

Application No:	17/02143/FUL
Proposal:	Improvements and Extensions to Southwell Methodist Church
Location:	Southwell Methodist Chapel, Prebend Passage, Westgate, Southwell, Nottinghamshire
Applicant:	The Church Council, Southwell Methodist Chapel
Registered:	23 November 2017 Target Date: 18 January 2018

This application is presented to the Planning Committee for determination as it has been referred by Cllr P Rainbow at the request of the Town Council due to insufficient information and concerns of the close proximity to the listed Saracens Head Hotel.

The Site

Southwell Methodist Church is a Grade II listed building in the Southwell town centre which is in the Town Centre character area of the Southwell Conservation Area. The building is dated 1839 and was first listed in 1992. In 1996 an extension was added to improve access which includes the three large glazed screens on the west, north and east elevations which are visible from the car park to the rear of the Saracens Head. The main elevation of the listed church faces Prebend Passage and is not prominent in the wider conservation area.

There are several listed buildings located in close proximity to the application site; notably the Grade II* listed Saracens Head hotel and Grade II listed buildings along the Westgate/Market Place and Queen Street. The positioning of the Methodist Church is such that it is largely not visible from the main town roads and is accessed through the car park behind the Saracens Hotel. There is a footpath that runs along the Prebend Passage that runs along the South elevation of the site as well as a path linking the Saracens Head hotel with the car park spanning the north elevation.

Relevant Planning History

PREAPP/00159/17 – Improvements and Extensions.

PREAPP/00085/17 – Proposed glass/brick conservatory style extension.

13/01124/LBC - Replace a ground floor window, reducing size by one blue brick course – Consent not required 11.09.2013.

PRE/00231/10 - Curtain walling system.

10/00788/FUL - Replace existing timber/glazing units on west, north and east elevations of extension to the church (1996 build). Change of materials from wood to coated aluminium curtain walling system – Permitted 27.07.2010.

10/00789/LBC – Replace existing timber/glazing units on west, north and east elevations of extension to the church (1996 build). Replacement necessary due to rots and splitting as a result of poor wood quality at installation and some design aspects. Change of materials from wood to coated aluminium curtain walling system but retaining image and colours as existing – Withdrawn 2010.

PRE/01361/09 - Replace internal and external woodwork.

94/51658/FUL - Alterations and extensions to north end of church to provide extra rooms and new entrance with paved forecourt – Permitted 25.04.1994.

93/51595/FUL - Alterations and extensions to north end of church to provide extra rooms and new entrance with paved forecourt – Withdrawn 1994.

The Proposal

Full planning permission is sought to extend the Church entrance lobby situated towards the North East of the site. The applicant has advised that the intention is for this extension to improve the versatility of the entranceway and provide additional floorspace for the growing congregation and use of the church. It is proposed that the extension be sited within the footprint of the existing disused courtyard and the floor level be built up to match the existing level of the entrance lobby. It is suggested in the submitted information that the extension is proposed to be predominately glazed so as to minimise the visual impact it would have on the listed building.

The proposal is for a single storey extension, proposed to minimise the visual impact on the building. The double roof pitch has been designed to reflect the existing roof pitches and blend with the form of the church with a grey aluminium curtain wall (7.2 m ridge height) and slate tiled roof at 7.8 m ridge height and 5.8 m eaves height. The extension would be approx. 4 m wide and 3.5 m deep and sit within the footprint of the existing courtyard. The floor slab is to be constructed to match the level of the church lobby with the glazed curtain walls to be built over the existing courtyard walls with a pitched roof.

The existing window on the south east elevation of the church is proposed to be adjusted to accommodate the proposed extension.

Departure/Public Advertisement Procedure

Occupiers of 8 properties have been individually notified by letter. A site notice has also been posted close to the site and an advert placed in the local press with an overall consultation expiry date of 7 January 2018.

Planning Policy Framework

The Development Plan

Newark and Sherwood Core Strategy DPD (adopted March 2011)

- Core Policy 9: Sustainable Design
- Core Policy 14: Historic Environment
- SoAP 1 – Role and Setting of Southwell

Newark & Sherwood Allocations & Development Management DPD

- Policy DM5: Design
- Policy DM9: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- Policy DM12: Presumption In Favour of Sustainable Development

The Southwell Neighbourhood Plan 2015 (as adopted)

- Policy DH1: Sense of Place

- Policy DH2: Public Realm
- Policy DH3: Historic Environment

Other Material Planning Considerations

- National Planning Policy Framework 2012
- Planning Practice Guidance 2014

Consultations

Southwell Town Council – “Southwell Town Council considered application 17/02143/FUL Southwell Methodist Chapel - Southwell and agreed unanimously to object to the application and asked that Cllr Bruce Laughton call in this application for the following reasons: Insufficient information is available and the council requires the LBC application and the comments of the conservation officer for consideration.”

Southwell Civic Society – No objections.

NSDC Conservation Officer – “Firstly, I would like to clarify that while the building is Grade II listed and the proposal requires Planning Permission, it does not require Listed Building Consent. This is because certain denominations (of which the Methodist Church is one) have their own system of granting what is effectively listed building consent, called Ecclesiastical Exemption. I note this is one of the reasons why the Town Council have objected to this application so they may find the following link useful: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/consents/ecc-exemption/>

Southwell Methodist Chapel is a Grade II listed building, sited within Southwell Conservation Area. The historic portion of the building (dating to 1839) has had a modern extension (1996) to the side and rear and this proposal is to further increase this modern extension and make internal changes within this modern area. The proposal will not affect historic fabric.

The building is close to other listed buildings, including the Grade II* listed Saracen’s Head, the setting of which is also a consideration. The building is visible from the carpark it sits adjacent to, as well as from the rear area of the Saracen’s Head and Prebend Passage leading down onto West Gate/Market Place.

The proposal now submitted follows productive pre-application advice and I have no objection to this proposal.

The Church has extremely limited capacity to increase floor space, as it does not really own any land beyond its footprint. There is a small section adjacent to the rear of the historic portion, but this is understandably a less robust part of the building in terms of potential extensions. An opportunity, therefore, lies in this small, modern courtyard area to the rear, and the proposal is to build directly above this courtyard wall, not actually increasing the external footprint at all but increasing the height at this area, and internally creating a mezzanine for additional floor space.

The design of the extension follows the principles of the modern extension, which uses glazed curtain walls and gables. While bringing the footprint up, I feel the design remains recessive, as it steps down from the modern portion with a monopitch roof and then gives way to a lower gable. This roof pattern, which does initially seem complicated, actually helps the extension reflect the existing roofscape from each side.

The materials selected also match the host building, repeating the simple glazed screen and red cross, as well as the tiled roof of the host building. That the bulk of the extension is accommodated in glass gives a transparency that helps reduce its potential impact.

The best use for this building is to retain it in ecclesiastical use and I feel this use can be continued and expanded here with no harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

While the proposal increases the bulk of the building in this area, I do not feel it will impact negatively upon the setting of any nearby listed building, in particular the Saracen's Head. The part of the Saracen's Head which is immediately adjacent is a modern section and houses the extracts and vents etc., so is a more robust part of the building. In any event, even seen alongside the more significant historic timber framed ranges and Assembly Rooms, I do not think this extension is harmful. I am content that this extension is still read within the context of the existing church and does not change the impact of this church overall. As a place of worship it is not unusual for these to be quite dominant structures, so I am comfortable that this is an eye-catching addition but is not overly imposing. In a relatively dense urban context, where the Saracen's Head and other listed buildings have always sat close to other historic buildings, including this church, I do not think it is incongruous to look out onto, or see both structures alongside each other, even with this modern addition.

For the same reasons I think this addition is a fairly natural addition to this place of worship and preserves the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Subject to conditions over materials and details, I have no objections."

Ramblers Association – "As long as there is no encroachment onto Prebend Passage (Southwell Footpath 84) which runs alongside the chapel we have no objection."

NSDC Access and Equalities Officer – "Consider inclusive access for all, with particular reference to access and facilities for disabled people. It is recommended that the developer's attention be drawn to BS 8300: 2009 'Design of Buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people – Code of Practice' which contains useful guidance. Approved Document M and K of the Building Regulations contain further useful information in this regard.

It is recommended that the developer be advised to consider access to, into and around the proposal along with the provision of accessible features and facilities to ensure that the proposal is equally convenient to access and use throughout.

It is recommended that the developer be mindful of Equality Act 2010 requirements and that a separate enquiry be made regarding Building Regulations matters."

Historic England – "Thank you for your letter of 18 December 2017 regarding the above application for planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we do not wish to offer any comments. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers, as relevant.

It is not necessary for us to be consulted on this application again, unless there are material changes to the proposals. However, if you would like detailed advice from us, please contact us to explain your request."

NCC Rights of Way – “I have attached a copy of the working copy of the Definitive Map, indicating the recorded public rights of way in the vicinity of the proposed development site, for your reference. Southwell public footpath 84 runs behind the church, but will not be affected by the proposal.”

No comments have been received from any interested parties or neighbouring properties.

Comments of the Business Manager

Principle of Development

Development of this nature is deemed accepted in principle subject to an assessment of numerous criteria outlined in Core Policy 9 and Policy DM5 of the Development Plan. These criteria include the provision that the proposal should respect the character of the building and surrounding area and have no adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties. The overall shape, size and position of an addition must not dominate the existing building or the character of the surrounding area.

Given that the site is located within the Southwell Conservation Area and is a listed building located close to other listed buildings, regard must also be given to the impact upon the listed building itself, the distinctive character of the area and should seek to preserve and enhance the conservation area and the setting of other listed buildings in accordance with Policy DM9, Core Policy 14 and those heritage policies contained within the Southwell Neighbourhood Plan.

Paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Guidance states that, 'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas...to enhance or better reveal their significance.'

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 states, in relation to the general duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions that, 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area'.

Heritage Development Plan policies, amongst other things, seek to protect the historic environment and ensure that heritage assets are managed in a way that best sustains their significance. The importance of considering the impact of new development on the significance of designated heritage assets, furthermore, is expressed in section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Paragraph 132 of the NPPF, for example, advises that the significance of designated heritage assets can be harmed or lost through alterations or development within their setting. Such harm or loss to significance requires clear and convincing justification. The NPPF also makes it clear that protecting and enhancing the historic environment is sustainable development (paragraph 7).

Impact upon the Listed Building and Character of the Conservation Area

The internal conservation officer has been consulted and has offered the following comments:

“The design of the extension follows the principles of the modern extension, which uses glazed curtain walls and gables. While bringing the footprint up, I feel the design remains recessive, as it steps down from the modern portion with a monopitch roof and then gives way to a lower gable. This roof pattern, which does initially seem complicated, actually helps the extension reflect the existing roofscape from each side.

The materials selected also match the host building, repeating the simple glazed screen and red cross, as well as the tiled roof of the host building. That the bulk of the extension is accommodated in glass gives a transparency that helps reduce its potential impact.

While the proposal increases the bulk of the building in this area, I do not feel it will impact negatively upon the setting of any nearby listed building, in particular the Saracen’s Head. The part of the Saracen’s Head which is immediately adjacent is a modern section and houses the extracts and vents etc., so is a more robust part of the building. In any event, even seen alongside the more significant historic timber framed ranges and Assembly Rooms, I do not think this extension is harmful. I am content that this extension is still read within the context of the existing church and does not change the impact of this church overall. As a place of worship it is not unusual for these to be quite dominant structures, so I am comfortable that this is an eye-catching addition but is not overly imposing. In a relatively dense urban context, where the Saracen’s Head and other listed buildings have always sat close to other historic buildings, including this church, I do not think it is incongruous to look out onto, or see both structures alongside each other, even with this modern addition.

For the same reasons I think this addition is a fairly natural addition to this place of worship and preserves the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.”

I note that Historic England do not make comments and the Southwell Civic Society raise no objection in this instance but that the Town Council have raised objection as they feel insufficient information has been received, that a LBC application is required along with the comments of the conservation officer for their consideration.

As can be noted above, the Conservation Officer is satisfied (as am I) that sufficient information has been received to make a thorough assessment of the proposal. The Town Council have been directed to the accompanying Design and Access Statement that has been submitted with the application in order for them to better understand the proposal. Listed building consent is not required for the alterations/extension in this instance as the church benefits from an ecclesiastical exemption and revised comments have not been received from the Town Council following the comments of the Conservation Officer.

I concur with the comments of the conservation officer and am of the view that the proposed works would cause no harm to the special interest of the listed building given the historic portion of the building has had a modern extension to the side and rear and this proposal is to further increase this modern extension, and therefore accords with the objective of preservation required under section 16 of the Act. The proposal also sustains the setting of other listed buildings and has no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Southwell CA.

The proposal therefore accords with the objective of preservation set out under section 72, part II of the 1990 Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act, as well as complying with heritage policies and advice contained within the Council’s LDF DPDs (DM5, DM9 and CP14) and section 12 of the NPPF.

Impact upon Neighbour Amenity

The NPPF seeks to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Policies CP9 and DM5 provide that development proposals should ensure no unacceptable reduction in amenity upon neighbouring development.

The building is considered to be quite visible in most directions given its positioning being in a well-used public car park, its proximity to the Saracens Head and Prebend Passage. Given this proposal seeks to extend within the existing footprint of the building I am of the view that the proposal would respect the neighbouring amenity of the surrounding buildings and not present as an incongruous addition to the existing building.

There is a small flat roofed terraced area to the rear, which forms the natural footprint for this extension. Of all the elevations this is the most discrete, its rear aspect facing onto the modern C20 extension to the Saracen's Head. However, sideways views from the public carpark and Prebend Passage make any extension here potentially quite sensitive still. I am of the view that the proposal would respect the neighbouring buildings and as such would not detrimentally impact upon the neighbouring amenity of surrounding properties.

Given the separation distance (approx. 8 m from the closest elevation of the Saracen's Head) and the orientation of the host building I do not feel there would be any adverse loss of light to either neighbour as a result of this extension.

The extension is not considered to have an overbearing impact upon the neighbouring properties by virtue of its scale and the design is considered to be acceptable given the replications of existing glazing and comments from the conservation team in support of materials. As such, I consider that the proposal complies with the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

Conclusion

Given the above, it is considered that the proposed development would preserve the special interest of the listed asset which is consistent with S.16 of the Act as well as policy and advice contained within Section 12 of the NPPF. The proposal also accords with the identified policies of the Development Plan in that it is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Southwell Conservation Area as well as the setting of other listed buildings and would not harm the amenity of neighbouring properties or land. Accordingly, I recommend that planning permission be granted.

RECOMMENDATION

That full planning permission is approved subject to the following condition(s);

Conditions

01

The development hereby permitted shall not begin later than three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

02

The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the following approved plan references:

- Site Location Plan
- Proposed Layout, Elevations and Block Plan – 63.1202.1 - 03

unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority through the approval of a non-material amendment to the permission.

Reason: So as to define this permission.

03

No development shall be commenced until details/samples of the materials identified below have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Roof Tiles

Aluminium – colour and finish

Rain Water Goods

Glazing: Film treatment and colour

Reason: In order to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and to safeguard the special architectural or historical appearance of the listed building.

04

No development shall be commenced in respect of the features identified below, until details of the design, specification, fixing and finish in the form of drawings and sections at a scale of not less than 1:10 have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Sections of glazed curtain wall, glazing details and their immediate surroundings

Verges and eaves

Rainwater goods

Reason: In order to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and to safeguard the special architectural or historical appearance of the building.

Notes to Applicant

01

The applicant is advised that all planning permissions granted on or after the 1st December 2011 may be subject to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Full details of CIL are available on the Council's website at www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/cil/

The proposed development has been assessed and it is the Council's view that CIL is not payable on the development hereby approved as the gross internal area of new build is less 100 square metres.

02

The application as submitted is acceptable. In granting permission without unnecessary delay the District Planning Authority is implicitly working positively and proactively with the applicant. This is fully in accordance with Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010 (as amended).

Background Papers

Application case file.

For further information, please contact Honor Whitfield on ext. 5827.

All submission documents relating to this planning application can be found on the following website www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk.

Kirsty Cole
Deputy Chief Executive

Committee Plan - 17/02143/FUL

