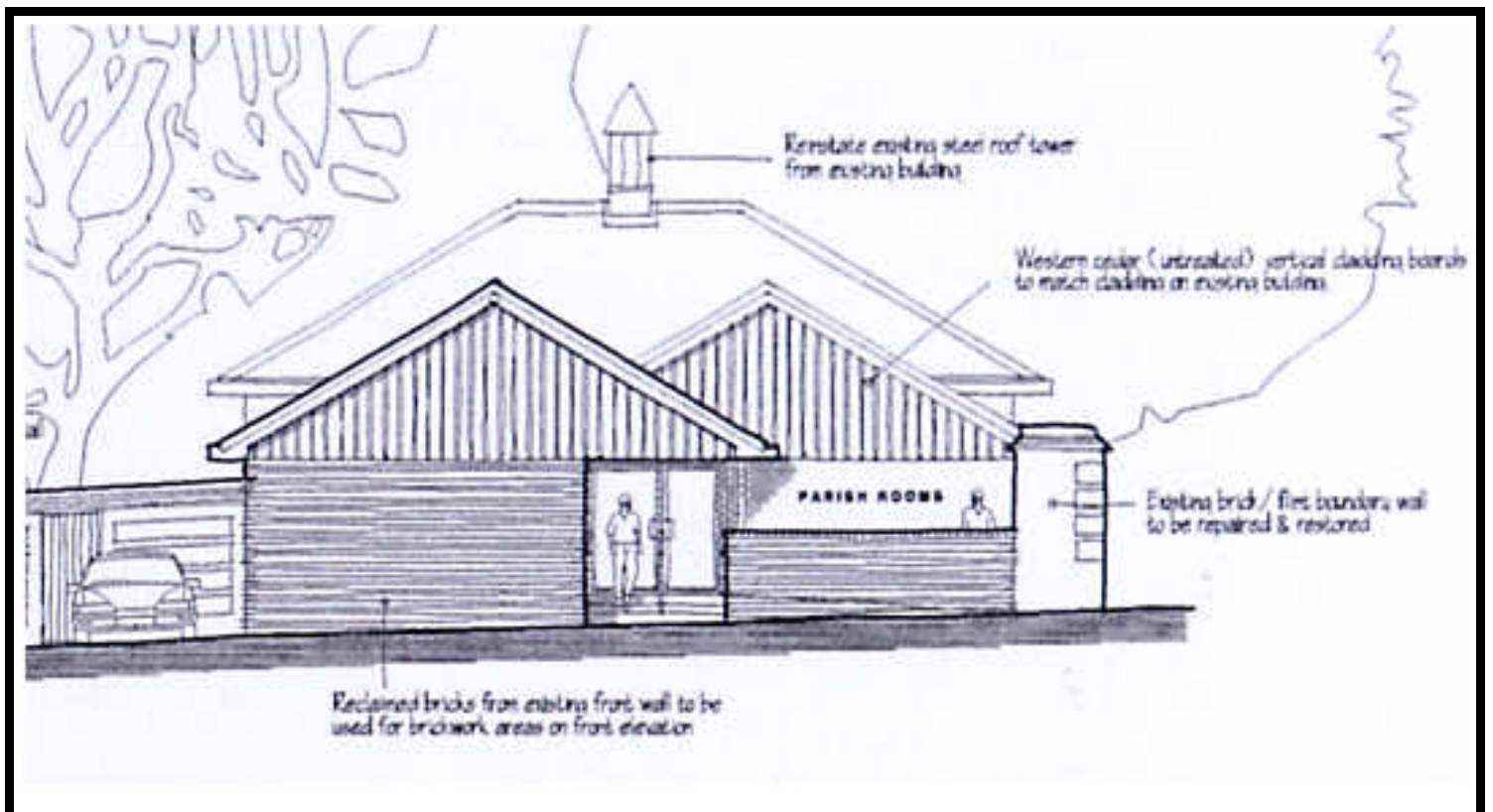




Blandford Church Hall

Plans for a new Hall for Blandford - April 2007

Our Vision for a new Parish Hall for Blandford...



Blandford Forum Parish Church launched a Campaign in the Spring of 2006 to seek the demolition of the Church Hall (known to some as the Church Rooms) in The Tabernacle area of the town and replace it with a purpose-built amenity which could be used by the Church and other groups in the town. The public got behind the idea with over 1700 signatures being added to a petition in support of the idea. An application to demolish was taken to North Dorset District Council in September but was rejected as no plans for a replacement building were put forward. In the 6 months since then, the Church and NDDC have been working together to find a way forward ...

And here it is ...

A New Hall for Blandford

Getting up to date...

For many years, the Church Hall in the Tabernacle (opposite the Post Office) has been in decline. Built in the 1880's as a summer house/ meeting room in the garden of the old Rectory, it has seen well over a century of use by people of Blandford, both young and old. It has now come to the end of its days and is no longer usable due to a leaking roof, the presence of asbestos and facilities which are no longer appropriate for public use. This has not happened suddenly: the building has been in decline for decades ... but now we want to do something about it by building a new hall on the same site.



The Campaign So Far ...

The publicity campaign last year was a stunning success - over 1700 people signed the petition and the application was accompanied by letters of support from individuals and organisations from across the town. North Dorset District Council have been left in no doubt as to the weight of public opinion behind the Vision of replacing the building.

So what happened in September...?

The initial application which was taken to NDDC was only for the demolition of the building - with a promise that no work would take place until plans for a replacement building had been approved. The Church believed that this was a viable approach but NDDC ruled that they could not go ahead without actual plans being approved.



However, there was clear support for the overall idea from the Members of the Planning Committee and the Church was encouraged by the Chairman to go away with this encouragement and return with formal plans.

What has happened since...?

The Church has had to respect the fact that the Officers and Members of the Planning Committee have rules and guidelines to which they must adhere and that any replacement building must fall in line with these. Over the past six months, the Church and the Architect have worked with NDDC to address each of the areas where there is a need to fulfil the legal requirements which apply. These have included ...

- ✓ Ensuring that the argument to demolish fulfils the requirements of the Government document PPG15 which lays down the terms under which a Grade II Listed building can be demolished.
- ✓ Ensuring that the design fulfils the need to meet the requirements of being situated in a conservation area. This has been done by producing a building whose look and lines reflect closely those of the existing hall.
- ✓ Ensuring proper respect has been given to the surrounding wall, which is also Listed. This has been achieved by incorporating a red brick section of wall into the front of the proposed hall.
- ✓ Ensuring that the well-established trees in the grounds would not be damaged by a new building. This has been ensured by proposing to use a form of construction which uses "piles" that go between the tree roots, thus protecting them. This construction even allows for rainwater to flow down the piles and water the trees !

Discussions with NDDC have informed the development of the application so that both parties understand the issues involved and the way they have been addressed in the application itself. As those charged with the responsibility of protecting Listed Buildings, the NDDC Planning Officers do not often agree to proposals such as this, but by directly addressing the concerns of the Officers, the Church hopes this might be one such occasion.

The Church has now put forward an application which, it is honestly believed, answers all of the concerns of NDDC.

A New Hall for Blandford

Why Can't The Church Renovate The Old One ?

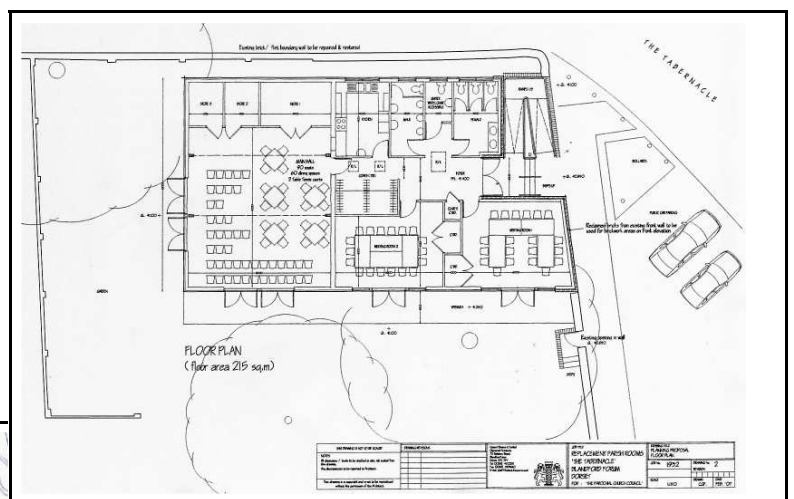
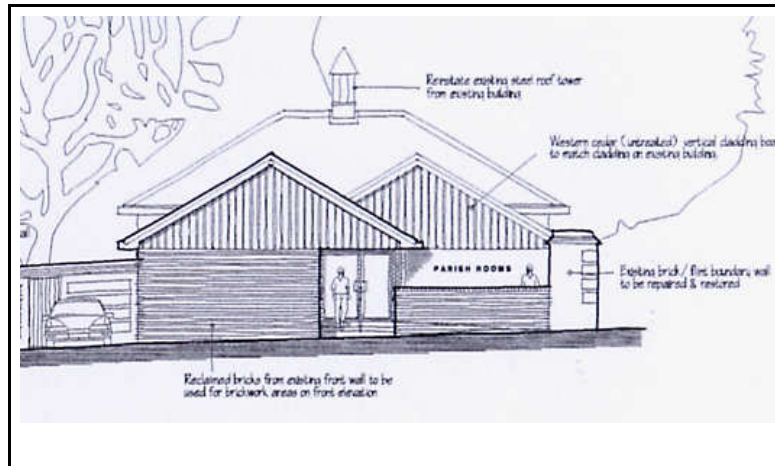
There are all sorts of reasons why the existing Hall has reached the end of it's days and needs to be replaced rather than renovated. If you want to find out more, please go and have a look at the Church Web Site at www.bfpc.org.uk , where you will be able to read details about why the Church needs and wants to do this. But, in short

- ☞ Structural surveyors have told the Church that the existing building has reached the end of its useful life.
- ☞ To renovate the hall and would mean stripping the building back to the ground, taking away nearly all of what Heritage listing aims to keep.
- ☞ Quantity surveyors have shown that the cost of renovating the hall would be significantly higher than that of building a new hall.
- ☞ The design of the new hall is in keeping with the look of the existing Hall and the surrounding conservation area.
- ☞ The new hall would offer a unique and precious resource to the whole town.

From this ...



To this ...



Please help us!

What Can You Do To Help ?

The decision to allow the Church to demolish the existing building and give approval for a new building lies with North Dorset District Council after consultation with Blandford Forum Town Council and other interested groups. This includes the community who will benefit from what is being proposed ... and that means you !! So what can you do to help?

1 - Find Out More !

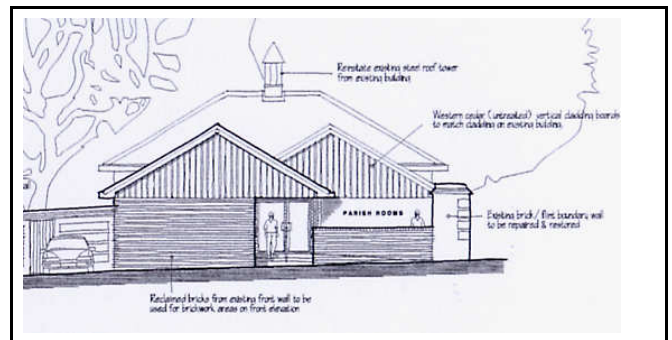
Come and see the plans which are on display in the Church. The Church is open from 9.30am to 12noon every day. You can also find out more (as well as getting regular updates on the situation) on the church web site at www.bfpc.org.uk.

2 - Write a Letter in Support of the Plans.

If you think that the ideas in this news sheet will benefit the community of Blandford Forum, then please write a letter supporting the application to The Planning Officer at North Dorset.

Please make sure you include the planning application references, which are **2/2007/0251** and **2/2007/0253**.

The Planning Officer
North Dorset District Council
Nordon
Salisbury Road
Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 7LL



3 - Come to the Meeting when the Decision is made.

The Planning Committee Meeting when the decision will be made is a Public Meeting and your support would be gratefully received ! When the date is made public, we will ensure that the information is available for everyone who wants to know. Please come along and show your support !

We need your help - please support this Vision for Blandford.

Tim Storey (Rector, Blandford Forum)

Please contact us at hall@bfpc.org.uk
or visit our web site at www.bfpc.org.uk



The Parish of St Peter and St Paul, Blandford Forum

Rector: Rev Tim Storey

2 Portman Place, Blandford Forum DT11 7DG. Tel: 01258-480092

Mission Statement: *"To Discover and Nurture Relationships in Jesus Christ."*

Vision Statement: *"To see every road in Blandford Forum baptised in the love of God."*