

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE

20th April, 2017

APPLICATION NO.	DATE VALID
16/P4748	31/01/2017
Address/Site:	Merton Hall, 78 Kingston Road, Wimbledon SW19 1LA
Ward	Abbey
Proposal	Alterations and extensions to Merton Hall including demolition of part of Merton Hall, and alterations and refurbishment of the retained two storey building and erection of a new worship hall, café, foyer and meeting/group rooms.
Drawing No's	'Site Location Plan 1000 P/0', 'Proposed Block Plan 2000 P/2', 'Proposed Ground Floor Plan 2001 P/1', 'Proposed First Floor Plan 2002 P/0', 'Proposed Roof Plan 2003 P/0', 'Proposed Elevations Sheet 1 3000 P/0', & 'Proposed Elevations Sheet 2 3001 P/0'
Contact Officer	Felicity Cox (020 8545 3119)

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to planning conditions.

CHECKLIST INFORMATION

- Heads of agreement: None
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental Statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted: No
- Design Review Panel consulted: Yes
- Number of neighbours consulted: 29
- Press notice: No
- Site notice: Yes
- External consultations: No
- Controlled Parking Zone: Yes

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application is being brought to the Planning Applications Committee for determination as it has been called in to committee at the request of Councillor David Dean, entails a development that is not considered to be minor in nature where the Council is the applicant, and from the level of local interest, thereby taking it outside the scope of the scheme of delegation to officers for determining planning applications.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 Merton Hall is a two storey building which is dated 1899 and has a floor area of 486m². The building is listed on Merton Council's 'Local (Non Statutory) List of Buildings of Historical or Architectural Interest. The building is constructed of red/brown brick, and has detailing of stone and moulded bricks. The roof is of red tiles. The main features of interest are the clock and curved roof within the roof tower, the stone detailing around the windows, the large curved bay window, the round headed arch feature above the notice board, the leaded windows, the stone tablet over the doorway, the moulded brick panels set out in chequer board pattern within the gable feature, the small roof vent on the apex of the roof, and the moulded brickwork which defines the sill level of the first floor windows.
- 2.2 The building has undergone numerous alterations and additions, including:
- Main hall roof recently overlaid with PV panels;
 - A single storey flat roofed addition (east elevation);
 - Main entrance doorway to west of front elevation disused and infilled with board and a glazed panel;
 - Replacement windows;
 - A lean-to entrance porch (east elevation)
- 2.3 Behind the hall building is a landscaping strip that has a grouping of mature trees along the rear boundary in addition to vegetable beds and two saplings (including a lime tree that was planted as part of the works approved under LBM Ref: 12/P0025). A former boiler house is also located to the rear of the hall.
- 2.4 The northern boundary of the site fronts Kingston Road. The front of the building is set back from the pavement by a narrow strip of tarmacked pavement. Two crossovers are located one either side of the building, providing access to two car parking areas that service the hall. A signalised pedestrian crossing is located immediately in front of the site.
- 2.5 To the east of the site is the Merton Manor Working Men's Club with a bowling green at the rear of the property. The building is currently vacant.

- 2.6 To the west, the site adjoins a parade of shops fronting Kingston Road. The two storey terrace parade has residential units above the ground level shops. A two storey dwelling is located behind the western car park of Merton Hall, which does not form part of this application.
- 2.7 The rear of the site borders a number of houses in Boscombe Road which are currently separated from the site via a small pedestrian accessway.
- 2.8 The site is not within a conservation area and the building is not listed.
- 2.9 The site is on a main road with busses and tram lines providing a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL level 5) which is considered good. The site is within a Controlled Parking Zone.

3. CURRENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The Elim Pentecostal Church is relocating from their current location within a light warehouse unit located on High Path to Merton Hall. As part of the relocation to Merton Hall, the application proposes alterations and extensions to the Merton Hall including demolition of the single storey hall at the rear, and alterations and refurbishment of the retained two storey building and erection of a new worship hall, foyer and meeting/group rooms for use by the Elim Pentecostal Church.
- 3.2 Following demolition and the new construction works, the gross internal floor area of the building would be 998m². The intended hours of operation for the Church would be 7:00-22:00 Monday to Sunday.
- 3.3 At ground level the building will incorporate a foyer, café, and foodbank at the front of the building, with the main worship hall located in the south-eastern section of the building. Toilet facilities and two meeting/children's rooms will be located in the western section of the building. The first floor level will incorporate additional meeting rooms and office for the pastor, in addition to balcony seating for the main hall.
- 3.4 The two storey façade is to be retained and a new glazed side addition is proposed on the eastern side of the building. The side extension incorporates an apex with aluminum lettering for the church name, measuring 11.11m above ground level. The glazed addition will extend to the front boundary line of the site. A new café will be located at ground level within the new side extension, serving both the congregation and the general public. The proposed hours of opening for the café would be 7 am till 6pm Monday to Saturday and 12 noon till 4pm Sunday.
- 3.5 The middle bay window is to be partially demolished to facilitate a new front entrance to the building with glass doors. The original proposal was for the entrance to have a new glass lobby that extended in front of the new opening in the wall. Amended plans were provided that will set

the new glass doors in line with the front façade of the building and incorporate stone trim detailing to the sides. The original feature stonework above the bay window will be retained.

- 3.6 The panel board in the western archway will be removed and replaced with new glazing, behind which a foodbank will be located. A secondary access will be located on the western façade of the new building behind the foodbank, providing access from the car park to the main foyer.
- 3.7 The rear hall is to be demolished and replaced with a new two storey extension. The extension will be located over the footprint of the existing building and eastern car parking area. The building will extend 1 metre deeper than the current hall building (setback of 4 metres from rear boundary). The proposed building works incorporate a mixture of flat (low pitched) and pitched roofs. The bulk of the new extension to the rear will have a hipped roof with maximum building height of 9.04m and height to eaves of 7.4m.
- 3.8 Fire escape stairs will be located on the rear elevation for emergency exit from the first floor. The original plans proposed ground level bi-fold doors on the rear elevation. Amended plans have been submitted replacing these doors with a double set of doors with adjacent windows. The amended plans have also changed the ground level windows on the western elevation (adjacent to the adjoining dwelling) to be obscured glazed.
- 3.9 The proposed building works incorporate a mixture of flat (low pitched) and pitched roofs. The bulk of the new extension to the rear will have a hipped roof with maximum building height of 9.04m and height to eaves of 7.4m. The south-western corner of the building (adjacent to the flank wall of the dwelling in the rear corner of the site) will be single storey with a flat roof, and will measure 4.1m above ground level. In comparison, the existing section of hall to be demolished has an eaves height of 5m and maximum roof height of 8.6m (gable roof), while the front section of building to be retained has an eaves height of 6.2m and maximum roof height of 11.8m.
- 3.10 The proposed materials on the new build include frameless double glazing to the side extension, powder coated aluminum framed windows, mixed red brickwork and concrete interlocking roof tiles (old English Dark Red MA10480S). The amended plans propose the use of composite cladding with grey render behind to the front apex and the upper storey of the rear addition. The original plans proposed the use of Marley eternit cladding (Grey Mist) to the front apex and rear addition.
- 3.11 The existing group of trees at the rear of the site are to be retained and additional buffer planting would be provided along the rear boundary. Amended plans provided have proposed additional soft landscaping

along the site frontage, and have removed the proposed new fencing along the western side boundary (adjacent to the flank elevation of the dwelling at the rear).

- 3.12 The car parking area on the western side of the building will accommodate three standard parking spaces and one disabled bay. A bin store will also be located along the front boundary, to be concealed behind landscaping and within a timber bin enclosure.
- 3.13 Amended plans were submitted that locates the bicycle parking in the south-eastern corner at the rear of the site. The original plans proposed cycle parking adjacent to the bin store at the front of the site.
- 3.14 The site is not within a Conservation Area. The site is located within a Controlled Parking Zone.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The relevant planning history pertaining to the site is as follows:

2012 - 12/P0025 - FORMATION OF HARDSURFACED AREA TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL CAR AND CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE BUILDING WITH ACCESS VIA THE EXISTING VEHICLE ACCESS FROM KINGSTON ROAD INCLUDING INSTALLATION OF NEW GATES AND FENCING - Grant Permission subject to conditions.

1972 - MER1028/72 - DISABLED PERSONS TOILET- Grant Permission subject to conditions.

1957 - M/M7526 - ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSION FOR NEW KITCHEN AND CLOAKROOM - Grant Permission subject to conditions

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The application was advertised by means of neighbour notification letters and a site notice.
- 5.2 There were 21 objections from local residents raising concerns relating to:
 - Proposed design, materials, scale and siting of extension will negatively impact the appearance and character of the locally listed building by destroying its proportions and concealing the original building
 - Large scale demolition and loss of ground floor bay window would result in harm to heritage asset
 - Extension is obtrusive and overly large and would be overdevelopment of the site
 - Extension to rear would be visually overbearing on neighbours

- Extension would reduce extent of front pavement for pedestrian movement
- Glass extension would restrict daylight to the adjoining property
- No streetscape improvements or soft landscaping is proposed along the frontage or side of the building
- Insufficient parking provision and will result in severe parking stress in the area (no CPZ applies on a Sunday)
- Proposal would leave to excessive noise and disturbance that is not in keeping with residential amenity of the area
- Proposal would result in a loss of privacy with new windows, doors and fire escapes overlooking the gardens of Boscombe Road and first floor windows of these properties
- Would result in nursery with bi-folding doors and play area abutting neighbouring properties leading to noise, disturbance and overlooking
- Would result in loss of space that is a multi-purpose community hall into a building for use by a single religious group
- Proposal will be change use of the site by including a café accessible to the public, incorporating a nursery and is an intensification of existing community use
- Proposal should be considered a major application due to the floor area being created and change of use proposed
- Will result in loss of landscaped area at rear of site which was noted for protection in previous planning application – will lead to negative ecological impact as bats, hedgehogs and rare nesting birds are present
- Café would negatively impact on other local cafes
- Suitable lighting to glass extension is required so that use of building is neighborly and meets ecological recommendations
- Hours of use have not been defined
- Proposed fencing within proximity to kitchen windows 78 Kingston Road will restrict use of windows and access to rear garden
- Bin and bicycle store at front of property will restrict outlook and attract anti-social behavior
- Inconsistent information in supporting documentation and findings of the reports

5.3 Wimbledon Society:

- The form in which the new glass elements relate to the retained front elevation is of particular significance given the extent of demolition proposed at the rear of the site
- Demolishing the curved front bay and adding new glass pane across frontage of bay would compromise character of building;
- Height and setback of building will result in loss of sunlight and daylight to adjoining buildings and gardens;
- Detailed landscaping plan will need to be submitted and tree protection measures in place to protect trees at the rear;
- Existing cycle racks will need to be relocated;

- Access to existing house at rear of site will need to be safeguarded;
- Alternative facilities will need to be available for the South Wimbledon Community Association.

5.4 John Innes Society:

- There is room for improvement in relation to the proposed alterations to the front elevations of the locally listed building
- Height and setback of building will result in loss of sunlight and daylight to adjoining buildings and gardens
- Detailed landscaping plan will need to be submitted and tree protection measures in place to protect trees at the rear

5.5 The Victorian Society:

- Object to the proposal to the locally listed building which would seriously and unnecessarily erode its special interest;
- By virtue of their scale, materiality, detailing and crude interface with the historic structure, the extensions would seriously mar its character and appearance and undermine those elements of the building's special interest;
- Front glazing would conceal building;
- Loss of central curved bay window would be damaging;
- Proposed materials would result in loss of important historic fabric and erode character and architectural interest of the building;
- Scheme would diminish group value and harm the setting of Quartermain's neighbouring Manor Club.

5.6 Environmental Health No objection. Having regard to the Rock Tech acoustic report No. 0117/EPCW1 measures will be necessary to prevent noise break out during services/events especially as there will be an amplified sound system in operation. Proposed attenuation measures involving design of the building envelope as suggested on within the report should be employed or similar to provide a reduction of 45dBA at 63 Hz. Use of the building for services and events should be limited to 11pm. Recommend conditions in relation to soundproofing of building, soundproofing of plant and machinery, restrictions on external lighting and construction times.

5.7 Transport planning – Officers requested an additional parking survey be undertaken on Sundays to demonstrate the surrounding highway network has sufficient capacity to accommodate overflow parking during the peak use period of the hall. The additional parking survey was reviewed by officers who confirmed that there is sufficient space for vehicles associated with the development, while still protecting a level of parking amenity for existing residents. Given the development's PTAL rating and the ability of the surrounding network to cater for parked vehicles, officers consider that there would be no significant impact on the performance and safety of the surrounding highway network.

- 5.8 LBM Ecology/Biodiversity – Officers confirmed the methodology, findings and recommendations of the submitted Ecological Assessment (JFA Ref: LON 2070 December 2016) are considered acceptable. Suitably worded conditions will be required to secure the enhancement opportunities recommended in the report, in addition to conditions on tree protection works and timing of vegetation removal.
- 5.9 LBM Climate Change – Following submission of an Energy Strategy Report (dated April 2016) officers have advised that they are satisfied that the proposed energy approach to the development is acceptable. Officers have advised that in the absence of an existing heat network, and operating with the constraints imposed by the need to retain elements of the historic building fabric combined with the energy usage patterns typically expected in a place of worship, the applicants approach is compliant with the Mayor's district heating objectives and policies. Officers have advised that the proposal is broadly compliant with Merton's Sustainability objective and that there are sufficient justifications for the emissions reduction shortfall in this instance. It is recommended standard pre-commencement and pre-occupation sustainable design conditions are attached to any planning permission.
- 5.10 LBM Waste Services – LBM Waste Services have reviewed the proposal and have advised that the proposed bin store and collection method is acceptable.
- 5.11 Design Review Panel - The Panel were keenly aware of the locally listed status of the building as a no designated heritage asset, and that the NPPF required that a balanced judgement needed to be made between likely harm to the building and proposed benefits. Even removal of the less valuable parts of the building would require a justified benefit. In this regard, the Panel were happy in principle to see the loss of the rear hall and ancillary elements of the building, given that the retained main building at the front was improved and better than the current situation. Overall, the Panel were strongly of the opinion that proposed changes should be very sensitive to the original building.

The Panel were also clear that new interventions, in principle, should be of a contemporary design. Glass was considered an appropriate material in principle, though care should be taken not to use it in excess or simply to provide a screen that masks the original behind and new additions should be subservient to the original. The alteration as proposed, was compared to Holy Trinity Church in Wimbledon where the church feels hidden by the indistinct modern extension; and the recently removed frontage to Kings Cross station, which were cited as unsuccessful examples of intervention into heritage assets. The Panel recommended the creation of a catalogue of library images of modern additions to historic buildings to provide a source of inspiration. It was felt that the current proposal would be too weighty or heavy; principally the proposed horizontal element on the frontage.

The Panel were clear that the design of the new interventions to the front building must be informed by a thorough analysis and understanding of the character and qualities of the existing building in order for them to be successful and sit harmoniously as an integral part of the whole. They were also clear that they felt this was not the case at present, whilst recognising that the design is at an early stage.

This character needed to be understood at different levels. Firstly, it needed to be understood that this building formed part of what was once a small civic centre of locally important public and community buildings prior to the formation of Merton Council. Secondly the building needed to be understood in the context of its street elevation – for example a street scene of elevations should be provided as an analysis of this context.

Thirdly, the architectural character of the building itself needed to be understood far better. The Panel were clear that the frontage was a complex and well considered Edwardian building showing a sophisticated example of deliberate asymmetry in all its elements, from the three different bays at the larger scale to various smaller scale elements like the clock tower, windows and other decorative elements.

The applicant's design reference to the fire station extension opposite was not considered as an appropriate enough reference and should look to the proportions of the retained original building. The Panel felt that all of the three main vertical elements of the building should remain clearly evident, and that in order to manage a successful relationship between old and new, the new elements could include some use of brick. The Panel were also sceptical about the effect of building forward from the existing building elevation, both in terms of the effect on the original building and the effect on the public realm.

The Panel felt that the pavement is narrow outside the building, with a pelican crossing directly in front of it. The building currently has a private forecourt, but the proposal is to build on this to the pavement edge, to include the café and main church entrances. The Panel were concerned both about the quality of this space and the likelihood of overcrowding on the footway before and after events. Landscaping around the whole building – particularly the front, was also considered important, and it was not yet evident that this had been considered.

Internally, the Panel understood and supported the arrangement for assembling the congregation, providing a degree of permeability with the street, and the need to keep a degree of separation between a number of key user groups. They felt the layout was sensible and worked well. They were however, concerned about the design of the main hall. Whilst it understood the church's wishes, it felt that it would not be very environmentally sustainable to have a heavily sound-proofed, 'black box' with mechanical ventilation. The applicant needed

to look at this carefully and make sure they developed a compelling case for this approach as part of a clear environmental strategy.

The Panel were clearly supportive of the proposals in principle and felt that it was entirely possible to adapt the building successfully for use by the church in a way that maintained and enhanced the character of the retained front building and its context in the streetscape. They were also clear that a more thorough approach was needed in assessing the idiosyncrasies of the existing building to inform a design for alterations and interventions to the main building frontage as part of the ongoing design process.

VERDICT: AMBER

6. POLICY CONTEXT

- 6.1 NPPF - National Planning Policy Framework (2012):
 - Part 7 Requiring Good Design
 - Part 8 Promoting healthy communities
 - Part 12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 6.2 London Plan (2015)
 - 3.16 Protection and enhancement of social infrastructure
 - 5.3 Sustainable design and construction
 - 6.9 Cycling
 - 7.4 Local character
 - 7.6 Architecture
 - 7.8 Heritage assets and archaeology
- 6.3 Merton LDF Core Planning Strategy (2011)
 - CS11 (Infrastructure)
 - CS13 (Open Space, Nature Conservation, Leisure and Culture)
 - CS14 (Design)
 - CS15 (Climate Change)
 - CS18 (Active Transport)
 - CS19 (Public Transport)
 - CS20 (Parking, Servicing and Delivery)
- 6.4 Merton Sites and Policies Plan (2014)

The relevant policies in the Merton Sites and Policies Plan (2014) are:

 - CM C1 (Community Facilities)
 - DM D1 (Urban Design and the Public Realm)
 - DM D2 (Design considerations in all developments)
 - DM D3 (Alterations and extensions to buildings)
 - DM D4 (Managing heritage assets)
 - DM EP 2 (Reducing and mitigating against noise)
 - DM EP 4 (Pollutants)
 - DM O2 (Nature Conservation, Trees, Hedges and Landscape Features)
 - DM T2 (Transport impacts of Development)

7. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The main planning considerations include assessing the principle of development, impact on the design and appearance of the locally listed building and surrounding area, biodiversity/ecology considerations, the impact on residential amenity and impact on car parking and traffic generation.
- 7.2 Principle of Development
Core Planning Strategy Policy CS11 and SPP Policy DM C1 encourages improvements to existing community facilities and places of worship, including encouraging services to be co-located where possible. The policies state that facilities should be provided in accessible locations with good links to public transport, should be adaptable and suitable to accommodate a range of services and should not have an undue adverse impact on the amenities of nearby residents or businesses.
- 7.3 The Elim Pentecostal Church is currently located within a light warehouse unit located on High Path adjacent to the A24 Merantun Way (PTAL Rating of 4). The present activities of the church include: Sunday morning services attended by circa 200-225 people, Mid-week services, the operation of the Wimbledon Foodbank including storage and distribution of food linked to a network of other churches, Bible study groups, Parent and child groups together with other community interest groups and twice weekly hosting of another church group 'Cathedral of Hope'.
- 7.4 The Merton Hall site has a PTAL rating of 5 which is considered to be good and the current lawful use of the site is Community Use (Use Class D1). In accordance with Policy CS11 and SPP Policy DM C1, the proposal will provide for improvements and expansion to a community facility in a location of greater public transport accessibility than the current location of the church. The proposal also provides for co-location of services by including ancillary community activities, such as a foodbank, café and parent and child groups.
- 7.5 Objections have been received opposing the introduction of a nursery on site. Notwithstanding that the applicants have stated the intent for the use of the 'meeting/nursery rooms' at present is to provide a space for child minding whilst church services are underway and other parent-child groups, Officers advise that a nursery use is a D1 use which is the same as the Church and existing hall. Therefore, the legal and lawful use allows for a nursery regardless of planning permission. Registration by Ofsted as a nursery would be a separate matter and outside of planning control. Given the arrangements likely to arise where a number of small children might be under the watch of a child minder/minders during a service, with characteristics similar to that of a nursery, it would appear unreasonable to formally restrict use as a nursery.

- 7.6 It is therefore considered that the principle of development for the relocation of Elim Pentecostal Church on site is acceptable and in accordance with Core Planning Strategy Policy CS11 and SPP Policy DM C1.
- 7.7 Impact on Design & Appearance of Locally Listed Building
London Plan policies 7.4 and 7.6, Core Strategy policy CS14 and SPP Policy DMD2 require well designed proposals that will respect the appearance, materials, scale, bulk, proportions and character of the original building and their surroundings. Policy 7.6 sets out a number of key objectives for the design of new buildings including that they should be of the highest architectural quality, they should be of a proportion, composition, scale and orientation that enhances, activates and appropriately defines the public realm, and buildings should have details that complement, but not necessarily replicate the local architectural character. Policy CS14 of the adopted Core Strategy states that all development needs to be designed to respect, reinforce and enhance local character and contribute to Merton's sense of place and identity. This will be achieved in various ways including by promoting high quality design and providing functional spaces and buildings.
- 7.8 The building is on Merton Council's 'Local (Non Statutory) List of Buildings of Historical or Architectural Interest.' The citation for the building is as follows: *'This is a 2 storey building which is dated 1899. It is built of red/brown brick, and has detailing of stone and moulded bricks. The roof is of red tiles. The main features of interest are the clock and curved roof within the roof tower, the stone detailing around the windows, the large curved bay window, the round headed arch feature above the notice board, the leaded windows, the stone tablet over the doorway, the moulded brick panels set out in chequer board pattern within the gable feature, the small roof vent on the apex of the roof, and the moulded brickwork which defines the sill level of the first floor windows. The only evidence of adverse alteration is the notice board, which has been placed in what may at one time have been a doorway'*
- 7.9 Officers note that the Locally Listed building has no statutory protection and could be demolished without the need for planning permission. As part of this application, the rear hall of the building is to be demolished and the front two storey component is to be retained and enhanced. Due to the siting of adjoining buildings immediately adjacent to the front pavement of Merton Road, and the larger scale of the two storey front component of Merton Hall, the rear hall does not make a significant visual contribution to the streetscene. Rather it is the two storey front elevation to be retained that is observable on approach to the site.
- 7.10 The supporting Design and Access Statement details that the Elim Pentecostal Church requires a sound-proof building to ensure no adverse noise and disturbance to surrounding residents. The Design &

Access Statement details that the applicant's original concept was to utilize the existing hall and enlarge the hall with extensions. However, the resultant feasibility study found that the current hall was unable to achieve the required degree of noise insulation due to the sound leakage via the numerous windows on the flank elevations and the roof construction (plaster ceiling, access void and pitched clay tile roof) mass not suited to good acoustic break out resistance.

- 7.11 Furthermore, the Church requires that the worship space be a 'black box' theatre space with no windows or natural light so as to create the required artificially lit environment. The space will need mechanical ventilation and cooling/heating which will be served by significant external plant. Ideally to screen the plant noise from neighbours this will be located at roof level where it can be screened. It was considered that the existing roof structure would not be suitable for such an installation.
- 7.12 The Church also requires that the worship space be a completely open space with unrestricted views across the congregation areas and to the stage. The position of the external brick buttressing piers in between the windows forms part of the structural integrity of the wall/roof configuration. Removal would not be feasible so any openings into the hall extensions would be interrupted by substantial piers and low beams necessary to frame the openings.
- 7.13 The proposed works to the front of the building would be a modern addition to the locally listed hall that is considered to be sympathetic to the materials, proportions, massing and asymmetrical design and form of the locally listed building. In response to LBM Conservation/Design Officer and the Design Review Panel (DRP) feedback, the extent of glazing to the front of the building has been reduced, including removal of the glazing over the central doorway so that more of the locally listed building is unenclosed. The proposed glazed extension is considered to be subservient to the original building, and will maintain views to the original façade whilst clearly distinguishing between the new addition and the locally listed building.
- 7.14 The proposed use of brick and vertical composite cladding references the brick and stone used in the façade of the locally listed building, whilst also picking up on the varied textures of the building's façade. The change of materials from the Marley eternit cladding to a vertical cladding on the side elevations is also considered to reduce any perceived bulk and massing along the side elevations of the new hall extension. Stone coloured render is proposed in a small section of the front façade which is not considered to be acceptable due to its propensity to discolour and mould, and therefore a condition requiring the provision of samples for an alternative material is recommended. Furthermore, submission of samples for all proposed materials is to be conditioned to ensure the development achieves a high quality design and the final material detail is respectful of the locally listed building.

- 7.15 The design of the rear extensions has incorporated similar details to the existing hall, including the use of red brickwork with feature piers. The extension is considered to achieve an appropriate massing and form without being overbearing on the section of Merton Hall being retained.
- 7.16 Having regard to the need to ensure the building is sound-proof so to not adversely impact the amenity of neighbours, it is considered that the proposed demolition of the rear component of the locally listed building is acceptable in this instance. The new building works would be sympathetic to the design and character of the original building, and the proposal is considered to maintain and enhance the character of the retained front of the building and its presence in the streetscene.
- 7.17 Neighbour Amenity
London Plan Policy 7.6 (Architecture) requires that buildings and structures should not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of surrounding land and buildings, particularly residential buildings, in relation to privacy and overshadowing. SPP policy DMD2 states that proposals must be designed to ensure that they would not have an undue negative impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, quality of living conditions, privacy, visual intrusion or noise.
- 7.18 The neighbouring property most likely to be affected is the dwelling located towards the rear of the site (registered as no. 78 Kingston Road). The proposed extensions maintain the existing western setback of the hall and the new design will be single storey for the majority of the depth of the flank wall of no. 78 Kingston Road. The proposed hall will not extend past the rear elevation of 78 Kingston Road. Recognising that the dwelling has primary outlook from its front and rear windows and the building will be lower in height than the existing hall building where adjacent to the house, it is not considered that the proposed extensions would result in undue loss of sunlight, daylight or outlook to the dwelling at 78 Kingston Road.
- 7.19 Representations have been received expressing concern with the potential for overlooking from the new windows of the hall. To ensure no overlooking results into 78 Kingston Road, the windows on the ground floor western elevation will be obscure glazed, and this will be secured by a suitably worded condition.
- 7.20 The proposal reduces the number of openings on the rear elevation of the building from the current scenario, with a single fire escape door proposed on the rear elevation closest to the boundaries with properties fronting Boscombe Road. As this fire escape is to be used for emergency purposes only, it is not considered that the proposal would compromise the privacy of adjoining residents. The rear facing windows to the meeting room on first floor will be 21 metres from the rear elevation of houses in Boscombe Avenue. This exceeds the

minimum separation distance of 20 metres recommended to maintain privacy between rear facing windows within the Merton SPG: New Residential Development. This proposed windows are therefore not considered to result in adverse overlooking, and it is noted that these windows will be recessed a further 5 metres behind the rear windows of 78 Kingston Road which currently overlooks the gardens in Boscombe Road.

- 7.21 Taking into consideration the hipped design of the roof, the siting of the hall and the separation distances between the properties, it is not considered that the proposal would be visually overbearing on neighbours or would result in undue loss of daylight to habitable rooms. The existing group of three trees along the rear boundary are to be retained in addition to new landscaping to provide a visual buffer and additional screening to adjoining residents. As the proposed hall extensions are located north of the gardens of dwellings on Boscombe Road, the proposal would not result in undue overshadowing into these gardens.
- 7.22 Multiple objections have been raised in relation to noise disturbance that could result from the proposal. The property will include an auditorium which will generate the primary source of noise. This source consists of an amplified PA system, acoustic instruments, congregational singing and plant noise. A Noise Impact Assessment prepared by ROCK-tech Acoustic Consulting (Ref: 0117/EPCW1) was submitted with the application detailing proposed noise attenuation.
- 7.23 The Council's Environmental Health Officers have reviewed the submitted Noise Assessment and advised that the recommended attenuation measures contained within the Noise Impact Assessment Report will be required to be implemented to ensure a reduction of 45dBA at 63 Hz. Subject to a suitably worded condition securing the noise attenuation measures within the building design and restriction on hours of operation, officers consider that the proposal would not result in undue noise intrusion on neighbouring properties.
- 7.24 Residents have been additionally concerned with the level of noise that may be generated from outside activities associated with the use. In response to resident concerns, the proposed ground level bi-fold doors on the rear elevation have been replaced with a single set of doors with adjacent windows to minimize noise breakout from the rear meeting/nursery room.
- 7.25 Officers consider that the anticipated noise from pedestrian sources, delivery sources and the car park should be no greater than the current use of the building. The Church has stated that many of the visitors to their existing Church congregate and 'chat' after the service in the foyer and exit gradually. The design of the building has therefore incorporated a foyer space which will provide a 'holding area' within the building from where occupants can then dissipate gradually out of the

building. It is therefore not anticipated that the proposal would result in harmful noise intrusion on surrounding businesses and residents.

- 7.26 Based on the above, it is not considered that the proposal as amended would be harmful to the amenities of adjoining occupiers in accordance with SPP policy DMD2.

7.27 Biodiversity/Ecology

Core Planning Strategy Policy CS13 and SPP Policy DM O2 seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, in addition to seeking that new developments incorporate and maintain landscape features such as trees which make a positive contribution to the wider network of open space. London Plan polices 7.5 and 7.21, CS policy CS13 and SPP policies DM D2 and DM O2 also seek to ensure high quality landscaping to enhance the public realm.

- 7.28 The curtilage of the site is predominately hardstanding with only a small landscaped section at the rear of the site. Due to the siting of the existing building close to the front boundary of the site, there are limited opportunities for soft landscaping along the site frontage. However, amended plans have shown that some soft landscaping will be provided along the site frontage to soften the streetscene, and submission of a detailed landscaping proposal for the site would be secured by condition.

- 7.29 The extension of the building to the rear will be one metre closer to the rear boundary than existing, and consequently the landscaped buffer at the rear is to be changed to a combination of soft and hard landscaping to ensure safe access is possible around the rear of the building. Additional new planting is proposed along the rear boundary which would serve to reinstate a green barrier between the hall and residential gardens beyond.

- 7.30 The applicants submitted an Ecological Assessment (JFA Ref: LON 2070 December 2016) inclusive of a Habitat Survey confirming that no bats or evidence of bats was present on site and within the site's buildings. It is also confirmed that there was no evidence of other protected species including reptiles, newts, and badgers. LBM Ecology Officers have reviewed the Ecological Assessment and confirmed methodology, findings and recommendations of the submitted Ecological Assessment are considered acceptable.

- 7.31 In line with Chapter 11 of the NPPF, the planning authority is advised that "Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged". The submitted ecological assessment has recommended multiple enhancement opportunities as follows:

- A bat sensitive lighting strategy is recommended along the rear boundary line to improve the community potential for bats

- Proposed landscaping should include a range of native flowering and berry bearing species in hedges to provide feeding opportunities for invertebrates and birds
 - The provision of two bird and one bat box to provide additional nesting / roosting opportunities on site.
 - A dead wood habitat pile within the southeast corner to provide additional habitat for a range of species including amphibians and reptiles, saproxylic invertebrates and small mammals.
 - All trees and their root areas that may be affected by construction works to be protected using Tree Protection Fencing to BS 5837:2012.
- 7.32 In line with the LBM Ecology Officer advice, it is recommended that the above enhancement opportunities are implemented on site and this can be secured by way of suitably worded conditions. Conditions should include the submission of a detailed landscaping strategy for the site, tree protection measures to be in place during construction, and timing of vegetation removal.
- 7.33 Parking and Servicing
Core Strategy policy CS20 requires that development would not adversely affect pedestrian or cycle movements, safety, the convenience of local residents, on street parking or traffic management.
- 7.34 The site has a PTAL of 5 being located in proximity to regular bus services and within walking distance to South Wimbledon Underground Station. Wimbledon Station is also located just over 1 kilometre from the site. The site is located within a controlled parking zone.
- 7.35 The application proposes the provision of four car spaces, inclusive of one disabled space. A Transport Statement was provided with the application and details the levels of existing and anticipated trip generation, taking into consideration the change in location and PTAL rating of the Church.
- 7.36 The statement included the results of a travel questionnaire which was undertaken by Church members. Based on the availability of public transport including bus, tram and underground services and the number of people living within walking distance of the church there is potential for reductions in car travel, and it is anticipated the percentage of members traveling by car to Church would reduce from 72% to 40%. The results found that there was a high level of car sharing amongst members, with average car occupancy of 3 people per car.
- 7.37 An analysis of this data has indicated that a total of 8 car drivers (27 people or 15%) live within 2km walking distance from the proposed site and therefore have the potential to change their mode of travel. In addition, 65% of the church members live within 5km of the proposed site. Of the people who use bus travel the relocation will still enable

them to use the same bus routes as most of the routes used at the existing site are present at the proposed site i.e. routes 93, 131, 152 and 200.

7.38 The peak activity period for the church would be Sundays and consequently LBM Transport Officers requested a Parking Survey be submitted assessing the level of available parking provision available on Sundays. The parking survey submitted shows that during the peak times of usage there is sufficient space to accommodate the predicted vehicles associated with the development whilst still protecting the level of parking amenity for existing residents.

7.39 Council Transport Officers have advised that based on the development site's PTAL rating and the ability of the surrounding network to cater for parked vehicles, there will be no significant impact on the performance and safety of the surrounding highway network. It is recommended that a robust travel plan is conditioned as part of the planning decision. It is therefore considered that the proposal is acceptable in accordance with Core Strategy policy CS20.

7.40 Cycle Storage

Core Strategy Policy CS18 and London Plan policy 6.9 call for proposals that will provide for cycle parking and storage. A D1 Use is required to provide 1 bicycle per 8 staff and 1 per 100 square metres of floor area for visitors.

7.41 The application proposes secure cycle parking within the south-eastern corner of the site with sufficient capacity to accommodate 20 bicycles in accordance with London Plan standards. It is suggested that additional Sheffield cycle stands should be provided adjacent to the site frontage for additional storage for visitors to the site, and it is considered that this can be secured by a suitably worded condition requiring the submission of cycle store details. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the above policies.

7.42 Refuse Storage and Collection

Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy [July 2011] states that the Council will seek to implement effective traffic management by requiring developers to incorporate adequate facilities for servicing to ensure loading and unloading activities do not have an adverse impact on the public highway.

7.43 The proposed movement by delivery and service vehicles is to be undertaken on Kingston Road as is the current site situation of the site and the same arrangement for neighbouring properties. A dedicated refuse store is to be provided within the car park, and is to be designed as a timber enclosure (1.2m high) with surrounding soft landscaping to screen the store. The bin store is within the recommended distances for bin stores as outlined in the Manual for Streets and the LBM's Waste and Recycling Storage Requirements Guidance Note. LBM

Waste Services have reviewed the proposal and have advised that the proposed bin store and collection method is acceptable. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the above policies.

8. SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1 The proposal does not constitute Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development. Accordingly, there are no requirements in terms of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The current proposal would provide for the improvements and expansion to a community facility in a location of greater public transport accessibility in accordance with Policy CS11 and SPP Policy DM C1. It is considered that the extensions and alterations to Merton Hall are of an appropriate design, scale and massing to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the locally listed Merton Hall. The proposal is not considered to result in adverse amenity impacts on neighbours subject to conditions, and is therefore recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION Grant planning permission subject to conditions.

Conditions

- 1) A1 Commencement of works
- 2) A7 Built according to plans; 'Site Location Plan 1000 P/0', 'Proposed Block Plan 2000 P/2', 'Proposed Ground Floor Plan 2001 P/1', 'Proposed First Floor Plan 2002 P/0', 'Proposed Roof Plan 2003 P/0', 'Proposed Elevations Sheet 1 3000 P/0', & 'Proposed Elevations Sheet 2 3001 P/0'
- 3) B1 External Materials to be Approved
- 4) B4 Details of Walls/Fences
- 5) C04 Obscured Glazing

Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied, the ground floor windows in the western elevation to Rooms G06 & G07 (Meeting/Children's Rooms) shall be glazed with obscure glass and fixed shut to a height of 1.7m above floor level and shall permanently maintained as such thereafter.

- 6) C07 Refuse & Recycling (Implementation)
- 7) C08 No Use of Flat Roof

8) D01 Hours of Use

The use hereby permitted shall operate only between the hours of 7:00-22:00 Monday to Sunday, except for the café, which shall only be open to customers between the hours of 7:00-18:00 Monday to Saturday and 12:00 noon-16:00 on Sundays.

9) Non-Standard Condition

The proposed development shall be carried out in accordance with the noise insulation measures as detailed in the RockTech Acoustic Report No. 0117/EPCW1 dated 24/01/2017. The approved noise insulation measures shall be permanently retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of future occupiers of properties and ensure compliance with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 7.15 of the London Plan 2015 and policies DM D2, DM D3, DM EP2 and DM EP4 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

10)D05 Soundproofing of Plan & Machinery

11)Non-Standard Condition

Any external lighting shall be positioned and angled to prevent any light spillage or glare beyond the site boundary. Any lighting along the rear boundary line shall be designed to be sensitive to bats in accordance with the enhancement recommendations of the Ecological Assessment (JFA Ref: LON 2070 December 2016).

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the area and the occupiers of neighbouring properties, and to protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with Policy CS13 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and Policy DM D2, DM EP4 and DM O2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

12)D11 Construction Times

13)F01 Landscaping/Planting Scheme

No development shall take place until full details of a landscaping and planting scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved before the commencement of the use or the occupation of any building hereby approved, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include on a plan, full details of the size, species, spacing, quantities and location of proposed plants, together with any hard surfacing, means of enclosure, and indications of all existing trees, hedges and any other

features to be retained, and measures for their protection during the course of development. The landscaping plan shall incorporate and include details of the enhancement recommendations stated on page 11 of the Ecological Assessment (JFA Ref: LON 2070 December 2016).

14)Non-Standard Condition

The trees along the rear boundary of the site identified on Site Survey Drawing No: 01 prepared by XYZ Land Surveyors and identified on the deposited plan numbered 2000 P/2 as to be retained, shall be retained and maintained unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect and safeguard the existing retained trees in accordance with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 7.21 of the London Plan 2015, policy CS13 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and policy O2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

15)F05 Tree Protection

No development [including demolition] pursuant to this consent shall commence until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, drafted in accordance with the recommendations and guidance set out in BS 5837:2012 has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the approved details have been installed. The statement shall include details of the proposed design, materials and method of construction of the foundations of the building. The details and measures as approved shall be retained and maintained, until the completion of all site operations.

The statement shall include details of the proposed design, materials and method of construction of the foundations of the building.

16)F07 Trees – Notification of Start

17)F08 – Site Supervision (Trees)

18)Non-Standard Condition

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no part of the development hereby approved shall be used or occupied until two bird boxes, one bat box and a dead wood habitat pile have been provided on site in accordance with the recommendations of the Ecological Assessment (JFA Ref: LON 2070 December 2016). The boxes and deadwood habitat pile shall be permanently retained thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with Policy CS13 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011 and Policy DM D2 and DM O2 of Merton's Sites and Policies Plan 2014.

19)H04 – Provision of Vehicle Parking

20)H06 – Cycle Parking – Details to be Submitted

21)H08 – Travel Plan

22)H13 – Construction Logistics Plan (to be submitted)

23)N09 – Safety and security of structure during partial demolition

24)Non-Standard Condition

Unless otherwise agreed in writing no part of the development hereby approved shall commence until evidence has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, confirming that the development will achieve a CO2 reductions of not less than a 22% improvement on Part L Regulations 2013, BREEAM 'Very Good' and internal water usage rates of no greater than 105 litres per person per day.

Evidence requirements:

Carbon emissions evidence requirements for design stage assessments must provide:

- Detailed documentary evidence outlining the Target Emission Rate (TER), Dwelling Emission Rate (DER) and percentage improvement of DER over TER based on 'As Designed' BRUKL outputs (i.e. dated outputs with accredited energy assessor name and registration number, assessment status, plot number and development address).

BREEAM evidence requirements for design stage assessments must provide:

- A letter from a person that is licensed with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) or other equivalent assessors as a BREEAM Assessor, that the development is registered with BRE; and
- A Design Stage Assessment Report showing that the development will achieve a BREEAM rating of not less than the standards equivalent to 'Very Good'.

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply with the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 5.2 of the London Plan 2011 and policy CS15 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011.

25) Non-Standard Informative

Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no part of the development hereby approved shall be used or occupied until a Post-Construction Review Certificate issued by the Building Research Establishment or other equivalent assessors confirming that the non-residential development has achieved a BREEAM rating of not less than the standards equivalent to 'Very Good', and evidence demonstrating that the development has achieved not less than a 35% improvement in CO2 emissions reduction compared to Part L 2013 regulations, has been submitted to and acknowledged in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Evidence requirements:

Carbon emissions evidence requirements for 'as built' assessments must provide:

- Detailed documentary evidence outlining the Target Emission Rate (TER), Dwelling Emission Rate (DER) and percentage improvement of DER over TER based on 'As Built' BRUKL outputs (i.e. dated outputs with accredited energy assessor name and registration number, assessment status, plot number and development address).

BREEAM evidence requirements for design stage assessments must provide:

- A Post-Construction Review Certificate issued by the Building Research Establishment or other equivalent assessors confirming that the non-residential development has achieved a BREEAM rating of not less than the standards equivalent to 'Very Good'

Reason: To ensure that the development achieves a high standard of sustainability and makes efficient use of resources and to comply the following Development Plan policies for Merton: policy 5.2 of the London Plan 2011 and policy CS15 of Merton's Core Planning Strategy 2011.

26) NPPF Informative

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