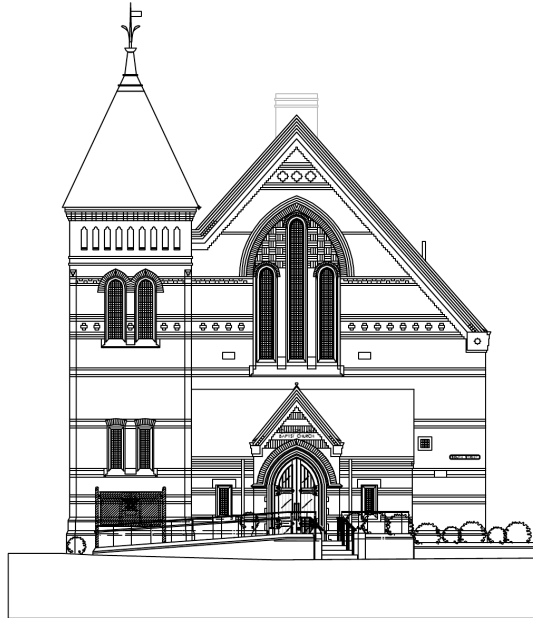




Caversham Baptist Church Reading

Planning Application for Proposed External Works and Alterations: Design & Access Statement

April 2019

1972
Rev.2



Chiltern Chambers 37 St Peter's Avenue Caversham Reading RG4 7DH

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Introduction

This Planning Application relates to proposed improvements to the church, including, accessibility, appearance, redesigned signage to the front and side of the building. In tandem are internal refurbishments which are not subject to Planning Consent.

This application is a resubmission following the withdrawal of the previous applications for the same scheme namely:

Application No: 180629

Application type: Full Planning Approval

The above application was WITHDRAWN by the applicant on 4 July 2018.

Application No: 180630

Application type: Advertisement Consent

The above application was WITHDRAWN by the applicant on 4 July 2018.

Following the withdrawal of the previous applications, we have worked on the scheme further in order to submit and gain approval for works to a Listed building, the scheme is now clearer in its detail and objectives and includes all the details authorised by the Listed Building Committee and detailed in the Certificate of Authorisation dated 29 March 2019

The Existing Building

Caversham Baptist Church is an active site with important community facilities. The church hosts regular weekly services including Sunday school and provides accommodation for a range of community groups including providing food for the homeless on a weekly basis.

The existing building is a Grade II listed building located at the junction of Prospect Street and South Street. The main pedestrian access into the Church is up a series of steps along South Street, through solid timber doors which are closed in appearance.

There is another daily access from the rear car park. A third door opens onto Prospect Street but is little used currently. This is actually the most prominent door.

Details of the Scheme Design

Overall Design Matters

The nature of the scheme is to make improvements to this community hub in the centre of Caversham, to bring the facilities up to date with regards to access and provide more open feel at the South entrance.

The entrance to the church can appear currently unwelcoming with solid and opaque timber door and the stairs are considered difficult in use and do in fact restrict access to the elderly and disabled for example



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Improvements are also needed to the ancillary and toilet facilities but these are not subject to Planning Consent being internal alterations.

To this end we propose the following:

At the South Front -

A new ramp and stair is proposed consisting of low brick walls with chamfered stone capping; the previous scheme featured a metal railing design which was seen as dominating the frontage in responses received regarding the original application.

Following discussions with the Baptist Union Listed Building Advisory Committee and the church, the proposal is now for a stainless steel and Glass Balustrade design. This is a contemporary lightweight design, sympathetic in contrast to an historic building. This design we believe represents the openness the church will like to convey to the community it services, as well as being less intrusive.

The configuration of the Ramp and stairs have been revisited in making this submission, but the restricted space available at the frontage and the change in level does limit the options available and the version submitted actually is in fact the only option available considering all factors

However additional planting has now been added to the scheme. The extent of the planting is shown on the drawings and the species have been carefully chosen to ensure the survival of the planting with minimum maintenance.

The new glazed front doors proposed will be of polished oak with etched glass infills. The new doors now incorporate the existing hinges in the design. The church's message to the community is that it is open, evolving, growing, contemporary and relevant to the modern community it supports. A solid door is the polar opposite to the experience and message the church will like to convey.

The exiting and historical doors will be conserved as follows:

Ex ED01 Storage

Carefully store Pair of Door in Loft above the Hall

Lay each door flat on 100x100 Timber Battens

If stacked allow for Batten between each door

A laminated sign to be physically attached to each door stating:

Origin of Door

Date of Storage

Reason for Storage

The BU Listed Building Advisory Committee conditions

Warning that

a- the door must not be removed from the Church

b- the door must not be altered

c- the door must not be destroyed without the prior written approval of the BU Listed Building Advisory Committee



There will be a new notice board at the frontage still and also new signage above the main entrance in the font style of the new Church logo design.

The existing tower door and other external doors will be renewed in polished oak; the design and construction will match the existing painted doors. The existing external and internal doors are now shown as reuse within the church and incorporated into the proposal

At Prospect Street, West side -

There will be a new signage at tower in the style of the new Church logo.

The sign has now been resigned, the size has be reduced from 2520w X 1352h to 1500w X 650h and the logo symbol removed; the LED surround has also been omitted. The sign now consist of the logo type on a Glass base fixed to the tower at the location shown on the drawings

To the rear of the building along Prospect Street we propose again replacing the existing painted door with a new polished oak door; the design and construction will match the existing painted door. The existing external and internal doors are now shown to be reused within the church and incorporated into the proposal

A new signage at high level in the style of the new Church logo.

The sign has now been resigned, the size has be reduced from 3930w X 596h to 900w X 900h and the LED surround has also been omitted. The sign now consist of the logo symbol and logo type on a Glass base fixed above and central to the Door at the location shown on the drawings

A new Noticeboard

The Noticeboard size has be reduced from 795w X 1063h to 600w X 800h and a product has been specified and approved by the BU Listed Building Advisory Committee to be

New A2 Poster Size

Weatherproof External Noticeboard

Heavy duty aluminium frame and

Polycarbonate acrylic cover

Colour: Grey

Orientation: Portrait

e-quip 4 education Ref PT00040P

The relocating the roundabout traffic sign from a post mounted sign to a wall mounted sign has now been REMOVED from the scheme. The Roundabout traffic sign will be retained in place

At East Elevation (Facing the car park)

A new railing to the existing ramp, design to match the proposed front railings

The existing side door will be renewed in polished oak door; the design and construction will match the existing painted door.

The remainder of the alterations proposed in the scheme are all internal and not requiring Planning Consent.



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Organ

The Organ needs to be removed to facilitate the Church's plans. During the course of the Listed Building process the BU Listed Building Advisory Committee consulted with the British Institute of Organ Studies, who stated that the organ was historically interesting and worthy of preservation. The following course of action has now been approved within then Listed Building Consent granted:

Organ to be removed from church when a suitable location is found to relocate the organ and re-erected at new location in playable form.

DO NOT MOVE without the prior written approval of the BU Listed Building Advisory Committee

Consideration has been given to the size, scale and design of the ramp, stairs and Balustrade in relations to the existing building and desire of the church to appear more open and accessible

The frontage will be constructed of materials to match the existing building; low brick wall, natural stone chamfered capping and an unobstructive and traditionally styled Glass Balustrade to allow maximum visibility of the Church entrance.

The proposal would not reduce on-site parking and the existing 13No of Car parking bays will be maintained.

It is important to stress that the scheme proposed does not represent an increase in activity on the site but rather an improvement to access provision, signage and ancillary facilities provided to accommodate the existing activities more effectively in line with current standards.

Access

Proper access into the building will be provided for ambulant disabled and wheelchair users in accordance with current Building Regulations. The front entrance doors will be wide with a levelled access to ease access and egress from the building.

Listed Building Matters

Caversham Baptist Church is a Place of Worship and subject to the Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Order 2010

Listing Building consent has been sought and granted by The Baptist Union of Great Britain. Attached is the Certificate of Authorisation issued by The Listed Building Advisory Committee of The Baptist Union of Great Britain & The Baptist Union of Wales on 29 March 2019.

Copies of the Consent Notice and related drawings are attached in this application as an appendix.

Church Statement

The Church have also made their own statement which is attached as an appendix to this document



Appendix ONE

Caversham Baptist Church Statement



Dear sirs,

Re: Planning Application for works to Caversham Baptist Church

I am writing in my capacity as chair of the Caversham Baptist Church Building Redevelopment Committee to explain the reasoning behind the application we are submitting.

Caversham Baptist Church is an active and lively church with 55 members and a regular congregation of around 100 adults. As well as the usual range of church services and Sunday School and other activities for our fellowship, we seek to actively serve the community around us, offering a number of activities that connect with hundreds of people in our local community each year including

- Time4U, a weekly parents/carers & toddlers group
- A weekly “Drop-In” for the less fortunate in partnership with Christian Community Action
- Friday Lunches which offer a weekly 3 course meal and companionship for a range of people from our community.
- An annual Community Fun Day on the May Day bank holiday.

We also have a long history of making our premises available for hire to support other groups within the local community. Current weekly users include a children's theatre school, a pilates group and keep fit classes, and we have a range of other occasional users.

Over the past 5 years we have been working with our architect, Neil Barr of DLK Architects to develop plans to improve the facilities so that we can continue and enhance our service to the community around us. This has included a feasibility study to examine different options for the building and consulting with the Caversham community via a leaflet drop to every home and business in Caversham, an open day and a public survey. Two key elements of feedback from this work was that the frontage of the building is not welcoming and it offers poor accessibility. It is with this feedback in mind that we have developed the plans that we now submit for planning consent.

We are very conscious that Caversham Baptist Church has been a prominent part of the Caversham street scene for over 140 years since it was completed 1874. We wish to ensure that the architectural merit of the building is maintained and indeed enhanced. We are planning only relatively low-key changes to the overall external look of the building, so as not to detract from the original design by Alfred Waterhouse (a notable architect who also designed Reading Town Hall and the Natural History Museum). The plans submitted include:



Showing the heart of Jesus, in the heart of Caversham

- A completely reworked main frontage in high quality materials that are architecturally appropriate to the building. This includes reinstating railings that would have been an original feature of the design but were removed during World War II.
- A ramp within the new frontage to make the front entrance of the building accessible to those with limited mobility or parents with pushchairs. At the bottom of the ramp we propose to create a new access point to the main frontage, aligned with Prospect Street pedestrian crossing point to simplify the access path.
- New, glazed doors and straight through access into the building to improve sight lines into the building to make it more inviting for visitors and newcomers.
- Enhancements to the landscaping around the secondary Prospect Street entrance.
- New external signage reflecting the church's recently refreshed logo

Overall, we believe that this package of improvements, alongside the significant improvements we have planned for the interior of the building will deliver a building that is fit for the 21st century whilst respecting the heritage of the premises. We believe they will enable the church to further develop our work in Caversham to engage with and serve an even wider range of people.

Yours faithfully

Richard Wilson

Treasurer, Trustee and Chair of Building Redevelopment Committee.

Caversham Baptist Church

Appendix TWO

Detail of the recently granted Listed Building Consent



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