

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**WEST STREET BAPTIST CHURCH  
WEST STREET, EAST GRINSTEAD, RH19 4EY**

Previous Application Reference: DM/22/0738(9)

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

This Planning Statement supports an application for Listed Building Consent for works at West Street Baptist Church, West Street, East Grinstead (RH19 4EY). The church is a Grade II listed building originally constructed in 1810. The proposed works are revised and mostly consistent with those described in previous application DM/22/0738(9) to Mid Sussex District Council. This statement explains the proposal, its heritage context, and demonstrates compliance with relevant planning policies.

## **2 BACKGROUND & HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

West Street Baptist Church, formerly Zion Chapel, is a Grade II listed building designated on 28 January 1948. It was built in 1810 as the first Nonconformist place of worship in East Grinstead and was associated with the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. Architecturally, the building is constructed in red brick with semi-circular headed windows set in double recesses, Gothic glazing bars, and a brick pediment. Later alterations include ground floor extensions to the front and side. The building holds historic and architectural significance as an early 19th-century chapel.

## **3 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORKS**

The proposal involves:

- Renovation of the side hall, including replacement of the roof structure.
- Internal modernisation of the hall and kitchen.
- Installation of a Corten steel-like metal cladding façade (Kingspan Oxidised 0010) to the side hall and porch.
- Removal of a 1980s stair and replacement with a new structure.
- Demolition of the existing porch and construction of a new glass porch.

These works aim to improve functionality, energy efficiency, and accessibility while respecting the building's heritage value.

## **4 POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The proposal has been considered against the following policy and legislative framework:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: Duty to preserve the building's special architectural and historic interest.
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): Paragraphs relating to heritage assets, requiring great weight to be given to their conservation.
- Mid Sussex District Plan: Policies DP26 (Character & Design) and DP34 (Heritage Assets) which seek to protect and enhance heritage significance.

## **5 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT**

The proposed works are designed to be sympathetic to the historic character of the building. The removal of the 1980s porch and its replacement with a glass porch will enhance the building's appearance by replacing an unsympathetic addition. Alterations to the side hall and internal modernisation will not harm the building's significance and will ensure its continued viable use. Overall, the works are considered to result in no harm or less than substantial harm, outweighed by the public benefits of maintaining an active place of worship and community facility.

## **6 JUSTIFICATION**

The works are necessary to address functional and safety issues, improve energy efficiency, and provide modern facilities for the congregation and community. They will secure the long-term use of the building, which is essential for its preservation. The design approach respects the building's historic fabric and character while introducing high-quality, reversible interventions where possible.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the proposed works preserve the special architectural and historic interest of West Street Baptist Church. They comply with the relevant statutory duties, national policy, and local planning policies. Since the features of this application are essentially the same (save for repositioning of the side hall door and consequent rearrangement of this part of the design as well as other minor updates) as the previously approved application the application should therefore be supported.