



For the attention of Emily Bell

Ref: 24/0579/FUL – Church Hall, St Mary the Virgin, Church of England, Camlet Way, Barnet EN4 0NJ

The London and Middlesex Archaeological Society (LAMAS) promotes London's archaeology, local history, and historic buildings. The LAMAS Historic Buildings and Conservation Committee reviews applications for listed building consent and seeks to ensure a sustainable future for vital aspects of London's built heritage.

On Tuesday, 19 March 2024 the Committee studied application 24/0579/FUL for the demolition and rebuild of the existing two storey church hall | Church Hall St Mary the Virgin Church Camlet Way Barnet EN4 0NJ

The church hall is significant for the setting of the Grade II* church, which according to paragraph 201 of the NPPF must be assessed in deciding on a planning application. In the view of the Committee replacing the present characterful hall by a neo-Georgian pastiche would damage the setting of the church.

There is in the documentation produced by the applicant insufficient information to justify this harm. We recommend that the applicant be required to submit further information to address the issues and that there should be a further consultation before the Council makes its decision; the Committee can then finalise its conclusion based on necessary evidence which is currently lacking.

The structural report mentions the portal frame inside but without describing its materials or what structural function it is providing, nor does it show where on the building the measurements of displacement were taken. The severe subsidence is at the SE corner, so the necessary intervention may be quite localised. There is no crack or obvious physical damage on the east facade, and the lean might be rectified by a partial rebuild.

The appendices are missing, including the 2007 report which may have put forward a solution for stabilising the rotation evident then. It is unclear from the report that is provided whether it might in fact be possible to stabilise the building – the report simply says it would not be economically viable to do so. However, this statement needs justification, which has not been provided, and we believe their case is far from proven.

The Committee would expect to see the options appraised, including whether it is feasible to address the east wall lean by a partial rebuilding. Extending the footprint of the building as part of the solution might be acceptable.

The new church hall proposed is made to look like a house, and the internal arrangement of the existing building is largely reproduced. Changing rooms and a meeting room are shown at first floor level but there is no lift, so what is proposed is a new community building that would not offer equal access.

Vicki Fox (Hon. Secretary)

LAMAS – Historic Buildings & Conservation Committee

22 March 2024