



Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240302

Location: Meopham Green Baptist Church Wrotham Road Meopham Gravesend

Description: Repair works to front (east) and side (north) elevations including removal of existing paint finish and brickwork re-pointed with a lime based mortar and repair works to side (south) elevation including removal of render (not including recent rear extension) and application of a new lime based render.

Applicant: Mr Michael Hegarty

Site Visit Date: Desktop

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Drawing no. 03 – Site Location Plan;
- Drawing no. 01 – Plans & Elevations As Existing;
- Drawing no. 02 – Plans & Elevations As Proposed;
- Drawing no. 04 – Block Plans As Existing & As Proposed;
- Compendium of Photographs; and
- Heritage Statement.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20000325	Retention of the extension at the rear for replacement pump enclosure for disabled lift.	Permitted	08.05.2001
19840761	Erection of single storey extension at the rear to form toilet accommodation and kitchen and resiting of oil storage tank	Permitted	12.11.1984
19760066	Erection of a single storey extension at rear to form games room kitchen and toilets	Permitted	20.04.1976
19540253	Erection of a church	Temporary	02.09.1954

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

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

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Meopham Green Rural Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document (2017)
- Management Plan Rural Conservation Area Appraisals Supplementary Planning Document (2016)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Meopham Parish Council – no objection.

No response from:

- GBC Conservation Officer

Neighbouring properties

10 surrounding properties were consulted plus site and press notices- overall consultation expiry date was 10.05.2024 – no responses received.

Officer's Analysis

The application site consists of a detached building on the eastern side of Wrotham Road just south of Meopham Green which is a Baptist Church. The site is located in the Meopham Green Conservation Area.

The proposal is for repair works to the existing painted front and north side walls and the existing rendered south side wall. The principle consideration in the assessment of the application is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Meopham Green Conservation Area.

Whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the Conservation Area

The existing building has its front and north side elevation's finished with a cream paint and its south side elevation finished with a painted render in the same cream colour. As can be seen from the below photographs submitted with the application the paint and render are in a poor state of repair:

Front elevation:



South side elevation:



North side elevation:



The fact that repair works are being proposed is therefore welcome.

Front and north side elevation;

The Heritage Statement advises that for the front elevation a modern polymer paint has been applied over the existing brick façade but is now flaking and for the north side elevation the same modern polymer paint has been applied over a previous bitumen paint which is also now flaking.

For the removal of the paint on the front and north side elevations a paint softener would be used and the paint would then be removed using the DOFF Integra paint removal system. The DOFF system uses super-heated water sprayed under pressure and as the water vaporises it can lift the paint at the same time. As this is not a timber framed building and there are no timbers that could potentially be damaged and it would be masonry the system would be used on then it is an acceptable method for paint removal in this case. In the past the removal of paint covering brickwork has been an almost impossible task and it would take the face of the bricks off in any case however, these days the modern high temperature, low pressure washers such as the DOFF system allow for the removal of paint to reveal clean historic brickwork without damaging the surface underneath. It delivers hot water (150°C) at a low pressure and low volume to ensure there would be no surface damage thereby being an effective and sympathetic method for paint removal.

It is stated in the Heritage Statement that once the paint has been removed any loose or failing mortar would be removed and the brickwork repointed using a lime mortar with a heritage approved brushed aggregate. The repointing of the brick joints with a soft lime mortar is a sympathetic method for re-pointing, details of the mortar mix and pointing finish would need to be conditioned should permission be forthcoming.

South side elevation:

The Heritage Statement advises that for the south side elevation a sand/cement based render has been applied to the whole elevation which is now damaged with areas of cracking and delaminating from the brickwork. It is proposed to remove the existing render and apply a new lime mortar based render to the same area. The existing cement render is inappropriate and damaging to the building as it will not let the building breathe and moisture will be collecting behind which will be causing the cracking and delamination; it's removal is therefore very welcome. No details have been submitted of how the existing render would be removed however. As the elevation is to be re-rendered and so covered over again it is not absolutely essential that the method of removal is known at application stage but should permission be forthcoming it is considered a condition should be attached requesting details of the method of removal for the render.

The proposed lime render is a very sympathetic method which will allow the building to breathe, details of the mix for the lime render would need to be conditioned should permission be forthcoming.

In summary it is considered that the proposal to remove the existing paint/render on the front and both side elevations would subject to conditions be done in a sympathetic manner which would actually enhance the character and appearance of the Meopham Green Conservation Area. As such the proposal would be compliant with Policies CS19 and CS20 (LPCS), saved Policy TC3 (LPFR) and sections 12 & 16 of the NPPF (2023).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the Meopham Green Conservation Area and is compliant with local and national planning policy.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:	<i>Rebecca Harrison</i>	Signed:	
Dated:	28th May 2024	Dated:	28 May 2024