



Historic England

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24 September 2015

Dear Reverend Green,

Church Centre, Church Fields, West Malling, ME19 6RJ

As you will know from our earlier letters and from the visit made by our Designation Adviser we have been considering adding the above building to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

We have taken into account all the representations made and completed our assessment of the building. Having considered our recommendation, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has decided not to add West Malling National School to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest.

Please follow the link below to download a copy of our advice report, prepared for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, which gives the principal reasons for this decision. The annex of this report will be published on our Heritage Gateway website in order to provide clarity about the building's designation status. The website makes it clear that the buildings and sites included on the Heritage Gateway are mostly privately owned and are not open to the public.

<http://services.historicengland.org.uk/webfiles/GetFiles.aspx?av=D67175ED-5B0B-4855-AEB3-4DFA05834AEE&cn=9747EA37-8872-4547-9074-68D372EB85AB>

If you consider that this decision has been wrongly made you may contact the DCMS within 28 days of the date of this letter to request that the Secretary of State review the decision. An example of a decision made wrongly would be where there was a factual error or an irregularity in the process which affected the outcome. You may also ask the Secretary of State to review the decision if you have any significant evidence relating to the special architectural or historic interest of the building which was not previously considered. Further details of the review criteria and process and how to request a review are contained in the annex to this letter.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance. More information can also be found on our website at www.historicengland.org.uk.



Historic England

Yours sincerely

Dominic Martin

Dominic Martin

Central Designation Coordinator

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Your personal details, along with the other information you have provided and information obtained from other sources, will be retained by Historic England for administrative purposes and, where applicable, for future consideration. Historic England will not release personal details to a third party if the disclosure would contravene the Data Protection principles.

Freedom of Information

Historic England is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 which provide a general right of access to information we hold. We may provide the information you have supplied in response to a request made under this legislation, subject to any exemptions which apply. Historic England will consult with external parties as necessary prior to releasing information.

Annex 1

Review Criteria and Process

A review will only be carried out in the following circumstances:

(1) there is evidence that the original decision has been made wrongly. Examples would include:

- where there was a factual error, eg. the wrong building was listed; or
- where there has been some irregularity in the process which has affected the outcome, eg. relevant considerations were not taken into account or irrelevant considerations were taken into account.

(2) there is significant evidence which was not previously considered, relating to the special architectural or historic interest of the building, as set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.



An example would be where new evidence relating to the date of a building has been discovered which might make a material difference to the architectural or historic interest of the building. Having conducted a review, the Secretary of State will either affirm or overturn the original decision. It is important to understand that the original decision will stand until the Secretary of State has made a decision on whether the original decision should be affirmed or overturned. If the original decision is overturned, this will not have retrospective effect.

How to request a review of a listing decision

Reviews are carried out by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and review requests should be made on the Department's 'Listing Review Request Form'. The Form is accompanied by Guidance to assist you in making a review request. Both the Form and the Guidance can be downloaded from the 'Reviews of Listing Decisions' page of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/how-to-challenge-our-decision-to-list-or-not-list-a-building>

If you are unable to access the website please contact:

The Listing Review Officer
Heritage Protection Branch
Culture Team
Department for Culture Media and Sport
4th Floor
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1A 2BQ

Review requests should normally be made within 28 days of the date of this letter. Requests made beyond this period may be considered in exceptional circumstances.



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This is an A4 sized map and should be printed full size at A4 with no page scaling set.

Number: 1429483_1

Name: West Malling National School

Heritage Category: Listing

County: Kent
District: Tonbridge and Malling
Parish: West Malling

For all entries pre-dating 4 April 2011 maps and national grid references do not form part of the official record of a listed building. In such cases the map here and the national grid reference are generated from the list entry in the official record and added later to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings.

For all list entries made on or after 4 April 2011 the map here and the national grid reference do form part of the official record. In such cases the map and the national grid reference are to aid identification of the principal listed building or buildings only and must be read in conjunction with other information in the record.

Any object or structure fixed to the principal building or buildings and any object or structure within the curtilage of the building, which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July, 1948 is by law to be treated as part of the listed building.

This map was delivered electronically and when printed may not be to scale and may be subject to distortions.

Grid Reference: TQ6780157546
Map Scale: 1:1250
Print Date: 8 September 2015



Case Name: West Malling National School, Kent

Case Number: 1428866

Background

Historic England has been asked to assess West Malling National School, currently in use as the parish centre, for listing.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	HE Recommendation
1	N/A	West Malling National School	Listing	Do not add to List

Visits

Date	Visit Type
05 August 2015	Full inspection

Context

The owners are proposing to convert the existing building into housing.

The building is situated within West Malling Conservation Area and adjoins the Grade II* listed parish church of St Mary the Virgin and 19 listed tombstones.

Assessment

CONSULTATION

The applicant, the owner, the local authority and the Historic Environment Record (HER) were invited to comment on the factual details of the case as part of the consultation process. The applicant responded that he had no further comments to make. The owner responded stating that as part of its duty, under Charity Law, to explore the building's possible options, they were seeking to obtain planning permission for conversion into residential units. However, at this stage they had no intention of demolishing the building. They enclosed very useful further historical information about schools in West Malling from the early C19 onwards.

No further responses were received.

DISCUSSION

Guidance for listing school buildings are found in the Historic England Selection Guide for Education Buildings (April 2011). As large numbers of schools survive, rigorous selection is necessary. Their contribution to the character of historic neighbourhoods should be taken into account as well.

School buildings from before 1840 that survive in their original form will normally be listed and sometimes at high grades. After this date and before 1870 schools have to be well preserved and of good architectural quality to be listed. It is stated that the survival of internal fittings is likely to add interest. Between 1870 and 1914 preservation and intactness are relevant, beside architectural interest, planning, earliness of date and

the rarity of the type of school in question. External architectural quality is a fundamental criterion for listing. Interiors matter - completeness can be most important - and the extent of alterations needs to be determined: losses and ill-proportioned additions can reduce design-worthiness. Many schools were built piecemeal and initial compositions were often not completed as intended.

West Malling National School has no date stone or foundation stone, but is reported to have been built in 1854. The earliest mention of it so far found is in Kelly's directory of 1855 for West Malling. The architect or builder is not at present known. On the 1870 six inch Ordnance Survey map it is shown labelled 'National School' as a roughly T-shaped plan with an L-shaped classroom range to the north and a T-wing, possibly toilets, to the south. The 1885 First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey map describes it as 'Girls and Infants'. By the 1896 Second Edition map it is now labelled 'School' rather than 'National School' and a further classroom block has been added to the west, and the original east wing has had a further classroom added on the south side. In 1904 the roof of the Girls' School was re-tiled and a ventilator fitted. By the 1908 Third Edition an additional classroom has been added to the south-east and the toilet block has been rebuilt and extended further south. There is a record of windows to the Girls' Room, in the earliest wing, being replaced in 1913 and of a school canteen being built in 1917-18. The buildings ceased being in use as a school in 1975 when a new primary school was built on another site and subsequently it has been in use as a parish centre.

This school was built piecemeal in at least four phases. The original mid-C19 part comprised a plain Gothic style National School building in Kentish ragstone. This has an L-shaped classroom block to the north and accommodation for a teacher on the upper floor of the L-wing. The large three-bay classroom originally had an exposed roof structure but a later suspended ceiling has been inserted so that only the tie beams and moulded corbels are currently visible. These are relatively plain. The adjoining cross-wing retains typical mid-C19 joinery: a wooden half-winder staircase with square balusters leading to two first floor rooms with four-panelled doors, built-in cupboards and simple wooden fireplaces with pilasters. Unfortunately the original windows were replaced in 1913 so that although some original fittings do survive, the range is of modest architectural quality, and the building has been altered and its original form has been engulfed by its amalgamation with piecemeal later building phases.

There are 167 National Schools on the National Heritage List for England, so National Schools are not a particularly rare building type. The 8 listed former National Schools in Kent all have their original building phase pre-dating 1870 and four of them are constructed in Kentish Ragstone. These comprise a National School in Canterbury of 1847 by William Butterfield, an 1848 school in Willesborough extended in 1897, an 1853 school in Aylesford by E W Stephens, and one in East Farleigh of 1866 by J Clarke. Three of these listed schools were built earlier than the National School in West Malling, three are by named architects and they are of all of greater architectural merit and more intact and cohesive as an entity than West Malling. Therefore, although the pre-1870 part of the building is pleasing and retains some original interior joinery it is of modest architectural value, has later windows, its original plan has been engulfed in later additions, and more intact examples of National Schools survive and have been statutorily listed elsewhere.

By the 1896 Ordnance Survey map, when the building had ceased to be identified as a National School and was now just called 'School' two further single storey classrooms had been added on the west side, divided in 1900 by a folding partition, and a further classroom had been added to the south-east side, all in Kentish ragstone. By 1908 an additional classroom had been added on the south-east side, partly of brick, and the original toilet block was rebuilt. The later classrooms do retain plain original wooden fireplaces with pilasters but these later additions are not of special architectural quality and do not form a cohesive whole with the original range. The windows to the western classrooms have been replaced in the C20, one of the south-east classrooms has a brick external wall which does not match the existing Kentish ragstone to the rest of the buildings, the replacement toilet block in particular is ill-proportioned and has an uneasy juxtaposition with the original 1854 wing, and schools of this type and date are not rare.

For all of these reasons West Malling National School does not meet the criteria listing.

CONCLUSION

West Malling National School is not recommended for listing. However it does have local historical and architectural interest and groups with a number of listed structures within a designated conservation area.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

West Malling National School, a Gothic style former National School dating from 1854 with late C19 and early C20 additions, is not recommended for listing for the following principal reasons:

- * Architectural interest: the earliest part of the building is pleasing and retains some typical internal joinery but is not of special architectural interest. The later additions have been added piecemeal, not entirely in matching materials, and the various building phases do not comprise a cohesive entity;
- * Degree of alteration: both the mid-C19 and later C19 parts of the building have had later windows inserted and the original form of the building has been altered by substantial later additions.

Countersigning comments:

Agreed. The original West Malling National School is architecturally modest, and while of some local and historical interest is not of the calibre to merit listing. Subsequent additions have had a further detrimental impact meaning that the overall composition is not coherent and there have also been alterations. Therefore this building is not recommended for inclusion on the List.

V. Fiorato, 7th September 2015

Annex 1

Factual Details

Name: West Malling National School

Location: Church Centre, Church Fields, West Malling ME19 6RJ

County	District	District Type	Parish
Kent	Tonbridge and Malling	District Authority	West Malling

History

West Malling National School was built in 1854. Kelly's Directory of 1855 for West Malling mentions both a National School and a parochial school. The original building on this site at Churchfields was for infants and girls up to fourteen. There was a separate school in 'an unused building in the High Street' from 1857 for boys from the age of seven, which replaced an earlier free school endowed by Francis Tresse, taken over by the National Society in 1857.

The earliest part of the present building appears on the 1870 First Edition six inch map labelled 'National School' as a roughly T-shaped plan with an L-shaped classroom range to the north, and a T-wing, possibly toilets, to the south. On the 1885 First Edition 25 inch Ordnance Survey map it is further described as 'Girls and Infants'. By the 1896 Second Edition map it is now labelled 'School' rather than 'National School': a further classroom block has been added to the west and the original east wing has had a further classroom added on the south side. The roof of the girls' school in 'the old part' was re-tiled in 1904 and a ventilator added. By the 1908 Third Edition map an additional classroom has been added to the south-east and the toilet block has been rebuilt and extended further south. There is a record of windows to the Girls' Room, probably in the earliest wing, being replaced in 1913 and of a school canteen being built in 1917-18.

From 1945 children transferred to secondary schools at the age of eleven and in 1954 boys and girls left this site for a new school elsewhere. The Infants School remained here until 1975 when a new primary school was built on another site. Subsequently the buildings were used as a parish centre.

Details

A National School, later used as a church centre, the earliest part built in 1854, extended by 1885 and further extended by 1908. The school is in the Gothic style, and the architect is not at present known.

MATERIALS: mainly random un-coursed Kentish ragstone with ashlar dressings but with some red brick on the east side. There is a Kentish peg-tiled roof with a brick ridge chimneystack and external, mainly stone, chimneystacks.

PLAN: the earliest part was roughly T-shaped with an L-shaped classroom block to the north, with teacher accommodation on the upper floor of the L-wing and toilets in the south T-wing. By 1896 two further classrooms had been added to the west, divided by a partition in 1900 into infants and babies, and a further classroom to the south-east. By 1908 an additional classroom had been built to the east of the south-eastern classroom, and the original toilet block had been rebuilt and extended.

EXTERIOR: the north-east or entrance front is composed of four sections. To the east is a lower gabled wing with a tri-partite window and tiled penticed porch. Adjoining to the west is a later gabled section with kneelers and three mullioned and transomed 1913 windows. Adjoining to the east is a projecting two-storey gabled crosswing of a single bay with a penticed porch on the western return. The west wing is single storeyed with four tri-partite 1930s casement windows and a plinth. There is a slightly projecting stone external chimneystack between the first and second bays.

The east side has a single window, of C20 date within an earlier opening, to the northern gable, and a mullioned and transomed casement window with a gabled head to the classroom behind.

The south side has a brick gable to the east with two mullioned and transomed windows, followed by: a stone gable with a sash window; a further sash window and a partly projecting stone chimneystack with a brick top to the return; two C20 casement windows, and a two-storey gable with a first floor casement window. The

ground floor is obscured by a circa 1908 single-storey toilet block with C20 windows. The eastern end has two entrances, three tri-partite casement windows and a partially projecting stone chimneystack with a brick top.

The west side has a blank gable end.

INTERIOR: the entrance through the east end leads into a large three-bay classroom, originally with an exposed roof structure but at the time of inspection (2015) only the tie beams and moulded corbels were visible.

The adjoining cross-wing has a wooden half-winder staircase with square balusters leading to two first floor rooms with four-panelled doors, built-in cupboards and simple wooden fireplaces with pilasters.

The west classroom wing has a folding wooden screen between the two classrooms which each have a wooden fireplace with pilasters. The two south-eastern classrooms have similar fireplaces.

Selected Sources

Map

National Grid Reference: TQ6780157546



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The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - 1429483_1.pdf