



The Scottish Civic Trust

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Susanne Millar
Chief Executive
Glasgow City Council
City Chambers
George Square
Glasgow G2 1DU

25th August 2026

**RE: Hillhead Baptist Church
Planning Application 24/01935LBA**

Dear Ms. Millar,

The Scottish Civic Trust and the undersigned partners and organisations are writing to you to express our concern about the decision of Glasgow City Council's Planning Committee to allow the demolition of Hillhead Baptist Church and to request that this decision be reconsidered.

The decision to allow demolition was taken by a very small number of the Committee with the Convenor using their casting vote to approve the decision. The Trust believes that the public interest is better served if the application could be revisited. More than 300 objections had been submitted by Glasgow residents at the time of the Committee's decision.

We are also concerned that the building was not advertised for sale for approximately ten years, allowing the developer to wait until the building was in a parlous state before applying for demolition. This was exacerbated by their decision to remove the roof of this listed building.

In reviewing the application, we have noticed that the developer could have made a profit from the site through retention of the façade of this historic building, situated in one of Glasgow's Conservation Areas. They chose not to because their economic margins increase through complete demolition and a new-build development.

Director: Joe Traynor FRSA, FSA Scot, FMA, CMgr, FCIM.

Chair: Euan Mackenzie, K.C.

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We are also aware of reports that there was another interested party who was willing to pay for the site, should it be placed for sale, and redevelop the building in a more sympathetic way which would have related to the surrounding designated Conservation Area.

The decision also appears to raise significant questions regarding the application of NPF4's policies on climate change, sustainable development and circular economy. Scotland's national planning policy places increasing emphasis on retaining and reusing existing buildings wherever possible, recognising the substantial embodied carbon contained within historic structures. In this case, the building is a sizeable stone structure. The demolition of a large 19th century stone building and its replacement with a new development appears difficult to reconcile with these objectives and justifies scrutiny at a national level.

Even if the complete retention of the building is no longer considered viable, the retention and incorporation of the principal façade and portico could preserve an important element of Glasgow's historic townscape whilst substantially reducing the heritage loss associated with the current proposal. Such an approach would better reflect the principles of adaptation, reuse and carbon conservation that are central to NPF4.

Furthermore, we are concerned regarding whether the national policy tests for demolition of a listed building have been fully satisfied. Questions remain as to whether all realistic alternatives to demolition have been properly explored and whether sufficient opportunity has been given to identify viable schemes involving retention, partial retention, or façade preservation. During the committee's process it was suggested that alternative developers may have been willing to pursue such options if additional time had been made available as noted above.

Ultimately, the Council's Planning Committee has taken an undemocratic decision which does not reflect the interests of Glasgow's communities. The public strength of feeling of constituents is enormous. The Scottish Civic Trust feels that the Planning Committee has disrespected Glasgow's people and the national regulations which protect listed buildings and Conservation Areas.

Reconsideration of this planning application by the full committee would reflect the strength of feeling within Glasgow's communities and demonstrate greater respect for both constituents and national planning standards.

Yours sincerely,



Joe Traynor
Director, Scottish Civic Trust



Henrietta Billings MRTPI
Director, SAVE Britains Heritage

Jocelyn Cunliffe
Chair
Architectural Heritage Society of
Scotland

Lucy Stewart
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Magdalena Balzusiak
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Association

Jean Charsley
Hillhead Community Council