

Design & Access Statement

Job no.	3060
Job title	Parish Church of St Peter, Huddersfield Proposed North entrance porch, exit stair enclosure, parking and external works
Date	June 2016

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Subject In support of Planning Application

This Statement must be read in conjunction with the full planning application documents and drawings. Illustrations within this document do not take precedence over the formal application scheme drawings and are intended primarily to illustrate points made in the text.

1.0 Design

1.01 Context

The church is grade 2* listed sited within the Town Centre conservation area. Please refer to the accompanying Heritage Statement.

There are many hundreds of users and visitors of the building each year. Approval was granted in 2009 to provide a new entrance pod on the south-west corner of the building which provided level access to the main church floor level and lift and stair access to the crypt and balcony floors. Although this scheme was partly implemented by the opening up of windows into the Crypt community room on the north side of the building, the scheme stalled due to insufficient funding.

The current application seeks approval to open up the north-west door, add a simple external glass porch to increase internal circulation space and reinstate the former escape stair lost in a 1970's internal replanning. An external staircase enclosure is proposed for the north fire exit stair. A new vehicular access, drop off and parking for 14 vehicles is proposed on the north side of the building.

1.02 Amount

The porch will add just 6.5 sq metres and the roof over the north external exit stairs will provide a further 13.5 sq metres. The external parking / paved areas amount to approximately 385 sq metres.

1.03 Layout / Design

In addition to the porch and fire exit stair enclosure the proposals also include the insertion of a platform lift to provide an essential internal link for the disabled and infirm, allowing comfortable access between the ground floor and lower ground floor.

To accommodate the space required by the stair and lift the current kitchen will be rehoused into the crypt, to serve directly into the community space. The remaining space will be used to house WC accommodation, which will be supplemented by further WC's replanned into the south stair tower lobby.

Currently the church ground floor level is approximately 850 mm above surrounding external ground levels. The level change has been sensitively designed to provide level access by the use of a series of shallow gradient ramps and alternative step approach.

The current external fire exit stairs leading from the Crypt level on the north elevation is a magnet for antisocial behaviour and provides yet a further source of flooding during sustained heavy rain. Proposals include the roofing over of the external steps and enclosing the area with wrought iron railings. The design of the enclosing structure will mirror that of the new entrance porch.

A new vehicular entrance will be formed off Byram Street to provide a parking area for 14 vehicles at the north side of the church. The hard landscaped area will provide a vital drop off and parking facility for clergy, volunteers, disabled drivers, wedding cars and funeral hearse etc. New surfacing, kerbs and drainage forming the parking area and paved areas connecting with the church north elevation will alleviate dampness and recent flooding experienced within the Crypt community space and restaurant. In addition the parking and drop off facilities will also be available for official church Civic events.

Visual and spatial access from the north stair lobby into the West End of the church Nave will be improved by the replacement and enlargement of the single door into a double glazed door. Removal of two rows of pews and the re-siting of warden pews in their place will widen the available free space for flexible use of the interior. A small reception and heritage information desk will be sited discretely against the north wall. Improved access for all members of the community in a sustained way is a key objective of the proposal.

1.04 Scale

The scale of the two structures proposed is very small in contrast to the quite enormous elevation of the north wall and tower of the building. Careful thought has been given to how the structures can articulate and fit onto the current decorative porch. The use of a flat roof allows a simple junction just below the crenelated pediment of the north door and, by the use of a simple glass envelope, the impact with the fine stone detailing will be minimised.

The flat roof proposed over the north exit stair enclosure will abut the external wall of the church below the window cill string course and will not therefore impact on the lancet windows, which provide an important rhythm and detail of the elevation.

1.05 Landscaping

St Peter's Gardens is a large ornamental green space with paths and seating which form a formal garden setting. The most southerly part of the gardens is less attractive, mainly formed by a grassed area with 14 no. memorial former grave stones and table tomb. The gardens are curtailed by a path which runs north south with large decorative light standards of a Victorian design. The path will be re-sited from the south to the north side of the lighting columns.

Parking and pedestrian areas will be delineated by the use of resin bonded gravel, smooth stone cobbles and stone pavings, small walls and kerbs to extend and compliment the hard landscaping seen within the pedestrianised area of Byram Street. The hard paving will provide a useful finish to allow the temporary erection of stage and large screens for proms in the park and other outdoor events. See our drawings for further details.

1.06 Appearance

The walls of the proposed entrance porch will be glass hung and applied over a simple steel structure. The structure will extend to form a small canopy finished with zinc roofing. The roofing will be detailed with a standing seam roof to provide detail and reflect traditional lead roofing.

The external columns will be expressed by extending above roof level to reflect the large stone pinnacles of the church elevation yet subservient and materially different to denote a modern structure.

2.0 Access

The principal access to the church ground floor level is currently by 6 no. steps through the west door. Access for the disabled is via a narrow and non-inclusive entrance via the south porch door. Access to the Crypt levels is also via a series of steps, though wheelchair access is available through the east door at Crypt level and series of internal wood ramps which is tortuous less than ideal and once again non- inclusive.

The current scheme proposes to introduce shallow ramps of a maximum gradient of 1 in 20.5, a gradient considered level within part M of the Building Regulations. Steps and paths provide an alternative and permeable approach. The new porch will be fitted with automatic sliding doors compliant with Access and the visually impaired to provide an attractive and all inclusive entrance.

A platform lift and stairs designed for ambulant disabled will ensure that anyone wishing to move around the building can do unfettered.

3.0 Consultation

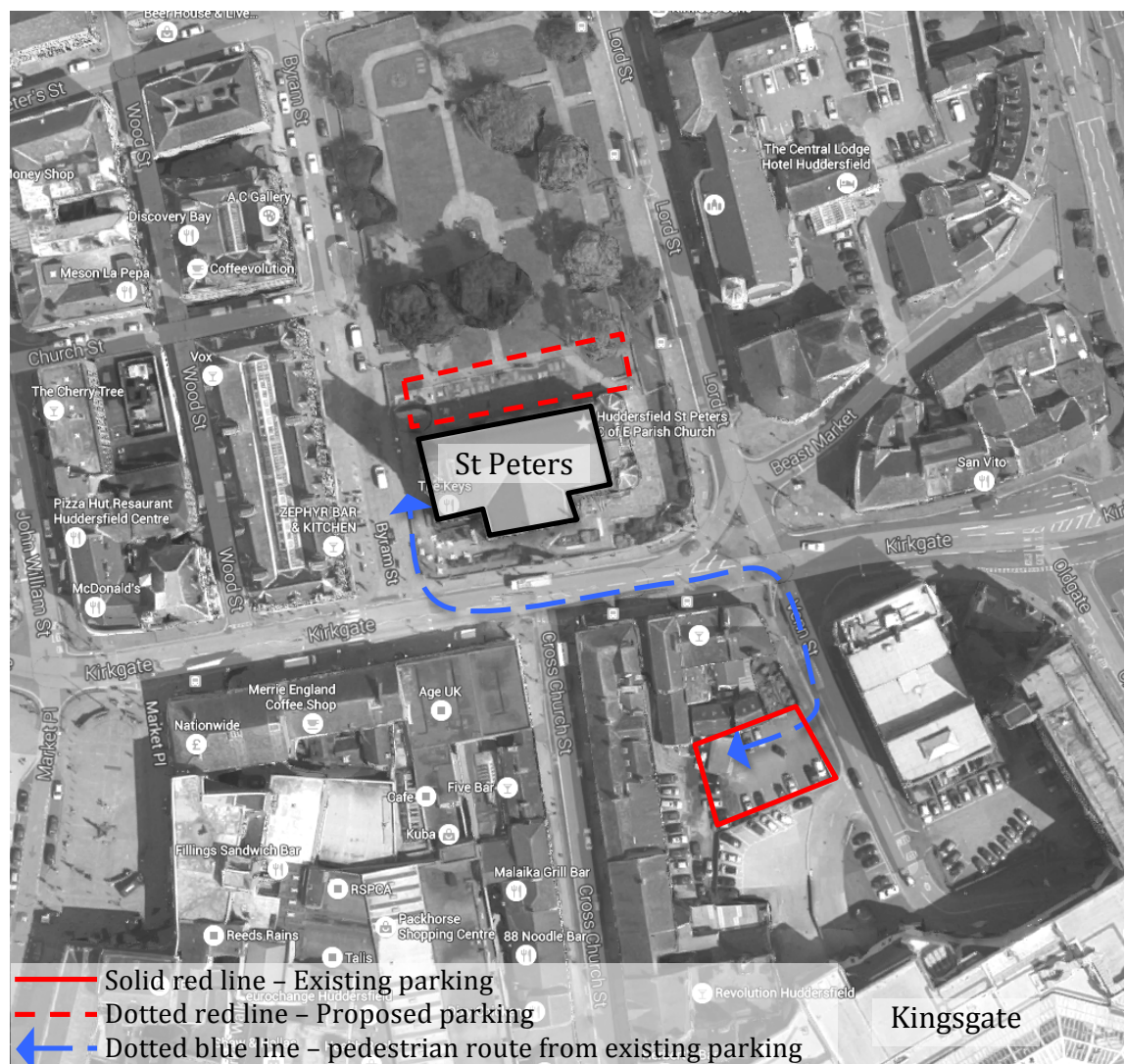
Consultation with Kirklees Metropolitan Council Head of Conservation has taken place and his comments have been taken into account during the design of the current proposals. A flat roof over the new simple glazed porch has been adopted rather than a curved roof, which may have conflicted with the shape and form of the pointed arch doorway. The roof enclosure over the external north exit staircase has been designed to compliment the proposed south porch. Simple wrought iron railings with vertical columns reflect the structural steel of the south porch structure.

All internal works affecting the character and significance of the interior layout, fabric and external works will be subject to a separate application through the Church of England Faculty jurisdiction including consultation with relevant amenity groups. Discussions with the Diocesan Advisory Committee are on-going.

4.0 Vehicle & Transport links

The church is in the heart of the town centre and is served by good transport links. The railway and bus stations are within a short walk of the church. Access bus and bus stops are to the east side of St Peter's Gardens.

Vehicular access to the church is limited aside from an existing car park located remotely nearly 200m away on Venn Street. This can be an issue when church wardens are making deliveries or for elderly patrons for whom it is difficult to make their way to the church on foot. Furthermore, owing to expansion plans by the Kingsgate shopping centre the remote parking facility on Venn Street is likely to be lost to the future development and these proposals create a viable solution which would future proof the access facilities for the church for the foreseeable future.



A new access from Byram Street will be formed with a low level motorised sliding gate operated by sensor to restrict usage. 14 no. car parking spaces are proposed to cater for Clergy and church wardens including a single space for the disabled. A drop off area immediately outside the proposed level access is designed into the scheme. 4 no. cycle spaces are also provided. The hard surfacing will provide a small turning area at the head of the parking area.

5.0 Emergency Access & Egress

Access for emergency vehicles will be improved by providing vehicular access along the north side of the building and the proposed entrance and current north exit stair.

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