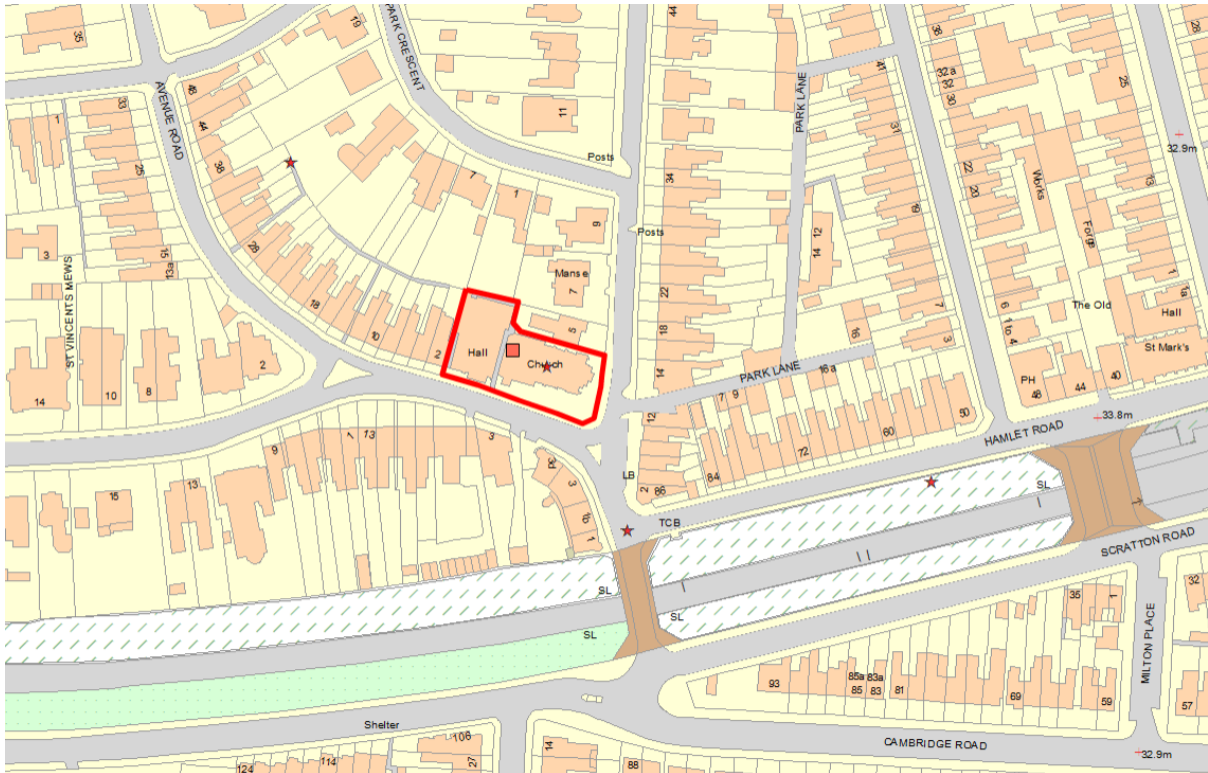


|                             |  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Reference:</b>           | 1. 18/02211/FUL<br>2. 18/02212/LBC   |  |
| <b>Ward:</b>                | Milton   |  |
| <b>Proposal:</b>            | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partial demolition to church and church hall, erect single storey extension to west side of church, erect gabled extensions to north-east and north-west corners of church hall with internal alterations to convert into six dwellings, associated garages and cycle storage, layout amenity space and one visitor car parking space, form vehicular access onto Avenue Road, install boundary railings, install rooflights and alter elevations</li> <li>2. Partial demolition to church and church hall, erect single storey extension to west side of church, erect gabled extensions to north-east and north-west corners of church hall with internal alterations to convert into six dwellings, associated garages and cycle storage, layout amenity space and one visitor car parking space, form vehicular access onto Avenue Road, install boundary railings, install rooflights and alter elevations (Listed Building Consent)</li> </ol> |  |
| <b>Address:</b>             | Park Road Methodist Church<br>Park Road<br>Westcliff-On-Sea<br>Essex<br>SS0 7PE  |  |
| <b>Applicant:</b>           | David Morton   |  |
| <b>Agent:</b>               | Ayshford and Sansome   |  |
| <b>Consultation Expiry:</b> | 3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2019   |  |
| <b>Expiry Date:</b>         | 11 <sup>th</sup> March 2019  |  |
| <b>Case Officer:</b>        | Abbie Greenwood  |  |
| <b>Plan Nos:</b>            | 1716/T/001, 1716/T/002, 1716/T/003, 1716/T/004,<br>1716/T/005, 1716/T/006, 1716/T/007, 1716/T/008,<br>1716/T/009, 1716/T/010, 1716/T/011, 1716/T/012,<br>1716/T/013, 1716/T/014, 1716/T/015, 1716/T/016,<br>1716/T/017, Design and Access and Heritage Statement by<br>M Warner and R Coombs dated November 2016, Addendum<br>to Design and Access and Heritage Statement by Ayshford<br>and Sansome dated November 2018, Outline Acoustic<br>Design by Cole Jarman dated 10 <sup>th</sup> August 2018, Thermal  |  |

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
|                        | Modelling Report and Services Strategy by The Engineering Workshop LLP dated 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2018, Viable Alternative Uses Report by Wheeldon and Deacon Chartered Surveyors dated 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2010 |
| <b>Recommendation:</b> | <b>1. REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION</b><br><b>2. REFUSE LISTED BUILDING CONSENT</b>   |



# 1 The Proposal

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought to convert the existing church building into 4 three bedroom apartments and to convert the church hall into a parking garage for 6 cars with 2 two bedroom apartments at first floor. Both buildings are grade II listed. The proposal will involve significant alteration to the exterior and internal fabric and spaces including some demolition. The key alterations are as follows (It should be noted that despite being shown on some of the drawings, the lost spire is not proposed for reinstatement) :

## *Church*

### Exterior

- Insertion of 30 rooflights into the existing slate roof.
- Insertion of 8 louvered ventilation panels measuring 1200mm x 400mm into the walls below the main windows.
- Demolition of the single storey flat roofed vestry addition to the west elevation of the building and its replacement with a new smaller single storey lobby addition which links to the existing organ loft/porch.
- Associated landscaping and reinstatement of boundary railings to south, north and east of the building facing the street.

### Interior

- Demolition of internal balcony/gallery within main worship space.
- Relocation of pulpit and alter screen into the altered vestry.
- Relocation of memorial plaques into new lobby area.
- Removal of organs and all but 4 pews which will be relocated to the new lobby area.
- Insertion of 2 additional floors across the entire building.
- Insertion of a large number of partitions to create 4 x 3 bedroom apartments totalling 38 individual rooms.
- Installation of associated servicing and internal voids including ventilation and heat recovery units and sound insulation required for residential conversion.

## *Church Hall*

### *Exterior*

- Demolition of 4 former classrooms to west side of the building and demolition of part of the remaining western main internal wall to create double width opening to facilitate the conversion of the ground floor to a parking garage.
- Installation of parking gate with feature hipped roof to south west corner of the south elevation facing the street.
- Demolition of the two storey rear addition.
- Demolition of part of the roof including 4 gables to the east and west roofslopes.
- Formation of replacement gables to east and west roofslopes and a replacement smaller two storey extension to northern end of the building.

### *Interior*

- Subdivision of ground floor at southern and northern end of the building to create 6 enclosed parking bays with roller shutters to central turning area.
- Insertion of a new floor to create 2 x 2 bed apartments at first floor each having 5 rooms and an external balcony to the rear.
- Creation of a shared communal amenity space of 125 sqm to the north of the church hall to serve all proposed units

- 1.2 The change of use of the buildings and the external changes require planning permission. The physical exterior and internal changes to the buildings require listed building consent.

### *Background to the Proposal*

#### *Pre – application 2010*

- 1.3 A broadly similar scheme for the conversion of the church into 7 units over 3 floors and the demolition of the church hall to form a parking area with 2 apartments above the rear spaces was submitted for pre application advice in 2010. At this time the Council and Historic England raised significant concerns relating to the impact of rooflights and the inset balcony on the roof of the church, the extent of subdivision of the main worship space and the demolition of the church hall and the gap that this would create in the streetscene. It was considered that the proposal resulted in substantial harm to the listed buildings and conservation area. The pre-application advice suggested that the applicant consider alternative uses for the buildings which did not require such significant external and internal changes such as commercial, cultural, education or community uses. The applicant was specifically advised that if they wanted to pursue a proposal for residential conversion, then a rigorous marketing exercise should be carried out and evidenced to justify the case for residential use which is seen as requiring greater intervention than other potential uses.

#### *Design Review 2013*

- 1.4 Following the receipt of the pre-application response the applicant sought a second opinion on the proposals. The same proposals were then put before a Shape East Design Review Panel in 2013. The panel supported the Council's view also expressing significant reservations as to the extent of subdivision of the church interior. Particular concerns were raised regarding the impact of dividing the space into three floors which was seen as having a significant impact on the volume and character of the building and the quality of the internal space; the extent of alterations to the exterior particularly to the main roofslope to the south and concern over the demolition of the listed church hall and the design and placement of the apartment building to the rear of the proposed car park. The design review suggested the following should be considered:

- The proposal should first and foremost consider uses other than residential which require less intervention and robustly demonstrate the case if these are considered unviable.
- The proposal should reduce the subdivision of the main space including a reduction of the number of floors and pulling away from the south elevation.
- The proposal should consider through dwellings (dwellings that run from the front south wall to the back north wall.)

- The proposal should seek to locate all roof lights to the less visible north elevation.
  - The panel raised concerns regarding potential sound transition between the units and queried how this would be addressed.
  - The panel advised that it was important for the church hall to be retained
- 1.5 As with the Council's pre application response the panel stated that in making the case for future residential conversion the applicant should demonstrate that a range of alternative uses for the buildings which would enable less intervention, had been explored and fully evidenced and that a range of design options were considered.
- 1.6 In response to these comments in 2010 and 2013 the applicant has amended the proposal to reduce the number of units within the main church from 7 units to 4 although it is noted that these are now larger units with more rooms and that 3 floors of accommodation is still proposed. It is also noted that in the current proposal the listed church hall building is now only partially demolished, retaining most of the front elevation to the street. Some other alterations have been made to the detailed design such as the arrangement of rooflights. The proposal includes a surveyors report from 2010 which comments on why residential use was chosen but no marketing or viability information has been submitted with the application to justify why other less intrusive uses are not viable.
- 1.7 The outcome of the pre-application discussions and the Design Review are afforded some weight in the appraisal of these applications, however, it should be noted that great weight is given to responses received from statutory consultees on the current proposals such as Historic England.

## **2 Site and Surroundings**

- 2.1 Park Road Methodist Church and Church Hall are grade II listed buildings. The church was constructed in 1872 to serve the newly formed Park Estate. It is built of Kentish ragstone with a large slate roof and feature pinnacles at the eastern end. The decorative fleche or spire has unfortunately been lost although the base remains marking its original location on the roof. The church is a simple but striking Gothic Revival Style and is a prominent landmark in the Milton Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The interior of the church is arranged as a single worship space with a mezzanine gallery at the eastern end accessed by a single staircase. The interior is lit by tall, narrow lancet windows below an exposed timber roof structure which includes carved braces, decorative columns and spandrels giving the space a dramatic impact. The original floor, pews and liturgical furnishings including the pulpit, screen and organs have been retained and give extra formality and grandeur to the interior. The intactness of the interior is noted as being of particular merit and significance.
- 2.3 The adjacent church hall, also grade II listed, was built to host the church school. It matches the style of the church to the street including the used of Kentish ragstone and replica pinnacles. It is yellow stock brick to the rear and has the characteristic appearance of later Victorian schools. It is a historically significant companion to the church.

- 2.4 The buildings are set close together on the plot at the junction of Park Road and Avenue Road. They provide good enclosure to the street at this key junction and are considered important landmarks for the conservation area. The houses surrounding the church are generally late Victorian and Edwardian in style and together form a striking streetscape. Opposite the church is a modern terrace which has been designed to replicate the Victorian style. This is moderately successful.
- 2.5 The buildings are located within Milton Conservation Area which is generally residential in character. There is one terrace of local shops to the south east of the site, most of which have been converted to residential use. The main town centre of Southend and the Southend Central Railway Station, are located within walking distance to the east. The London Road Public Transport Corridor is a short distance to the north. The seafront is located within reasonable walking distance to the south of the site.
- 2.6 The buildings were listed in 1984. The official listing description for the church and church hall is as follows:

*'Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1872 by E Hoole. Ragstone with ashlar dressings, slate roof. Gothic style. Projecting gabled porch to Park Road has plank double doors with decorative hinges flanked by two light windows under parapets. Tall pinnacles flank central five light window with geometrical tracery. Smallest lancets to right and left, all with stopped drip moulds. Façade to Avenue Road is a six window range with buttresses and a porch to left. Gable fronted hall in similar style to left also has projecting porch and three 2-light windows flanked by pinnacles. The church was built as part of the Park Estate on ground given by J G Baxter.'*

## **Planning Considerations**

- 3.1 The main considerations in relation to the planning application are the design and impact on the character and appearance of the site and wider area, impact on the heritage assets, the impact on neighbour amenities, amenities of future occupiers, and any transport, highway and access issues and CIL. The only consideration in relation to the application for listed building consent is the impact on the architectural and historic character and significance of the listed buildings and their settings.

## **4 Appraisal**

### **Principle of the Development**

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018) Core Strategy (2007) policies KP1, KP2, CP1, CP3, CP4, CP6, CP7 and CP8; Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5, DM13, DM15**

- 4.1 The overarching aim of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to promote sustainable development. Within the framework this is split into 3 objectives, an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. The definition of the environmental objective within paragraph 8 of the framework makes particular reference to protecting and enhancing the built and historic environment as being a key contributor in achieving this objective.

- 4.2 Within this framework there is no objection in principle to the conversion and adaptation of listed buildings or loss of church uses provided that the proposal has due regard for the impact that these works would have on the character and significance of the listed buildings. This is discussed in detail below, along with the consideration of the impact on the character of the conservation area, any impact on neighbour amenity, transport and highways, the quality of accommodation for future occupiers and wider sustainability issues. The principle of the development is therefore considered to be acceptable subject to these considerations.

### **Design and Impact on the Listed Building and wider Milton Conservation Area**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (2018) Core Strategy (2007) policies KP1, KP2 and CP4; Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5 and advice contained within the Southend Design and Townscape Guide (2009)**

- 4.3 In determining this application the Council has a statutory duty under section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.
- 4.4 Section 72(1) of the Planning and Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 states that special attention should also be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.
- 4.5 In relation to works affecting listed buildings the National Planning Policy Framework states

*192. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

*193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

*194 Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.*

*195. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:*

*a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*

*b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*

*c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*

*d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

4.6 Policy KP2 of the Core Strategy requires that “*all new development contributes to economic, social, physical and environmental regeneration in a sustainable way*”.

And that development should:

*“conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations”.*

4.7 Policy CP4 states that:

*Development proposals will be expected to contribute to the creation of a high quality, sustainable urban environment which enhances and complements the natural and built assets of Southend. This will be achieved by:*

*7. safeguarding and enhancing the historic environment, heritage and archaeological assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Ancient Monuments*

4.8 Policy DM1 states:

*‘In order to reinforce local distinctiveness all development should:*

*1(i) Add to the overall quality of the area and respect the character of the site, its local context and surroundings in terms of its architectural approach, height, size, scale, form, massing, density, layout, proportions, materials, townscape and/or landscape setting, use, and detailed design features giving appropriate weight to the preservation of a heritage asset based on its significance in accordance with Policy DM5 where applicable;*

4.9 In relation to development affecting a listed building and development in Conservation Areas DM5 states:

*‘2. Development proposals that result in the total loss of or substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, including listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas, will be resisted, unless there is clear and convincing justification that outweighs the harm or loss.*



*Development proposals that are demonstrated to result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset will be weighed against the impact on the significance of the asset and the public benefits of the proposal, and will be resisted where there is no clear and convincing justification for this.'*

- 4.10 The church has been largely vacant since it was sold over 20 years ago. In 1998 permission was granted to use the buildings for storage however, it does not seem that this was implemented particularly in relation to the main church itself which still contains all its fixtures and fittings including many pews.
- 4.11 The proposal seeks to convert the church into 4 apartments and to convert the church hall into a parking garage for 6 cars with 2 additional apartments above. The proposed changes are set out in section 1 above and will be considered in detail below.
- 4.12 In assessing the impact that a development will have on a designated heritage asset, including both listed buildings and buildings within a conservation area, it is first necessary to identify the significance of the heritage assets. The official listing description for the buildings are noted in paragraph 2.6 above. In this case the significance of the listed buildings and contribution to the conservation area can be summarised as:
- A fine example of an early gothic revival church.
  - Largely unaltered exterior and interior including survival of some fine fixtures and fittings within the main church.
  - The open spatial character and quality of the worship space roof within main church including its significant volume, exposed trusses and timbered roof.
  - The church hall designed to complement the main church is a historically significant companion and together they form an impressive group in the streetscene
  - The importance of the pair as a local landmark and their contribution to character of the surrounding conservation area, the development which they were built to serve.
  - Historical associations with the area and the rise of Methodism in Southend.
- 4.13 Whilst it is recognised that these buildings have been vacant for many years and the Council is keen to see these important listed buildings given a new lease of life, it is important to remember that listed buildings are a finite resource and the Council has a duty to ensure that all development proposals affecting listed buildings in Southend have respect for their special character and significance so that they are protected from significant and irreversible harm.
- 4.14 The impact of the proposed changes to these listed buildings is discussed below.

### *Church*

- 4.15 The church is proposed to be converted into 4 apartments by splitting the building into quarters and inserting 3 floors to form dwellings each over 3 floors and creating a total of 38 rooms within the worship space. The floors will be set away from the north and south walls by 1m to reduce the impact of the conversion on the exterior views of the building and to provide a ventilation void for the interior rooms.

- 4.16 The exterior of the church remains relatively unchanged but introduces 30 rooflights, the demolition of the vestry to the north west corner to form a new lobby, the insertion of fresh air vents below the main windows and the insertion of clear glazing in some of the existing windows and doors.
- 4.17 Although the number of units within the main church has been reduced since the pre-application proposal and the new floors have been pulled a short distance away from the main elevations, the size of the apartments has increased and the number of rooms created by the proposal is significant (38). It is considered that the level of subdivision of this area, both horizontally and vertically, is still too great. If this proposal were to be implemented the spacious character and integrity of the church's worship space would be completely destroyed and the interest of its largely unaltered interior would be lost. Concern is particularly raised in relation to the number of floors proposed and the number of subdivisions within this space. Section drawings submitted with the application show the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor is to be inserted within the upper section of the exposed roof structure which means that this will no longer be seen as part of the main space. This will foreshorten the scale of the roofspace into more domestic proportions (2.4m floor height to the main living area) and would be inappropriate in this context and for a building of this character where a view to the proposed feature roof would be expected.
- 4.18 There will also be a significant impact on the historic fixtures and fittings within the building which at present are largely intact. The gallery and the organ will be demolished along with the historic floor covering, most of the pews, and the other features including the pulpit, screen and memorials will be relocated out of the main space into the new lobby area at the western end of the building. This too will harm the significance of the listed building.
- 4.19 There is also a requirement for extensive servicing to be introduced. Supporting documents submitted with the proposal comment that there is a need for up to 8 external condenser units to provide the necessary ventilation to meet building regulation requirements with fresh air being provided via 8 air vents of 1200mm x 400mm (3 on the principal elevation) and some of the 30 rooflights. No information has been provided as to where these external condenser units would be located but they are likely to have a significant impact on the exterior of the building and public views thereof. The size and prominent location of the southern vents is also a concern.
- 4.20 The acoustic report states that a '*mass barrier will be required to protect the head details of the party walls. It has been advised that the existing roof construction may not be able to support the weight of such ceilings and therefore they should be suspended from the proposed internal steel framework.....This ceiling should be installed where the pitched roof forms part of the ceilings of the second floor spaces with appropriate detailing around the roof lights.*' (4.1.1-4.1.5). This would obscure the exposed timber roof structure significantly impacting on the character and significance of the listed building. The proposal has therefore failed to demonstrate an acceptable solution to sound proofing of the units.

- 4.21 In relation to the exterior the arrangement of the rooflights has been amended from the pre-application design which saw two large groups, one as a cut in balcony feature, on the front elevation. This initial design was considered to cause great harm to the character of the building. Within the current proposal the 30 rooflights now proposed are more evenly spread across the roof and more ordered in their placement so that they align with the main windows. Whilst this has addressed concerns relating to the individual scale of interventions within the roof it is considered that the number of rooflights proposed on the main south slope, which is highly prominent in the streetscene, is too great and that this will detrimentally impact on the character of the listed building and the wider conservation area. This too is a consequence of the number of floors and number of rooms proposed within the building.
- 4.22 There is less concern over the loss of the single storey vestry in the north west corner of the building and its replacement with a new lobby although knocking through a large opening in the main west wall under the feature west window will require significant engineering which is a concern. Alternatives should be considered for the layout and circulation in this area - through dwellings as recommended by the Design Review may be one option. The existing vestry is a single storey flat roofed element which cannot be seen from the street, appears to be a later addition to the building and is separate to the main worship area and of less significance in this respect. There is therefore no objection to a replacement single storey extension in this location. The proposed design of the new lobby appears to be a simple small flat roofed structure glazing to the north elevation and solid walls to the west. Its detailing is unclear on the submitted drawings but this could be addressed by requiring further details to be submitted.
- 4.23 Overall therefore it is considered that the impact on the church would cause great harm to its significance. This view is supported by Historic England who have submitted a strong objection to the proposal in its current form (see paragraph 6.1 of this report). In relation to the proposed alterations to the main church, Historic England have commented that the proposed works would ' *completely compromise the interior of the building, losing any sense of its original open character and any ability to read the architectural elements of the building in combination. Any residential use would necessarily bring major changes to the interior, not least the loss of furnishings, but the proposals would have an intensive impact, beyond what might be necessary for the creation of fewer units. We are concerned this would have a highly damaging and harmful impact on the historic significance of the listed building. We have considered this application in terms of this policy and are seriously concerned that the degree of subdivision caused by the proposals could result in a very high level of harm to significance of the listed building in terms of the NPPF, paragraphs 193 and 194. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets affected by proposed development and the contribution their setting might make to that significance.*'

- 4.24 Notwithstanding these individual concerns, there is an overarching issue of whether the building would be better converted to another alternative use which would enable better preservation of its main volume and features. Successful church conversions, where they occur, achieve a good balance between maintaining the openness of the main worship space and the introduction of subtle and generally lightweight divisions such as galleries and mezzanines to enable this open character to still be read. It is generally easier to achieve this for non-residential uses such as commercial, education, community or even an alternative religious use which may be better suited to this building. As noted above both the Council and the Design Review Panel recommended that the applicant undertake a robust marketing exercise to demonstrate the viability of alternative uses. A report entitled 'Viable Alternative Uses Report by Wheeldon and Deacon Chartered Surveyors dated 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2010' has been submitted with the application which makes passing reference to alternative uses such as offices but dismisses this as a option because of the level of change required [which it is noted is likely to be far less than currently proposed] and because the demand for offices is low although there is no evidence to demonstrate this. The report makes no mention of other uses except that there may be potential for a nursery within the Church Hall. There is no evidence that any marketing or costings have been undertaken. It is considered that this report is significantly out of date and does not robustly demonstrate that other less harmful uses would not be viable for the main church building. It is noted that in their comments Historic England also consider this document to be poor and that it does not justify that residential use is the only viable option for the building.
- 4.25 It is therefore considered that the proposal has failed to demonstrate the case for residential conversion of the main church into 4 apartments.

#### *Church Hall*

- 4.26 The church hall is a historically significant companion to the church but its interior is less important than the church itself as it a much smaller more compartmentalised space. It has a similar timbered ceiling as the main church but of a smaller scale, which is a positive feature, but otherwise it has no fixtures or fittings of note. In this respect it is less sensitive to conversion than the main church. The church hall has suffered from dry rot, which has been addressed, and water ingress though the roof of the former classrooms on the west side and the main roof on the east side which have not been repaired and is causing the building to deteriorate. The two storey rear cross wing, which is a later addition, has a number of severe cracks which are threatening its integrity. Consequently the building is in a significantly worse state of repair internally than the main church.
- 4.27 At pre application stage this building was proposed for total demolition. This was raised as a significant concern by the Council and the Design Review Panel both in relation to the loss of the listed building itself and the negative gap that it would create in the streetscene and subsequent impact on the character of the conservation area. The current proposal seeks to retain the building to the front. The two storey rear section, which is clearly suffering structural damage, is proposed for demolition and will be replaced by a new rear cross wing. It is also proposed to demolish the 4 classrooms to the west side of the building and rebuild the two roof gables on each of the east and west roof slopes.

The hipped roof section to the frontage (west side) will also be demolished and replaced with an access gate with a hipped roof. The remaining building is proposed to be converted to garages at ground floor with a permanent double width opening to its west side and the creation of 6 shuttered areas and a turning space within the building. A new floor is to be inserted above to provide two apartments within the roof. The demolition of the rear wing will allow a shared external amenity area to be formed at the rear.

- 4.28 In principle, the retention of this building is imperative to the acceptability of the proposal generally. It has group value with the adjacent church, is important in the streetscene and has its own place in the history of the area. The intention now to generally retain this building is therefore welcomed. There is no objection to the loss of the two storey rear wing which was a later addition and clearly in a poor structural state. The replacement extension here seems reasonable in scale and form and is acceptable in principle subject to detailing. The case for rebuilding the existing roof gables is less clear. These are proposed to be the same scale and form as the existing gables but no information has been submitted as to why the existing features could not be used. This would need to be explained as the loss of historic fabric, is currently unjustified.
- 4.29 Internally the proposal to convert this building to garages is more acceptable in principle than the subdivision of the main church, however, it is still considered that other alternative uses for this building which maintain it as an enclosed form should not be discounted without further robust marketing evidence. Indeed the 2010 report suggests that this could be suited to use as a nursery. However, if it can be justified that this building is needed for parking to support the viability of other more suitable uses or conversions of the main church then this may be considered a compromise. The fit out internally will need to ensure that this space is useable and is of a quality and design that is expected for a listed building.
- 4.30 Overall therefore, whilst the Council would be keen to see these important historic buildings brought back to life and regenerated, this should not be at any cost. The proposal, as it stands, would cause a very high level of harm to the significance of the listed church building. The harm to the church hall and conservation area would be less significant but there are still areas of concern that would need to be addressed in order for these elements of the proposal to be considered acceptable. The lack of any comprehensive and up to date marketing or viability appraisal of the buildings in respect of more sensitive uses, the lack of a condition survey and the proposed number of units also weighs heavily against the proposal. It should also be noted that the applicant was offered the opportunity for further pre application discussions with the Council and Historic England to try and resolve these issues but chose to decline this offer at this time.
- 4.31 It is therefore considered that the proposal does not meet the requirements of the NPPF in particular paragraphs 7,8, 189, 193 and 194 or the policies noted above or the Council's duty to protect its heritage assets. The design and heritage impact of the proposal is therefore unacceptable. This conclusion is supported by Historic England. Their full comments are noted in Section 6 Below.

### **Quality of Accommodation for Future Occupiers**

### **Planning Policies: National Planning Policy Framework (2018) (NPPF), Core**

**Strategy (2007) Policies KP2, CP4, CP8; Development Management Document (2015) policies DM1, DM3, DM8; Design and Townscape Guide (2009); the National Technical Housing Standards**

- 4.32 The NPPF states that the planning system should always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- 4.33 Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Development Management Document and CP4 of the Core Strategy refer to the impact of development on future and surrounding occupiers and seek to ensure good relationships between new and existing development.
- 4.34 Policy DM1 of the Development Management Document requires that development provide an internal and external layout that takes account of all potential users.

*Internal Space Standards*

- 4.35 Policy DM8 states that the internal environment of all new dwellings must be high quality and flexible enough to meet the changing needs of residents. This includes ensuring that new dwellings meet the National Space Standards.
- 4.36 The proposal seeks to create 2 x 3 bed 6 person dwellings, 2 x 3 bed 5 person dwellings and 2 x 2 bed 4 person dwellings. These are required to be 108 sqm, 99 sqm and 70 sqm respectively. All the proposed dwellings meet these standards as well as the required individual bedroom sizes.

*Daylight, Sunlight and Outlook*

- 4.37 There is no concern with the proposed daylight and sunlight to the church hall apartments. The daylight and sunlight from the proposed habitable rooms within the church is less straightforward as the rooms look onto the ventilation space and then through the existing church windows and proposed rooflights. Where the rooms face south onto the street elevation it is considered that sufficient daylight and sunlight would penetrate through the existing windows. There is however a concern that daylight to the main living space for the north eastern unit in particular and to some extent also the north west unit, which faces north onto the flank wall of number 5 Park Road, would be limited. This living area is positioned on the middle floor where it will receive limited light from the very upper section of the existing side windows of the church and will have some light from the lower rooflight. This, combined with the lack of outlook which is restricted by the existing opaque glass windows in this location, is likely to result in a poor quality main living space. Whilst there is a degree of flexibility for listed buildings if the proposed design is required to safeguard the significance of the building, in this case the insertion of 2 additional floors would not only cause great harm to the historical significance of the building but it would also lead to a poor standard of accommodation for future occupiers. This weighs against the proposal and is another indication that 3 floors is not an acceptable solution in this case.

- 4.38 The habitable rooms proposed within the church will not enjoy the level of outlook as regular dwellings because the existing windows are obscure glazed with green stained glass detail or fully stained glass with religious scenes. The windows are original to the building and an important part of its historic fabric. The upper floors will enjoy some outlook of the sky through the proposed rooflights. On balance and noting the principle of 'buyer beware' it is considered on balance that the restriction in outlook caused by retaining the existing windows can be accepted in this instance in order to safeguard the historic character of the building provided the rooms receive sufficient light.
- 4.39 The apartments in the church hall are all proposed to have new windows with clear glazing. This will ensure good outlook to the habitable rooms.

#### *M4(2)*

- 4.40 It is unlikely that the dwellings proposed would conform to Building Regulations M4(2) especially given that the units in the church only have tight spiral staircases, however, as this proposal relates to the conversion of an existing building and not a new build, it is not required to meet the M4(2) standard under the current policy.

#### *External Amenity Space*

- 4.41 The demolition of the rear two storey section of the church hall will make way for 125 sqm of shared external amenity area. This is considered to be reasonable given the constraints of the site and is seen to be a benefit to the scheme which includes family accommodation. The details of this area would be agreed via a landscaping condition if the proposal was otherwise found to be acceptable.
- 4.42 Overall therefore it is considered that, the proposal has not demonstrated that it would result in a good level of daylight and outlook to the living area of the north eastern unit within the church conversion. This is unacceptable and conflicts with policy.

#### **Impact on Residential Amenity**

**National Planning Policy Framework (2018); Core Strategy (2007) policies KP2 and CP4; Development Management Document (2015) policies DM1 and DM3 and the Southend Design and Townscape Guide (2009).**

- 4.43 Policy DM1 of the Development Management Document requires all development to be appropriate in its setting by respecting neighbouring development and existing residential amenities *"having regard to privacy, overlooking, outlook, noise and disturbance, sense of enclosure/overbearing relationship, pollution, daylight and sunlight."*
- 4.44 The proposal has 3 residential neighbours to the north and west of the buildings. The neighbour to the north of the church has a number of windows in its rear projection facing the church separated by a distance of around 3.5m, however, as the church windows on this side are obscure glazed, it is considered that the proposal to convert the church would not, in practice, cause harmful overlooking of this property or its amenity area. However, the north eastern flat of the proposed

conversion of the church hall has a corner window to its main living space which faces onto the rear garden and rear elevation of number 5 Park Road. This window would be 1m from the boundary of the garden to number 5 and 5.7m from its closest rear window. It is noted that the existing church hall extension in this location has 3 windows in this location facing onto this neighbour but all of these are obscure glazed so do not give rise to actual overlooking. The proposal as it stands would cause harm to the amenities of this neighbour. It should be noted that it would not be sufficient to just obscure glaze this window as this would still result in perceived overlooking.

- 4.45 To the north the church hall backs onto 1 Park Crescent. The proposed replacement rear extension to the church hall would be 6.4m from this boundary and it is a further 25.2m to the rear of the neighbouring property. 1 Park Crescent has mature trees against this boundary as well as a number of small outbuildings/sheds. The trees are not protected by tree preservation orders but are protected by virtue of their location within the conservation area. The proposed extension to the church hall has a clear window to the main living space and small terrace and external staircase to each of the two flats facing this neighbour. The existing 2 storey church hall building is located virtually on this boundary so is currently quite overbearing for this neighbour, however, this building only has obscure windows. On balance it is considered that, given the presence of the existing trees, the outbuildings which provide a buffer to the main amenity area of number 1 and the considerable distance between the proposed dwelling and the rear windows of number 1 Park Crescent the impact on this neighbour is within acceptable limits.
- 4.46 To the west the church hall faces onto 2 Avenue Road. The proposed northern replacement gable on this side would face onto the rear projection of the neighbour some 6.8m away. The neighbour has 2 small windows in the rear outrigger facing the application site. These appear to have top fanlights and are most likely bathrooms. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not result in unacceptable overlooking of this property. There is also a corner window to the north west corner of the rear extension which faces onto the amenity area of number 2, however, unlike the relationship with number 5 Park Road, which has its boundary 1m from the site, this window is set 5m off the boundary. Given that it is not the main outlook for this room, this arrangement is considered acceptable.
- 4.47 In relation to other amenity impacts the proposed extensions to the buildings are to replace larger sections of the building which are proposed for demolition. The additions will therefore not appear materially more overbearing on the neighbours than the existing situation or cause an unacceptable sense of enclosure or loss of outlook.
- 4.48 In relation to any potential noise nuisance arising from the proposed parking garage it is considered that, in this case, vehicle movements would be low so this should fall within reasonable limits.
- 4.49 Overall therefore, whilst the impact on 1 Park Crescent and 2 Avenue Road is found to be acceptable, it is considered that the proposed rear extension of the church hall would give rise to unreasonable overlooking of 5 Park Road. This is contrary to policy and unacceptable in this regard.



## Traffic and Transportation

**National Planning Policy Framework (2018); Core Strategy (2007) policies KP2, CP3 and CP4; Development Management Document (2015) policy DM15, and the Design and Townscape Guide (2009).**

- 4.50 Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy seeks to widen travel choice and improve road safety. Policy DM15 states that *'Development will be allowed where there is, or it can be demonstrated that there will be, physical and environmental capacity to accommodate the type and amount of traffic generated in a safe and sustainable manner.'*
- 4.51 Policy DM15 of the Development Management Document states that one off-street parking space should be provided for each dwelling however it notes that *'Residential vehicle parking standards may be applied flexibly where it can be demonstrated that the development is proposed in a sustainable location with frequent and extensive links to public transport and/ or where the rigid application of these standards would have a clear detrimental impact on local character and context.'*
- 4.52 The application is for 6 residential units. 6 garages with shutters and 1 external visitor parking space is proposed within the ground floor of the church hall building. The garages in the southern section of the building each measure 4.95m x 3.3m. The garages in the northern section of the building are each 6.9m x 2.7m. It is also noted that two of these northern garages have columns within the space proposed for parking which in practice shorten the useable parking area to 4.8m.
- 4.53 The Development Management Document comments that for garages to be considered as viable parking spaces they are required to have internal dimensions of at least 7m x 3m. None of the proposed garages would meet this standard although the 4 to the northern side are quite close to these dimensions.
- 4.54 The Council's Highways officer has raised an objection to this proposal as the garages fail to meet this standard. He recommends that the arrangement should be revised to enable fewer but larger spaces. He also suggests that a lesser standard than 1:1 may, depending on the type of dwellings proposed, be justified in this location, which is close to public transport links and other amenities.
- 4.55 It is considered that the proposed garages to the southern end of the building are too short of the standard to be considered as viable parking spaces. These would better serve the development as cycle and refuse storage areas. The 4 garages and visitor space to the north are potentially more useable, and could be adapted to be undercroft parking spaces rather than garages which would require less width. It is also considered that as there is no policy requirement for visitor parking, therefore this space could also be used to serve the main development. On balance it is considered that the proposed parking area, with some adjustment and tracking to demonstrate usability, could be considered sufficient to serve the development given its sustainable location.

### *Refuse and Cycle Stores*

- 4.56 There is mention of cycle storage on the plans within the proposed garages with additional visitor cycle stands next to the new lobby. This would meet the policy requirement. There is, however, no refuse storage proposed and this is unacceptable.

### **Sustainability**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (2018); Core Strategy (2007) policies KP2 and CP4; Development Management Document (2015) policies DM1, DM2 and DM3 and the Design and Townscape Guide (2009).**

- 4.57 The overarching theme of the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. Policy KP2 of the Core Strategy states that *“All development proposals should demonstrate how they will maximise the use of renewable and recycled energy, water and other resources. This applies during both construction and the subsequent operation of the development. At least 10% of the energy needs of new development should come from on-site renewable options (and/or decentralised renewable or low carbon energy sources), such as those set out in Design and Townscape Guide”*.
- 4.58 The submitted Thermal Modelling Report states that the proposed conversion would utilise a mechanical heat recovery system (MVHR) to provide ventilation and heating for the units. This type of system recycles heat from exhaust air for space heating. This reduces the energy consumption of the building. No renewables are proposed. No information has been provided to demonstrate how much energy this would save compared to the baseline figures.
- 4.59 On balance, given the constraints of the listed building, it is considered that a lesser standard of renewables could be accepted on this proposal than would be required for a new build development which is not a listed building. The lack of renewables is therefore considered to be acceptable in this case.
- 4.60 In relation to water Policy DM2 of the Development Management Document part (iv) requires water efficient design measures that limit internal water consumption to 105 litres per person per day (lpd) (110 lpd when including external water consumption). Such measures will include the use of water efficient fittings, appliances and water recycling systems such as grey water and rainwater harvesting. This could be secured by condition were the proposal otherwise acceptable.

### **Other Issues**

#### *Landscaping*

- 4.61 The proposal includes new landscaping and the reinstatement of traditional railings to the front boundary. This would be an enhancement to the setting of the building and the wider conservation area and is welcomed, however, it is noted that this does not outweigh the concerns noted above in relation to the impact of the development generally on the significance of the listed building and conservation area.

## *Bats*

- 4.62 It has been suggested that the existing vacant buildings may be used by roosting bats. Bats are a protected species and therefore development proposals that might affect bat roosting sites need to follow strict guidelines and to comply with separate legislation. The submitted information does not include a bat survey in conflict with policies and unacceptable in this regard.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

- 4.63 This application is CIL liable. If the application had been recommended for approval, a CIL charge would have been payable. If an appeal is lodged and allowed the development will be CIL liable. Any revised application would also be CIL liable.

### **Conclusion**

- 4.64 Whilst the Council seeks to support the regeneration of listed buildings at risk, this should not be at any cost. The proposal, as it stands, is considered to cause a very high level of harm to the significance of the listed church building and harm the significance of the church hall and the conservation area. The proposal has also failed to demonstrate that it would provide a satisfactory quality of accommodation for future occupiers and parking facilities. It is also considered that the design of the church hall extension would give rise to an unacceptable level of overlooking of the neighbour at 5 Park Road. There is also not provision for refuse storage and any potential impact on bats has not been assessed.
- 4.65 The proposal is therefore unacceptable and contrary to policy. The benefits of the scheme do not outweigh this harm.

## **5 Planning Policy Summary**

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2018)
- 5.2 Core Strategy (2007) Policies KP1 (Spatial Strategy), KP2 (Development Principles) CP3 (Transport and Accessibility), CP4 (The Environment and Urban Renaissance)
- 5.3 Development Management Document (2015) Policies DM1 (Design Quality), DM2 (Low Carbon and Development and Efficient Use of Resources) DM3 (Efficient and Effective Use of Land) and DM5 (Southend-on-Sea's Historic Environment), DM15 (Sustainable Transport Management)
- 5.4 The Southend Design and Townscape Guide (2009)
- 5.5 The Milton Conservation Area Appraisal (2014)

## **6 Representation Summary**

### **Historic England**

- 6.1 The grade II listed Park Road Methodist church was constructed in 1872 to serve the Victorian Park Estate and designed in a simple but powerful Gothic Revival style. The interior is a single open worship space with a mezzanine gallery at one end accessed by a single staircase. The interior is lit by tall, narrow lancet windows below an exposed timber roof structure which includes carved braces and spandrels giving a quite dramatic effect. Pews and liturgical furnishings give extra formality to the interior. The adjacent church hall as built to host the church school and has the characteristic appearance of later Victorian schools and is a historically significant companion to the church.

The proposed works would convert both buildings to residential use, including subdividing the interior of the church into four units. This would completely compromise the interior of the building, losing any sense of its original open character and any ability to read the architectural elements of the building in combination. Any residential use would necessarily bring major changes to the interior, not least the loss of furnishings, but the proposals would have an intensive impact, beyond what might be necessary for the creation of fewer units. We are concerned this would have a highly damaging and harmful impact on the historic significance of the listed building.

It is clear that the church has been out of use for many years. Permission was previously granted for a storage use which, even though it would have required internal changes, could have kept the main space as a single unit. This expired in 2003. A report included with the current application refers to marketing of the building being carried out in 2010. This includes that a residential use should be sought, but does not go into detail of the options considered, the costs of development and above all the need for the creation of multiple residential uses informed by estimates of the price at which the property was marketed. We are concerned about the level of harm the current proposals would cause and the lack of clear and convincing justification for this particular scheme rather than any less intensive version.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development and that protection and enhancement of the historic environment is an overarching objective in this (paragraphs 7 and 8). The NPPF also identifies that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations (paragraph 184). In determining applications it is a requirement that the applicant describe the significance of any heritage asset affected and that this detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance (paragraph 189). Paragraph 192 of the NPPF states that when determining applications local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. The significance of listed buildings can be harmed or lost by alteration to them.

The NPPF states that clear and convincing justification should be made for any such harm and that 'great weight' should be given to the conservation of listed buildings irrespective of the level of harm caused (paragraphs 193 and 194). This weight given to conservation and the justification for harm should be especially convincing where harm to buildings of a high grade of listing is concerned.

We have considered this application in terms of this policy and are seriously concerned that the degree of subdivision caused by the proposals could result in a very high level of harm to significance of the listed building in terms of the NPPF, paragraphs 193 and 194. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets affected by proposed development and the contribution their setting might make to that significance. Sufficient information should also be provided to enable an understanding of the potential impact of the development on the asset. In this case we would advise the Council that further details are needed on the marketing of the property, costs of repair and conversion and alternative schemes in order to provide a clear and convincing justification for the proposals and satisfy the requirements of paragraph 189. We would not support the granting of consent at this time but would like to advise the Council further once further information has been secured.

#### Recommendation

Historic England has serious concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds and would recommend the Council request further information on the need for the current proposals which could result in a high level of harm to the historic significance of the grade II listed building. We consider that the application does not meet the requirements of the NPPF, in particular paragraph numbers 7, 8, 189 193 and 194. As the application stands we would not support the granting of consent, but recommend the Council secure additional information to satisfy paragraph 189 as described above. Following this we would be happy to advise the Council further.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the application.

#### **Environmental Health**

- 6.2 The application is for the conversion and partial demolition of a listed church and church hall with internal alterations to convert into six dwellings associated garages and cycle storage.

The Planning /Design/Access / Heritage Statement including the Addendum has been reviewed.

An Outline Acoustic Design Statement by Cole Jarmin dated 10/08/2018 showing adequate sound insulation provisions to meet Approved Document E has been reviewed.

There are no objections to the proposals subject to the following suggested conditions

- Construction Hours Shall be Restricted to 8am - 6pm Monday to Friday, 8am – 1pm Saturday and Not at all on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
- During Construction and Demolition, there Shall be No Burning of Waste Material on Site
- The Listed Building Consent and provisions of glazing shall be expected to meet BS 8233:2014 Internal Noise Levels for all Habitable Rooms.

### **Highways**

- 6.3 The garages shown do not meet current policy of 7m x 3m therefore cannot be considered parking spaces. The applicant would need to revise the garage sizes to meet policy guidance, the visitor space could be removed to assist this layout.

Consideration would also be given to reduced levels of parking given the sustainable location of the site which has good links to public transport in close proximity.

At this current time a highway objection is raised due to specifically relating to garage sizes which do not meet current policy guidance.

### **The Victorian Society**

- 6.4 No response received.

### **Milton Society**

- 6.5 This building has not been well cared for over the years with repeat approaches from us to the Council for action, particularly in relation to the lost flèche, masonry damage to the north side and damage resulting from water ingress. We do not have the benefit of seeing the interior condition in the last several years and would point out that under NPPF clause 191 damage resulting from neglect should not be taken into account. To the extent that the building has not been well cared for we believe that bats may be roosting in the building and a bat survey by a suitably qualified professional and bat management plan should be conditional to any approval.

A principle concern that we have with these applications is with the detail design of the intervening new build extension to the rear of the church hall. Here a more detailed rear elevation and three dimensional drawing would assist understanding. We shall refer again to this concern below.

This Listed building is of primary townscape importance in Milton Conservation Area and we fully support its retention and protection, particularly from a local townscape point of view. We trust that consultation has been invited from Historic England and The Victorian Society. However, we appreciate that the building has been unused for many years and therefore a suitable adaptive use could be appropriate, strictly providing that such enabling development serves to retain and repair the existing historic building.

In the absence of a detailed condition survey with the application this should include the repair, following good conservation practices, of the exterior walls and stonework, doors, windows and glazing, and roofs. In particular this should include the removal of inappropriate cement render to one of the east pinnacles and repair/replacement to the stonework, and the replacement of the fleche. We note that the applicant withholds this particular feature from the proposal yet, misleadingly, shows this on the drawings. This is an essential feature of the historic building and the surviving base has been kept in unprotected condition for many years. However, this is a significant historical feature that should be replaced.

We do not object to the major demolition to the rear of the hall as this is clearly of lesser architectural significance and recognise that this reduces the massing to the benefit of neighbouring outlook. However, the main body of the hall with its internal features and the south end elevation with returns should be retained as it appears in the application. We recognise that a new vehicular entry is an essential requirement but this too requires further detail design. Where the new rear extension to the hall is proposed we have concerns over the overlooking design proposed, notably from the proposed terraces and north facing dining room windows. We note that a small landscape amenity area could mitigate this to some extent but we believe the detailed design of the balconies and windows needs further work.

We appreciate the restrained, set back floor plate design to the church interior, protecting principal features and believe that this is of vital importance in protecting the scale of the interior characteristic, notwithstanding that the four 3 storey apartments with party walls are an inevitable consequence of residential development. Here it is important that internal features, particularly the roof structure, are protected and retained. We are also concerned about the relocation of the reredos, a principal feature of the church interior and believe entry to the apartments here could be redesigned to retain this important feature in a shared lobby.

We note that the proposal requires the intervention of rooflights to provide interior natural light and views out. These appear to be as restrained as possible and we note that, typically, Roger Coombs specified flush rooflights by The Rooflight Company to minimise the intervention. This is acceptable and should be conditioned with any approval.

Internal historical features such as the wall plaques should also be protected although the small memorial entrance hall appears contrived and not related to the original building. Re-use of a couple of pews in this area appears to be a good idea but rather as a practical part of the proposal than contrived and unusable rows. As we have not had recent access to the interior so assume that the Council will fully assess and report on the features to be retained.

Overall we refer to NPPF paragraph 127 and relates Local Development Plan policies requiring a high standard of design not fully described nor fully included in this application.

We also have concerns about the sustainability of this development and note that the applicant seeks to cut corners with the removal of grey water recycling, ground source heat pumps. This does not meet the requirements of NPPF Section 14.

However, in short, this application is potentially supportable with improvements to the design aspects we have raised but without these changes we have to object as the application stands.

We particularly note that any approval may not necessarily lead to development but possibly to a sale and then to subsequent proposals for more residential units. In this event a purchasing developer could exploit any shortcomings in a poorly made approval so we respectfully ask for very careful consideration with this important local landmark site.

## **Public Consultation**

6.6 Two site notices were displayed, a press notice was published and 48 neighbours were consulted on the application. 3 responses has been received at the time of writing raising the following issues:

- 1 parking space per property is insufficient and the proposal will result in overspill parking into the surrounding area which suffers from parking stress.
- Overlooking of neighbouring properties.
- The buildings are important to the conservation area and alternative uses need to be found.
- All historical features should be retained and repaired and the fleche should be reinstated.
- There may be bats within the buildings.

6.7 The application was called to Development Control Committee by Councillor J Garston, Councillor Ware-Lane and Councillor Nevin.

## **7 Relevant Planning History**

7.1 98/0409 – Use church (class D1) for warehouse storage and distribution purposes (Class B8) – granted

7.2 98/0408 Use vacant premises (class D1) for warehouse storage and distribution purposes (Class B8) – granted

## **8 Recommendation**

**Member are recommended to REFUSE Planning Permission for the following reasons:**

**01 The proposal has failed to demonstrate that the church and church hall can be converted into residential dwellings without harming the special character and significance of the listed building. In particular the extent of roof alterations to the principal roofslope and the visual impact of the ventilation equipment and louvres and the extent of roof demolition for the church hall are harmful to the character and integrity of the building.**



**This is unacceptable and contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (2018), Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy (2007) Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5 of the Southend-on-Sea Development Management Document (2015) and guidance contained within the Southend-on-Sea Design and Townscape Guide (2009).**

**02 The proposed church hall extension would give rise to an unacceptable level of overlooking of the neighbouring occupiers of number 5 Park Road and its private amenity area. The proposal is therefore unacceptable and contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (2018), Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy (2007) Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Southend-on-Sea Development Management Document (2015) and guidance contained within the Southend-on-Sea Design and Townscape Guide (2009).**

**03 The proposed church conversion, by reason of the inadequate levels of light and outlook to the northern units, would result in an inadequate quality living environment, to the detriment of the amenities of the future occupiers of the proposed dwelling. This is unacceptable and contrary to National Planning Policy Framework (2018), policies KP2 and CP4 of the Core Strategy (2007), policies DM1, DM3 and DM8 of the Development Management Document (2015) and the advice contained within the Design and Townscape Guide (2009).**

**04 The proposed parking layout as shown in drawing reference 1716/T/004 is unacceptable because the garages proposed fail to meet the garage standards as set out in the Development Management Document (2015) paragraph 7.12 and the spaces would therefore not be useable for the parking of vehicles. In the absence of this the proposal would be provided with inadequate parking to the detriment of the free flow of traffic and highway safety. The design also fails to make adequate provision for refuse and recycling storage for future occupiers and is likely to harm to the character, significance and setting of the heritage asset. The proposal is therefore unacceptable and contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (2018), Policies KP2, CP3 and CP4 of the Southend Core Strategy (2007) and Policies DM1, DM3, DM5 and DM15 of the Development Management Document (2015).**

**05 The proposal has failed to assess the impact on bats and has therefore not demonstrated that there would not be an adverse impact on the ecology of the site. The proposal is therefore unacceptable and contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (2018) and Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Southend Core Strategy (2007).**

**Member are recommended to REFUSE Listed Building Consent for the following reasons:**

**01 The proposal has failed to demonstrate that the church can be converted into 4 dwellings over 3 floors without harming the special character and significance of the listed building.**

**In particular the impact of the sub division on the integrity of the main worship space, the extent of the loss of the ecclesiastical features within the building, the extent of roof alterations to the principal roofslope, the visual impact of the ventilation equipment and louvers and the extent of roof demolition for the church hall are harmful to the character and integrity of the listed building. This is unacceptable and contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (2018), Policies KP2 and CP4 of the Southend-on-Sea Core Strategy (2007) Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5 of the Southend-on-Sea Development Management Document (2015) and guidance contained within the Southend-on-Sea Design and Townscape Guide (2009).**

### **Informatives**

**01 Please note that this application would be liable for a payment under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) if planning permission had been granted. Therefore if an appeal is lodged and subsequently allowed, the CIL liability will be applied. Any revised application would also be CIL liable.**

**02 It is noted that some of the proposed drawings show the replacement of the fleche/spire. This would be a positive addition to the proposal and welcomed subject to detailing but it is understood that this has now been omitted from the proposal and is therefore an error on the drawing. This needs to be clarified in any amended proposal.**