

**From:**

**Subject:** FW: Comments on NYM/2020/0237/LB and NYM/2020/0236/FL  
**Date:** 18 May 2020 14:48:28

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## Building Conservation comments to book in please

Kind regards,

**Jill Bastow**  
Senior Planning Officer

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**From:** Building  
**Sent:** 11 May 2020 14:37  
**To:** Jill Bastow  
**Subject:** Comments on NYM/2020/0237/LB and NYM/2020/0236/FL

The Old Chapel Robin Hoods Bay

This is one of the earlier Wesleyan Chapels in the area, with John Wesley preaching here in its first year 1779 (not 1841). Wesley describes the people of Robin Hoods Bay as 'plain people' who's 'continual jars with each other prevented their increase in either grace of number'. The church is described as popular, but this might be ascribed more to its central location over the parish church at the top of the hill some distance away. Like many non-conformist chapels of the time it is quite plain in design with double height windows to the principal façade. The rear of the building, alongside other properties in informal in character. The fenestration to the rear is clearly distinct from other nearby domestic properties, presumably due to floor heights and sloping gallery.

This applications seeks to replace an existing picket fence with a glass balustrade and steel railing. The applicant draws attention to other cast-iron railings in the conservation area and at other chapel sites. However, whilst examples can be drawn upon they cannot always be said to set a precedence as each case should be judged on its individual merits. These other examples in the conservation area are predominately original and associated with buildings that are domestic, 19<sup>th</sup> century or later, and to the street frontages. The use of such ornamentation on other chapels is known but these tend to be later 19<sup>th</sup> century developments (in the Wesleyan context) and only to the principal façade. Whilst other examples of their use to the rear of the property might exist, they are not certainly commonplace.

The current character of the rear of the building that faces the sea is very informal, much akin to the rest of Robin Hoods Bay. Any formalisation or gentrification of this space could not only harm the character of the listed building but also that of the conservation area. As stated a pre-ap a replacement picket fence with wider gaps or a post and rail fence would be appropriate for the character of the area, although I appreciate that the latter might bring with it safety concerns. The loss of an informal style of boundary treatment would harm the significance of the area. This would be compounded by the introduction of a decorative steel and glass balustrade. The glass would undoubtedly cause more harm as it would draw the eye in a way that this elevation was never intended to do. The decorative steel balustrade would gentrify this area of the site and place an emphasis on the rear which it was never intended to have.

Early designs – the heritage statement states that

*Clearly when first built there were no railings here as a row of cottages directly faced the south face of the chapel. It is not known how these boundaries were dealt with after the landslip which took away these cottages but it is strongly felt that a timber wicket fence would not have been appropriate at that time for a proud Wesleyan Chapel of the period.*

I disagree with this comment as the early Methodist movement (a period to which this chapel dates) revered plainness see Wesley's *On Dress*. The establishment of the Primitive Methodist movement in 1810 was due in part to the Wesleyan Methodists movement away from this approach. Perhaps this misunderstanding is the result of the Author of the design and access statement confusing the date of construction. Further to that there is a clear picture in Robert Lidster's *Robin Hoods Bay and Fylingthorpe Through Time* that shows the rear of this building circa 1900 shown below.

It clearly shows that to the upper section there is a picket fence and a post and rail to the lower section. The lower one had been boarded over, presumably for the safety of the Sunday School children who used the area as a playground and to access their toilets, also shown in the picture. This shows that a simple approach was taken to the fencing, which is in keeping with this section of the conservation area and the early Methodist movement; and, when it was adapted (perhaps after the landslip), it was still done in a very 'makeshift' way which is also in keeping with the above. The fence looks far from new and can safely be assumed to be very early if not original in part.

The application states that

*PRECEDENTS There are many local examples of glazed balustrading in Robin Hoods Bay. - see attached photographs. Many of these are on domestic properties and this has been mentioned to the applicant in pre application discussions. The applicant would argue that if their use on domestic properties is justified, when the only need is to enhance the domestic owners visual appreciation of the views, surely a commercial property, trying to sustain the well being of a listed building has stronger justification for a limited amount of glazed*

### *balustrading*

This presumes that the justification of the use of glazed balustrades is based on private benefit, and therefore it should be justified here to maintain the listed building and that commercial properties have just as much a right to appreciate views. This is a flawed argument as it assumes the justification rather than a lack of harm. It further states that the need to maintain the listed building offers a stronger justification for the introduction of the glass, which implies that the other glass balustrades were not on listed buildings, and so potentially not as sensitive. Without knowing the other examples the application is referring to (as they were not included) it is impossible to say why it was suitable there and not in this instance. The justification given by the application mentions only private benefits. Any harm, even less than substantial, requires public benefit for justification as stated in the NPPF 2019.

I understand the desirability to improve views from the site and to make the site appear more 'upmarket' but unfortunately in this instance these proposals are not compatible with preserving the significance of either the listed building (its historical interest with the early Methodist movement) nor Robin Hoods Bay Conservation Area (and the significant characteristics it embodies at this location). As such it does not meet the test set out by the NPPF and it is with regret that I recommend it for refusal. Should the application be revised in line with these comments and those at pre-ap then I would be able to better support it for approval.

**From:**  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on NYM/2020/0237/LB - Case Officer Mrs J Bastow - Received from Building Conservation at The Old Vicarage, Bondgate, Helmsley, York, YO62 5BP,  
**Date:** 11 May 2020 14:27:19

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Please see email to case officer

Comments made by Building Conservation of The Old Vicarage  
Bondgate  
Helmsley  
York  
YO62 5BP

Preferred Method of Contact is: Post

Comment Type is Object with comments  
Letter ID: 543255

**From:**

**To:** [Planning](#)

**Subject:** Comments on NYM/2020/0237/LB - Case Officer Mrs J Bastow - Received from Fylingdales Parish Council at c/o Ms Stephanie Glasby, Gilders Holme , Raw, North Yorkshire , YO22 4PP, Via Email:

**Date:** 06 May 2020 16:26:49

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No Objections

Comments made by Fylingdales Parish Council of c/o Ms Stephanie Glasby  
Gilders Holme  
Raw  
North Yorkshire  
YO22 4PP

Comment Type is Comment  
Letter ID: 543253