

ENGLISH HERITAGE

EAST OF ENGLAND OFFICE

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Our ref: P00205173

11 January 2013

Dear Ms Lyon

**Notifications under Circular 01/2001, Circular 08/2009 &
T&CP (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010
CHURCH OF ST MARY AND ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY , CHURCH STREET,
WYMONDHAM, SOUTH NORFOLK, NORFOLK, NR18 0PH
Application No 2012/2080**

Thank you for your letter of 21 November 2012 notifying us of the application for planning permission relating to the above site. We do not wish to comment in detail, but offer the following general observations.

English Heritage Advice

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 6, 7 and 14 establish a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that protection and enhancement of the historic environment constitutes an important element of sustainable development. Furthermore paragraph 17 names the conservation of heritage assets (in this case the grade I listed Abbey church and adjacent Scheduled Ancient Monument and conservation area) as a core principle of the planning system. The significance of listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and conservation areas can be harmed or lost by alteration to them or development in their setting and any such harm should require 'clear and convincing justification' (paragraph 132). We have considered the current proposals in light of this government policy and relevant English Heritage guidance.

The extension of Wymondham Abbey and associated internal reordering have been discussed and developed for well over 10 years and been the subject of a previous Permission. Throughout this period English Heritage has supported the principle of providing the new facilities for choir and visitors contained in the extensions. We also support the internal alterations; especially as the removal of modern partitions from the south aisle associated with the southern extension is very welcome, as is the re-creation of the processional route through the west tower.

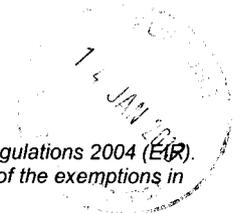


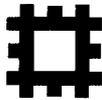
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Since the previous version of the extension scheme was submitted the scale of proposed development has been reduced and the form of the southern extension's roof has been simplified. The latter is a welcome change. We have discussed the use of lead for the new roof and ways this might be secured against theft, but would not wish to oppose the applicant's preferred material, terne-coated steel, providing accurate lead-like detailing is achieved in the rolls and margins. Simple, crisp detailing should also be achieved around the proposed roof lights. A continuous run of glazing, with the structural frame of the roof below, might allow an easier detail. If this can be achieved, setting the glazing symmetrically in the roof, with solid elements at both ends, would give a more pleasing affect than that proposed. Detailing at the roof margins will also be important. A strongly over-sailing eaves detail would help articulate the building form. As regards the masonry of the new south extension, coursed rubble masonry might be better than ashlar, if flint is not to be used. The idea of a green roof on the northern extension is acceptable, but given the dark, damp conditions I wonder if sedum will flourish. Advice might be sought on an alternative plant.

Internally, there are two chief issues to resolve. The project architect is considering ways of disguising the new doorway to be created by the north aisle altar. Extending the (modern) paneling flanking the reredos was suggested and I would support this idea as it will allow a more convincing jib door to be formed. The proposed shop fittings in the south aisle are ingeniously conceived in order to allow merchandise to be stored away, but I wonder how practical this will prove to be. Consideration might be given to the creation of simple, moveable screens, allowing the shop area to be semi-self contained. The shop in the south aisle of Norwich Cathedral has adopted a similar strategy.

Recommendation

We would urge you to address the above issues, and recommend that the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice. It is not necessary for us to be consulted again. However, if you would like further advice, please contact us to explain your request.

Yours sincerely

David Eve

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