



The Planning Officer  
Waverley Borough Council  
Western Planning Committee  
BY EMAIL

10 May 2023

Dear Sir

The Link, St Bartholomew's Church (WA/2023/00922 & 00923) – Comment only

The Society very much supports finding a long term sustainable future for The Link. The current proposals have many positive aspects but we query whether the alterations proposed are necessary to bring about the desired end product and whether there are less harmful ways of producing a similar result. We set out below some considerations to bear in mind.

**Roof Alterations**

- These alterations would affect historic fabric on the subject building, and would be visible from the adjoining listed church and lie within the conservation area. The proposed new gabled roof addition above the new link corridor would also affect an area of original roof, or at least an area of roof likely existing from 1868.
- The proposed area of flat roof would also be unsympathetic to the character of the building.
- New rooflights - these should be specified to be conservation rooflights.
- New gabled link – we would suggest that the roof ridge of the gabled link be set below the eaves of the existing school building so that it does not intervene into the historic roof of the original part of the school. As it stands this element would result in a small element of harm to the significance of the listed building.

**Entrances**

- The building at present has three entrances, which is a surprisingly high number of entrances. The Society queries whether it is justifiable to seek additional entrances into the building that affect historic fabric. An alternative scenario could be to retain the north-eastern entrance on the northern wing and use that as one of the entrances. A suitable ramp for wheelchairs could be provided in this location or the level of the car park dropped across the car park to allow access into the building to be at the same level as the car park.
- Locating a new porch across the external chimneystack on the north-eastern elevation of the rear extension would be harmful to significance as it would devalue the visual

contribution the stack makes (which is large) and would also lead to harm to the window head and hood mould to the window on the Derby Road elevation of the main school if the porch were affixed to this elevation (unclear from the proposed scheme). Also creating another entrance here, in addition to the relatively recent entrance just to the north on the same north-eastern elevation, would also confuse the phasing of the building and the layout of the historic building. The latter contributes towards its significance. The former girls' school entrance on the northern side off High Lane could be re-used.

### **Internally**

- In significance terms subdividing the interior horizontally will result in a reasonable degree of harm to significance as school buildings of the period were lofty spaces to allow good levels of natural light and to create an inspiring space to learn.
- Para 202 of the NPPF requires that the optimum viable use is borne in mind. This is first financial viable use that results in the least possible harm to the listed building. We would highlight that the applicant should show evidence that less harmful schemes are unviable.
- A lift in a school building of this period is unsympathetic to the character of the listed building, notwithstanding the various alterations that are required internally to allow its installation. The key rooms could be provided at ground floor level, with service ancillary rooms at first floor level, therefore removing the need for wheelchair access via a lift to first floor level.
- Proposing to take down the wall between the existing office and adjoining wall would be harmful as this wall forms part of the original building. There is an existing doorway here, which appears wide enough for wheelchairs.
- The DAS mentions the need for removing the central chimneystack to produce more space and then proposes the subdivision of an open area in the south-eastern part of the building. The latter is the original school building, and is the most sensitive area to change. We would highlight that the south-eastern part of the building is part of the original open-plan school building and subdividing it in this way would blur the legibility of the building's significance and original use. Where possible we would suggest new insertions are demountable so they can hypothetically be removed in years to come, and in this way they are reversible, meaning no harm.

Finally, we suggest that the applicant should supply a full set of demolition plans and elevations, to assist consideration of the application.

Yours Sincerely

S. Dullaway (by email)  
(on behalf of The Haslemere Society Planning Group)