

North Hertfordshire District Council

Building Conservation comments

File Ref: 24/02215/FP

Date: 30/01/2025

Planning Officer: HT

Address: St Marys Church Hall, Church Street, Baldock, Hertfordshire SG7 5AE

Subject: Removal and replacement of windows and dormer structures to front elevation (south), removal and replacement of double opening emergency exit door set to side elevation (east) and creation of concrete pad to form level-threshold access point forward of emergency exit.

1.0 Recommendation

- 1.1 It is considered that the proposal would neither harm the listed building's special character or harm the special character of the Baldock Conservation Area, therefore satisfies the provisions of Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (LB & CA) Act 1990 and will accord with Section 16 of the Framework and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031. The proposal is therefore **UNOBJECTIONABLE** in heritage terms.

2.0 Context

- 2.1 St Marys Church, Baldock is grade I listed and is located within the Baldock Conservation Area. Both the building and area are Designated Heritage Assets for the purpose of applying the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework with the church building being a high value Heritage Asset. The statutory list entry reads as follows:

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 clerestorey. 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.

3.0 The Local Plan and NPPF (Dec 2024)

- 3.1 Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 - 2031 is relevant as are the following paragraphs of the NPPF:
- **135 c)** (sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment),
 - **207** (local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting)
 - **210** (desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness),
 - **212** (great weight should be given to the asset's conservation),
 - **213** (clear and convincing justification), and
 - **215** (harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use).

4.0 The Proposal

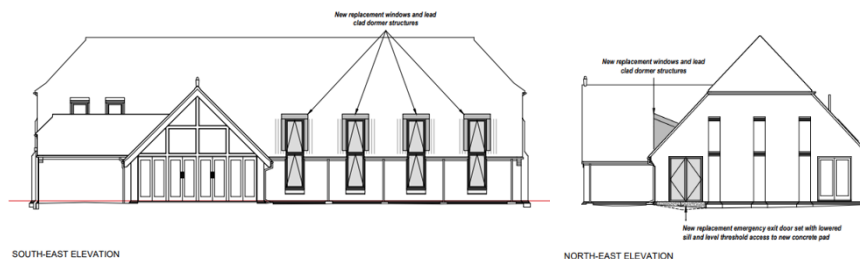
- 4.1 As noted in the submitted Statement of Significance, the Church Hall was constructed circa 1984 and is traditionally constructed with a tiled roof, brickwork and a feature entrance porch together with tall slim windows to the front and left side only. This Statement continues by stating that:

“.....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.”

- 4.2 The submitted Design and Access Statement reads as follows:

Proposals include:

- *Replacement of existing timber and metal windows with black powder coated extruded metal thermally broken powder coated and double-glazed heritage type window (see attachments).*
- *Construction of new timber and insulated lead clad dormer structures over new windows – cheeks and mono-pitch roof.*
- *Lowered door sill to emergency exit door set (east elevation) and replacement of existing emergency exit timber door set with black powder coated extruded metal thermally broken and double-glazed heritage type door set (see attachments).*
- *Installation of concrete pad forward of emergency exit doors (to be replaced) to form level-threshold access point.*



Mark Simmons
Senior Conservation Officer