



Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20221301

Location: St Marys Church Room Sole Street Cobham Gravesend

Description: Demolition of existing kitchen, wc and south porch. Erection of a single storey kitchen and wc block and entrance porch. Existing UPVC windows to be replaced by timber windows and a new window opening created on the south side. On the north side a window will be replaced with an escape exit door and the old exit door to be replaced with a high level window. External ramps are to be provided for disabled access to the building and the roof and external walls will be renewed.

Applicant: Mr Ron Chamberlain, Cobham Parochial Church Council

Site Visit Date: Desk top

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Drawing no. 1802/01 - Site Location Plan;
- Drawing no. 1802/02 – Site Plan As Existing;
- Drawing no. 1802/03 – Plan As Existing;
- Drawing no. 1802/04 – South Elevation As Existing;
- Drawing no. 1802/05D – Plan As Proposed;
- Drawing no. 1802/06 - Block Plan;
- Drawing no. 1802/07A – Site Plan As Proposed;
- Drawing no. 1802/08B – West Elevation As Proposed;
- Drawing no. 1802/09A – East Elevation As Proposed;
- Drawing no. 1802/10 – South Elevation As Proposed;
- Drawing no. 1802/11A – North Elevation As Proposed; and
- Design and Access Statement.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20190822	Demolition of existing kitchen, wc and entrance lobby extension and erection of new entrance extension on Manor Road frontage (south elevation); erection of kitchen, store and wc extension at the rear (west elevation); construction of entrance ramps and paved areas; replacement roof and new and replacement fenestration.	Permitted	29.10.2019

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 - Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- TC2 – Listed Buildings

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.

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

- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006);
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009).

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

No response from:

- GBC Conservation Officer
- Cobham Parish Council

Neighbouring properties

11 surrounding properties were consulted plus site notice – overall consultation expiry date was 10 February 2023 – no responses received.

Officer's Analysis

This application is identical to the permitted scheme granted under application reference 20190822 in October 2019. The reason the applicant has submitted this new application is because this previous permission has expired.

The proposal is for 'Demolition of existing kitchen, wc and south porch. Erection of a single storey kitchen and wc block and entrance porch. Existing UPVC windows to be replaced by timber windows and a new window opening created on the south side. On the north side a window will be replaced with an escape exit door and the old exit door to be replaced with a high level window. External ramps are to be provided for

disabled access to the building and the roof and external walls will be renewed’.

St Marys Church room is a 19th Century prefabrication structure with such structures often referred to as tin tabernacles. The building was erected in 1889 and is owned by the Diocese of Rochester. It is currently used as a place of worship and also as a community meeting facility for the residents of Sole Street. The building is timber framed and externally clad with corrugated iron.

The site is located in Sole Street, a rural settlement inset from the Green Belt, within the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. St Mary’s Church Room also a Community Asset and there is a grade II listed building to the north, Yeomans House.

The principle issues in the assessment of the application are as follows:

Principle

As stated the proposal is identical to that permitted in October 2019 under application reference 20190822. This application has been submitted as this permission has now expired. The permission was given in the current development plan period and there are not considered to be changes to national or local planning policy to warrant a different decision. In any case the site is located in a rural settlement inset from the Green Belt. Policy CS02 (LPCS) states that in the rural area, development will be supported within those rural settlements inset from the Green Belt and defined in the Policies Map; as such the proposed development is acceptable in terms of principle. The proposal must now be looked at in terms of all principle considerations to see whether it is acceptable with regards to them.

Design, Character and Appearance including Heritage

Although the Church Rooms are not listed or within a conservation area, the NPPF (2021) makes reference to non-designated heritage assets, stating that in weighing application that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and significance of the heritage asset. It is considered that due to its age and character the building could be classed as a non-designated heritage asset.

The main element of the application is a single storey front, side and rear wrap around extension. It involves the demolition of the existing front entrance porch which is not considered to respect the original character of the building.

The proposed front extension element of the extension would be 2.34m deep and 4.36m wide. It would have a pitched gable roof which is considered to respect the original character of the tabernacle. It would be subservient in design and would have windows which match the proportions of the existing building. It is considered that it would be a vast improvement on the existing front extension which is to be removed. The side/rear element of the extension would be 1.7m in width and extend beyond the rear wall of the building by 0.9m which matches the existing rear projection. This part of the extension would have a flat roof but this is considered acceptable seeming as it is single storey and this part of the building would not be visible from the streetscene. Due to the modest size of the extension, it is considered it would appear overly awkward to have a more complicated roof design. The windows have been sensitively designed. The extension would be finished in materials to match the existing structure.

The extension is considered to be modest and sensitively designed and would enhance the original character of the building and its wider setting. The existing unsympathetic uPVC windows would be replaced with timber windows. A new window is proposed in the south elevation and another in the north elevation but these are considered to be in keeping with the character of the building. A condition is recommended (should permission be forthcoming) to request further details of the external facing materials and window joinery details.

The land surrounding the Church Room is currently un-landscaped with the land being concreted over at some point in time. The current proposal is looking to address this issue with the introduction of planting

beds. A paved area is also proposed with the incorporation of ramps to make the Church Room more wheelchair accessible. A new emergency exit door is proposed on the rear elevation of the building, which also has a ramp serving it. These are welcome additions in order to improve the accessibility of the building to all and it is considered that subject to conditioning further details there would be no impact on the character of the building or surrounding area.

Overall it is considered that the proposed extension and alterations to St Mary's Church Room are appropriate in terms of size and design. They are well proportioned and enhance the character of the building and would not have any harmful impact on this non-designated heritage asset. The proposals are an improvement on the original appearance of the Church Room and will enhance the building's visual appearance and contribution to the character of the area.

To the north is the grade II listed Yeomans House however, given that the proposals are considered modest and that they would enhance the application building, it is considered they would have no harmful impact on the setting of Yeomans House.

In respect of design, character and appearance including heritage the proposal is therefore considered compliant with Policies CS19 and CS20 (LPCS).

Landscape Character

The application site is located in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. Given the proposal is for a modest extension and alterations to an existing building in the rural settlement of Sole Street, it is considered it would have no impact on the wider landscape character and in this regard the proposal is therefore considered compliant with Policy CS12 (LPCS).

Neighbouring Amenity

The proposal is not considered to impact on any neighbouring amenity. Due to the scale and distance of the extension from any neighbouring property it is considered it would not cause any impact with regards overshadowing, loss of outlook or overlooking. Similarly with the proposed new windows, given the distance from neighbouring properties and as the building is not in habitable use there are considered no issues with regards overlooking. As such in respect of neighbouring amenity the proposal is considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Parking and Highways

The proposal has no existing parking provision and the proposal would not lead to any increase in demand therefore it is considered there would be no highway implications with the proposal and in this respect the proposal would be compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

None.

Conclusion

The proposed extensions and alterations are well designed and appropriately proportioned to respect the original character of the building; they are in fact considered an enhancement. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in regards design, character and appearance including heritage, landscape character, neighbouring amenity and parking and highways.

Recommendation: Permission

(For detailed conditions 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:	13th February 2023	Dated:	13th February 2023