scene and create good quality townscape.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Need for the development

It was identified as part of the listed building application (P/19/0140) that since the Kingdom Hall has ceased to be used as a place of worship, it has proven difficult to establish a more permanent use. Consequently, the former chapel and No. 20 have remained vacant for a number of years and both their interior and exterior are noticeably deteriorating due to the lack of maintenance. The permitted conversion of the building for residential use will enable these historic buildings to be brought back into beneficial use, which will help secure its long term survival and future maintenance.

In order for the development to meet appropriate building regulations standards in respect of fire safety, it is necessary for elements of the original scheme to be amended. In particular, alterations are proposed to the manner in which the new first floor level abuts the chapel windows to prevent the spread of a fire between floors and the installation of an AOV roof light to ensure suitable ventilation in the main communal lobby area.

Impact on the listed buildings

It was established as part of the approved scheme that the aspects of the listed buildings that are deemed to be of greatest significance are the building shape/form, the stone facade of the chapel, the window openings and front doors and the front facade of No. 20. The group value of the two buildings within the wider street setting is also of high value. With the exception of the windows, which have been replaced over time, the exterior (northern/western elevations) of the listed buildings largely retain their original features that contribute to their special character. In contrast the rear (southern) elevation of No. 20 has been entirely lost as a result of the modern two storey and single storey extensions. As such, this aspect of the building is deemed to be of a neutral/negligible value and would be capable of accommodating alternations to the external fabric of the building.

The cupola on the roof was not an original feature to the building, but instead it was introduced as part of the initial scheme to meet modern fire regulation standards. The cupola itself was of a traditional design to reflect the character of the chapel. It has since been assessed that the cupola is too small and does not provide sufficient ventilation to meet the appropriate building regulations. As such, it is proposed that the cupola be omitted from the scheme and a roof light be installed on the rear roof plane instead.

To the rear of the Kingdom Hall and No. 20 New Castle Street is an existing two storey rear extension and a single storey extension that provide an unsympathetic addition to the listed building, which is in a particularly poor condition. Due to the substantial loss of original features, this aspect of the building is deemed to be of low significance. Additionally, a number of alterations were approved as part of the original scheme to the rear of the building, which involves the demolition of the two storey extension and the construction of a first floor extension.

The siting of the proposed roof light on the rear roof plane, although not particularly visible from its surroundings, would be seen in conjunction with other approved alterations to the listed building. The introduction of the roof light would not significantly affect the appreciation or understanding of the building form and would present a minor intervention to the slope of the roof. Given the low significance of the rear aspect of the building, the

roof light would not have a significant impact on the special qualities of the listed building. The roof light is also required to enable the conversion of the building and will assist in bringing it back into beneficial use and support its long term preservation.

It was intended as part of the original scheme, that the existing front door serving No. 20 Newcastle Street would be retained and restored. However it should be noted that the existing door is not an original feature of the historic building. The applicant has drawn reference to the other front doors within the street, the majority of which are of the same design incorporating two elongated arched panels at the centre with simple adornments. The proposal seeks to install a timber door of the same design, which would complement the character of the conservation area and would be more in keeping with the original features of the listed building (No. 20). As such, the amended front door design would be seen as an enhancement that improves the quality of the listed building.

The approved development for the conversion of the former chapel involves the installation of a new first floor level to provide 2 flats. Due to the length of the windows on the front and side elevations of the chapel hall, it will be possible to see the profile of the first floor level, where it crosses the midpoint of the windows. Additionally, the approved scheme involves the installation of new window frames and glazing, of which one of the glazed panels in each of the windows would be blackened glass to screen the edge of the first floor level.

In order to minimise the possibility of a fire incident spreading between the levels of the building, the details of how the edge of the first level butts up to the glazing has been amended. This involves a section of dense blockwork positioned between two lintels, with a blackened fire resistant glazed panel provided on the exterior set within the new window frame. Aluminium plates would also be used to conceal the lintels and avoid any visual breaks to the vertical emphasis of the windows. Whilst the details of how the first floor level interfaces with the windows has been altered, the external appearance of the windows within the chapel elevation would largely remain the same as that previously approved. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the existing windows on the chapel are far removed from the original design and appear to have been replaced/altered previously. As such, the original fabric was lost a considerable time ago. Proposed alterations to the exterior of the chapel and No. 20 are of an acceptable design and would not adversely impact on the character, appearance or significance of the listed buildings. The appreciation and interpretation of the listed buildings would be preserved and in part would be enhanced.

CONCLUSIONS

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.

The proposed amendments to the approved scheme (P/19/0140) would help ensure the conversion of the listed buildings complies with the appropriately fire regulations. The proposal would also provide some enhancements to the aspects of the buildings which

have previously been subjected to unsympathetic alterations. As such, the variation of condition 2 of the listed building consent P/19/0140, to amend the approved plans to reflect the proposed changes is acceptable.

For the above reasons, the proposal is considered to comply with the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 and will conserve the special interest and architectural/historical merit of the building. The proposal also complies with PPW and policies CW1 and SW11 of the LDP. Accordingly, the following recommendation is made:

RECOMMENDATION: **LISTED BUILDING CONSENT BE GRANTED** subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

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

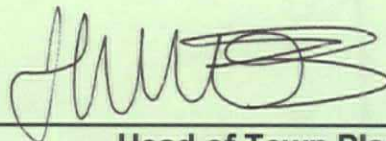
- Drawing No. 9433/05 Rev P2 - Demolition and Infill Plans (Received 09.07.2019)
- Drawing No. 9433/06 Rev P3 - Existing and Proposed Front Elevations (Received 12.03.2020)
- Drawing No. 9433/07 Rev P5 - Existing and Proposed Rear Elevations (Received 12.03.2020)
- Drawing No. 9433/08 Rev P3 - Existing and Proposed Side Elevations (Received 12.03.2020)
- Drawing No. 9433/09 Rev P1 - Existing and Proposed Section A-A (Received 28.05.2019)
- Drawing No. 9433/10 Rev P2 - Existing and Proposed Sections B-B (Received 04.07.2019)
- Drawing No. 9433/11 Rev P5 - Existing and Proposed Sections C-C & D-D (Received 12.03.2020)
- Drawing No. 9433/12 Rev P3 - Proposed Ground and First Floor Plan (Received 09.07.2019)
- Drawing No. 9433/13 Rev P5 - Window Details (Received 12.03.2020)
- Drawing No. 9433/14 Rev P2 - Window Details (Received 12.03.2020)

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

INFORMATIVES

1. This permission shall be read in conjunction with the approved details and conditions of Listed Building Consent P/19/0140.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

4/5/20