



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

13 JUNE 2019

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLANNING

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

Members are asked to determine the planning application outlined below:

APPLICATION NO: 18/1072/12
(BJW)
APPLICANT: QCF Development Ltd
DEVELOPMENT: Demolition of ruined chapel building and erection of 6 no. 2-bed flats, car park, and relocation of many gravestones to perimeter walls to create lawn amenity area (Listed Building Consent)
LOCATION: CAPEL Y TON, 3 HIGH STREET, TONYREFAIL
DATE REGISTERED: 05/11/2018
ELECTORAL DIVISION: Tonyrefail East

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, subject to favourable referral to Cadw.

REASONS:

The application proposes the demolition of the remaining sections of a Listed Building in order to facilitate the comprehensive re-development of the site.

The application building has been in a derelict and dilapidated condition since it was gutted by fire in 2008 at which time the roof and all internal features were lost.

Given the information regarding the stability of the remaining structure and its potentially dangerous condition and the longstanding disuse and maintenance of the structure it is considered that it retains very little of the character and historic significance, for which it was initially listed.

The demolition, while an avenue of last resort, is in this case justified due to the physical state of the building, its lack of continuing merit and the potential of the site to provide a fitting replacement building that would serve the local housing market and make a productive use of the site that recognises its original historic and architectural importance.

Consequently, it is considered that the demolition of the building would be justified in this instance and a recommendation to approve the application is offered.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Listed Building Consent is sought for demolition of an existing ruined chapel at Capel y Ton, 3 High Street, Tonyrefail. The application is accompanied with a planning application, to erect a 2-3 storey building of the same footprint and height that uses the original entrance porch at the site and ancillary works to create amenity space and car parking provision at the site.

The application is accompanied with the following additional information:

- Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA)
- General structural appraisal.

SITE APPRAISAL

The site includes a substantially fire-damaged chapel and surrounding graveyard that faces High Street in Tonyrefail. The site is Grade II listed and borders the designated retail centre of Tonyrefail town centre. It is surrounded by a mix of uses including retail, a public house, a clinic, a library and residential dwellings. Within the site the chapel is located towards the western boundary with the graveyard to the east of the building.

The chapel building has been substantially damaged and no roof or internal details remain. In addition the first floor of the front elevation has been lost. However, evidence of what is left and records indicate that the stone building was finished in light render and the front elevation contained some ornate detailing. The roof prior to the fire was finished in slate.

The Listing details of the site, record no. 24274, is included below:

Location

Prominently located in the centre of Tonyrefail. Set back behind forecourt walls and railings within a graveyard containing numerous monuments.

History

Calvinistic Methodist chapel built in 1863 and renovated in 1905. It succeeded a chapel of 1791 which was located elsewhere in Tonyrefail. There were 300 members in 1904.

Exterior

Chapel in minimal classical style. Single range with 3-bay 2-storey gable-end facade. Rendered and whitened under a slate roof on a coursed stone plinth, with pale stone dressings. Detail includes quoin strips, rusticated to the lower storey and with recessed panels to the upper storey, a plat band at 1st floor level, and a simple moulded band defining the gable. A central gabled stone doorcase with kneelers and dressed stone quoins appears to have been added in 1905. It contains a round-arched

doorway with hoodmould and tall keystone, under which are double panelled doors and an overlight with radial and margin glazing. The entrance is flanked by segmental-headed windows with eared architraves. The upper storey has 3 small windows with round-arched heads and raised surrounds, a plain sill band and plain impost band. All the front windows are cross-windows retaining their original small panes, radial glazing under the arches and coloured margin glazing. In the gable is a rectangular tablet with moulded surround inscribed 'Methodist / Chapel Erected / 1863'. Beneath is a further tablet on 2 corbels reading 'Adnewyddwyd 1905'.

The plat band at 1st floor level continues around the sides of the chapel which are 3-window. The windows have round-arched heads to the upper storey and segmental heads below and contain horned sash windows with margin glazing. The rear wall has 2 small vents to the outer sides of the gable.

Interior

Narrow entrance vestibule with stairs to either side leading to gallery. Panelled doors leading into chapel, between which is a 6-light window with Art Nouveau stained glass. Coloured tile floor and ceiling rose with foliage decoration. In the chapel is a 3-sided gallery on narrow cast iron columns with necking rings. Wooden gallery front with recessed panels and gold paint, with dentilled frieze to underside. Deep gallery with 5 rows of panelled pews. Three banks of planked pews with carved bench ends below. Octagonal wooden pulpit with recessed panels including pilasters and round arches to the front. Straight stairs to either side with moulded balustrades and large newel posts with circle designs to faces. Panelled set fawr in front. On the wall behind the pulpit is a moulded plaster arch with round head set between pilasters with recessed panels and capitals with dentils and bosses. These support a broken segmental pediment, through which a stylised finial rises. Within the arch is a marble wall tablet with pointed arched head to the preacher William Evans of Tonyrefail (born 1795). Flanking the central archway are 2 blind round arches, the mouldings with foliate bosses, which sit on a band at gallery level. These appear to have been windows originally. Moulded plaster coving with flower bosses and margin ceiling panelling, inside which is a wood panelled surround. There are 3 highly ornate ceiling roses, that to the centre the largest with concentric bands of flowers and foliage. Small marble tablet on E wall, a 1914-18 war memorial, and marble tablet on W wall to Margaret Edwards of Porthcawl (d.1905).

Listed

Listed as a well-preserved chapel of late classical type with elaborate interior detail. In a prominent position in the village.

Reference

Jones, Walter, Tonyrefail: The Story of a Community, 1997, pp146-9; Newman, John, The Buildings of Wales: Glamorgan, 1995, p633.

PLANNING HISTORY

18/1060	Capel y Ton, 3 High Street, Tonyrefail	Demolition of ruined chapel building and erection of 6 no. 2-bed flats, 1 no. 1 bed flat (penthouse), car park, and	Pending
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relocation of many gravestones to perimeter walls to create lawn amenity area.

08/1407	Capel y Ton, 3 High Street, Tonyrefail	Change of use of former Chapel to residential property (listed building application)	Granted 17/02/09
08/0883	Capel y Ton, 3 High Street, Tonyrefail	Change of use of former Chapel to residential property	Granted 17/02/09

PUBLICITY

This has included site notices and the direct notification of properties surrounding the site, no responses have been received.

CONSULTATION

The following groups were consulted and have offered no comments: The Royal Commission for Ancient and Historical Monuments in Wales; The society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings; The Twentieth Century Society and The Council for British Archaeology Wales/Cymru.

Georgian Group – no comments, defer to the Victorian Society.

Ancient Monuments Society – offer the following comments:

1. We welcome the limitation of the new build to the footprint of the existing chapel.
1. We welcome the wholesale retention of the monuments in the principal view from the south.
2. We ask whether any of the memorial tablets inside the chapel are capable of salvage and, if so, can we suggest that provision is made for their appropriate retention, if necessary after relocation.
3. We oppose the design of the new block of flats. The mixture of the glazed pyramidal top, the crude three storey vertical screen of fenestration, the differing treatment of the ground and first floors and the retention of the original entrance surround does not work. We urge much greater architectural cohesion and less harsh or expansive windows. A repeat of the archhead of the present windows would create a “softer” outline. The use of uPVC is regrettable
4. We welcome the responsible attitude towards the churchyard and in particular the retention in situ of the more substantial monuments (where a regular regime of maintenance and repair will need to be instituted). We appreciate the need to grant the new occupants of the flats some green amenity space to enjoy but we do ask whether marshalling the headstones against the boundary walls might be dropped in favour of a less regimented approach – with selective resiting of the headstones to create useable areas but with relocation in serried ranks avoided. Headstones divorced from their burials and placed like soldiers against a wall is visually demeaning but also hastens decay by water run-off from the wall and reduced exposure to sun.

The Victorian Society urge a re-design of the building.

POLICY CONTEXT

The site is within the settlement boundary and is unallocated. The site is immediately adjacent to the Tonyrefail Retail Centre (policies SSA16 and SSA17 refers).

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

The property is within the defined settlement boundary and is unallocated. The chapel building itself is a Grade II Listed Building.

Policy AW1 - sets provisions for the creation of new housing throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf between 2006 –2021.

Policy AW2 - supports development proposals in sustainable locations including sites within the defined settlement boundary.

Policy AW5 - sets out criteria for new development in relation to amenity and accessibility.

Policy AW6 - requires development to involve a high quality design and to make a positive contribution to place making, including landscaping.

Policy AW7 – refers to the protection and enhancement of the built environment. This policy states that development which impacts upon sites of architectural and historic merit will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the site.

Policy AW10 – requires development proposals to have an acceptable impact on health and safety and local amenity in respect of issues such as pollution control and flooding.

Policy SSA13 - permits housing development within the defined settlement boundaries where it can be demonstrated that the proposal meets set amenity, highway, design and contamination standards.

National Guidance

In the determination of planning applications regard should also be given to the requirements of National Planning Policy that are not duplicated in the Local Development Plan, particularly where National Planning Policy provides a more up to date and comprehensive policy on certain topics.

The Welsh Government published Planning Policy Wales 10 on 5th December 2018, and the document aims to incorporate the objectives of the Well-being of Future generations Act into Town & Country Planning.

It is considered that this proposal meets the seven wellbeing of future generations goals inasmuch as they relate to the proposed development and that the site has been brought forward in a manner consistent with the five ways of working.

It is considered that the proposed development is consistent with the key principles and requirements for placemaking as set down in Chapter 2 People and Places: Achieving Well-being Through Placemaking, of PPW10 and is also consistent with the following inasmuch as they relate to the development.

Chapter 3 (good design and better places, promoting healthier places, sustainable management of natural resources)

Chapter 4 (moving within and between places, transport, living in a place, housing)

Chapter 6 (distinctive and natural places)

Planning Policy Wales Technical Advice Note 12 Design.

Sets out the objectives of good design and aims to encourage good design in all aspects of development.

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment (2017)

Provides guidance on how the planning system should consider the historic environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning and listed building applications.

The above chapters and Technical Advice notes set out the Welsh Government's policy on planning issues relevant to the determination of this planning application.

REASONS FOR REACHING THE RECOMMENDATION

Section 16(2) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant Listed Building Consent for any works the Local Planning Authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Main Issue:

Acceptability of the proposed development on the special architectural and historic merit of the building.

The application proposes the demolition of the remaining building at the site which is a Grade II Listed Building consisting of a Chapel within an extensive graveyard with several prominent memorials.

The building has been in a derelict and dilapidated condition since 2008 when it was originally gutted by fire and the internal features and roof were lost. Since that time, although an application was subsequently approved to convert the property into a dwelling, there have been no works carried out at the site and its condition has worsened considerably.

The accompanying structural report concludes that the building poses a danger to the surrounding area due to its lack of lateral restraint and the continuing deterioration of the structure.

It is considered that the loss of the building, while regrettable, would be secondary to the danger that it poses within the surrounding area.

Additionally, there seems little prospect of renovating the existing structure due to its physical and structural issues and the considerable “heritage deficit” that would make such a renovation financially expedient. Consequently, this option would be beyond the reasonable means of a developer to deliver.

It is considered that the proposed building, while not to everyone’s taste, would form a fitting modern replacement to the existing property at the site. The form and scale of the building would replicate the existing property and the retention of the entrance feature would offer a visual reference to the former building at a key part of the new building.

It is acknowledged that the resultant re-development scheme should be capable of being delivered to fully justify the loss of the building. Therefore demolition should not be undertaken until the contract has been let for the construction of the replacement building and this has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This requirement can be secured by virtue of an appropriately worded condition.

Conclusion

The loss of any Listed Building is always regrettable and should be a last resort of any decision to grant Listed Building Consent. In this case it is considered that the entirety of the internal features of the building have been lost and the loss of the roof has weakened the state of the structure of the property such that it is unsound and possibly a danger to surrounding properties.

Additionally, its external features have suffered from an ongoing lack of maintenance and have also deteriorated to the point that its reason for listing appears less relevant than it was hitherto.

Consequently, subject to satisfactory recording and a deliverable contract for the re-development of the site, it is considered that the proposal to demolish the Listed chapel would be acceptable.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve, subject to positive determination of the associated Listed Building Consent (LBC) and favourable referral to Cadw.

RECOMMENDATION: Grant

1. The development hereby granted consent shall be begun not later than the expiration of five years beginning with the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan(s) no(s)

Site location plan, Drawing No. 1705.SLP

Proposed site plan, Drawing No. 1705.PL04
Proposed plans, Drawing No. 1705.PL01
Proposed Elevations (North and west) and Section A-A, Drawing No. 1705.PL02
Proposed Elevations (South and East), Drawing No. 1705.PL02

unless otherwise to be approved and superseded by details required by any other condition attached to this consent.

Reason: To ensure compliance with the approved plans and documents and to clearly define the scope of the permission.

3. Notwithstanding the details on the approved plans before work starts, the design and details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- rainwater goods;
- soffits and fascias;
- boundary treatments;
- stone and bricks
- rooflights

The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the proposed works will be in keeping with the character of the area, in accordance with Policy AW5 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan.

4. No demolition shall take place until copies of plans and/or a photographic record of Capel y Ton is deposited by the applicant in the Royal Commissions archive.

Reason: To retain a record of the building to accord with para. 6.5.17 Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales.

5. The demolition of the building shall not commence until a contract has been let for the construction of the replacement building and deposited with the Local Planning Authority. Details of the contract shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any demolition taking place.

Reason: To ensure that there is no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area in accordance with Section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

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