

London Borough of Haringey Quality Review Panel

Report of Formal Review Meeting: Braemar Avenue Baptist Church

Wednesday 15 December 2021

Via video conference

Panel

Hari Phillips (chair)

Phil Armitage

Hugo Nowell

Joanna Sutherland

Lindsey Whitelaw

Attendees

John McRory London Borough of Haringey

Richard Truscott London Borough of Haringey

Elisabetta Tonazzi London Borough of Haringey

Valerie Okeiyi London Borough of Haringey

Adrian Harvey Frame Projects

Adela Paparisto Frame Projects

Apologies / report copied to

Deborah Denner Frame Projects

Rob Krzyszowski London Borough of Haringey

Robbie McNaugher, London Borough of Haringey

Confidentiality

This is a pre-application review, and therefore confidential. As a public organisation Haringey Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOI), and in the case of an FOI request may be obliged to release project information submitted for review.

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1. Project name and site address

Braemar Avenue Baptist Church, Braemar Avenue, London N22 7BY

2. Presenting team

Andrew Budgen	Spacelab / Urbanlab
Sam Jackson	The Built Heritage Consultancy
Mandip Sahota	NTA Planning
Mohanad Alnaimy	Energylab

3. Aims of the Quality Review Panel meeting

The Quality Review Panel provides impartial and objective advice from a diverse range of highly experienced practitioners. This report draws together the panel's advice, and is not intended to be a minute of the proceedings. It is intended that the panel's advice may assist the development management team in negotiating design improvements where appropriate and in addition may support decision-making by the Planning Committee, in order to secure the highest possible quality of development.

4. Planning authority briefing

This site is located at the top of Braemar Avenue to the eastern side, at the junction with Bounds Green Road. The main grade II listed church building is built in a late Gothic Revival style in contrasting flintwork and dark red brickwork with terracotta dressings. To the north-western corner is a prominent tower that extends higher than the steeply pitched, gabled roof of the main church. On the southern elevation is the main entrance and extensions to the rear and southern elevation. To the south of the church is the original single storey, corrugated iron Church Hall, built as a temporary structure albeit older than the church itself, and is in a derelict condition. To the east is a public park known as Nightingale Gardens. The wider surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, but with a number of institutional and community buildings along Bounds Green Road and Trinity Gardens. The site lies in the north-western part of the Trinity Gardens Conservation Area, and it has a PTAL value of 6A. Officers would welcome the panel's views on the overall design quality of the proposals, and in particular its relationship to the sensitive context and on the proposed approach to trees.



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5. Quality Review Panel's views

Summary

The panel thanks the design team for their comprehensive presentation and feels that the scheme offers a number of benefits, not least the improvements to the listed church and the provision of a valuable community facility. However, it is unconvinced by the case for the basement-level church hall and would like to see options explored for providing this at ground level to allow for a positive relationship with Nightingale Gardens.

The panel is comfortable with the proposed height and massing, and finds much that is positive in the architectural treatment. It does feel that the architecture could be more assertive and would like to see some of the earlier materials proposed reconsidered for inclusion in the façades. The approach to landscape is positive and the panel would like to see indigenous species selected, as well as a green roof that provides the most biodiverse solution possible. It feels that the ambitions as regards sustainability are good, and the challenge now is to bring them to life and integrate the approach into the design of the scheme. In particular, the panel feels that the embodied carbon of the proposals should be formally assessed and should guide the design and selection of materials.

Height, massing, and architectural treatment

- The panel is comfortable with the proposed height and massing of the building and feels that it achieves a successful transition from the housing along Braemar Avenue to the church.
- The proportions and verticality of the architecture are successful, although the panel feels that the elevations lack some confidence. A more assertive architectural language that relates more positively to its context, while recognising the supportive role the building plays in relation to the church, might be more appropriate.
- The panel questions whether the stepping back of the building to reveal the church is necessary and feels that this is detrimental to the building's design; it would like to see further visualisations to explore this. It also feels that the additional break in the left-hand bay unbalances the composition.
- The panel welcomes the design development of the architecture. However, it feels that the earlier materials, and particularly the metals, were more successful and had more potential than the red brick ultimately selected. The potential for integrating the metal into the façade, possibly replacing the proposed cladding material on the top floor, should be explored.
- The use of MVHR within the building is positive, but the panel would like to see the visual impact this will have on the elevations.



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The church hall

- The panel questions the viability assumptions that underpin the decision to locate the church hall at basement level. It is similarly unconvinced by the acoustic argument, and feels that the opportunity to create a light, airy community space with a positive relationship to Nightingale Gardens outweighs the case for a basement solution.
- The view through the glass annex has the potential to contribute significantly to its setting, and the panel feels that a ground-level church hall would allow for more to be made of this.
- It questions whether there is scope for locating a ground-level hall at the back of the building, facing the park. The consequent loss of the residential units here could be offset by avoiding the need to excavate, to install a lift, and to provide a second kitchen.
- The panel would accept the additional public benefit of a ground-level hall as justification for not providing affordable housing on the site.
- As currently proposed, the ventilation of the basement hall requires further attention, and the panel questions where sufficient allowance has been made for ceiling height to accommodate the necessary plant.

Residential accommodation

- The dwellings on the southeast corner of the building may be overshadowed by trees and this should be rigorously tested. The ratio of glazing on the west elevation should be optimised for heat gain and daylighting.
- The single aspect dwellings, particularly on the ground floor, may be dark and lack sufficient ventilation.
- The panel notes that the location of the bin store, at the heart of the building, may well have a negative impact on the quality of the environment of the circulation around the core.
- The basement-level private amenity space may be at risk of flooding and this should be tested and appropriate drainage put in place.
- The arrangement of the fire escape routes, in relation to the stairs, ground floor dwellings and exits, should be assessed to ensure they comply with the fire regulations.



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Sustainable design

- The sustainability ambitions for the scheme are positive, and the challenge will be in integrating this approach within the design process as a whole.
- The embodied carbon of the scheme should be properly and formally assessed, and this assessment should inform the development of the design and materials selected.
- The panel understands the reasons for choosing to avoid heat pumps but suggests that the need for an upgraded electricity supply be properly considered.

Landscape design and biodiversity

- The approach to landscape design is generally positive.
- The panel notes that the removal of the mature tree at the boundary with Nightingale Gardens may cause ground heave, and this will need to be properly considered, in consultation with the tree officer at Haringey.
- The panel would like to see it replaced with one, or potentially two, indigenous trees, and would prefer this to be the case for all trees introduced to the site.
- The panel would like to see the proposed green roof composed of indigenous species that provide an extensive, biodiverse living roof, rather than simply using sedum.

Next steps

- The panel would be happy to see the scheme again, if helpful.



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Appendix: Haringey Development Management DPD

Policy DM1: Delivering high quality design

Haringey Development Charter

- A All new development and changes of use must achieve a high standard of design and contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area. The Council will support design-led development proposals which meet the following criteria:
- a Relate positively to neighbouring structures, new or old, to create a harmonious whole;
 - b Make a positive contribution to a place, improving the character and quality of an area;
 - c Confidently address feedback from local consultation;
 - d Demonstrate how the quality of the development will be secured when it is built; and
 - e Are inclusive and incorporate sustainable design and construction principles.

Design Standards

Character of development

- B Development proposals should relate positively to their locality, having regard to:
- a Building heights;
 - b Form, scale & massing prevailing around the site;
 - c Urban grain, and the framework of routes and spaces connecting locally and more widely;
 - d Maintaining a sense of enclosure and, where appropriate, following existing building lines;
 - e Rhythm of any neighbouring or local regular plot and building widths;
 - f Active, lively frontages to the public realm; and
 - g Distinctive local architectural styles, detailing and materials.

