Consultation Response from KC, Conservation and Design

2022/90324 The Chapel, 640, Hunsworth Lane, East Bierley, BD4 6PY

Installation of replacement windows (within a Conservation Area)

Date Responded: 08.04.2022
Responding Officer: Sebastian Pickles
Responding Ref:

The building subject of the application is located in the East Bierley Conservation Area. The building is not listed but is recognised as being a key building in the Conservation and as noted in the Appraisal is a building with important/ good frontage, of which does not simply apply for the principal elevation fronting Hunsworth Lane.

The building is the former Methodist Chapel. To the main elevation just beneath the gable ridge is a date stone showing 'Free Church 1889'. During this period there was an increase in the number of Methodist Chapels being constructed to meet the increase the local population.

Looking at the historic mapping the main Chapel is to the south of the site with an attached Sunday School to the north. The Chapel is located at the heart of the historic settlement with the green located to the immediate west of the building. The chapel is clearly visible from the north, south and west of the green, with clear views looking onto the building.

The building itself is relatively modest in architectural style. This should however be considered in context of the site which is a former Methodist Chapel. Many examples within the region show that while there was consideration for the design and aesthetic, many chapels were more restrained and modest in style. The main elevation has some lovely stone detailing surround the door with the flanking pilaster and composite capitals. The decorative banding beneath the project cover also presents additional detailing. There is very much a focus around the entrance to the building. The side elevations are more modest, however have a lovely feel of symmetry.

The proposals are for the replacement of the existing timber windows with UPVC frames. The windows in question are located in the southern elevation, which is highly visible looking from the south.

The submitted statement sets out that they are seeking replacement windows owing to existing windows are causing damage to the fabric of the building. Having reviewed the submitted images the existing windows do not appear to be an overall poor state of condition. It is apparent that there have been some previously failed repairs, which include the use of silicone to infill lost sections of internal timber. The detail further sets out that the issues are increased when there is a high prevailing wind. From the detail is likely that owning to poor maintenance water is penetrating the window surrounds.

The statement sets out that the applicant is unable to find source timber replacement windows owing to the style and shape of the windows. I find this statement entirely questionable.

The proposed replacement frames would be UPVC with frames which are entirely thicker and chunkier that the existing frames. The thickness of glass appears to be around 28mm, which will add to the overall thickness of the frames. The detail has set out the frames would be of a match to the existing. I entirely disagree with the statement as UPVC frames would not replicate the same detail and would produce frames which are entirely differing in style and form and would sit more proud within the window reveal.

As set out in the current Conservation Area appraisal 'The use of UPVC does not respect the style of design of the windows on the historic buildings in the Village. They are inappropriate for use on historic buildings and detract from the authentic character of the property. UPVC frames have a chunky design and sometimes have false glazing bars which are of an inappropriate design'.

Conservation and Design consider that the proposed replacement windows to be entirely inappropriate and unacceptable. They would create a harmful impact to the former Chapel and have a visually harmful and negative impact on the street scene.

We consider that that the proposals to be contrary to Policy LP35 of the Local Plan and Policy 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act. The application should therefore be refused.