

DesignForLiving Architects Limited

Ideas and concepts for realising your home's potential

Suite 9 Westend Courtyard, Grove Lane, Westend, Stonehouse GL10 3SL

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

CHANGE OF USE OF FORMER METHODIST CHURCH TO PRIVATE DWELLING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS IN RESPECT OF THE CHANGE OF USE MIDWAY, CHALFORD HILL, STROUD

Context

Chalford Hill Methodist Church lies within Conservation Area 19 – Chalford Hill. It is located on Midway, which runs through the centre of the village. The buildings comprise of the original 19th Century church and 20th Century additions forming a village hall and ancillary spaces. There is parking in front of the building that opens onto the public highway.

Proposals

The proposal is to convert the church building, the entrance foyer and an existing lean-to extension to a single private dwelling. The proposals will have a minimal impact on the external appearance of the building.

Externally it is proposed to raise the existing south elevation windows to a new first floor level within the building and to insert two new windows with ashlar stone surrounds to match the existing below at ground floor level. Two of the window openings in the west elevation will be elongated and the windows replaced. One of these openings has been partially blocked up in the past and this action will be reversed as part of the works. A round window with an ashlar stone surround is proposed to be inserted into each of the gable ends of the church building at high level. The existing Velux roof windows are to be removed and 3no. new rooflights inserted into each slope of the main church roof.

The existing first floor, staircase, gallery, and false ceiling are to be removed and a new first floor and staircase inserted within the church building.

Materials and character

The original church is constructed of Cotswold rubble stone with ashlar quoins and window surrounds. It is roofed in plain tiles, the exact nature of the material is not known, but it is apparent that the roof has been recovered in the past. All the existing windows, except for the timber framed stained-glass windows in the south elevation, have been replaced with PVCu windows.

The gallery balcony and support posts remain in situ, but the gallery has been blocked off, a first floor inserted and a false ceiling has been installed over the remainder of the church area.

The building retains most of its original characteristics and is a largely unadorned barnlike stone structure with small round-headed windows penetrating thick masonry walls. It is a prominent landmark in the area as it sits high on the valley slope.

The original roof structure is in situ and comprises of rafters supported off timber purlins and two oak king post trusses.

An extension was added to the east side of the church in the early 20th Century consisting of rendered masonry under a tiled roof. The original windows have been replaced with PVCu windows. The extension is of no architectural merit.

A later extension was built in the 1960s which appears to include a entrance foyer with an artificial stone wall, gable and a round headed entrance screen. It is possible that this may have been erected before the larger James Gibbs Hall, which until recently was the village hall attached to the church. This building is constructed in artificial stone blockwork with occasional artificial stone ashlar features. All the windows are PVCu. The building is typical of its age and purpose and is of no architectural merit within the context of the village.

Condition of the buildings

The buildings are in good general repair and have only been vacant for a short period of time.

Access

The current proposals do not affect the existing pedestrian or vehicular access arrangements to the property. There are shallow pitched steps and a ramp from the parking area to the main entrance. The main entrance already has a level threshold.

The existing car parking area will be retained and is of sufficient size to meet local authority parking standards for new dwellings.

Summary

The applicant considers these proposals will conserve a valuable heritage asset and landmark which would otherwise remain redundant, and are a sustainable way of providing residential space in an already established village without building anew.

The village hall is not part of this application and will retain its F1 use with a view to reintroduce it as a community asset in the village in the future.