

OFFICER REPORT

Application Number: P2026/0602

Site Address: The Presbytery St Josephs Roman Catholic Church Church Street Aberavon Neath Port Talbot SA12 6LE

Proposal: Ecclesiastical Exemption Consultation for the installation of handrails to steps at front entrance to church

Applicant: James Crowley

Agent: N/A

Ward: Aberavon

Application Type: Ecclesiastical Exemption

Valid Date: 17th September 2026

Statutory Expiry Date: 14th October 2026

Ext. of Time / PPA date:

Publicity Expiry Date: 23rd September 2026

RECOMMENDATION - Ecclesiastical Observations

Ecclesiastical Exemption

Application Reference: P2026/0602

Site and Context:

The application site is St Josephs Roman Catholic Church, Aberavon which is a Grade II Listed Building. The Church fronts Church Street and is bounded to the sides by Church Hall to the North and The Presbytery to the South. The Cadw report for Listed Buildings notes that the Church is early Christian style with basilican interior, dating from 1930.

Description of Development:

This application is a consultation under Ecclesiastical Exemption.

Ecclesiastical Exemption is a legal provision allowing certain religious denominations to bypass control of the Local Planning Authority in relation to works to Listed Buildings under their own Church system of control which has been approved by the Secretary of State.

The submitted information is a consultation only and sets out the following proposed works:

- Installation of handrails to steps at the front entrance to a Church.

The works above as proposed are considered to be exempt from Listed Building Consent by virtue of Ecclesiastical legal provision.

Planning History:

- P2018/0878: Consultation under Ecclesiastical Exemption: Demolition of a lean-to greenhouse with timber frame and brick plinth which adjoins the exterior wall of the church. [Decision Date: 31-OCT-18]
- P2016/0708: Replacement of complete section of slate roof and two small flat roofs, works to gutters and rainwater goods plus works to internal walls to repair plaster damaged from water ingress - Consultation under Ecclesiastical Exemption. [Decision Date: 27-SEP-16]
- P2003/0767: Ecclesiastical Application for new lighting in Church [Decision Date: 17-JUN-03]
- P2003/0151: Ecclesiastical Building Application - Rewiring and new lighting [Decision Date: 28-FEB-03]
- P2002/0120: Ecclesiastical Building Application - Heating System [Decision Date: 28-FEB-02]
- P2001/1173: Installation of a Stained Glass Window [Decision Date: 19-OCT-01]

Consultations:

Ward Members - No response

Report

Planning Policies:

The Local Development Plan for the area comprises the [Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan](#) which was adopted in January 2016, and within which the following policies are of relevance:

- **Policy SP21** Built Environment and Historic Heritage
- **Policy BE1** Design
- **Policy BE2** Buildings of Local Importance

Issues:

Having regard to the above, the main issues to consider in this application relate to the impact on the historic features of the Listed Building.

Impact on the Historic Features of the Listed Building:

In this case, given the limited scale and nature of the proposed works, it is considered that the installation of two handrails would not harm the historical or architectural significance of the Church. The submitted materials and design (steel handrails, painted black) are considered appropriate, integrating with the existing steel, black railings to the front of the Church. For these reasons, it is considered that the proposed works would not detrimentally impact upon the historic features of the original structure, nor affect its character. As such, the Local Planning Authority offers no objection to the proposed works.

Conclusion:

It is considered that the works would comply with Policies SP21, BE1 and BE2 of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan. As such, it is recommended that no objection be offered in response to this consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

Ecclesiastical Observations

Subject to the following conditions/reasons, which have been imposed for the reasons stated:-

Case Officer	Thomas Lewis
Telephone No.	01639 686226
Date of Recommendation	1st October 2026