

St Mary's Hall, London Road
Arundel, West Sussex, BN18 9BA

Heritage Statement

For alterations to the existing building

*To accompany the revised Listed Building Application for
modifications to the original approval*

November 2011



ST. ANN'S GATE ARCHITECTS
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1.0 Introduction:

- a) This statement supplements that which was supplied for the first planning and listed building application made in 2010 which received consent in May 2011.
- b) Further to the initial listed building application, there have been some further investigations into the fabric of the building during the course of early stripping out, and some adjustments to the internal layout of the spaces with regards to vertical circulation that now need to be addressed within a new listed building application.
- c) This statement therefore still has relevance, but it must be borne in mind that the listed building application here deals only with the alterations to the scheme that has already been granted consent (Ref: AB/24/11/L)
- d) St Mary's Hall, London Road Arundel is a Grade 2 listed building, with its listings entry reading as follows:

Listed Buildings Online	
Building Name:	St Marys Hall And Wall To Mount Pleasant
Parish:	Arundel
District:	Arun
County:	West Sussex
Postcode:	BN16 9BA
LBS Number:	297224
Grade:	II
Date Listed:	07 October 1974
Date Delisted:	
National Grid Reference:	TQ0142007229
Listing Text:	
1. 5401 LONDON ROAD (South Side) ----- St Mary's Hall and wall to Mount Pleasant TQ O107 1/172 II	
2. Late C19. Architect possibly J A Hansom. Former Roman Catholic school. Red brick with ashlar dressings. Pitched tile roof. Elaborate grouped red brick chimney stacks with much corning. 1 storey, with basement on south side. Coved eaves cornice. 2 gabled projections at either end of north elevation. Octagonal tower above central door. South elevation has 6 buttresses, centre 2 supporting oriel window. Aedicule framing statue at south west corner. Mullion and transom windows with diagonal lead glazing bars. Wall to Mount Pleasant has 2 piers of Pulborough stone with gabled caps.	
Listing NGR: TQ0142007229	

2.0 Unchanged rationale for the works:

From the previous application the following can be re-stated:

- a) The use of St Mary's Hall has long been compromised by difficult accessibility between floors and the inappropriate kitchen facilities, now not compliant with regulations and the lack of suitable toilets. Whilst the building's fabric and structure is in a reasonable condition, the internal fittings, services, electrics and heating are in a poor condition and an overhaul of the building is overdue.
- b) The spaces within the building will be dictated by the structure and form of the existing walls, ensuring that the best and most sensible use is made of the areas within the structure avoiding unnecessary changes to structure. By and large, the main areas of the building will remain unchanged with the majority of changes occurring in the 'back up' or ancillary spaces.
- c) The alterations to the building are a considered response to a client brief, to provide improved facilities to continue its existing function and additional space to support the uses of the main spaces within the buildings.
- d) The changes are not considered to have any detrimental impact on the buildings character or inherent quality as a listed structure but in many ways re-establishing a layout more akin to the original use of the building. The building's refurbishment will provide a continued service and amenity within the town of Arundel for the cathedral and the wider community with a standard more fitting to the quality of the building.

3.0 Current application

The changes to the application [here](#) revolve around three main elements:

- 1. The alteration to the layout of the vertical circulation and access at lower ground floor level
- 2. The amendment of the boundary wall to the site with protection from falling
- 3. Dropping the lower ground floor level to reinstate original floor to ceiling heights

3.1 Circulation and layout alterations

- a) The original application showed the position of staircase and lift within the bay to the east of the central new access in the northern range of rooms. The new arrangement retains the position of the access lift, but has re-orientated the staircase around it and the access onto the lift.
- b) The reason for this rearrangement is the discovery through excavation and trial pits that underpinning would be required for the northern walls, although this had hoped to be avoided. The process will now allow for additional space and a better access route at the lower ground floor level for wheelchairs, but also a better use of the lower ground floor northernmost spaces themselves.
- c) At the upper level there will be two changes to the structure:
- The existing door into the new meeting room at the north-east corner of the building will be blocked in and a new opening created at the south-west corner instead.
 - The access landing for lift and the head of the staircase will be on the south side of the vertical circulation area, not the north side.
- c) At the lower level, there will be several resulting changes to the structure and layout:
- The circulation space and access corridor is vastly simplified and the curved ramp removed
 - The large new opening created in the spine wall of the original scheme is removed
 - The layout makes more use of the northern spaces, due to the possibility of uniform levels created by underpinning
- d) As before, the window at the upper level will still light the stairwell and the proposed lift within the space will have only a half height enclosure on the upper level, allowing the whole of the ceiling and ceiling beams in the space to be unimpeded.
- e) Improvements on impact resulting from the changes:
At the lower level, the original application showed the creation of a wide opening in the east-west spine wall at the lower ground floor level to make provision for a kitchenette in the meeting space. This amended layout has a kitchenette and storage area provided within the northernmost spaces, allowing the large section of spine wall previously to be removed to stay in place, which is felt to be an improvement on the structural stability of the building generally as well as the integrity of the fabric.
- f) Detrimental impact on fabric resulting from the changes:
At the upper level, the new layout does require a new door opening to be made within a wall to give access to the meeting room where no previous opening exists. Whilst this is an alteration and has impact on the historic fabric, it is felt that it would be replacing the existing opening within this wall which will be blocking up in brickwork and have no greater resulting impact than the original opening had. The original opening is shown here in the photograph (right hand side of room in the image) below and is considered to be of no particular historic merit.



This opening is considered to be of low historic merit in the overall context of the building, given that it is a simple flat headed lintel of later insertion.

- g) It is felt that the resulting layout now proposed has a more rational and direct access route at both upper and lower level, with mirrored openings at the upper level which retain the symmetry of the building's layout. The improvement of access to the two outer rooms and the lower ground floor arrangement will be an improvement for the overall function of the building which outweighs the relatively modest impact on the fabric of a single door opening relocated.

3.2 Amendment of Boundary Wall

- a) The proposed application makes changes to the boundary wall on Mount Pleasant and the bollards to the front of the site.
- b) Following discussions with Building Control officers and Highways it has been necessary to make amendments to the boundary wall to protect from falling and insert an additional two bollards at the ends of the new ramps.
- c) This has been achieved by lowering the horizontal section of boundary wall to a unified level above pavement and inserting railings from the new ramp wall downwards. These railings are continued around the new ramp and access platform for emergency escape on the east side of the building, and also on the boundary wall with the graveyard. Existing copings in this area show the points of what was historic railings or barrier of some kind in these coping.
- d) The proposal is to reuse the existing copings and stonework of the existing wall in the newly built sections for the ramp, and top this with new wrought iron railings of a traditional design as shown on the elevational drawings.
- e) Overall, it is felt that this approach will best retain and reuse the historic fabric of the boundary wall in a more positive manner by use to rebuilt the lower boundary below the railings and continued onto the facing the new ramped access to the building on Mount Pleasant side. A photograph of the existing stone wall is here below:



- f) At the request of Highways, two additional bollards are required over and above what was originally approved at the bottom end of the two ramp accesses at the front of the building. These are shown on the plans.

3.3 Dropping the lower ground floor level

- a) Following investigation into the floor make up of the lower ground floor level, the approach to how these spaces will be treated has been reassessed and consent must now be sought to lift some remaining original floor slabs.
- b) Full removal of the raised timber floor during building works has now revealed a section of Yorkstone slabs on the floor which are part of the original fabric. These do not occupy the entire ground level, but are the remains of original external flooring surface of the school play area prior to this part of the building being enclosed in the past.
- c) In some areas the stones have already been removed and replaced with sections of concrete screed. To avoid further excavation, the scheme had originally provided to leave the existing floors (thought to be all concrete) inserting minimum insulation and a floating floor over the top.
- d) The stones now discovered are cracking and there is considerable face deterioration due to having been covered up for a significant amount of time. The image below shows the flooring around the base of one of the steel columns.



- e) Keeping the stones in situ and leaving them exposed is not feasible given requirements for thermal insulation, issues of damp and meeting the Building Regulations. As such, the options are as follows:
 - Lift the stones and relay them in situ with appropriate sub-flooring
 - Lift the stones for use elsewhere if possible
 - Re-cover the stones in situ with a reinforced screed
- f) Of these options, the true conservation approach is to retain the stones in situ. This option would, however, cause an increase in the overall floor depth with the allowance for a new reinforced screed overlaid in a manner to suitably protect them and avoid cracking on the floor screed above.
- g) This additional screen would raise floor levels and reduce the headroom in the large meeting room to a level that is considered unacceptable.

- h) As the stones would not be seen if retained and covered over, the decision about whether or not they should be retained falls to whether the stones are of sufficient archaeological importance to merit retaining in place.
- i) The stones are not intact, and have already been damaged or are removed in places, so their heritage significance is felt to be lessened.
- j) Lifting the stones and re-using them in situ has been considered, but the function room is to have a wide variety of uses, with anything from yoga classes to conference use. It is felt that the activities would not be best served by an uneven external quality solid stone floor.
- k) The application here therefore seeks to remove the slabs for alternative use where possible.
- l) Until the stones are lifted, there is no way to establish how much of the material can be salvaged, but it is hoped that they can be re-incorporated into the external landscaping in the rear courtyard with some minor re-working.