

Horton Chapel Haven Way Epsom Surrey KT19 7HA

Refurbishment and conversion of existing Grade 2 Listed Chapel to an Arts and Performance Centre, including new entrance canopy, external repairs to the building fabric, internal alterations to building.

Ward:	Court
Contact Officer:	John Mumford

1 Plans and Representations

- 1.1 The Council now holds this information electronically. Please click on the following link to access the plans and representations relating to this application via the Council's website, which is provided by way of background information to the report. Please note that the link is current at the time of publication, and will not be updated.

Link: <http://eplanning.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=P0XY9R GYINK00>

2 Summary

- 2.1 This application proposes the restoration and conversion of the chapel including various alterations to facilitate the new use as an arts and performance centre. Amendments have been made to the proposals and they are now acceptable in all respects.
- 2.2 **The application is recommended for APPROVAL** as the proposal will facilitate an excellent re-use of this building in a manner that is appropriate and compatible with its fabric and its listed status. The proposals will hopefully breathe new life into this important listed building, the future of which has been subject to long-standing uncertainty.

3 Site description

- 3.1 See associated planning application report under reference 17/01378/FUL.

4 Comments from third parties

- 4.1 The application was advertised by means of a press and site notice. To date (08.03.2018) no comments have been received in response.

5 Consultations

- 5.1 Conservation Officer: detailed comments are cited in full below.

6 Relevant planning history

None recorded

7 Planning Policy

Core Strategy 2007

Policy CS5 Heritage Assets

Development Management Policies Document 2015

Policy DM8 Heritage Assets

8 Listed Building considerations

- 8.1 This is one of the last remaining undeveloped redundant hospital-related buildings. The Chapel has been vacant for at least 15 years and is in a relatively poor condition.
- 8.2 The applicants are proposing to use the Chapel for performing arts, teaching and exhibitions. Such a use is to be welcomed as the proposal will entail the restoration and appropriate re-use of this important listed building.
- 8.3 The Council's Conservation Officer made a number of points and these are listed below, together with the appropriate responses/amendments made where issues needed to be addressed.

Chapel Exterior

Rooflights, access hatches and ventilators

- 8.4 Due to the design of the Chapel roofscape, the central ridge barely features in views of the listed building. Allowing adequate daylight into the interior is fundamental to any sustainable new use and the proposed rooflights accomplish this inconspicuously and with minimal loss of historic fabric.
- 8.5 Introduction of the discretely located rooflights, access hatches and ventilators result in little alteration to the way in which the Chapel as a whole is experienced from the exterior, and any harm resulting from the minor loss of historic fabric is effectively mitigated by the heritage benefits ensuing from sustainable re-use.

Valley gutters and flat roofs

- 8.6 Replacement of the valley gutters and recovering the flat roofs with single ply roofing membrane is regretted from the conservation perspective. However these elements cannot be seen and it is acknowledged that there are concerns regarding the probable theft of lead, if replaced with historically appropriate materials. The proposed replacements with modern materials are therefore supported in this case.

Replacement rainwater goods

- 8.7 Replacement of the deteriorated cast iron rainwater goods with 'cast iron style' aluminium guttering and downpipes is regretted from the conservation perspective. However it is conceded that the new elements effectively replicate the existing aesthetic and the use of 'cast iron style' aluminium has become widely accepted in the historic context. The minor harm to the significance of the listed building as a whole is far from the level which justifies refusal in terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para. 133, and the work is accepted in this instance.

Access ramps and glazed canopy

- 8.8 The new canopy is an independently structured element of simple, contemporary design and 'light weight' appearance, while the ramps facilitate equal access and have very little visual presence. The proposed elements are reversible interventions which facilitate the sustainable new use without diminishing the distinctive ecclesiastic aesthetic, or harming the significance of the heritage asset.

New Doors

- 8.9 The existing doors are utilitarian elements which contribute little to the significance of the heritage asset. There is no objection to the proposed replacements, which are of good quality materials and simple, complementary design.

Chapel Interior

Subdivision into eastern and western areas

- 8.10 The modern partition and mural which presently divide the former Nave are poor quality elements of no architectural or historic merit and they contribute little to the special interest of the Chapel. Demolition of the existing partition causes no harm to the significance of the building and its replacement with a 'Thick wall' allows essential services to be discretely accommodated. The dividing wall is of blockwork and considerably more robust than envisaged at pre-application stage, when the need for all interior partitions to be 'light-weight' and reversible was emphasised. However, in view of the precedent for subdivision in this location, the wall is accepted as it facilitates sustainable use and the ensuing benefits outweigh the harm caused by its invasive presence.

Removal of the unsightly suspended ceiling is welcomed, as the utilitarian element obscured characteristic spatial volumes and the significance of the heritage asset is better revealed as a result.

Secondary Glazing

- 8.11 There is no objection in principle to the installation of secondary glazing, which is widely accepted in the historic context. However the fenestration of the Chapel is a key architectural feature and its distinctive detailing must not be obscured. The design of the secondary frames must be amended so that they better respect the original frames and have minimal presence when the windows are viewed from the both the interior and the exterior. (ie. the 'sidelights' should not be divided by a central bar)
- 8.12 Response: The applicants have persuaded officers that the height of the single panes on either side of the main windows is such that an intermediate glazing bar is justified to provide structural integrity to the glazing. The visibility and any adverse impact of these relatively small members will be only slight.

Lighting, insulation, ventilation and other essential services

- 8.13 With the exception of the ventilation ducts in the servery (discussed in more detail below) the introduction of these elements has been accomplished in a reasonably discrete manner which causes the minimum possible harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset. The works are largely reversible and accepted as essential to the sustainable new uses of the listed building.

Eastern section (Exhibition & cafe area)

- 8.14 Characteristic interior spatial volumes with unobstructed, full height axial and transverse views are key features of ecclesiastic buildings and subject to some design amendment, the proposed conversion would largely preserve these qualities in the eastern part of the Chapel.
- 8.15 Relocation of the lectern and pulpit, and retention of the Rood Screen in situ preserve highly significant features of the listed building, and the inclusion of new interpretive material explaining the importance of the Chapel and the wider Hospital complex is welcomed.

Kitchen & Servery

- 8.16 There is no objection to catering equipment that is discretely concealed within the former Vestry. However the suspended 'raft' in the servery appears to have been designed to partially conceal ventilation equipment and in consequence, it is a bulky, visually intrusive element which - together with the ducts rising above it - appear entirely alien to the context.
- 8.17 The catering provision in the servery area must be simplified so that less service equipment is required and so that the bar/counter can be set back and avoid conflict with the adjacent window.
- 8.18 Response: The applicant has submitted revised details reducing the size of the raft over the bar and reducing the bar length.

Ramp and steps up to chancel

- 8.19 Provided these are independently structured elements which could be entirely removed without harm to original fabric, there is no objection to these interventions and full details will be required by condition.
- 8.20 Response: The applicants confirm that these will be de-mountable wooden structures details of which can be secured by condition (Condition 2).

Adaptation of the Organ room

- 8.21 The organ pipes and associated elements make an important contribution to the special qualities of the building and their retention and rehabilitation is welcomed. The minor alteration to the timber panelling below the pipes allows the space behind to be actively used and the work causes little harm to the significance of the building as a whole.

Memorial Plaques

- 8.22 These elements make an important contribution to the unique qualities of the Chapel and their careful relocation to areas where they will be clearly visible is welcomed. Full details of how they are to be removed from their original locations and reset in the new will be required by condition (Condition 3).

Freestanding furnishings

- 8.23 Flexible, freestanding furnishings are welcomed as a non-invasive solution to the provision of the secluded interior spaces essential to the new use of the listed building.

Western section (performance area)

Entrance lobby and adjacent storage area

- 8.24 The minor alterations to the lobby cause no harm to the significance of the Chapel and the installation of the adjacent 'light-weight' screens to form an open-topped storage area is accepted as facilitating sustainable use, while having little impact on the building's special qualities.

Toilet facilities

- 8.25 The provision of toilet facilities is clearly essential to the new, sustainable use of the listed building and the principle of subdivision to accommodate such facilities was agreed at pre-application stage. However it was envisaged that the required partitions would be 'light weight', reversible installations. Contrary to this expectation, the colonnade partition is a substantial masonry structure which requires invasive footings and results in permanent alteration to the listed building. There are also concerns over the relationship between the north-western windows and the toilet partitions. As noted at pre-application stage, the distinctive fenestration is a defining feature of the listed building and when experienced from the exterior, windows must not be obstructed by visually intrusive interior partitioning.

- 8.26 While the principle of subdivision to provide essential facilities remains acceptable, a more sympathetic approach is required to avoid harm to the significance of the Chapel. Consideration should be given to the possibility of accommodating toilet facilities within a 'pod' structure.
- 8.27 Response: The applicants have amended the plan to show these facilities in more of a 'pod' so they are not connected to the outside wall or internal columns. The creation of the corridor beside the toilet facilities is for fire escape purposes, the partitions can be supported with a low level beam that doesn't require 'invasive' footings. The drawings have been amended to remove the footings.

Stairs, disabled lift and mezzanine

- 8.28 The lift and stairs are discretely located and essential to the sustainable new use of the Chapel.
- 8.29 As agreed at pre-application stage, the construction of a mezzanine is acceptable in principle and enclosure by a full-height glazed screen allows some sense of the original spatial volumes to remain. However, preceding advice emphasised the need to recess the mezzanine away from the windows in order to minimise its intrusive visual presence and this matter has not been addressed in the current proposal. The distinctive fenestration is a defining feature of the listed building and when experienced from the exterior, windows must not be obstructed by visually intrusive interior partitioning.
- 8.30 While a mezzanine enclosed by a full height glazed screen remains acceptable in principle, a more sympathetic approach is required to avoid diminishing the special aesthetic qualities of the Chapel and thereby harming its significance.
- 8.31 Response: The drawings have been amended to show the mezzanine 'recessed' away from the windows.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 The proposed conversion of Horton Chapel is acceptable. Adapting an ecclesiastical building to secular uses inevitably results in considerable interior alteration. In this case, the interior has been subject to past insensitive treatment and the Chapel as a whole is dilapidated and at risk, so the need for a sustainable new use is pressing and carries great weight.
- 9.2 The precedent for the interruption of the full length, interior axial views has long been established and while the proposal undoubtedly transforms the original interior spatial qualities of the Chapel, careful consideration has clearly been given to reconciling conservation requirements with the needs of an active new use.

- 9.3 Nothing of historic significance is demolished or removed from the listed building and its external appearance remains largely unaltered. Although many alien elements are introduced to the interior, with few exceptions, the installations are entirely reversible and cause little permanent detriment. While fundamentally altering the way in which the interior of the building is experienced for the duration of the new use, actual harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset is limited.
- 9.4 Para. 131 of the NPPF requires Local Planning authorities to take account of 'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'. Para. 134 advises that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use'.
- 9.5 In this case, finding a new use is challenging and the proposal secures a sustainable future for the Chapel, while largely conserving its historic significance and the visual quality of its setting. Considerable heritage benefit and public benefit will both ensue.
- 9.6 All of the points raised by the Conservation Officer have been satisfactorily addressed by the applicants.
- 9.7 The scheme is therefore recommended for APPROVAL.

10 Recommendation

Listed building consent is **granted** subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

- (1) **The works hereby granted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.**

Reason: To comply with Section 18 (1) (a) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by Section 52(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- (2) **Detailed drawings of the proposed ramps and steps up to chancel, at a scale of not less than 1:20, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the building is brought into use and the ramps and steps so approved shall be constructed and installed in accordance with those details.**

Reason: To ensure that the designated heritage asset is protected and to accord with Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies Document 2015

- (3) **Full details of how the memorial plaques are to be removed from their original locations and reset in the new must be provided to the Local Planning Authority before any relocation work is commenced and those**

works must only be carried out in accordance with such details as are approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect these important features of the listed building and to accord with Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies Document 2015

- (4) The works hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:**

1778-SK-20-K	Proposed Ground Floor plan
1778-SK-21-J	Proposed Sections
1778-SK-22-C	Proposed Roof Plan
1778-SK-23-J	Proposed Site Plan
1778-SK-25-C	Proposed SW & NE Elevations
1778-SK-26-C	Proposed NW & SE Elevations
1778-SK-27-A	Mobile teaching pods
1778-SK-28	Internal Elevations Office Screen
1778-SK-29	Proposed Entrance screen
1778-SK-30-B	Internal Elevations Servery Bar
1778-SK-31-A	Services Entries and Excavations
1778-SK-32	Internal elevations secondary glazing
1778-SK-33	Roof level - rooflights and vent grills

Reason: To ensure that the designated heritage asset is protected and to accord with Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies Document 2015

Informative:

- (1) The Council confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of paragraph 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012**