

ALL HALLOWS CHURCH, GOSPEL OAK COMMUNITY ACCESS PROJECT
Design & Access Statement

This application, to amend the existing Planning approval, refers to proposed re-landscaping at the west end of All Hallows Church on the corner of Savernake Road and Shirlock Road, and for the construction of a single storey annex building on land to the south side of the church.



Area to the north of the main entrance



Area to the south of the main entrance



Aerial view (from Bing Maps)



View of the land to the south from the church

All Hallows is Listed Grade II*, and is situated in the Mansfield Conservation Area. The qualities of the existing building and setting are covered in the Statement of Significance (Heritage Statement).

[1] The revised scheme

This application concerns an amendment to the approved scheme (Ref: 2013/4184/P). The proposed revision reduces the footprint of the approved annexe by roughly a half. The form, scale, and massing of the remainder of the annex remains unchanged, and the building will use the same approved material palette.

A garden will be provided at the west end of the annexe to provide an amenity for the church. In order to protect the garden from vandalism, and to discourage loitering, a bespoke set of railings will be provided at the west end. Other than a reduction in the width of the steps, the external landscaping and access ramp at the west end remains unchanged.

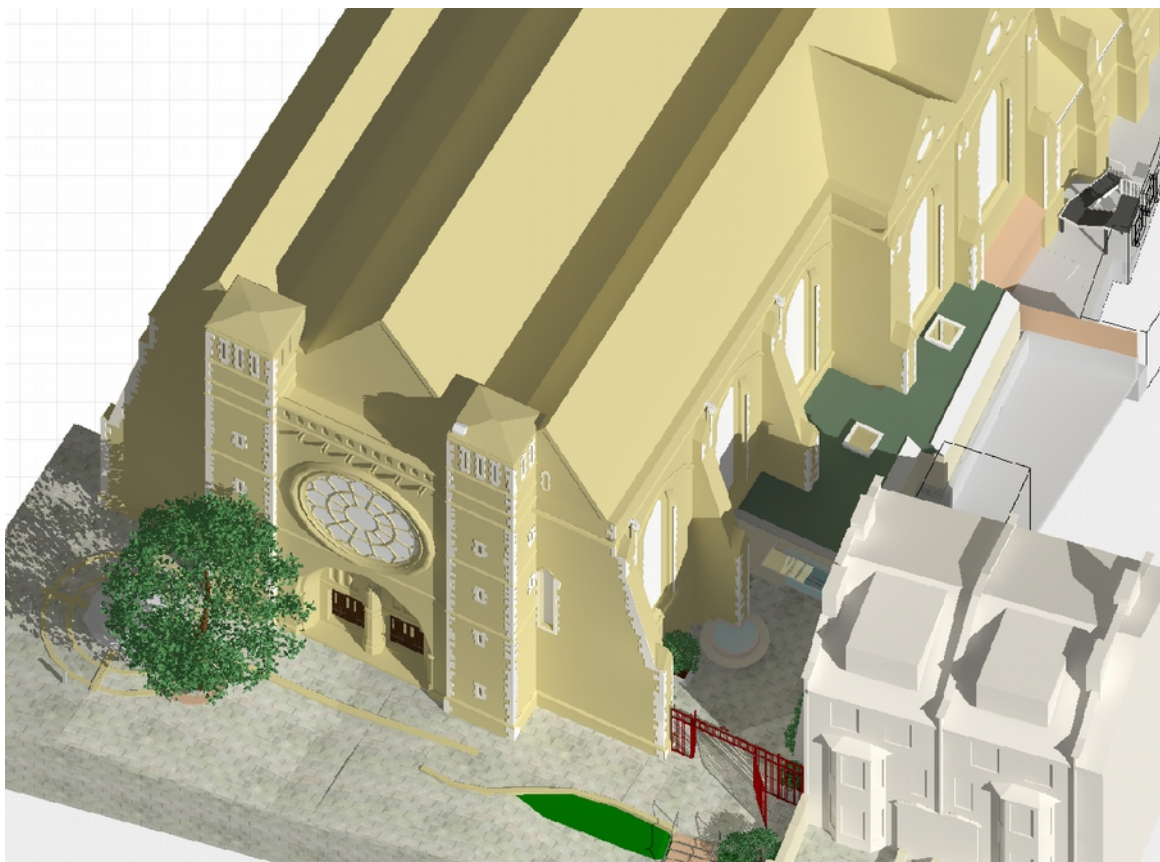
[2] Use of the site

The overall rationale for the project is set out in the Statement of Need. The external space outside the main entrance of the church in Shirlock Road is currently in a very poor condition, and does not reflect the quality of the architecture of the building and what takes place within. To the north side,

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a paved area bordered by a step and chains panning between low posts surrounds the memorial. On the south side, a small grassed area fills space between the sloping footway and a high fence in front of empty land to the south side of the church, giving a somewhat derelict appearance. The unused plot to the south of the church is mainly concreted over.

The approved re-landscaping of the area to the north of the entrance will see the step and chains removed, and the paved area made contiguous with the public paving to provide a more generous feeling of public realm on the corner of Shirlock and Savernake Road, with the memorial remaining the focal point. The parish intends to carry this out to the public footway in partnership with the Council if funding and agreement with Highways can be obtained. This will replace the concrete pavers with a natural York stone. It is intended that this corner will become a welcomed piece of public realm and focal point befitting the architecture of the building, in an area characterised by narrow footpaths where pedestrians are usually on the way to somewhere else.



On the south side, the paving will be extended from the main entrance to provide level access to the proposed annex building, with shrub planting on the sloped banking towards the pavement.

The annex building will provide much needed accessible amenities for people attending church services and occasional concerts. There will also be occasions when occupation of the annex building will enable the main church building to be open to the visiting public for prayer or enjoyment of the architecture.

The site is currently unused, overgrown, and flanked by a high party wall. Rather than being a burden to maintain for little practical benefit, the annex building will satisfy the needs of the parish and wider community; whilst a small, low-maintenance garden would enhance the verdant qualities of the neighbourhood. Generally, the church looks locked up and lifeless. The new garden will provide an external place for quiet contemplation, but also offer a space for the congregation to

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occasionally enjoy tea and coffee after services, creating a sense of life and a link to the community.

[3] Amount and layout of new accommodation

The annex building will serve the following key purposes:

- Small kitchen facilities for church use and occasional events.
- A small meeting space for groups of up to 12 people.
- Accessible WC facilities that will cater for the peak occupancy that the building hosts. This concerns both regular worship use, when there is high demand at the start and end of services, and for the occasional concerts, which currently entail the unsightly siting portable toilets by the main entrance.

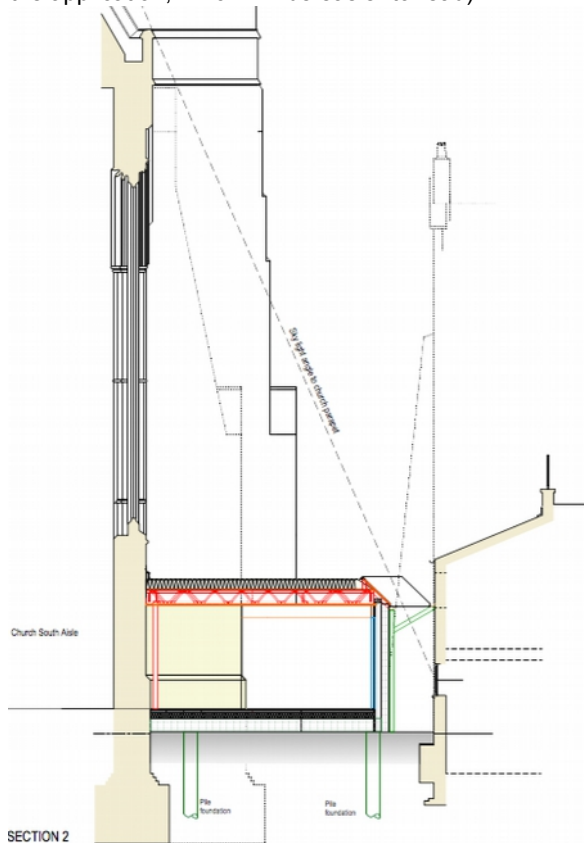
The inclusion of a small meeting space with tea-kitchen and WC facilities is designed to be as flexible as possible, allowing for the spaces to provide much-needed facilities to support the church in a small space.

[4] Scale

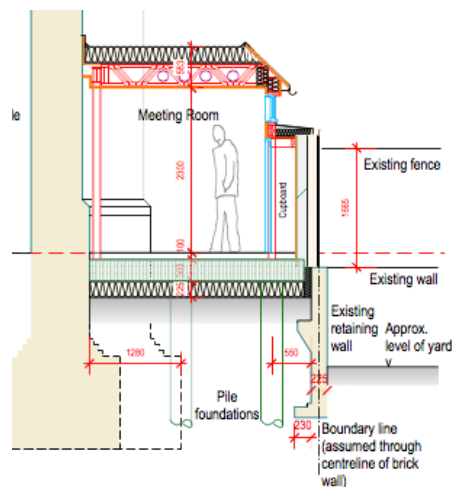
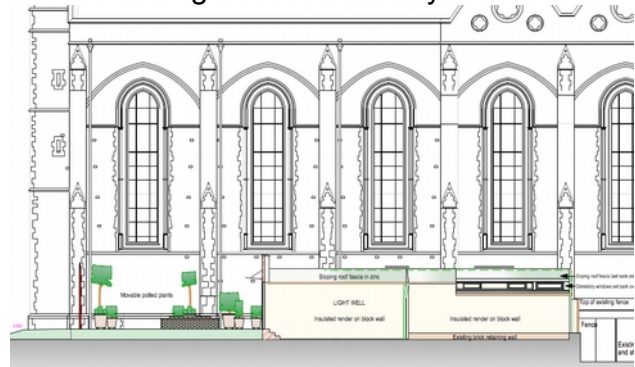
The entire building will be single storey, reflecting the proximity of neighbouring houses and gardens, and so as not to encroach up the main church windows on the south elevation when viewed from inside or from neighbouring houses.

Section through light well showing daylight line

(These are extracts highlighting the larger-scale drawings in the application, which will be easier to read)



Elevation to light well and rear yard



Section at rear of building by rear yard.

A sensitive aspect concerns the arrangement of the building alongside 56 Shirlock Road, the extension of which, unusually, incorporates windows directly in the party wall. The Planning Officer's comments in Delegated Report of Application 2011/4165/P noted *"The proposed development would incorporate a 1 metre wide lightwell to maintain the existing light and ventilation to these windows, and due to the close proximity and imposing presence of the existing church, the sense of enclosure to/outlook from the affected kitchen would not be materially worsened."* These proposals maintain these parameters, with the additional tolerance to the daylight angle that formed part of the approved scheme. This remains as the permission granted in 2015 and is detailed in Section 2 above and in the drawings.

[5] Appearance

The frontage of the annex building will be set behind the second buttress of the church, and behind the buttresses of the neighbouring house. The parapet of the frontage will be at approximately the same height as the current timber fence. This is primarily with security in mind. The railings will allow views of the original church wall, and the garden will act as a transition space, respecting the current policy within Conservation Areas that prefers infill developments not to fully plug-up gaps between buildings. The design of the front facade does not attempt to mimic or compete with the weighty architecture of the host structure, yet will present an inviting face to the building. This arrangement also leaves the main church windows visible from the street.



Existing situation with fence



Proposed railing with gate

As unchanged from the approved scheme, the flank and rear walls will be plain, finished in a light coloured insulated render to maximise light reflectance, particularly within the light well to 56 Shirlock Road. The proposal is to retain the existing brick wall to the rear garden of the above property, and cantilever the new wall above, replacing the timber fence. For the sake of the internal accommodation, this will rise just under 300mm (1ft) higher than the existing fence over most of the length. Above this, the roof line will be set back over a narrow strip of clerestory glazing that will provide daylight to the interior and enable occasional access for gutter clearance.

The roof will be covered by a single-ply membrane in a grey-green colour, with the intention of

being low-key when viewed from surrounding houses and roof terraces. The parapet capping to the front, and the sloping fascias to the side will be in pre-patinated zinc. This will be well jointed to be reminiscent of traditional lead. It will also provide a high light reflectance factor where it adjoins the neighbouring property as noted in the paragraph above.

The insulated render will be self-coloured in a tone somewhere between the smooth stone dressings on the church and the stock brick of the adjoining houses. The mildly roughcast surface of the render will give it a stone-like quality which is intended to complement the general quality of the architecture. The exact colour will be determined by trial samples on site to ensure it is harmonious with the ragstone.

[6] Usage times

The approved planning application form stated that the hours of use of the annex are unknown, due to there being no facility for writing in qualifications. Weekday and Saturday usage times will usually vary from morning until mid evening – around 9pm - depending on activities, ranging from community groups to music recording. During the exceptional large concert events, the annex will be closed at the end of the performance. Sunday usage is expected to be from noon until early evening. All activities will be consistent with the use of the church.

[7] Access

The main church space currently enjoys level access through the north door on Savernake Road, however beyond entry into the worship space, there are no other facilities available. The existing toilets, kitchen and meeting rooms are in the basement at the east end. Previous planning studies have found that providing access to these from Courthope Road through the low level yard would be difficult and entail lengthy diversionary routes, remote from the main activities of the building.

These proposals will make an accessible environment around the west end of the the church, including into the annex, which will very often be the social focus of the building. The arrangement will facilitate easy access between the worship space, refreshment and WC areas.

These considerations are not exclusively about wheelchair access. The staircase from the north aisle to the basement facilities is steep, and among those who know the building, notoriously difficult for many ambulant disabled or otherwise less mobile people to negotiate. Any reconfiguration of the staircase or incorporation of a lift here would have an intrusive impact on the architecture. It would also require movement of people at the east end of the church, which is not convenient for services and concerts. The annex building will mean that the facilities are fully inclusive and accessible to all, without interrupting the use of the main space, and will provide a much more family-friendly environment to the building as a whole. The impact on the existing architecture will be minimal, as the proposals will use the existing south aisle door.

With the access so improved, we do not propose to eliminate the step at the west entrance, as this would entail quite a steep fall to the footway, and other consequential work on the stone thresholds.

A previous application for this site proposed a parking space for blue badge holders within the

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site. This parish now proposes that a dedicated bay is designated within the residents' parking bays closest to the corner of Savernake and Shirlock Road.

Comparison between the approved scheme and proposed revision

Aerial View – As approved



As proposed alteration



Front Elevation – As approved



As proposed alteration



Nicholas Weedon
 12/15