

[REDACTED]
14 Braemar Avenue
Haringey
London N22 7BY

23 February 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Objections to Listed Building Application: HGY/2023/0236 (associated with Planning Application HGY/2022/4552) – Development of Braemar Avenue Church Site (“the Development”)

Our address: 14 Braemar Avenue, N22 7BY

1. We did not receive any notice from Haringey’s planning and building control department (“the Council”) for HGY/2023/0236. We filed our objections to HGY/2022/4552 on 23 February 2023.
2. As set out therein, we consider the Development fails to comply with a number of planning policies and guidance at a local, London and national level without any or any adequate explanation or justification.
3. We object to the:
*“Demolition of existing Church Hall and 1950's brick addition to rear of main Church building and redevelopment of site to provide new part 1, part 4 storey building (plus basement), comprising a new church hall and associated facilities at ground and basement level and self contained residential units at ground to fourth floor level with associated refuse and recycling storage and cycle parking facilities. The proposal also includes landscaping improvements.”*²
4. This objection does not repeat the matters set out in our objection to HGY/2022/4552, save where relevant to the issue of obtaining Listed Building Consent. We have received expert advice in preparing the response.
5. The Heritage Asset is described as “Baptist Church, Braemar Avenue, Wood Green (Grade II listed)”,³ which appears to the brick and stone Church.⁴

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² ApplicationForm.pdf

³ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 3.

⁴ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 46.

6. We object to the Listed Building Consent Application (“the Application”) because:
 - i. The heritage statement fails to assess the Church and Church Hall in line with applicable policies;
 - ii. The heritage statement is inconsistent with the wider planning documents submitted with the Listed Building Consent application;
 - iii. The assessment of harm is based on irrational conclusions and thereby inconsistent with applicable policies; and
 - iv. The failure to consult.

OBJECTIONS

i. The Heritage Statement’s failure to assess by reference to applicable policies

7. Firstly, the Heritage Statement fails assess the Church Hall by reference to paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) which states:

“196. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset⁵ should not be taken into account in any decision.

8. The Heritage Statement states the “*church hall’s significance lies in its historical relationship with the church...*”⁶ It appears that it can properly be considered a heritage asset.
9. The Heritage Statement states that “*[a]lthough externally it is largely original, there have been unsympathetic repairs over time leading to the loss of the vast majority of its original (limited) detailing*”.⁷
10. It nevertheless goes on to state the “*extant building, with almost all traces of architectural elaboration having been lost over time, is not considered to be of special architectural interest in its own right. Looking at the building in isolation its aesthetic (design) value is considered to be low.*”⁸
11. The Heritage Statement fails to comply with paragraph 196 NPPF because it has assessed the Church Hall by reference to its deteriorated state, when its state is due to the deliberate neglect and damage to it by the Applicant.
12. Therefore, its conclusion that the “*resultant harm to the significance of the listed building. The harm through demolition is considered to fall between neutral and less*

⁵ Defined as: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.

⁶ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 35.

⁷ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 36.

⁸ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 36.

than substantial harm, on the lower part of that spectrum”⁹ is flawed. The Application therefore fails to properly assess harm to the Church in the context of the Conservation Area.

13. Secondly, the Heritage Assessment fails to assess the significance of the demolition by reference to paragraphs 199 and 200 NPPF, which states:

“199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset¹⁰ (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification...”

14. The analysis at section 6.1.1 of the Heritage Statement fails to reference, let alone give, great weight to the impact of the demolition of the church hall’s significance to the Church.
15. In turn, the Application to demolish the church hall does not give great weight to the conservation of the church hall’s significance to the Church and does not provide clear and convincing justification for the demolition of the church hall.
16. Thirdly, the Heritage Statement fails to engage with the balancing of harm properly in its conclusion that demolishing will result in neutral or less than substantial harm.
17. The harm *“should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”* (paragraph 202 NPPF). There is no analysis of the possible securing optimum viable use of the church hall. The balancing exercise undertaken focuses exclusively on the physical building of the listed Church and not the harm to the significance of the Church, which includes the existence of the church hall, not on the optimum viable use of the church hall and its relationship with the Church.
18. The Heritage Statement and Application fails to include, in its consideration of the public benefit, an assessment of the Development’s failure to provide any public benefit in the provision of affordable housing, absence of cohesive analysis of community benefit and an insinuation of non-payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy.¹¹ Further details of our concerns in relation to public benefit are set out in our response to application HGY/2022/4552, which we ask is taken into account in consideration of this application.

⁹ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 36.

¹⁰ Defined as including: “...Listed Building ...or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.”

¹¹ Braemar Avenue FVA Report – Redacted, ¶10.7.

19. Fourthly, the Heritage Statement fails to analyse the impact of the demolition of the 1950s extension to the Church.¹² The Church was listed on 6 July 1976.¹³ It is apparent that the 1950s extension (depicted in figure 4.2¹⁴) was considered as a part of the Listing as a Grade II building. The Heritage Statement just refers to the “*evidential value of the southern elevation is considered to be low.*”¹⁵ The Heritage Statement proceeds on the basis that the Development must be built.
20. But, there is no assessment at all of the nature of the harm to the demolition of the 1950s extension, there is no assessment about the preservation of the extension, there is no clear or convincing justification for the harm by demolition; there is no analysis of exceptional justification for the loss of part of the Church, the whole of which has been listed (paragraph 200(a), NPPF).
21. Therefore, the Application fails to meet paragraphs B and C of DM9 of Haringey’s Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2017) by not including an assessment and justification of the impact of the new development on the demolition of the 1950s extension, no priority given to sustaining and enhancing the Church and no consideration of preservation of the historic form, fabric, function and character of the Church including its developments through the 1950s (set against its likely historic significance, given the substantial post-WW2 rebuilding in these bombed areas that has not been considered at all).

ii. The Heritage Statement is inconsistent with other application documents

22. The Heritage Statement underestimates the harm caused by the Development because, despite the Heritage Statement suggesting that “*any replacement building would need to be sensitively designed to respect the setting of the listed building and to have a neutral impact on its significance*”¹⁶, it proceeds on the basis that the “*design [of the development] has been conscious to derive its western elevation rhythm from the historic terraces south of the church hall, to ensure the proposed building blends with its context.*”¹⁷
23. The context as noted is “*Edwardian Housing*” which “*forms part of the historic setting of the listed building, lies in close proximity to the Site, and lies in the experiential, visual and aesthetic setting of the listed building. The housing is considered to contribute towards the significance of the listed building as an element of setting.*”¹⁸

¹² Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 36.

¹³ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 45.

¹⁴ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 12.

¹⁵ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 29.

¹⁶ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 39.

¹⁷ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 38.

¹⁸ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 29.

24. The purported sympathetic design referenced in the heritage statement is contradicted by the Design and Access statement describing the elevations as “*a contemporary, striking new mixed use development.*”¹⁹
25. This internal contradiction indicates a lack of robust heritage assessment that fails to demonstrably give considerable importance and weight to the heritage assets on the development site.
26. Insofar as the Heritage Statement suggests that the Development respects the setting of historical terrace houses near the listed building merely by being in line with the terrace houses, such conclusion is incredible. It is equally confounding to read that a flat Western elevation can be considered respectful to the historic terrace houses, with undulating bay windows, and the church with its multiple depth elevations.
27. “*Braemar Avenue Church forms a part of the Trinity Gardens Conservation Area, which is characterised by a sense of openness and verdure. Shrubs, trees and planting are widespread throughout the area and form an important element of the character and appearance. Most properties are of Victorian origin and are of architectural interest which positively contribute to the character and setting.*”²⁰ However, the design of the Development does not incorporate the stonework of the heritage asset of the Main Church building and the conservation area, nor the brickwork²¹ of Victorian/Edwardian architectural style of the conversation area.
28. The Application therefore fails to have regard to the sustaining and enhancing the significance of the Church and church hall and its setting, as required by DM9 section C(a).

iii. The Heritage Statement’s assessment of harm is based on irrational conclusions

29. The heritage statement goes on to say that the proposed footprint of the Development is not “*an excessive change from the status quo*”, because the current church hall “*is hemmed in by the trees*”.²² To suggest that the replacement of trees with a four-storey building is not an excessive change from the status quo is remarkable.
30. It appears that the heritage assessment is predicated on the assumption that “*the parapet wall above the second floor*”²³ of the new block being level with the roof ridge height of the historic terraces”. It can be seen from “045-1802_GA_040_Braemar Ave. Proposed Elevation A” that the parapet wall exceeds the roof ridge height of the terraces.

¹⁹ 220830_1802_Braemar Ave Planning DandA Statement, page 5.

²⁰ Planning statement, ¶7.43.

²¹ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 41.

²² Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 37.

²³ Meaning the third storey above ground.

31. It continues that the “*new building would therefore be marginally higher than the roof ridge height of the historic terraces to the south and only very marginally above the roof ridge height of the church*”²⁴ with the inclusion of the fourth storey. Again, as can be seen from “045-1802_GA_040_Braemar Ave. Proposed Elevation A”, the conclusion is absurd.
32. Thus, the conclusion that the harm analysis (that the impact is neutral and/or less than substantial harm) is unsustainable.
33. The conclusion also fails to demonstrate consideration for the design treatment of individual buildings in their wider setting as indicated by paragraph 2.65 of Haringey DPD. Nor does it attempt to consider Listed Building Consent for the purposes of reinstating original features of significance where these have been lost or damaged, or otherwise improve the site to make it more sympathetic to the Conservation Area, as indicated by paragraph 2.66 of Haringey DPD.

iv. Consultation

Consultation by the Applicant

34. An in-person exhibition in the Church was held on Tuesday 27 September 2022 between 6:30pm and 8:00pm. We attended the exhibition.
35. We raised with the Applicant the opportunities for community engagement offered by the development of the church hall. None were able to provide further information. We were directed to speak to the members of the Baptist Church. On speaking to representatives from the Baptist Church, it was apparent (as it is from the planning application) that there are no plans for engagement with the local community. We were informed that there would be further meetings about community engagement. We expressed a desire to be a part of that discussion. There has been no engagement with us (or as far as we are aware with the rest of the local residents who would be affected by the construction of the Development). In fact, I understand that our residents’ association proposed a meeting prior to the submission of this application, to discuss concerns, and the invitation was ignored.
36. The Statement of Community Involvement indicates that none of the local community’s concerns have been genuinely considered.
37. It is concerning that concerns raised by the locals are dismissed in the Statement of Community Involvement based on pre-applications discussions with the Council and by the Quality Review Panel.²⁵

²⁴ Braemar Church - Heritage Statement Final - Dec22, page 37.

²⁵ Statement of Community Involvement, page 5.

38. The Applicant attempts to style the Quality Review Panel as being an impartial and objective board²⁶ but it is comprised of local architects²⁷ and officers from the planning department.²⁸ The QRP is not independent. It cannot fortify the Application. It is a manifestation of the Council within itself.
39. The refusal of the Applicant to genuinely consider the community concerns, alongside reliance on the LPA and QRP is a significant indication that the Application has been predetermined.²⁹

Consultation by the Council

40. The Application comprises of 1,747 pages. We did not receive notification of HGY/2023/0236, in reality we have had less than a month after the discovery of this application following receipt of the Council's letter of 24 January 2023 in respect of HGY/2022/4552 to provide a response.
41. The consultation process by the Council has given existing residents extremely limited time to consider the density of the application, where the Applicant has had multiple meetings with the Council and four years to prepare its plans.
42. Consultation time and information provided for consultation have been insufficient.

OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSION

43. We object to Listing Building Consent permission being granted.
44. The planning application register suggests the decision will be made by delegated authority. We strongly urge that the application is considered by a Planning Committee especially as it is directly related to HGY/2022/4552.

Yours faithfully,



²⁶ Planning statement, ¶4.21.

²⁷ Affiliations unspecified.

²⁸ Officers unspecified.

²⁹ *R(CPRE (Somerset)) v South Somerset DC* [2022] EWHC 2817 (Admin); *R (G) v Thanet District Council v Kentish Projects Limited* [2021] EWHC 2026 (Admin).