



Mr Justin Howell
Birmingham City Council
Planning and Regeneration
PO Box 28
Birmingham
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Our ref:12 08 03

9 October 2013

Dear Mr Howell,

**ACOCKS GREEN BAPTIST CHURCH, YARDLEY ROAD, BIRMINGHAM B27
PLANNING APPLICATION REF: 2013/06516/PA**

Thank you for consulting the Twentieth Century Society on the above planning application. This proposal follows a previous application (ref:2012/03710) for a similar scheme which also comprised the demolition and redevelopment of Glynn Edwards Hall. That application was withdrawn by the applicant prior to determination. Our comments on the previous scheme are dated 6 August 2012. This letter sets out the Society's **strong objection** to the current proposals.

Significance

Constructed in 1924, Glyn Edwards Hall was built to the designs of FB Andrews, architect of the adjacent Baptist chapel. It sits in a highly sensitive corner location flanked by two grade II listed buildings: the chapel constructed in 1913 on Yardley Road, and Arthur Moore Hall, built in 1903 on Alexander Road.

Glynn Edwards Hall and former Caretakers house (No 2 Alexander Road) are curtilage listed by virtue of being attached to the listed buildings and dating to pre- 1947. The hall was also added to Birmingham City Council's Local List in 1991 at grade A. Grade A is the highest category of local listing, according the Council's own selection criteria. The properties on the opposite side of Alexander Road and No 50 Yardley Road are also included on the local list.

The hall, built later than its neighbours has a steep tiled roof, tall gabled bays, and a half timbered gable above the entrance door, a feature that is characteristic of the design of many of the surrounding properties on Yardley Road, Alexander Road and Malvern Road. It

represents a successful effort by the architect to ensure the hall blended with the surrounding townscape. In addition, the one storey scale of the hall is lower in height than both of its neighbours, ensuring it is subservient and respectful to the setting of the adjacent buildings, particularly the church. The conspicuous corner location also terminates views from Malvern Road, heightening the prominence of the site in the local townscape.

There are also clear links between both FB Andrews buildings, such as the Arts and Craft style femerell, which takes its cues from a similar architectural feature on the roof of the church, the decorative tile work on the ridges of both roofs, and the intricate brick detail of the hall facades that echo those of the church. These subtle connections create visual links between both buildings, adding importance to this group as an ensemble.

Proposal and Twentieth Century Society Comment

The current application shows minor alterations to the replacement building on the Glynn Edwards site and the outline of alternative options. However we remain unconvinced that sufficient attention has been paid to exploring alternatives that involve the retention of the Glynn Edwards Hall.

We are still opposed to the loss of this highly valued locally listed building which has significance as a non-designated heritage asset in its own right, as well as its group value in the setting of two adjacent grade II listed buildings.

I trust these comments are helpful to you in your consideration of this application. I would be very grateful if you could keep us informed of the outcome of this case.

Yours sincerely,



Henrietta Billings

Senior Conservation Adviser

The Twentieth Century Society

Remit: The Twentieth Century Society was founded in 1979 and is the national amenity society concerned with the protection, appreciation, and study of post-1914 architecture, townscape and design. The Society is acknowledged in national planning guidance as the key organisation concerned with the modern period and is a constituent member of the Joint Committee of the National Amenity Societies. Under the procedures set out in *ODPM Circular 09/2005*, all English local planning authorities must inform the Twentieth Century Society when an application for listed building consent involving partial or total demolition is received, and they must notify us of the decisions taken on these applications.