

From: Rachel Broomfield <rachel.broomfield@spab.org.uk>

Sent: 11 November 2025 11:18

To: Emma Green <emma@b2architects.com>

Cc: Jacqui Carreira-White <Jacqui.Carreira-White@bathwells.anglican.org>; Rhys, Rhiannon <rhiannon.rhys@historicengland.org.uk>

Subject: Re: Church of St Michael and All Angels, East Coker, Yeovil , BA22 9JW (2025-120456), our ref: 211827

Importance: High

Re: Major reordering & external works. Accessibility improvement, pew removal, server, heating.

Dear Emma

Thank you for re-consulting the SPAB regarding the proposed works to the Grade II* listed church of St Michael and All Angels, East Coker. We have commented on the proposals previously in December 2023, June 2024, April, July and August 2025. We thank you for involving us throughout the process and for taking our comments and concerns on board.

In our last letter we just highlighted few issues, most which you have now addressed so we thank you for the additional information provided. There are one or two matters outstanding which can probably be conditioned, but I would like to draw them to the attention of the DAC so they can be clarified:

- **Archaeological issues (both internal and external):** details of a watching brief will need to be agreed, both with the DAC and council as it will be likely to be a condition of your Planning Permission and faculty. We presume that you have now had pre-application discussions with the local authority about the external works. We understand they are happy with the new location of the toilet in the vestry.

Full planning permission in place and WSI complete – both included on OFS

- **North Porch:** We are very pleased that the external wooden doors to the North Porch will now remain in-situ. Will the new internal glazed door be power assisted / automatic opening? Will the existing internal stone steps be retained beneath the new ramp or removed completely? We do not object to the slight movement of the 15th century door inwards, provided it does not cause any damage so details of the works will may be required but we are happy to leave that to with the DAC.

No assisted opening proposed – as no space to incorporate the mechanism required, little room to get out of the way of the door etc.

Existing stone threshold internally retained in situ. Step further inside the N aisle cannot be retained as the floor here is to be lowered not raised – see Proposed Section BB 0659.WD.014 rev A. If in good order and possible we will relocate the existing stone step to the new location.

Details of the door relocation shown on dwg 0659.WD.023 rev A – as submitted.

- **West end (internal works):** We understand that the threshold to the west door will be lowered (to reinstate its original level), and there will be some localised re-levelling to improve the entrance. Internally a new timber framed dais with engineered timber boards will form new steps from the west door and larger storage units (for the new tables and

chairs) will replace the existing small cupboards either side of the west door. This will sit over the existing stone steps and be reversible.

Looking at the plans, while we do not object to these works, we are not clear exactly what the point of building the new steps over the top of the old ones is? Surely the existing steps are fine and can remain in use, although they may obviously require some repairs if very worn, and we accept the installation of the handrails. Further clarification would be appreciated. We have no objection to the new storage cupboards but clarification of the new Howe chairs to be purchased will be required as we could not find one called 40/40.

The existing steps are very steep and make the entrance difficult for brides/ coffin bearers – see SofNeed. The idea is for a gentler gradient compliant with Part M for the new arrangements, which also allow space for handrails to improve accessibility.

Howe 40/4 chairs are proposed - details included in the specification section N10, p49 – CHAIRS AND STORAGE DOLLIES

- **Relocation of the font:** This is to be moved from its current location to a central position to the rear/west of the remaining nave pews. While this may be acceptable, we would draw your attention to Section F of Canon Law which states that: *'The font shall stand as near to the principal entrance as conveniently may be, except there be a custom to the contrary or the Ordinary otherwise direct; and shall be set in as spacious and well-ordered surroundings as possible.'* We will leave this to the DAC but they may consider that it needs to be moved closer to the north door to align with this guidance.

There are arguably two principal entrances in this church – north and west. The proposed position is between the two, and nearer to the north door (the main entrance) than the current font position.

- **Installation of a servery:** This is to be installed in the southwest corner of the church. We have no objection but please ensure that an air gap is left between the new units and the church walls.

Yes – this is indicated on the detail drawing 0659.WD.031 rev A,

- **Base of the tower (accessible WC):** This will be accessed via a new door through the east wall of the North Transept which will prevent the use of the North Transept as a chapel. The South Transept, which was a chapel, will be converted back to that use - what works will that entail? How will the new accessible toilet 'cubicle' work with the existing window in terms of detailing the junction as this window will be partly inside and partly outside the cubicle and yet will need to be accessible for cleaning and maintenance?

Works to the south transept are shown on the submitted drawings. Very little changes are proposed, just relocation of loose furniture initially.

The window is not partly inside/ outside the new cubicle - it is entirely within. Please see detail drawings 0659.WD.041 rev A, as submitted. There is no change to existing arrangements for accessing/cleaning the window.

- **Heating:** We are happy with the proposed chandeliers, convection heaters, under pew heaters and the plinth heaters in the transepts. We did not realise that UFH was also proposed at the west end in the spaces currently occupied by the pew platforms. Whilst this is likely to be acceptable, is there sufficient space beneath the floor or will additional excavation be required? If so, this will require archaeological oversight.

Archaeological oversight expected and proposed – see submitted WSI.

- **Other works:** The works to the two effigies and the lighting will be dealt with via separate faculties therefore we will not comment on those here. We would certainly support the removal of the Chancel carpet and the repair of the acrostic ledger that is hidden beneath it. Further details of these works will be required, including a conservators report.

These details are in progress and will be submitted separately in due course.

There is no need for us to be consulted on this scheme again.

Best wishes,
Rachel

Rachel Broomfield

Senior Casework Manager (Acting)

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Temporary hours: Monday to Friday, 9.30am – 5.30pm

Please send all notifications of listed building consent applications, faculty applications or requests for pre-application advice to casework@jcnas.org.uk
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