Client:	Hope Church Huddersfield	Date:	08/08/23
Job:	St Patricks Catholic Centre	Job No:	1823

Revision A – 10/12/24

Design and Access Statement

Introduction

This design and access statement accompanies a full application for the change of use and associated works to convert St Patricks Catholic Centre into a place of worship for Hope Church Huddersfield

Site Location

St. Patrick's Catholic Centre is located at New North Parade, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD1 4DA. The building is situated in a central location, just west of Huddersfield town centre, within close proximity to key transport hubs such as Huddersfield Railway Station and major roadways, including the A62. The surrounding area is characterized by a mix of commercial and residential uses, contributing to the vibrant urban fabric of this part of Huddersfield.

Historically, the building has served as a Catholic community centre and is part of the larger St. Patrick's complex, which also includes St. Patrick's Church nearby. The building now sits vacant and has been listed for sale. While the centre itself is not used at the moment it has played an important role in the local community, providing facilities for social gatherings and religious events. Its location in a highly accessible part of the town makes it ideal for conversion into a church, as it benefits from existing infrastructure and visibility.

In terms of transport, the site is well-connected, with regular bus services passing along New North Parade and nearby parking available for visitors. Its close proximity to the town centre and transport links will make the proposed church easily accessible to both local residents and those travelling from further afield. The surrounding area is walkable, and the centre's position encourages sustainable transport options, such as walking or cycling.

Existing Site Condition

The building was constructed in the mid 1970s to serve as a community centre for the local Catholic parish. The building, while structurally sound, has not been in regular use recently and is at risk of falling into a state of disrepair if it remains vacant for much longer. The exterior and interior both show signs of neglect, with some visible deterioration of the masonry and internal finishes.

A recent asbestos survey identified the presence of asbestos-containing materials in certain areas of the building. While these materials do not currently pose an immediate hazard, any future refurbishment or change in use will require careful management and removal of the asbestos by licensed professionals in line with health and safety regulations.

Additionally, several elements of the building, such as the windows, and internal fixtures, are in urgent need of repair to prevent further deterioration. The proposed conversion into a church for Hope Church Huddersfield will not only prevent the building from becoming derelict but will also involve necessary refurbishment works to bring the facility up to modern standards of safety, accessibility, and functionality. This will include improvements to the heating and electrical systems, which are outdated and unsuitable for sustained use in their current state.

By redeveloping the building for active community use, the work aims to preserve this important local facility and prevent the building from deteriorating further.

Heritage and Conservation

Although St. Patrick's Catholic Centre is not a listed building itself, it is situated in close proximity to several heritage assets, including St. Patrick's Church, which is a Grade II listed building designed by the architect Joseph Kaye and completed in 1832. The church's Gothic Revival style and its designation as a listed structure are significant in shaping the architectural character of the surrounding area. Therefore, any development involving the Catholic Centre must be mindful of the setting of this heritage asset.

The conversion of St. Patrick's Catholic Centre into a church for Hope Church has been designed to respect and preserve the historical and architectural integrity of the surrounding area with the character of the building remaining much the same. While the Catholic Centre does not share the same historical significance as the catholic church, it forms part of the overall site that has been used for religious and community purposes for decades. As such, its adaptive reuse will maintain the site's community function, aligning with conservation principles of retaining buildings that contribute to local heritage and culture.

Where possible, original materials and architectural features of the Catholic Centre will be preserved, respecting the character of the building. Careful consideration will be given to any necessary external alterations to ensure they do not adversely affect the visual relationship with the wider streetscape. New interventions, where necessary, have been designed to be sympathetic to the existing architectural language while modernizing the building for its new use.

Access and transport

St. Patrick's Catholic Centre benefits from a highly accessible location on New North Parade, Huddersfield, with excellent connections to both public and private transport networks. The site is positioned just a short distance from Huddersfield Railway Station, offering frequent train services to Leeds, Manchester, and beyond, making it convenient for congregants and visitors arriving by train. The proximity to major bus routes also ensures good accessibility for those traveling from nearby residential areas or neighbouring towns.

<u>Vehicular Access and Parking</u>

Vehicular access to the site is facilitated by the main road network, including the nearby A62, which provides links to the M62 motorway, making the site easily reachable for those traveling by car from across West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester. There is no dedicated parking available on site. However, several public car parks are available within walking distance, including one immediately to the rear of the site, those near the railway station and along the main roads.

While the site itself doesn't have dedicated parking spaces, the surrounding area has sufficient parking infrastructure to accommodate demand during peak times, such as church services or events. This is tested as the building has been used to host large events within its current use.

Pedestrian Access

The site is well-integrated into the local pedestrian network, providing safe and easy access for those arriving on foot. The surrounding streets have pedestrian pathways, and the building's entrance is directly accessible from the main pavement on New North Parade and trinity street.

Inclusive Access

As part of the redevelopment into a church, consideration has been given to ensuring that the building is fully accessible to all members of the community, including those with disabilities. The building currently features a ramp which is not complaint with current building regulations. The design proposes a new ramp and step-free access at the main entry point, as well as internal modifications to ensure compliance with current accessibility standards. Accessible toilet facilities will be provided.

Public Transport Links

The site is highly accessible by public transport, with regular bus services running along New North Parade and nearby streets, linking the site to the wider Huddersfield area. Major bus stops are located within a short walking distance, ensuring easy access for those using public transport. The integration of these public transport links supports the sustainability goals of the project by reducing reliance on private vehicles and encouraging more environmentally friendly modes of travel.

By providing a range of access options—by foot, bicycle, public transport, and private car—the proposed change of use, of St. Patrick's Catholic Centre will ensure the building is easily reachable for all, supporting both the congregation of Hope Church and the wider community.

Design of the Building

The proposed design for the conversion of St. Patrick's Catholic Centre into a church for Hope Church reflects both functional improvements and careful consideration of the building's architectural character. The design seeks to enhance the usability of the space while maintaining the integrity of the existing structure.

Ground Floor Glass Infill and Entrance Lobby

A key feature of the proposal is the glass infill between the existing columns at the ground floor level, currently an external space. This glass thermally broken enclosure will create a welcoming entrance lobby for the church, improving the building's accessibility and functionality. The transparency of the glass respects the original structure by maintaining visual continuity between the external columns, whilst transforming the space into a usable area. This infill will also provide protection from the elements, creating a modern yet sympathetic intervention that serves as the new focal point for visitors entering the church.

Main Entrance Design

To enhance the visibility and significance of the new main entrance on Trinity Street, the design proposes the use of forest green aluminium cladding on either side of the door. This choice of material and colour is intended to help visually frame the entrance, making it more distinctive and welcoming for visitors. The rich, dark green hue provides a striking contrast to the surrounding materials, subtly drawing attention to the entrance while maintaining a cohesive relationship with the building's overall aesthetic This colour also matches the colour of Hope Church Huddersfield logo.

Additionally, the upper pane of glass above the door will feature a semi-transparent window film, which will provide an opportunity for future branding, such as the potential inclusion of Hope Church's logo. This would be part of a separate signage application, enhancing the identity of the church. The combination of aluminium cladding and the glass film creates a modern, inviting entrance that balances functionality with a contemporary visual appeal.

New Entrance Ramp

The existing non-compliant ramp from New North Parade is proposed to be demolished and replaced with a new, compliant ramp located at the main entrance on Trinity Street. This new ramp will be clad in a material that matches the dark grey PPC aluminium proposed for the new windows, giving the entrance a modern and cohesive look. The use of these materials will create a contemporary feel, enhancing the building's aesthetic while maintaining harmony with the proposed window design. The balustrade for the ramp will primarily consist of glass, while a stainless-steel handrail will be incorporated for both durability and a sleek, modern touch. This new design will improve accessibility, ensuring compliance with current building regulations, while seamlessly integrating into the building's overall architectural context.

Reorganisation of Plant Equipment

The current arrangement of plant equipment and condensing units at the rear of the building is unsightly and detracts from the building's appearance. These units are also located near the primary parking area, making them a less-than-ideal

feature for those entering the site. To address this, the proposal includes relocating the plant equipment to a newly constructed fenced enclosure at the side of the building. This move will significantly improve the building's rear appearance and free up space for a cleaner, more organized layout. Additionally, the unsightly and deteriorating garage at the rear, which is no longer fit for purpose, will be demolished to accommodate these changes.

Window Modifications

Several windows on the building are proposed to be enlarged in order to bring more natural light into some of the darker internal spaces. These windows, which can be seen on the proposed elevations, have been carefully designed to maintain the proportions and architectural rhythms of the existing building. The new window sizes align with the existing datums, ensuring that they harmonize with the overall building, enhancing the external appearance while serving the functional needs of the new use.

Furthermore, a few new windows will be introduced into areas that currently lack access to natural light. These areas, previously used as beer and wine cellars, are not required for the new church layout and will be repurposed into more practical spaces. The addition of windows in these areas will enhance the usability of these rooms, providing much-needed natural light, while the design of these windows will remain consistent with the proportions and aesthetic of the existing building.

At present, the windows of St. Patrick's Catholic Centre are inconsistent in both material and appearance. A mix of timber and uPVC windows in varying styles and colours detracts from the overall aesthetic of the building, giving it an unsightly, disjointed appearance. Importantly, these existing windows perform poorly in terms of energy efficiency, contributing to higher heat loss and operational inefficiencies within the building. The proposed design seeks to replace all existing windows with dark grey PPC (polyester powder coated) aluminium windows. This upgrade will provide significant benefits in both performance and appearance. The new aluminium windows will offer superior energy efficiency, reducing heat loss and improving the building's overall thermal performance. Furthermore, by standardizing the design across all windows—both newly introduced and replacements—the building will present a cohesive and modern appearance that fits more harmoniously into the surrounding street scene, enhancing the visual appeal of the area.

Internal Reconfiguration

Internally, the spaces have been reworked to better meet the operational requirements of the church. However, careful consideration has been given to limiting structural alterations and to preserve the building's original integrity. Where changes are necessary, the impact on the external appearance has been

minimised. The overall layout maintains a clear functional flow for church activities while respecting the building's historical framework.

Infilled Windows

In areas where the proposed internal layout does not align with the placement of existing windows, some windows will be infilled with masonry to match the original building. This approach ensures that these alterations remain visually cohesive with the existing structure, maintaining the architectural consistency of the façade.

Massing

The proposed conversion and alterations to St. Patrick's Catholic Centre do not result in any significant increase in the building's mass or overall volume. The external dimensions of the structure will remain largely unchanged, with the majority of the alterations focused on internal reconfiguration and façade improvements. While certain elements, such as the introduction of a new glass infill and the reconfiguration of the entrance ramp, will alter the appearance of parts of the building, these modifications are minor and do not increase the massing or height. The design retains the original proportions and scale of the building, ensuring that it remains in keeping with the surrounding urban context and does not impose on neighbouring properties. This approach allows the project to achieve its functional and aesthetic goals without disrupting the established streetscape or the building's historical character.

Materials Choice

The selection of materials for the proposed conversion of St. Patrick's Catholic Centre has been carefully considered to enhance both the aesthetic appeal and functionality of the building, while ensuring consistency with the existing architecture and surrounding streetscape. Dark grey PPC (polyester powder coated) aluminium has been chosen for all new and replacement windows, offering improved energy efficiency and durability, while providing a sleek, modern appearance. This material complements the proposed glass balustrades and stainless-steel handrails on the new entrance ramp, creating a cohesive, contemporary feel throughout the project.

Additionally, the use of forest green aluminium cladding around the new main entrance on Trinity Street introduces a contrast to the darker window frames, subtly highlighting the entrance and improving its visibility. This choice of colour adds a modern touch without overwhelming the building's original character. All materials have been selected not only for their visual qualities but also for their low maintenance and long-term durability, ensuring the building will continue to perform well over time. The balance of modern materials with the existing masonry ensures that the building will remain a prominent and harmonious feature within the urban context.

Fire Strategy

The fire safety strategy for the conversion of St. Patrick's Catholic Centre into a church for Hope Church has been developed to meet the requirements of current building regulations and standards. The primary focus is to ensure the safety of all occupants through prevention, protection, and evacuation measures.

Fire Prevention

As part of the refurbishment, the building will undergo a full assessment of its electrical and mechanical systems to ensure compliance with current fire safety standards. All electrical systems, including lighting, heating, and other services, will be updated or replaced as necessary to reduce the risk of electrical fires. Any new elements that go into the building will be in line with current building regulations. The removal of asbestos, identified in previous surveys, will also mitigate any potential chemical fire risks associated with its presence.

Fire Detection and Alarm Systems

A survey to assess the capabilities of the current alarm systems is to be undertaken. If necessary, a modern fire detection and alarm system will be installed throughout the building, the extent and capabilities of the system are to be confirmed by a specialist.

Means of Escape

Any proposed changes to the internal layout have been carefully considered to ensure that all occupants can safely evacuate the building in the event of a fire. Multiple escape routes are available, with clear signage and emergency lighting provided throughout the building to guide occupants to the nearest exit. Where additional signage is required, to bring the building in line with current building regulations, this will be proposed. The main entrances on New North Parade will serve as the primary exit points, with additional emergency exits located at the rear and sides of the building to provide alternative routes. The escape distances, of the furthest points from the exits, in each room, have been checked for compliance against the building regulations and escape distances as proposed are compliant. This is to be checked and confirmed by a fire consultant / building control.

The proposed plans feature a new AOV, serving the primary staircase to bring the smoke lobby in line with current building regulations. This is to be checked and confirmed by a fire consultant / building control.

The building currently features three staircases the main staircase measuring roughly 1200mm wide, an escape stair at roughly 1190mm wide, and a second escape stair at roughly 960mm wide. The two larger staircases are compliant with current building regulations for the required capacity of the building, the smallest stair would ideally need to be made slightly wider in order to be compliant with

current building regulations. The suitability of this is subject to the comments of a fire consultant / building control.

Compartmentation and Fire Resistance

To prevent the spread of fire within the building, the internal layout will be compartmented, with fire-resistant walls and doors installed between key areas in line with building regulations. This compartmentation will help to contain any fire at its point of origin, protecting escape routes and allowing occupants time to evacuate. All doorways along the escape routes will be fitted with fire-rated doors, and fire shutters may be required to close the hatch openings within compartment walls in the event of fire. The suitability of this is subject to the comments of a fire consultant / building control.

Evacuation Procedures

As part of the overall fire strategy, an evacuation plan will be developed and implemented. This will include escape routes and assembly points outside the building. Special consideration will be given to the evacuation of vulnerable individuals, such as those with disabilities or limited mobility, ensuring that appropriate assistance is provided to evacuate safely. This will be done in partnership with a fire consultant / building control.