

KINMEL HALL, ST GEORGES, ABERGELE, NORTH WALES

Paula Jones <Paula.Jones@conwy.gov.uk>

Mon 18/01/2021 16:43

To: You

Cc:

- Peter J. Wood;
- Steven Wynn Simonds;
- Huw Robat Williams

Afternoon Paul

I have provided my response to your latest email in red below.

Regards

From: medical memories <tmmr1969@outlook.com>

Sent: 13 January 2021 22:57

To: Paula Jones <Paula.Jones@conwy.gov.uk>

Cc: Steven Wynn Simonds <Steve.Simonds@conwy.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: KINMEL HALL, ST GEORGES, ABERGELE, NORTH WALES

Dear Mrs Jones,

Thank you for your email.

The information you have provided me with raises more questions which I would appreciate your explanations to with the relevant research having been carried out into the Council records relating to Kinmel Hall.

The points raised are these: -

1) In your last email dated 25th November 2020 you assured me that once the 'reputable heritage consultant' had been appointed you would inform me as to who it was. I am still waiting for this information to be provided to me.

I seem to recall when we last spoke I mentioned that I couldn't reveal the identity of the heritage consultant as this is confidential information but I did try to reassure you by confirming that I knew that it was a reputable heritage consultant.

2) You state that you are still waiting for a response from Mrs Erkman with respect of the lack of security around the Stable Block. It is nearly two months since you made her aware of this problem and I feel that it should be followed up sooner rather than later. Apart from the fact that the Stable Block pre dates the Hall and is in a far worse state of repair than the Hall - as the written report that was submitted 6 years ago by Hare and Humphries clearly shows - it is also the fact that the Erkman's total lack of knowledge relating to or interest in the Hall - as the current state of the building and grounds proves - they are totally unaware of the fact that the Stable Block is an integral part of the Hall - a fact proved by their 'security guard's' statement that the Stable Block 'does not matter' May I also remind you that since April 2019 Kinmel's water supply has been in bottled form - as can be seen in the enclosed image - because the 'conscientious' owners of the Hall refuse to pay to have the mains supply repaired and reinstated.

I will ask Mrs Erkman for her intentions on dealing with the asbestos but if no progress is made then this is a matter for Environmental health to consider further.

3) 'I'm sure that the survey will identify the presence of asbestos'. It is my understanding that the 'deliberate damage' to the Hall that the Council is requesting the owners take 'urgent action' over is to do with the Hall and not the out buildings. Therefore such an assumption is not acceptable because the work that needs doing is to secure the 19th Century Building and not the 1936 Sports Hall which is where the immediate Asbestos problem exists. That is unless the suspended Ceilings in the majority of the bedrooms have also collapsed as a direct result of the negligent attitude of the Owners to their 'prized possession'.

I am alarmed to read that your colleagues in Environmental Health have taken from the 13th October 2013 to today to NOT take urgent action with regards to the Sports Hall especially when the Asbestos problem was raised repeatedly by both Peter Jones Hughes and Huw Davies to their superiors in the Council during that time period. It is not as though it was news to them when I contacted them last year because of the failure of the Council to do anything for 7 years.

I disagree with your comment where you say that the Council haven't done anything in the last 7 years. There have been ongoing discussions and in 2019 injunctive action was taken through the Courts and this resulted in a Tomlin Order requiring the owners not to undertake

work without the Council's consent and to provide us with a schedule of works. I'm aware that the Principal Planning Enforcement Officer who has been dealing with this case, has visited the Hall on a number of occasions along with Huw Davies to check on the work that has taken place and there have been ongoing dialogue with the owners representatives.

However, at the beginning of last year communication between our legal team/officers and the owners and their representations did stall for a short time but as I've mentioned previously we have managed to restore communication with Mrs Erkman, and she has made positive steps to address this matter by recently appointing an experienced heritage consultant and they have carried out a survey of the building.

With regards to your comment about the owners taking 'positive steps' they were given specific instructions by Amanda Venables and Peter Jones - Hughes as to what positive steps they must take to make the Hall secure following the spate of breakins that occurred in 2013 namely 'steel or perspex shutters to all ground floor windows of the Hall'. Their response - plywood panels screwed into the original window frames and then bolted through the original Oak Shutters inside - without listed planning consent.

As mentioned above, if the owners do not respond to my emails regarding the security problems then the Environmental Health team will need to consider what steps they need to take next.

These 'positive steps' are sticking plaster to a problem the size of the German Dams after the visit of 617 Squadron.

Although I appreciate you are disappointed with the deteriorating condition of the building, Officers are trying to make every possible attempt to stop the building decaying further but this is a complex situation. Although there are a few Enforcement options that we can use, given the nature of the legislation and given the owners lack of interest previously in carrying out works to the building, then even if a Notice was served it is doubtful that the owners would comply with the Notice and if they don't, then the next step as set out in the legislation is for the authority to pay for the work to be done with a Charge placed on the building or for the authority to compulsorily purchase the building. It is likely that the costs of even the basic repairs just to make the building water tight would run into a considerable amount of money.

I'm sure you can appreciate that the Council haven't got financial resources available to be able to carry out extensive work especially at the moment when they Council has other priorities that need to be dealt with. This isn't to say that the Council won't take action in future as clearly this is an important building, I'm merely pointing out that the Planning Legislation doesn't offer many options. Even if the Council were to take action we also have the added problem of dealing with an off shore company and the legalities behind serving Notice on them and this is why over the years we have needed to obtain advice and guidance from our legal team. We have also tried to see if Welsh Government and Cadw are able to offer any grant assist but they aren't in a position to offer financial support either.

As such, given that I have recently managed to restore dialogue with the Mrs Erkman, I'm hoping that we can convince her to carry out the much needed work, through negotiation without the need to take formal action.

I look forward to your detailed response with submissions from all the relevant departments and not phone calls as you instructed Environmental Helath to do today.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Hughes
Honorary Historian for
Kinmel Hal