

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Address: Function Hall, Polish Catholic Church Of The Sacred Heart

Application No: 181193 / LBC

Proposal: Repair of boundary walls to the church that front onto Watlington Street and St John's Road. The repairs will require the walls to be dismantled and rebuilt to match the existing.

Applicant: Polish Catholic Mission Reading

Date received (valid from): 06/07/2018

Target Decision date: 31/08/2018

Case officer: Tom French

1. Site description and Surrounding Area

The application site contains a Grade II listed ecclesiastical building and located to the east of Watlington Street. The application site is directly opposite the Grade II* listed building Watlington House. The application site is located within the Eldon Square conservation area, and is within an Air Quality Management Area.

The stone boundary walls along Watlington Street and into St Johns Road are built of squared stone, un-coursed stone with dressed ashlar copings and quoin stones forming the pillars and the pillars at the entrance gateways. There is decorative ironwork railings between the pillars and embedded in the stonework on top of the wall. The railings are different on Watlington Street to St Johns Road.

The listing description is as follows:

WATLINGTON STREET 1. 5128 (East Gide) Church of St John the Evangelist SU 7273 7/354 24.7.74. II GV 2. Church of England. 1872-73 by W A Dixon. Large Early English style rock faced Kentish Rag Church with buff and red sandstone dressings. South-west tower with angle buttresses and 2 light bell-stage openings. Gargoyles and machicolation below brick spire with gables. Columned doorway at front of tower with carved lunette and applied crocketed gable over. Tripled west window, stilted arches. Half octagon turrets of different heights flank west front. Tall short nave and chancel, gabled aisle chapels. Stonework around foundation stone excavated in order to remove the foundation stone.

2. The Proposal

Listed Building Consent is sought to repair the boundary wall of the church that front onto Watlington Street and St Johns Road. The proposed works consist of dismantling and repairing (including partial replacement) of the stone walls around the boundary of the site. The iron railings would also be refurbished and reinstated.

3. Consultation

A press notice was issued and a site notice has been displayed on site. No letters of representation have been received.

The RBC Heritage Consultant:

The RBC Heritage Consultant has provided the following comments:

Discussion

The existing boundary walls have deteriorated largely due to re-pointing in inappropriate and overly hard cementitious mortar which has caused the stonework to spall, exposing the core of the wall in places.

Recommendations

In view of the deteriorating condition of the walls, the repairs are to be welcomed and supported. Some stones additional will naturally be required in order to supplement any stones damaged beyond repair. It will also be necessary to ensure that the stones are re-built in a bond which preserves the original character of the wall, using a lime mortar which is not overly hard and does not contain cementitious material. The ironwork should be entirely re-useable and should be reinstated in using the same method after refurbishment.

Stone sample(s)

Unless agreed otherwise in writing, a sample(s) of facing stone(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to ordering of materials. All stonework incorporated in the boundary wall shall match the approved samples.

Reason: To accord with Reading Borough Council Core Strategy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment and to protect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Dismantling of the stone boundary wall

The stone boundary wall shall be carefully dismantled and all stones stored prior to their use in re-building of the boundary wall. Any deficit of stonework shall be made up using the matching stones, as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To accord with Reading Borough Council Core Strategy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment and to protect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Dismantling of ironwork

The railings and other ironwork forming part of the stone boundary wall shall be carefully dismantled and stored prior to their use in re-building of the boundary wall.

Reason: To accord with Reading Borough Council Core Strategy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment and to protect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Mortar Mix

No related works may be undertaken until details of the proposed mortar mix have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Mortar is to be lime-based, with a breathable finish. The inclusion of cement is not permitted.

Reason: To accord with Reading Borough Council Core Strategy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment and to protect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Subsequent to these comments being fed into the applicant, further details have been submitted to avoid the need for pre-commencement conditions (see 'other issues' of the appraisal section below).

4. Plans and Documents Considered

The Council, in reaching its recommendation, has taken into consideration the following plans & documents:

Drawing/Document number/title:

- A01 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A02 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A03 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A04 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A05 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A06 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A07 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A08 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A09 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A10 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A11 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A12 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A13 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A14 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A15 - Boundary Wall Repair
- Site Location Plan
- Block/Site Plan
- Photo Sheet No.01 - Boundary Walls
- Design & Access Statement Incorporating heritage Statement - Repair of the Boundary Walls, Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Watlington Street, Reading, July 2018

As received: 09/07/2018

- Email from the agent, Subject: RE: Polish Catholic Church, Sacred Heart, Watlington Street (Application Number 181193). Received by the LPA: 02/10/2018

5. Relevant Planning History

891346 - FUL - Erection of Vicarage including screen wall, fences and new access to existing Scout huts - Application Permitted

171464 - LBC - Repair of the east gables of the nave and the chancel to include repair/replacement of stone copings, wall repairs including repointing, replacement of cast-iron rainwater goods , repair and recovering of roof covering and gutter linings and repair and consolidation of accessible windows - Application Permitted

6. Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7. Relevant Planning Guidance

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Local Development Framework '*Core Strategy*' 2008 (Altered 2015) and '*Sites and Detailed Policies Document*' 2012 (Altered 2015).

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

The '*National Planning Policy framework*' ('NPPF') 2012 states clearly that its content is to be a material consideration in the determination of applications. The 'NPPF' states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document) according to their degree of consistency with the 'NPPF' (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the 'NPPF', the greater the weight that may be given). Accordingly, the 'NPPF' and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

8. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework;
National Planning Policy Guidance;

RBC Local Development Framework

Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015)

CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

9. Appraisal

Historic Character and Appearance

The NPPF details that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to the assets conservation. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be and any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

Policy CS33 states that the character and integrity of listed buildings will be preserved, and the Council will seek to enhance the settings of listed buildings wherever appropriate, by ensuring that new development in their vicinity is sympathetic.

Further to the consultation response received from the RBC Heritage Consultant the proposed works are considered to be relatively modest in scale. Given the deteriorating condition of the wall, at least in part due to inappropriate materials being used during a previous repair, it is considered that the proposed works will be to the benefit of and enhance the character and appearance of the historic asset, nearby listed building and the wider conservation area.

Given the nature of the proposals, the significance of the heritage assets (the application building, nearby listed buildings and the wider conservation area) is not considered to be adversely affected. It is considered that the proposed works would have a beneficial impact on the character or appearance of the street scene or conservation area.

The proposal accords with Policy CS33.

Other Issues

Further to the consultation response from the RBC Heritage Consultant, and to avoid pre-commencement conditions, the applicant has submitted details of the proposed mortar mix and replacement stones to be used. As such conditions are recommended requiring the mortar mix and stones used are as described in an email from the agent received by the LPA 02/10/2018, Subject: RE: Polish Catholic Church, Sacred Heart, Watlington Street (Application Number 181193) (i.e. they are compliance conditions rather than requiring details to be submitted).

10. Recommendation

Grant listed building consent, subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. The works hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this consent.

Reason: In accordance with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. All new external and internal works and finishes, and any works of making good, shall match the existing original fabric in respect of using materials of a matching form, composition and consistency, detailed execution and finished appearance, except where indicated otherwise on the drawings hereby approved.

Reason: In order that the special architectural and historic interest of this Listed Building is safeguarded in accordance with Policy CS33.

3. The consent relates only to the following plans/drawings/documents, and the works hereby approved shall be carried out in all respects in accordance with the submitted application and accompanying drawings:

Drawing/Document number/title:

- A01 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A02 - Boundary Wall Repair
- A03 - Boundary Wall Repair
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As received: 09/07/2018

- Email from the agent, Subject: RE: Polish Catholic Church, Sacred Heart, Watlington Street (Application Number 181193). Received by the LPA: 02/10/2018

Reason: This is to ensure that the works carried out are fully in accordance with the approved drawings and details in order to protect the special historic and architectural character of the listed building, in accordance with Policy CS33 of the Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015).

4. The stone boundary wall shall be carefully dismantled and all stones stored prior to their use in re-building of the boundary wall. Any deficit of stonework shall be made up using the matching stones, as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To accord with Reading Borough Council Core Strategy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment and to protect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

5. The railings and other ironwork forming part of the stone boundary wall shall be carefully dismantled and stored prior to their use in re-building of the boundary wall.

Reason: To accord with Reading Borough Council Core Strategy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment and to protect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

6. The mortar mix and facing stone(s) to be used in the construction of the proposed development shall be:

Mortar mix:

- 1 part quick/lump lime
- 3.5 parts Chardstock sharp sand
- 0.5 parts red Taunton fine sand
- 1 part Cotswold stone dust
- 5% red brick dust pozzolan

Facing stone(s):

Syreford limestone from Syreford Quarries & Masonry Ltd

as shown on the approved plans or documents.

Reason: To accord with Reading Borough Council Core Strategy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment and to protect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Informatives

1. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission

may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.

2. The applicant's attention is drawn to Building Regulations requirements. Please contact Building Control on 0118 937 2449 for advice.
3. The construction (and demolition) of the development will be subject to environmental health law and the applicant is referred to:
<http://beta.reading.gov.uk/environmentalprotection>