

Design & Access Statement

Incorporating Heritage Statement & Impact Assessment

Alterations to:

The Old Chapel

Church Hill

Tasburgh

NR15 1NB



October 2021



INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is to be read in conjunction with the enclosed planning application for variation of a condition following the previous grant of planning permission 2018/1954, a simultaneous application for listed building consent; and, attached drawings. The purpose of this supporting statement for the proposed development is to demonstrate that careful consideration has been given to the design and access arrangements for the proposal, and to identify the affected assets and their setting, and assess the effects of the proposed development on the identified significance.
- 1.2 The above applications have been submitted to gain approval to reconstruct the front wall at the site and raise the ridge height of the existing roof by approx. 300mm.
- 1.3 SA Architectural Services have been appointed by the current owners to prepare a planning application to gain approval for the proposed works.
- 1.4 The statement is structured as follows: **Section 2:** outlines the **proposed development**; **Section 3:** describes the physical characteristics of the **site and its surroundings**; **Section 4:** summarises the relevant national and local **planning policy context**; **Section 5:** provides a **planning and heritage impact assessment** of the key considerations raised by the proposal; and **Section 6:** sets out in brief our overall **conclusions** on the proposal.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 This application follows on from an approved conversion and extension to the building under reference no.'s 2018/1954 and 2018/1955. This permission grants the conversion of the Methodist chapel, including single storey extension and internal alterations, into holiday let accommodation.
- 2.2 The current applications seek permission to reconstruct the front wall at the site and raise the ridge height of the existing roof by approx. 300mm.
- 2.3 The existing wall is considerably bowed and the works are urgently necessary in the interests of health and safety. The raising of the ridge height would necessitate the need to substantially excavate the existing ground floor levels to provide the additional ceiling height at ground and first floor level, and mitigate any risks from undermining the existing foundations. This could be achieved by raising the wall plate height by 3 or 4 courses when the existing roof is repaired/replaced, as approved under previous application no.'s 2018/1954 and 2018/1955.
- 2.4 The layout and design of the proposed alterations is shown on submitted drawing numbers PRE04B, PRE05B, PRE06B and PRE07B.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 The site currently occupies a large corner plot, the chapel located to the south-west, adjacent to the public highway Church Hill in Tasburgh. The chapel is of masonry construction, with parapet walls under a black clay pantiled roof. A modern lean-to extension exists to the east. The chapel, set within the curtilage of The Beeches (a grade II listed dwellinghouse), shares a substantially sized enclosed garden with the dwelling (approximately 0.44 hectares).



Fig. 1: Site location (Source: Google Maps, 2021)

- 3.2 The application site is approached from the public highway, Church Hill to the south aspect, onto a hard standing driveway that provides parking. Substantial gardens exist to the south-east and south-west, whilst neighbouring properties exist immediately to the north-west and further to the south side of Church Hill.
- 3.3 Located in Lower Tasburgh, one of two main areas of settlement in the parish, the area comprises an older ribbon of development strung along

part of Grove Lane and Low Road. Set in the Tas Valley, the area includes single plot depth development of varying age with significant trees and hedges interspersed with important gaps that give it an attractive rural character.

Planning History

- 3.4 This planning and heritage impact assessment has been prepared in support of a planning application for variation of a condition following the previous grant of planning permission 2018/1954 and a simultaneous application for listed building consent to reconstruct the front wall at the site and raise the ridge height of the existing roof by approx. 300mm.
- 3.5 A previous application for planning permission and listed building consent, reference 2018/1954 and 2018/1955, was granted for the conversion of the Methodist chapel, including single storey extension and internal alterations, into holiday let accommodation (approved 29 July 2019 and 13 February 2019 respectively).
- 3.6 There are two further previous applications of relevance that constitute the site's planning history, and these have been summarised below:
- 3.7 **2020/2449**
Discharge of conditions 9 and 10 of planning permission reference 2018/1954 - front wall details, car parking (approved 1 March 2021).
- 3.8 **2021/0026**
Discharge of conditions 3 and 4 of planning permission reference 2018/1955 - window details, roof lights (approved 11 February 2021).

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 Planning law requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan is therefore the starting point for the assessment of all planning proposals.
- 4.2 The Government's planning policies, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), are also a significant material consideration in deciding planning applications.

Development Plan Policies

- 4.3 In South Norfolk, the development plan comprises the: Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Joint Core Strategy (March 2011, with amendments in January 2014); and the South Norfolk Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (October 2015).

- 4.4 The following policies contained within the Joint Core Strategy, including the Proposals Maps, and South Norfolk Local Plan have been taken into consideration in the preparation of this application. The provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance have also been taken into account, where appropriate.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
- Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Joint Core Strategy (JCS) Policies:

- Policy 2 - Promoting good design

South Norfolk Local Plan (SNLP) Development Management Policies:

- Policy DM 3.8 - Design Principles
- Policy DM 4.10 - Heritage Assets

ASSESSMENT

Principle Of Development

- 5.1 The chapel is located to the south-east of The Beeches, a grade II listed dwellinghouse. The site is separate and independent from the identified asset (i.e.: it does not materially affect the setting of the asset) and has no historic functional relationship to the identified asset and will present no material harm to its significance.
- 5.2 The site does not contain any identified special historic or heritage interest in and of itself, it primarily warrants assessment by virtue of its siting within the curtilage of the heritage asset, The Beeches.
- 5.3 The proposal is therefore compliant with national planning guidance and local planning policy.

Effects On Local Character

- 5.4 Externally, the proposed changes are generally sympathetic to the existing character and appearance of the chapel, the material finishes and original arrangement of openings remaining intact on the front and rear elevations. Timber sash windows will also be retained in the front elevation, despite the reconstruction of the front wall. The only change in more important views from the roadside is the flat rubbed brick arches above the window openings.

Heritage Impact

- 5.5 Paragraph 201 of the NPPF states, *“Where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*
- 5.6 The schedule of materials proposed for the alterations would be broadly consistent with those applied to the existing chapel. Features such as flat rubbed brick arches above the window openings would help to provide the correct detailing for this type of building and would complement those evidenced on surrounding properties.
- 5.7 The alterations are of a design and scale that is subservient to the asset, designed using a schedule of materials and physical features that are complementary to its historic fabric as demonstrated on the accompanying plans. Whilst it is recognised that the proposed scheme will result in a degree of harm, it is not considered that this would amount to ‘substantial harm’ or ‘total loss’ of the assets significance yet it is to be acknowledged that the scheme would have a ‘neutral’ effect on the asset and its setting, which can be defined at the lower end of ‘less than substantial harm’ in relation to Historic England’s *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* and the relevant building Selection Guide for listing.
- 5.8 Furthermore, the chapel is sited an adequate distance away from the heritage asset. As such, the proposed development would comply with the requirements of Policy DM 4.10.

Effects On Residential Amenity

- 5.9 Careful consideration has been given to the design of the proposed alterations to minimise their impact on the amenities enjoyed by neighbouring dwellings and to ensure a good standard of amenity for future residents.
- 5.10 Sufficient separation distances exist in excess of those minimum distances considered necessary to ensure there would be no significant adverse impact on the outlook, privacy and daylight of surrounding dwellings. Boundary treatments and planting would also provide some screening. As a result, it is considered that the proposal to raise the ridge height of the existing roof by approx. 300mm would not result in the unacceptable loss of amenity and harm to the living conditions of the existing residents, and would provide for adequate amenity levels of future occupants.

CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The proposal will result in neutral harm to the setting of The Beeches.
- 6.2 The scheme would not cause any 'significant harm', nor would it constitute a 'total loss' of its significance, but instead result in 'less than substantial harm' with an overall neutral impact on the identified heritage asset.
- 6.3 Taking into consideration the building is not in any proper use and in very poor condition the proposed changes, on balance, are considered acceptable. Any harm resulting from the proposal would be considerably outweighed by the public benefits of ensuring the buildings survival for the longer term.
- 6.4 The site has no historical or functional relationship with the identified heritage asset and the proposal will not adversely impact on the immediate setting of the main listed building on the site.
- 6.5 The proposal is considered to comply with national planning guidance and local planning policy and guidance, as set out above.

APPENDIX 1 - Photographs

Photographs

1 View of Old Chapel from public highway

2-4 Views of Old Chapel



APPENDIX 2 - List Description

Heritage Asset	List Description
Grove Cottage	<p data-bbox="810 338 927 367">Grade II</p> <p data-bbox="810 416 1214 448">List Entry Number: 1050046</p> <p data-bbox="810 495 1222 526">Date first listed: 26-Jun-1981</p> <p data-bbox="810 573 1315 640">5321 TASBURGH CHURCH LANE Grove Cottage TM 19 NE 3/1136</p> <p data-bbox="810 687 1331 943">Early C19 house. Painted brick. Low pitched hipped roof with black glazed pantiles. Two storeys. Three bays. Sashes with glazing bars. Central pilastered doorcase with entablature, rectangular fanlight and panelled door.</p> <p data-bbox="810 990 1230 1021">Listing NGR: TM1976695920</p>