

CHARNEY BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL

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Ms Janet McDonald
BLDA Architects
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29th August 2017

Dear Janet,

Proposed Dining Hall at Charney Manor

Thank you for taking time to explain at our meeting on 21st August the plans that the Trustees are currently considering. Our Chairman offered to write to summarise our thoughts and you said you would welcome this.

As you know, the Parish Council will be consulted by the District Council once your application is submitted. Because of this, the fact the plans you submit may differ from those we saw and also the Parish Council's need to take into account any views expressed by Parishioners, our comments at this stage have to be without prejudice to any comments we may finally make. We nevertheless hope you will find the following helpful and very much welcome the opportunity to comment.

You set out very well the reasons for wanting a new dining hall and the reason for selecting the site. There appears to be little argument over that. Any concerns that are made locally are more likely to be around detail and I list the main points we raised with you and which you may like to consider further.

1. Design. The general approach to the design is supported but, despite the fact it is 'at the back' we are struggling to embrace the large area of flat roof – whether grass covered or not. Although intended to be subservient its size is such that it seems anything but. We hope you are able to look further at this with a view to better integrating this element into the design.
2. Landscaping. It would be unfortunate if there were a need to form more extensive hard surfaced servicing areas on the grassed areas to the rear of the building. Because of the distance of the building from the current servicing area it is difficult to see how this would otherwise work, but we would welcome an explanation as to how hard surfacing this area could be avoided;

3. Siting. The self-contained nature of the building and its siting could lend itself to be hired out for functions not directly related to retreats or conference type events. This point may well be raised by nearby residents who might reasonably be concerned about hours of use and noise especially if events make use of the grounds and music is played in the building with doors/windows open. There may also be concerns that the building could serve as an area for larger parties to be accommodated from time to time in a separate, albeit temporary, marquee. You did seek to reassure us that this was unlikely and we suggest you cover in some way how this would not fit with the Trustees vision for the Manor. It would be helpful if the application could also say something about the type of planning condition(s) that the Trustees might be prepared to accept to safeguard against any such concerns, also assuming the existing kitchen and dining areas in the Manor are being retained.
4. Engagement. The extent to which you are looking to engage with the local community is very welcome and the Parish Council would be pleased to assist you in this in any way it can. Do you feel you have sufficient time to properly consider any views that may be expressed at the meeting you are considering holding at the end of September in time for them to be fully taken into account in the formulation of final plans for submission in October? We do recommend that the application contains a summary of any views expressed and the extent to which they have been taken into account in the final plans. If you do decide to hold a further public meeting after the application has been submitted it is important to be clear on its purpose and avoid the risk of 'consultation fatigue'.
5. Traffic. I can't recall if we raised this but this is something that residents may well raise (there is an active Road Safety Group in the village and we also undertake regular monitoring of traffic speed in conjunction with the Police). It would be helpful if the application could cover any anticipated increase in traffic generally and how construction traffic will be managed in particular.

Overall we find the approach that is being taken extremely professional and reassuring. The Manor is a very important part of life in Charney and the Parish Council would be looking to support its future use and development by the Quakers as far as it possibly can.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Brown', with a horizontal line underneath.

Trevor Brown

Parish Clerk