

**PLANNING COMMITTEE NORTH – 13 August 2019**

**APPLICATION NO:** DC/19/2004/FUL

**EXPIRY DATE:** 18.07.2019

**APPLICATION TYPE:** Full

**APPLICANT:** Mr Robert Taylor

**LOCATION:** The Old Chapel, 5 Mill Lane, Southwold, Suffolk, IP18 6HW

**PARISH:** Southwold

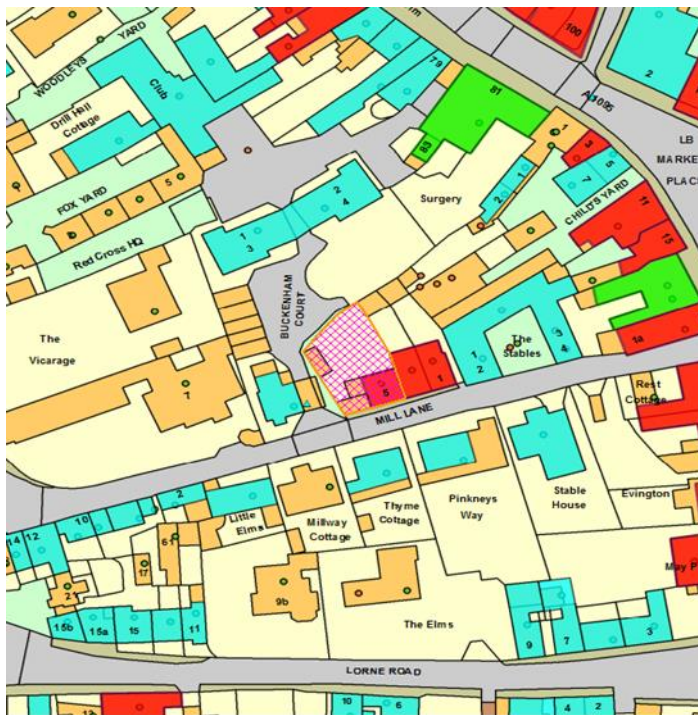
**PROPOSAL:** Full Planning - Material amendments to approval DC/17/4306/FUL. a) Increasing length of new build extension by 900mm; b) Increasing privacy by raising conservatory wall to 2m; c) alterations to windows of new build extension and removal of external door

**CASE OFFICER :** Chris Green

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**MAP**



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Date 31/07/2019



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## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This application is a full application that seeks to vary an approval given in 2017 for the removal of a 1980 vintage side extension to a listed non-conformist chapel near the centre of Southwold with a linking mainly glazed building and a substantial rebuild and enlargement of an outbuilding at the rear to replace space lost and provide additional space for living accommodation.
- 1.2 The Town Council have objected to this proposal and those preceding this and referral panel suggested this should be brought to committee to enable appropriate discussion to ensue.

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 2.1 The non-conformist place of worship is attached to a listed residence to the east, no. 1 Mill Lane and is now in use as a single dwelling. It is a Grade II listed building situated in the Southwold Conservation Area. To the west of the original chapel there is a 1980 built extension set forward on the plot to the back of the footway and incorporating a garage.

- 2.2 The listing description states:

Methodist chapel, now house. 1799, converted to house 1839; late C20 alterations and extension. Built by William Samkin. Red brick with pantile hipped roofs.  
EXTERIOR: 2-storey 3-window front with 2-storey 1-window extension to left. Central panelled double-leaf doors, now sealed, flanked by one 2-light casement on each side: these 3 openings have keyed semicircular arched heads, now blocked. Two 2-light casements on first floor flank sundial with gnomon and legend: tempus fugit. Raised first floor band; dentil eaves cornice.  
INTERIOR: not inspected.  
(Bottomley A & Hutchinson J: Discovering Southwold: Southwold: 1988-: 5).

## **3 PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The application seeks permission to demolish the 1980's two-storey extension added to the side of the building and restore the chapel as close as possible to its original form. The accommodation lost by the removal of the extension is to be accommodated in a two-storey structure that replaces the garage and on the site of an earlier two-storey building, and which is to be linked to the former chapel by a glazed conservatory.
- 3.2 Two parking spaces will be provided on the site of the demolished extension. Beyond this behind a brick wall a courtyard space is created from which access into the glazed link and two storey building is provided.

## **4 CONSULTATIONS/COMMENTS**

- 4.1 Southwold Town Council "*Recommendation*"
- *Request a) Increasing length of new build extension by 900mm.*

*Any increase in the depth of the “stand alone” building, even if there is a corresponding decrease in the depth of the glass structure, will increase the mass and dominance of an architecturally insignificant building, and the impact on neighbour amenity. REFUSE*

- *Request b) Increasing privacy by raising conservatory wall.  
Extending the brick wall may have the virtue of partially concealing the glass structure. DESIGN REQUIREMENTS - Sensitive detailing of the brick wall to match existing historic brick walls in this part of the Conservation Area will help to mitigate the harm caused by the glass structure and should be made a condition of consent.*
- *Request C) Alterations to windows of new build extension and removal of external door.  
DESIGN REQUIREMENTS Provided the changes in fenestration and the door are not visible from the street or adjoining properties, the Town Council has no objection.*

#### *Description of character of dwelling and area*

*The Old Chapel is a Grade II listed building in the Southwold Conservation Area. A previous scheme for an extension to the Old Chapel by this agent was refused and the refusal was upheld on appeal. The Inspector’s decision explains the building’s character and the importance of the existing space around the building to its significance.*

*The significance of the building derives from its historical record of the evolution of religious progression and non-conformist traditions. Its simple elevations with symmetrical detailing and fenestration [are] arranged to reflect the internal use of spaces. The existing alterations and extensions harm the original form and shape of the building and its original setting. Whilst constructed attached to the adjoining cottages, there was space around the building to the side and rear, along with some surrounding buildings, albeit unattached. These factors all contribute to the significance of the listed building.*

#### *History of Application*

*The Inspector went out to express concerns that the refusal scheme, which involved removing the 1982 extension, would “add significant additional footprint and bulk and mass to the built form on the site... The extension would appear excessively large for the host building and the combination of elements would add competition and confusion to the simple form of the listed building. Rather than appear subservient, it would compete and detract from it. The open front car port is a particularly modern and unrepresentative feature.”*

*A new scheme was submitted, which was consented (despite the objection of the Town Council, because it had all of the defects of the refused scheme). The Town Council was especially concerned about the glass conservatory/stairwell and the size and lack of architectural merit of the stand-alone building, which is linked to the Old Chapel by the glass structure.*

#### *Issues*

*The poor quality of the drawings makes it difficult to understand the changes and their impact, when built. With that caveat,*

- *Request a) Increasing length of new build extension by 900mm. Any increase in the depth of the “stand alone” building, even if there is a corresponding decrease in the depth of the glass structure, will increase the mass and dominance of an architecturally insignificant building, and the impact on neighbour amenity. The request increases the lack of subservience and overdevelopment of the original build. This request could have an impact on the neighbour at Gatehouse. REFUSE*
- *Request b) Increasing privacy by raising conservatory wall. Extending the brick wall may have the virtue of partially concealing the glass structure. DESIGN REQUIREMENTS - Sensitive detailing of the brick wall to match existing historic brick walls in this part of the Conservation Area will help to mitigate the harm caused by the glass structure and should be made a condition of consent.*

*We would want the Conservation Officer to consider the wall design and the materials used. We would have expected to have been provided with these details as part of this application – as it was condition 3 of the application DC/17/4306/FUL. The significance of the design of this wall cannot be underestimated.*

- *Request C) Alterations to windows of new build extension and removal of external door. DESIGN REQUIREMENTS Provided the changes in fenestration and the door are not visible from the street or adjoining properties, the Town Council has no objection. The effect of the alteration makes a symmetrical aspect now not symmetrical - but it would appear that its visual effect will be limited due to the wall mentioned above,*

*Policies to which the application is contrary to;  
Guidance for Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas SDP – para 4.11 – extensions.*

*NPPF – section 12 – Designing Well-designed places*

*NPPF – Section 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the historic environment*

*Waveney New Local Plan – Policy WLP8.29 – Design*

*Waveney New Local Plan – Policy WLP 8.37 – Historic Environment””.*

4.2 Third Party Representations – six letters of objection have been received their comments are summarised below:

- Impact on parking
- Impact on light pollution
- The scale of the proposal
- The design of the proposal
- Lack of detail
- Lack of notice

## 5 PUBLICITY:

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area, Listed Building,	7 June 2019	28 June 2019	Beccles and Bungay Journal
Conservation Area, Listed Building,	7 June 2019	28 June 2019	Lowestoft Journal

## 6 SITE NOTICES

The following site notices have been displayed:

General Site Notice	Reason for site notice: Conservation Area, Listed Building, Date posted 30 May 2019, Expiry date 20 June 2019
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### 6.1 Related application

Reference No	Proposal	Decision	Date
DC/19/2005/LBC	Listed Building Consent - Material amendments to approval DC/17/4306/FUL. a) Increasing length of new build extension by 900mm; b) Increasing privacy by raising conservatory wall to 2m; c) alterations to windows of new build extension and removal of external door		
DC/17/4306/FUL	Construction of a two storey extension at rear and conservatory	Application Permitted	4 December 2017
DC/17/4307/LBC	Listed Building Consent - Construction of a two storey extension at rear and conservatory	Application Permitted	4 December 2017

## 7 PLANNING POLICY

7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 1990

7.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) forms a material consideration in the determination of this application.

7.3 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Part II

7.4 East Suffolk (Waveney) Local Plan 2019

- WLP8.29 – Design
- Policy WLP8.37 – Historic Environment
- WLP8.39– Conservation Areas
- Supplementary Design Guidance “Built Heritage and Design Supplementary Planning Document” - April 2012

## **8 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 Built as a place of worship the Old Chapel is now in use as a single dwelling. It is a Grade II listed building situated in the Southwold Conservation Area.
- 8.2 The proposal is to amend the previous decision DC/17/4306/FUL which was to demolish a 1980's two-storey extension added to the side of the building and restore the chapel as close as possible to its original form, and to reveal that form by removing parts of the later additions.
- 8.3 The accommodation lost by the removal of the extension is to be accommodated in a two-storey structure that replaces the garage and on the site of an earlier two-storey building, and which is to be linked to the former chapel by a glazed conservatory. Two parking spaces will be provided on the site of the demolished extension. Beyond this behind a brick wall a courtyard space is created from which access into the glazed link and two storey building is provided.
- 8.4 The earlier application DC/17/4306/FUL and the associated listed building application DC/17/4307/LBC were approved in December 2017.
- 8.5 This application revises that proposal slightly by increasing the length of the rear two storey accommodations forward towards the highway by 900mm over that approved earlier and making the glazed linking circulation space, incorporating the staircase 900mm shorter in depth so that the front of the link remains the same distance from the highway. Officers consider that this small change over that originally consented to has no material impact on the streetscene and the better understanding of the historic chapel that was gained in the original approval is not prejudiced by this proposal.
- 8.6 The ridge height of the proposal is no different to that originally approved, so no increased mass is considered by officers to occur. The proposal to raise the wall at the front of the conservatory to two metres is considered beneficial, obscuring the staircase from public view. The proposed adjustments to the fenestration of the rear building's front elevation and the removal of a door is considered minor in impact and unobjectionable.
- 8.7 It is considered that the proposed scheme does not alter the merits of the approved scheme, will preserve the special interest of the listed building and its positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and accords therefore with Development Plan policies WLP8.29, WLP8.37 and WLP8.39 which seek to protect and enhance the historic environment.

## **9 CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The proposed revisions to the scheme approved in December 2017 are considered not to cause harm and offer the same benefits that were realised in that earlier approval, where the form of the original building is to be revealed by removal of extensions of late 20<sup>th</sup> century date.

## 10 RECOMMENDATION

Recommend APPROVAL with the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in complete accordance with Drawing Nos 140905A; 140914C; 00902B; received on 17/05/19 and 140909 received on 10/10/17.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. No development shall commence until details/detailed drawings of the following matters shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in writing:  
[i] full specification of external materials, including hard surfacing within the curtilage;  
(ii) boundary walls and gates.

The approved details shall be implemented in their entirety before the extensions are first occupied.

Reason: To ensure the works preserve and enhance the special character of the building and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area: the application did not include the necessary details for consideration.

4. The first floor windows in the west elevation of the two-storey extension shall be fitted with obscure glazing and shall thereafter be retained.

Reason: To avoid undue loss of privacy to neighbouring residents in the interests of residential amenity.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** See application ref: DC/19/2004/FUL and 2005LBC at [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/public-access](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/public-access)  
Chris Green, Senior Planning Officer, Riverside,  
Lowestoft 01502 523022

## Appendix one

Delegated report relating to original permission DC/17/4306/FUL approved 04.12.2017  
Built as a non-conformist place of worship the Old Chapel is now in use as a single dwelling.  
It is a Grade II listed building situated in the Southwold Conservation Area.

The proposal is to demolish a 1980's two-storey extension added to the side of the building and restore the chapel as close as possible to its original form. The accommodation lost by the removal of the extension is to be accommodated in a two-storey structure that replaces the garage and on the site of an earlier two-storey building, and which is to be linked to the former chapel by a glazed conservatory. Two parking spaces will be provided on the site of the demolished extension. Beyond this behind a brick wall a courtyard space is created from which access into the glazed link and two storey building is provided.

The submission follows pre-application planning advice given by the Principal Design and Conservation Officer and the Central Area Team Leader.

Commenting on this application the Principal Design and Conservation Officer confirms:-

"I can confirm that the submitted scheme conforms closely to that which we discussed and that, therefore, I support it as I judge that there is no harm arising from the proposal and that there are welcome benefits.

I can confirm that the submitted Historic Assessment Report is acceptable for the purposes of paragraph 128 of the NPPF. The significance of the chapel is derived from its evidential value in respect of non-conformist worship; its very modest architectural qualities; and its positive street-scene contribution. The internal character of the chapel is somewhat compromised by later alterations such that its contribution to the building's significance is lower but still of value (survival of the gallery floor, for example). The setting of the chapel is formed of the open space to the rear and associated outbuilding (there were more of these historically). These contribute somewhat to the building's significance. The back-edge-of the road façade of the chapel contributes importantly to the dense urban character of the conservation area in this part of it, which is historic, established and very attractive. Undoubtedly, the grisly 1980s extension detracts from the chapel, street-scene and conservation area.

In arriving at my views, I have been mindful of the results of the previous planning appeal at this site and also the content of the Southwold conservation area appraisal.

I support this application as I judge that it will better reveal the significance of the heritage asset that is the listed chapel and also enhance its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. This is for the following reasons:

- o There is no obligation or requirement for the applicant to remove the poorly designed 1980s flank extension to the chapel which actively detracts from the listed building and harms its special interest. However, the applicant's proposal to demolish this addition is a significant benefit that should not be under-rated by any of those with an interest in this proposal. Demolition will remove a blot on the building, streetscene and conservation area; and largely restore the original form of the building thus restoring some of the lost significance of the heritage asset. This is a very important and welcome conservation gain - and unusual - and I strongly support it.



o It is entirely reasonable, therefore, that, by removing the extension, the applicant would seek to reinstate the lost accommodation through an alternative arrangement in a manner that is better considered than that which was judged acceptable in the 1980s. I judge, therefore, that the principle of the replacement extension now proposed is acceptable.

o I judge also that the design of the replacement extension is acceptable. It takes the form of a linked rear range of 1.5 storeys scale. Its position is set well back within the site and occupies one corner of it. Thus, its position, size and scale are entirely secondary and subordinate to the chapel and will not detract from the chapel's special interest. The majority of the rear open space is left unaltered.

o The architectural form, style and choice of materials of the attached rear range are entirely traditional, modest and quiet such that it will not draw the eye to it when viewed from the street, which is appropriate for a replacement extension. Contrast that with the current arrangement.

o The proposed glazed link to the chapel will still allow the original form the chapel to be read whilst contributing an attractively designed but modest addition which is evidence of the 21st century's continued evolution of this altered building.

o The proposed changes to the chapel building itself are largely in the nature of reinstatement of lost features and this is also welcome, alongside some further modest adaptation.

On these bases, therefore, I judge that the proposal will enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and better reveal the significance of the listed building as a designated heritage asset and preserve its special interest. I judge that there will be no harm arising from this proposal and that paragraph 134 of the NPPF is not, thereby, engaged."

Having regard to the above views it is considered the scheme accords with Development Plan policies CS17 and DM30 which seek to protect and enhance the historic environment.

The proposed two-storey structure will be positioned alongside the access and parking area for Buckenham Court, a small residential complex to the side and rear of the Old Chapel. It will be positioned close to the property adjoining to the west, which extends over the access way. The increase in the scale of the building from single storey to 1.5 storey would not unduly impact on this property by virtue of loss of light as the window most affected by the new build is an obscure glazed window. The window to bedroom 1 in the west elevation would however result in overlooking to rooms in the neighbours rear wing. This is a second window to the bedroom and therefore to avoid loss of privacy to the neighbour the window should be obscure glazed. This will be controlled by way of a condition.

Given the new building is of a 1.5 storey scale it will not appear unduly overbearing to the surrounding residents. It is also well set back from the road and thus will not be overbearing or intrusive in the street scene. The proposal will still leave a reasonable sized garden area for the property and space for the parking of two vehicles so is not considered to be an over-development of the site.

Consequently therefore the proposal accords with Development Plan policies CS02 and DM02.