

BALDOCK ST MARYS CHURCH HALL

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Purpose

The purpose of this statement is to support the application for planning permission and faculty.

The church hall is an ancillary building but in the curtilage of Church of St Mary, Baldock which is a Listed Building Grade I - see later.

The church hall was constructed circa 1984 and is traditionally constructed with a tiled roof, brickwork and a feature entrance porch together with tall slim windows to the front and left side only.

The church hall is set back from the church and close to the external churchyard wall and is surrounded by gravestones.

The church hall is adjacent to several tall conifers.

The Church of St Mary and the church hall are in a prominent town centre location with associated church yard, gravestones and memorials but without car park The church itself and its spire is visible from open countryside outside of Baldock but the church hall itself is located to the rear of the church and is not visible from either a distance or even close up and is only evident within the church grounds.

This statement of significance relates to the church hall only and not to the church itself, as the works required relate to church hall windows and doors only.

The works involve the replacement of vandalised window and door units by replacing the single glazed units with more modern thermally efficient and thermally broken double glazed units in powder coated aluminium.

The fenestration will remain much the same with only minor alterations to external dimensions. The lead cheeks and cap to the top of the tall units will be upgraded and improved, but externally the appearance of the fenestration will be very similar.

Designation Records for the Heritage Asset

The church hall is a curtilage building. The hall is situated within the churchyard and is prominent only from within the churchyard.

The hall itself does not have any particular architectural merit or features.

Planning History

The building was constructed circa 1984 and was subject to Planning Consent which was obtained from North Herts District Council and almost certainly the subject of a faculty from the Diocese of St Albans.

There is but little evidence of the negotiations or processes for design considerations which were considered at the time of construction but no doubt because of its location, considerable consultation was carried out.

Archaeological Interest

At the time of construction there must have been archaeological interest in the site and almost certainly archaeological investigations were made prior to and during its construction and possibly some former graves must have been removed or relocated.

Understanding the Form and History of the Heritage Asset

Again, I would reiterate that the church hall is an independent building and although relates to the historic church it is completely independent within the churchyard.

There was no phased development, and the church hall was constructed as one entity.

Assessing the Significance of the Heritage Asset

As detailed above the church hall is not significant in itself but is related to the heritage asset.

Architectural and Artistic Interest

The church hall is a product of its time but does present relatively pleasant elevations and materials. There are no particular architectural or artistic elements.

Historic Interest

There is little historic interest in the church hall.

Contribution to the Significance of the Site

The church hall does not contribute to the significance of the site but does provide an important communal facility.

Impact of Significance

The church hall was constructed in 1984 and has therefore become part of the churchyard and adjacent to the significant historic asset of the church.

Listing

I set down below the listing for information.

Location

Statutory Address:

CHURCH OF SAINT MARY, CHURCH STREET

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

Hertfordshire

District:

North Hertfordshire (District Authority)

Parish:

Non Civil Parish

National Grid Reference:

TL 24396 33905

Details

838/1/31 CHURCH STREET 08-NOV-49 (Southwest side) CHURCH OF SAINT MARY
(Formerly listed as: HITCHIN STREET CHURCH OF SAINT MARY)

GV I

Revision Number: 2

CHURCH STREET 1. 5255 (South West Side) Church of Saint Mary (Formerly listed under Hitchin Street) TL 2433 NW 1/31 8.11.49. GV 2. C13 east end of chancel, C14 west end. C14 nave, aisles, north and south chapels, west tower and 2 storey south porch with C15 turret. C15 windows and nave clerestory. North porch added 1836. C19 spire. C13 double piscina in chancel, south chapel C14 piscina and double sedilia. C15 north chapel brasses and restored screen to chapels and chancel. Octagonal C13 font. Fine C18 and C19 marble wall tablets including Caldecott memorial with carved figures, 1846 by E H Baily. North aisle window 1881 by C E Kempe. RCHM pp 44-45; VCH PP 69-71. [The Church of Saint {Mary.} Churchyard Wall of Saint {Mary's} and {Yos} {I} to] 13 (odd) form a group.

Pevsner Description

The Buildings of England - Hertfordshire

A roomy church, architecturally in several points the sister of Ashwell, a few miles away. Big broad w tower of the early C14 with Dec windows, and on the embattled parapet a small octagonal lantern crowned by a Herts spike.

The body of the church also embattled, mostly of flint. But the lower part of the chancel is of stone. Here traces can be found of C13 windows and a DOUBLE PISCINA with a C13 shaft.

The s porch is two-storeyed with a turret in the NW angle and an outer doorway of the early C14. The other windows are Perp. The interior is in its appearance almost completely C14: tower arch, arcades of six bays, chancel arcades of two bays, SEDILIA and PISCINA in the s chapel with nodding ogee arches. The piers are quatrefoil with additional thin shafts (without capitals) in the diagonals (just as at Ashwell), typical moulded capitals (on the s side slightly more finely detailed than on the N), and double-chamfered arches.

Good contemporary head corbels for the outer labels. C15 clerestory roofs (on head corbels). The aisles are wide and on the low side. The church is generally board and roomy: a wealthy town church.

FONT. Octagonal, on five shafts; C13

SCREENS. A complete C15 set across aisles and chancel arch, the rood screen, of course, more ornate than the others, but all three relatively elementary in their tracery.

STAINED GLASS. W window 1849, looks as if it might be by *Wailes*; E window similar; N aisle Simpson Window 1881, a typical early *Kempe*; S aisle second from E by *Clayton & Bell* c.1875.

PLATE. Chalice and Paten 1629.

MONUMENTS. C13 Purbeck marble coffin-lid with cross (N Chapel).

Brasses to a woman c.1410; to a man with hunting horn, c. 1420; to a man and woman, later C15, larger figures (N chapel); to a man and woman, shrouded, c.1480, c. 3ft long (N chapel). Georgiana Caldecott 1846, by *Baily*. She lies on a couch mourned by a kneeling young woman, while an angel in the background of the relief carries her soul up to heaven. Many minor epitaphs (e.g. by *Gaffin*).

Nature of Proposal

As detailed above the nature of the proposal is to replace the vandalised window and door units with thermally efficient, double glazed, maintenance free window and door units to maintain the fenestration details in general.

Avoiding Harmful Impact

The proposal to replace the windows does not affect the external envelope of the building in any way. There is no further harmful impact on the heritage asset of the church.

Recording

Again, as there will be little significant alterations to the elevations there will be no real reason to record the replacement of the windows although a planning application may be necessary.

Values

Evidential Value

As detailed above the church hall was constructed in 1984 and its value is evidenced by its use.

Historic Value

The church hall in itself does not have any historic value although it is a curtilage building. It has now been in place for some 36 years and will continue to provide an amenity for the church and community.

Aesthetic Value

The building is a product of its time, but its architectural style is considered to be satisfactory. The use of manmade clay tiles and facing bricks provide a pleasing building.

Communal Value

The church hall is not only used by the church and the congregation but is available for hire for use by the community.

Unfortunately, the church and the church hall are not provided with a car park although there is car parking available in the streets externally.

Footpaths cross the church yard, and the building is quite prominent within the churchyard itself.

With some eventual upgrading and improvements, it is hoped that the church hall will provide an attractive facility for the church and community.

Statement of Need

The proposed replacement of the windows which have been subject to vandalism should not require a statement of need.

The church hall is used not only by the church and the congregation but also for other users.

The church provides a very usable facility and has facilities for those with disabilities.