

West Area Planning Committee

13th January 2015

Application Number: 14/01442/LBD

Decision Due by: 18th September 2014

Proposal: Demolition of boundary walls on north and west elevations as part of re-development of canal site (14/01441/FUL) and involving provision of ramped access to south entrance of church. (Amended plans)

Site Address: Land At Jericho Canal Side, Oxford, Oxfordshire [Church of St Barnabas]. Site Plan **Appendix 1**

Ward: Jericho And Osney

Agent: Haworth Tompkins Ltd

Applicant: Cheer Team Corporation Ltd

Recommendation: West Area Planning Committee is recommended to support the proposal in principle subject to and including conditions listed below.

Reasons for Approval

1. It is considered that the proposals, subject to the conditions imposed, would accord with the special character, setting and features of special architectural or historic interest of the listed building. It has taken into consideration all other material matters, including matters raised in response to consultation and publicity. The proposals are considered to accord with the requirements of relevant policies in the Oxford Local Plan, Core Strategy and the NPPF.
2. The City Council has given considerable weight and importance to the desirability of preserving or enhancing designated heritage assets and their settings, including the listed building(s) and/or conservation area. The proposal would cause harm to the boundary walls of the Grade I listed Church, however, it is considered that this is less than significant harm and in any event is outweighed and justified by the substantial public benefits of creating a public square. Any harm would be mitigated by recording and salvage of the walls. The proposal would not be harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation area, canal and other non-designated heritage assets. The proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of relevant policies in the Oxford Local Plan, Core Strategy and the NPPF.

Conditions

- 1 Commencement of works LB consent
- 2 LB consent - works as approved only
- 3 7 days' notice to LPA
- 4 LB notice of completion
- 5 Repair of damage after works
- 6 Recording
- 7 Re-use of stone and brick
- 8 Metal finish
- 9 Handrail and posts iron
- 10 Paint colour

Main Local Plan Policies:

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016

HE2 - Archaeology

HE4 - Archaeological Remains Within Listed Blgs

HE3 - Listed Buildings and Their Setting

HE7 - Conservation Areas

CP1 - Development Proposals

CP8 - Design Development to Relate to its Context

CP10 - Siting Development to Meet Functional Needs

Core Strategy

CS18_ - Urban design, town character, historic env

Other Planning Documents

Jericho Canalside SPD (2013)

Other Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework.

The Church of St Barnabas is a grade I listed building.

This application is in the Jericho Conservation Area.

Planning Practice Guidance.

Relevant Site History:

12/02483/FUL - Demolition of boiler house. Erection of new building housing WCs, utility room and tool store with rooflight. Insertion of new door at north end. PER 28th November 2012.

12/02484/LBC - Demolition of boiler house. Erection of new building housing WCs, utility room and tool store with rooflight. Insertion of new door at north end. PER 29th November 2012.

14/01441/FUL - Demolition of various structures on an application site including former garages and workshops. Erection of 22 residential units (consisting of 1 x 2 bed, 13 x 3 bed and 1 x 4 bed houses, plus 3 x 1 bed and 4 x 2 bed flats), together with new community centre, restaurant, boatyard, public square, winding hole and public bridge across the Oxford Canal. Demolition of existing rear extension and erection of two storey extension to Vicarage at 15 St. Barnabas Street and ramped access to church entrance. (Amended plans) PCO

Representations Received:

English Heritage has no objection to the principle of the proposals.

Statutory and Internal Consultees:

Oxford Civic Society, English Heritage Commission, Oxford Architectural And Historic Society Victorian Group, Oxfordshire Architectural & Historical Society, Society For The Protection Of Ancient Buildings, Victorian Society, Garden History Society.

Issues:

Access and impacts of proposals as affecting the building's character as one of special architectural or historic interest and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Sustainability:

The proposals would help the continued use of the church in its original use.

The Site, Proposals and Officers Assessment:

1. The church of St Barnabas Cardigan Street is the parish church of Jericho. The church was built from 1868-9, the campanile in 1872 (reroofed with a lower pitched roof 1893) and the Morning chapel (now Lady Chapel) and N aisle erected 1888-9. The architect was Sir Arthur Blomfield (1829-1899), awarded the RIBA Royal gold medal in 1891. Blomfield was one of the most active and successful church architects of the Gothic Revival. His early work is characterised by a strong muscular quality and the use of structural polychrome often with continental influences.
2. Blomfield was articled to P.C. Hardwick and began independent practice in 1856 in London. In 1882 Blomfield designed the Royal College of Music in London. In 1890-97 he rebuilt the nave of Southwark Cathedral. He was highly regarded as a church restorer. One of Blomfield's early pupils was Thomas Hardy. The church is an important monument to the influence of the

Oxford Movement in the city where it began.

3. The church is one of the most interesting and unusual churches from the great era of church-building in the mid-C19. It was designed to provide a place of Anglican worship in the poor area of Jericho and was built at the expense of Thomas Combe, superintendent of the Clarendon Press, a strong Anglo-Catholic and an early patron of the Pre-Raphaelites. He stipulated that at the church there should be 'strength, solidity and thoroughly sound construction' but that 'not a penny was to be thrown away on external appearance and decoration'. Internal embellishment was to be added gradually.
4. Blomfield responded to the challenge and initially proposed to build the whole church of concrete (then a very new and experimental material which was being tried out in a number of places) but elected for rubble walls faced with cement. This was an innovative method of construction.
5. The style is Italianate Romanesque, in complete contrast to the prevalent Gothic style of church-building in the 1860s. The other fundamental characteristic of the exterior is the use of cement rendering for the facing. This is decorated with narrow brick banding and polychrome red and brick arches to the openings. The nave has tall, round-headed clerestory windows and brick string-courses. To the aisles there are low lean-to roofs and small two-light square-headed windows, each with a central column with moulded capital and base. At the south west corner of the building the south porch wraps it and is a continuation of the south aisle. The south doorway has corbelled detailing to the jambs and an outer door with good strap hinges. Above the lintel, the wall is pierced with three openings for an overlight.
6. The choice of style at St Barnabas is most unusual and is evidently to do with the patron's desire to break the mould of church-building and provide something that is economical yet dignified. Non-Gothic Anglican churches would remain extremely rare for the rest of the C19. The objective was to provide a place of worship that could be embellished over time, as intended by the founder, and the final intentions have never been fully realised.
7. The boundary walls are constructed of rubble stone and brick and are part of the church's curtilage. Parts of the walls are visible in a historic photograph of 1875 taken by Henry Taunt. These walls have historic significance as evidence of the church ownership and historic pattern of walls to the canal side. The high level walls have suffered from decay caused by cement-rich pointing. A modern timber fence would be removed but this does not form part of the special architectural or historic interest of the church.
8. There are three sections of wall, as follows:
 - A low level red brick wall with bullnose engineered brick coping on the north side of the church: this has been partly knocked down recently with material lying to the church side. There is a straight joint between the church corner and the wall.
 - A high level rubble stone random coursed boundary wall (with some ashlar) to the north. This has suffered from some localised decay and is bulging in

- places.
- A high level rubble stone random coursed boundary wall (with some brick and some ashlar) to the west.
9. The loss of the boundary walls are justified as this would open up the church to the wider proposed Jericho development as part of redevelopment of canal site (14/01441/FUL). Some minor harm would be caused by the loss of original fabric and historic evidence. This harm would be less than substantial and would be justified by the integrating the church with the development proposals and creating a new public square. Any harm would be mitigated by recording and by salvage of historic material for re-use in the proposed ramp and in the wider canal site redevelopment.
 10. A ramp with landing and railings are proposed to the south entrance of the church. This entrance is currently used as the main entrance and has two stone steps leading up to the threshold. The handrail and posts would be simple in design as befits the unadorned appearance of the church. The material proposed would be steel, painted, however it is considered that iron would be more appropriate and this has been conditioned. The ramp could use material salvaged from the demolition of the walls.
 11. The proportions of the doorway would be altered to a minor extent however it is considered that this would be justified by the improved access.
 12. The proposed location for a ramp is appropriate as alternative locations such as the historic main entrance doors of the west end would not be appropriate locations and would unbalance its symmetry. It would not be appropriate to insert a new door into the church walls. In addition wheelchair users would share the main entrance and not a side entrance which is in the spirit of the Equality Act 2010.

Conclusion:

13. The proposals subject to satisfactory discharge of conditions would not cause significant harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the church or the character or appearance of the conservation area; are justified; would accord with local and national policies and the NPPF, would improve access to the church and would be reversible.

Human Rights Act 1998

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant Listed Building Consent, subject to conditions. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance

with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Officers have considered, with due regard, the likely effect of the proposal on the need to reduce crime and disorder as part of the determination of this application, in accordance with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. In reaching a recommendation to grant Listed Building Consent, officers consider that the proposal will not undermine crime prevention or the promotion of community safety.

Background Papers:

PPS5 Practice Guide
14/01441/FUL

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Date: 5 January 2015