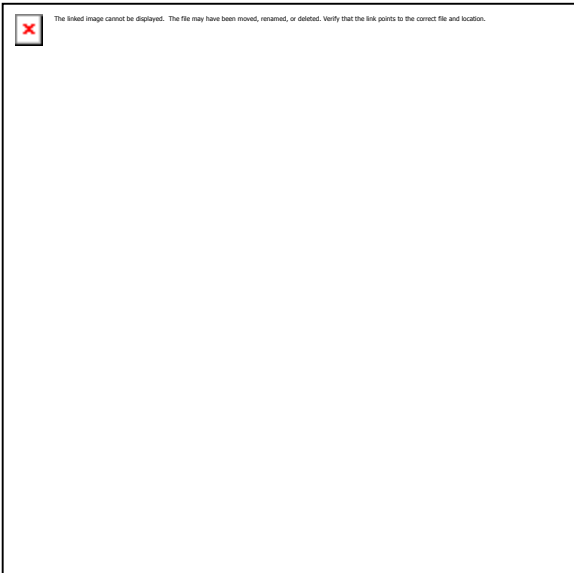




Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20220853

Location: The Light Of The World Holy Ghost Church Of God Dover Road Northfleet
Gravesend

Description: Retrospective permission for the replacement of wood framed single glazed windows with double-glazed uPVC casement windows including alterations to window openings.

Applicant: Pastor Bode Haastrup

Site Visit Date: 12 August 2022

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Covering letter
- Application form;
- Site Location Plan;
- Drawing no. PA/22/065/001 – Existing Elevations;
- Drawing no. PA/22/065/002 – Proposed Elevations;
- Church window specification;
- Detail Sheet – Outer frame and sash; and
- Detail Sheet – Sash and transom details.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development

- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 - Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- None.

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places
- 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Conservation Areas Maintenance/Replacement Windows and Doors Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (2020)
- The Hill, Northfleet Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2009);
- Management Plan Northfleet Conservation Areas (2009).

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

None consulted.

Neighbouring properties

20 surrounding properties were consulted plus site notice (Article 15) with the overall consultation expiry date being 2 September 2022 – one response received (objection) the comments of which can be summarised as follows:

- Such a shame a building of 1850 could not have been respected with the right planning and not cost saving by doing the job on the cheap;
- The windows would have looked so much better if the arches were done in upvc and not rough brickwork above frame;
- The windows appear not to be installed correctly as they appear too large for the opening and frames have been installed with the bottom seal out and the top recessed, they are not upright;
- The noise complaint will not be addressed as this was due to the opening windows down the side

- and front and the new windows still open; and
- Planning permission should have been granted before any work was carried out.

Officer's Analysis

The main issue is the impact on the character and appearance of the building and the streetscene.

Planning permission is required for the replacement windows as churches do not have any permitted development.

The application site is a church which is situated on the western side of Dover Road near its northern end. It was previously the Northfleet United Reform Church and is now in use by The Light Of The World Holy Ghost Church Of God. The building appears to date to 1850 (a plaque which previously existed on the front of the building stated this). It has a pitched roof and the front elevation which presents to Dover Road is of simple, classical appearance with much architectural interest. There are double entrance doors with three moulded panels on each, framed by a decorative architrave with door hood above supported by decorative brackets. In the gable there is a decorative roundel below which is a cornice with rounded corners and a moulded architrave below that; each of the front corners of the building are dressed with quoins.

Until recently either side of the door there were two timber, single glazed windows. These were of vertical proportion with rounded heads to fit the rounded headed architraves. The windows had elegant timber glazing bars with margin lights. The glass was frosted clear glass in the main central panels with frosted coloured glass in the margin lights:



Unfortunately, the windows were removed in the first half of 2022 and have been replaced with plastic,

double glazed top hung casements with brick infill panels in the top part of the window openings as the windows are smaller and straight headed and therefore not tall enough or round headed to fit the opening:



The windows in the side elevations of the original part of the building appeared to be similar timber windows. The windows in the rear part of the side elevations and in the rear elevations are a mixture of modern windows.

In the surrounding area there is a mix of building types and ages. To the north is the Northfleet and District Traders Association, a fine late Victorian renaissance style building with decorative door hood. To the south of the application site is a row of simple two story early Victorian cottages style properties. Opposite the site are pairs of nineteenth century villas. The immediate area the application site is located in is a fine set piece of Victorian domestic, religious and local community building types. Although not a listed building or located in a Conservation Area, the application building makes an important contribution the street. The nearest Conservation Area to the site is the The Hill Conservation Area, which is to the north and in the appraisal for the Conservation Area it specifically highlights that 'the former club building and Methodist church on Dover Road have special architectural and historic interest and consideration may be given to a southern extension to the Conservation Area'. Overall, it is considered that the application building should

be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset of some significance.

The windows that have been removed were not the originals, a photograph shows there were different timber windows before those which have been removed which can be seen below:



However, the windows which have recently been removed in the front elevation and sides of the original part of the building were fine timber windows of elegant proportions and made up a large part of the architectural interest of the building particularly with regards to the front windows which are by their nature are most visible. The unauthorised windows which have been installed are plastic windows of thick and chunky proportions with an incongruous top hung opening and to add even further harm the windows do not even fit the window openings. Being that smaller straight headed windows have been installed, a crude section of brickwork has been added above each window to infill the gap in the opening. The loss of the previous elegant timber windows and their replacement with the crude plastic windows with infill brickwork has caused serious harm to the character and appearance of the application building as the previous windows were such an important part of its significance. The replacement windows lack the elegance and finesse of the previous windows. The loss of the previous windows and the insertion of the new replacements has also caused harm to the immediate streetscene which although there are other examples of plastic windows, this demonstrates even more so the importance of the timber windows which have been removed from the application building.

The NPPF (2021) states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. In this case, the application building has much fine architectural detailing of which the windows which have been removed were a significant part. The building is also one of the finest in this section of Dover Road. The harm that has been caused is considered to be significant. The loss of the side windows is unfortunate but the impact is not as great given their limited visibility from the street frontage. The rear already had modern windows in. It is the harm that has been caused in terms of the front windows which is particularly harmful.

In the covering letter the agent advises that the windows were removed because they were beyond repair, offered very poor insulation, caused considerable amount of condensation and a noise complaint was received and investigated by the Council in 2018. The NPPF (2021) sets out that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. In this case the application building is a fine example of simple Victorian church architecture with much interesting architectural detailing; the proposal has caused great harm to the significance of this building as the windows which have been removed made up a large part of this significance. The reasons given for the removal of the windows are therefore not

considered to outweigh the harm which has been identified. The plastic double glazed windows which have been installed were not the only solution for the issues identified and furthermore if replacement windows were absolutely the only solution then better quality windows of timber, slim-lite glazing and which actually fitted the opening could have been used.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

None.

Conclusion & Recommendation

It is considered the loss of the previous timber single glazed windows and their replacement with plastic, double glazed windows with brick infill in the front elevation has caused significant harm to the character and appearance of this building and the streetscene and as such the proposal is contrary to Policies CS19 and CS20 (LPCS) and Section 16 of the NPPF (2021).

Recommendation: Refusal

(For detailed reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>Rebecca Harrison</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	29th September 2022	Dated:	29th September 2022