

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT WITH HERITAGE STATEMENT



New Klargestest at land adjacent to

St Mary Magdalene Church
Church Lane
Lyminster
West Sussex
BN17 7QJ

For

The PCC of St Mary Magdalene Church, Lyminster

Project No: 514

February 2021

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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT WITH HERITAGE STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

Instructions have been received from our client, the PCC of St Mary Magdalene's Church, to submit a planning application for a new Klargester below ground cesspool for existing church WC facilities to the land adjacent to the church for St Mary Magdalene Church, Church Lane, Lyminster, West Sussex BN17 7QJ

The report has been written to accompany the planning application and has been drafted with reference to the CABE guidance document Design & Access Statements: How to write, read and use them.

This report is subdivided into three sections. The first section of this report sets out the planning context for the proposed development, including a description of the site as existing and the justification for the new building and its location.

The second part of this report sets out and describes the proposals in terms of Use, Amount, Layout, Scale, Landscaping, Appearance and Access.

The report then closes by setting out the case for development, providing an assessment against relevant planning policies and the response to the physical characteristics of the site. This structure will help to demonstrate that the current development proposals have been arrived at following a robust planning appraisal and an evaluation of the site and its context.

This Design & Access Statement with Heritage Statement herewith demonstrates that the wider community benefits outweigh any harm caused to the Heritage Asset or Historic Environment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The application site is in a rural setting, south of the Chichester to Eastbourne (A27) towards the west of the village.

The site sits adjacent to the ancient churchyard of the Grade I listed 13th Century Church within a small redundant triangular parcel of land alongside the farmyard track of Church Farm north of the modern agricultural barns.

The Site is not located within the South Downs National Park however; it is located within the Lyminster Conservation Area.

Map right - Site Location Plan. (Red) Application Site not within the churchyard boundary



PLANNING CONTEXT

At the time of writing, all decisions are being made in accordance with the local planning authorities existing Development Plan. In this case, the relevant Plan comprises of the policies of the Arun District Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (2018).

Arun District Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (2018)

The following policies are considered relevant to this proposal:

Policy HER SPI (The Historic Environment)

Policy HER DMI (Listed Buildings)

Policy HER DM3 (Conservation Areas)

Policy HER DM6 (Sites of Archaeological Interest)

Policy C SPI (Countryside)

Policy ENV SPI (Natural Environment)

Policy ENV DM5 (Development & Biodiversity)

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

A review of the Council's online planning register identified the following applications:-

- Replacement of Fell I No. Rowan tree, fell I No. Swedish Whitebeam tree, shorten lateral spread east by up to 3m & reduce crown by 3m to I No. Holm Oak tree & shorten spread heading east & south by 2-3m within the Lyminster Conservation Area. Ref. No: **LY/20/16/TC** Status: Withdrawn
- Fell I No. Rowan tree, fell I No. Swedish Whitebeam tree, shorten lateral spread east by up to 3m & reduce crown by 3m to I No. Holm Oak tree & shorten spread heading east & south by 2-3m within the Lyminster Conservation Area. Ref. No: **LY/20/16/TC** | Status: No Objection
- Sectional fell of I No. Lime tree within the Lyminster Conservation Area. Ref. No: **LY/9/14/TC** | Status: No Objection
- Various tree surgery within the Lyminster Conservation Area. Ref. No: **LY/5/10/TC** | Status: No Objection
- Construction of single storey extension to church, to include wc & tea point. Ref. No: **LY/19/07/BR** | Status: Passed Conditionally
- Extension to provide accessible wc, kitchenette & storage facilities. Ref. No: **LY/13/05** | Status: Approved Conditionally
- Application for Listed Building Consent for extension to provide toilets and small meeting room (proposals show disabled toilet which is to comply with the Disabled Discrimination Act). Ref. No: **LY/15/03L** | Status: withdrawn
- Erection of new raised floor for bell ringers and associated works within the bell tower. Ref. No: **LY/21/91/B** | Status: Passed

DESIGN AND HERITAGE STATEMENT/STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St Mary Magdalene is a Grade I listed church situated in Lyminster. The original Chancel and Nave date back to Saxon times and formed part of the Benedictine nunnery of Lyminster.

Originally the Chancel was the Nun's Church and was separated from the Nave by a high solid timber screen. The Medieval Aisle roof is heavily timbered with crown posts.

The Nave arcade is Transitional Norman (c.1160-70) with pointed unmoulded arches and plain responds formed when the north aisle was added. The church was altered in the 13th Century and subsequently in the 15th Century with the addition of a north porch and a vestry in the 19th Century.

The church lies to the north of Littlehampton, near the River Arun, with views across the water meadows to Arundel.

BACKGROUND

The Proposal seeks to replace the existing antiquated composting WC installed in 2007 and in recent years parts have been consistently breaking and disintegrating and are becoming much more difficult to get hold of replacement parts.

Therefore in order for the church to provide reliable and sanitary facilities to its congregation they need to replace the composting WC for a standard WC that connects to either mains drainage or a Klargestar cesspool.



Current problems with the composting WC:

- 1) Given the irregular use of the composting loo and the varying temperature in the modern extension, it is very difficult to control the heating in the Mulltoa itself. As a result the composting process is impeded.
- 2) Lyminster church is not used every day. The advice for the Mulltoa is to turn off the device if people are away for more than two days, but this again means that the composting process is slowed down. In practice, we do not turn it off but it means that the vicar has to go to church on a regular basis simply to check the fluid level and adjust the thermostat setting for the Mulltoa.
- 3) The device only churns and mixes up the compost, paper etc when someone sits on it. As this would happen very infrequently the vicar and church cleaners have to make sure that they go into church regularly simply to press down on the Mulltoa to activate the motor. If this is not done, again the composting process is slowed down. In summer months especially this causes the Mulltoa to smell badly.
- 4) The Mulltoa cannot cope with the heavy use associated with larger events such as a carol service or any other major service. Even if the thermostat is turned up as high as possible, liquid seeps out of the drainage tray, over the floor and sometimes into the kitchen area.
- 5) The Ventilation pipe was not installed correctly and has a bend of more than 45 degrees (contrary to the fitting instructions). This means that the waste pipe smells do not vent to the outside effectively, especially when the wind is in a westerly direction.
- 6) The compost needs to be changed about every 6-8 weeks. This is a very unsanitary job as the human excrement has rarely fully composted. The church has to rely on two people in the congregation to do this job, as no one else is willing to volunteer for it.

Current Impact of the composting WC on the Church use:

When it floods it is a health hazard and seriously impacts on the worship, outreach and community use of the church.

As the Mulltoa can generally give off a foul odour people are disgusted by it and dislike using it. Families with children do not like using it and because of the smell given off it is also a very unpleasant place to change a baby's nappy. We are constantly having to apologise about the toilet and need to explain to all that use it that they must sit down.

The churches future vision:

The Parish now have a growing congregation of families and young children that meets twice a month on Sunday morning. There is a vision to have a mid-week social event for parents and children but cannot do so because of the lack of a proper, flushing WC. The church do not have the use of a local hall or other facilities that they can use for alternative functions and therefore all events have to take place in church.

In addition there is a desire to use the church more for the local community, as there is not a village hall at Lyminster. They have a specially created social area at the back of the church but again, people are reluctant to come as there is no proper WC and the off-putting odour from the composting WC towards the back of the church.

CONSIDERATION TO OTHER ALTERNATIVES

There has been significant consideration into the alternative options to installing a below ground Klargester cesspool and these are as follows:

Connection to the mains drainage:

It is unknown how far the mains drainage extends along Church Lane, as the obvious man-hole that provide access and connections, located within the road appear to be non-existent or have been covered over following road resurfacing works.

In order to make a direct connection to the mains sewer would require extensive excavations through the churchyard causing disruption to the graves and unnecessary damage to the Archaeological important of the site. There would also be a significant cost to the church both for the careful excavations through the churchyard as well as the associated connections to the mains drainage sewer once located along Church Lane. Therefore a mains connection would not be feasible.



Replacement composting WC:

Whilst the church have made-do with an existing composting WC there are a number of draw backs, which have been listed above in the Background section. Not least because of the odour that is emitted back into the church but also the unpleasant task of emptying the compost tray. It is likely that this would not be fully decomposed due to the lack of constant use, creating an unsanitary situation for those responsible for its up-keep and emptying.

PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSAL

- I. **Replace the existing composting WC with a traditional WC and underground Klargester cesspool.**

The issues caused by the existing composting WC, its practicality of irregular use and the logistics of emptying have compounded the argument for the church requiring a new approach to the toilet facilities that discharge the waste outside of the church into an underground cesspool.

THE PROPOSAL

This section sets out how the proposal is rooted in a robust understanding of the physical characteristics of the development site.

How the proposal responds to planning policies and other material considerations listed above is discussed in detail in the last section of this Statement; The Case for Development.

Description of the development

The application seeks approval for a a new underground Klargester Cesspool to receive foul waste from a traditional WC facility replacing the existing composting WC within an existing modern (2007) church annexe extension.

Use

The existing use of the building is class D2 Assembly & Leisure that facilitates church use and the wider community requirements.

Amount

The proposal seeks to install an underground 18,000L Klargester cesspool within a small triangle parcel of land outside of the church boundary off the side of the neighbouring farmyard and access track. This section of land has been considered redundant by the Farm owner and is to be gifted to the church along with the rights of access for routine emptying and maintenance.

The small triangular section of land comprises of 56m sq. located between the churchyard boundary wall and the farmyard/ access track. The area is laid to soil with patches of grass and stored lose material for use on the farm.



Layout and implications of site

The layout of the proposal has been determined by the close proximity of the church WC facilities and the generosity of the neighbouring farm owner. The location sits close to the church boundary wall minimising the necessary trenching of a foul waste pipe through the archaeologically significant graveyard as well as being within close proximity to an access track for emptying and maintenance.

The foul waste holding tank has been designed to adequately store waste from the WC facilities catering for low usage periods as well as high usage periods without the possibility of over filling during the peak months of usage. In addition to this by locating the Klargester cesspool outside of the churches boundaries have significantly reduced the impact on the archaeologically important graveyard.

Scale

The footprint of the proposal, largely dictated by the site constraints and adjoining stone boundary wall as well as the minimum sizes of Klargester cesspool tanks.

The external appearance of the proposal will be returned to soil and grass seeded with a simple man-hole cover for emptying and maintenance. The grass seeded soil will help to conceal the man-hole as well as encourage local wildlife such as bugs and insects, which already exist within the rural churchyard.

Landscaping

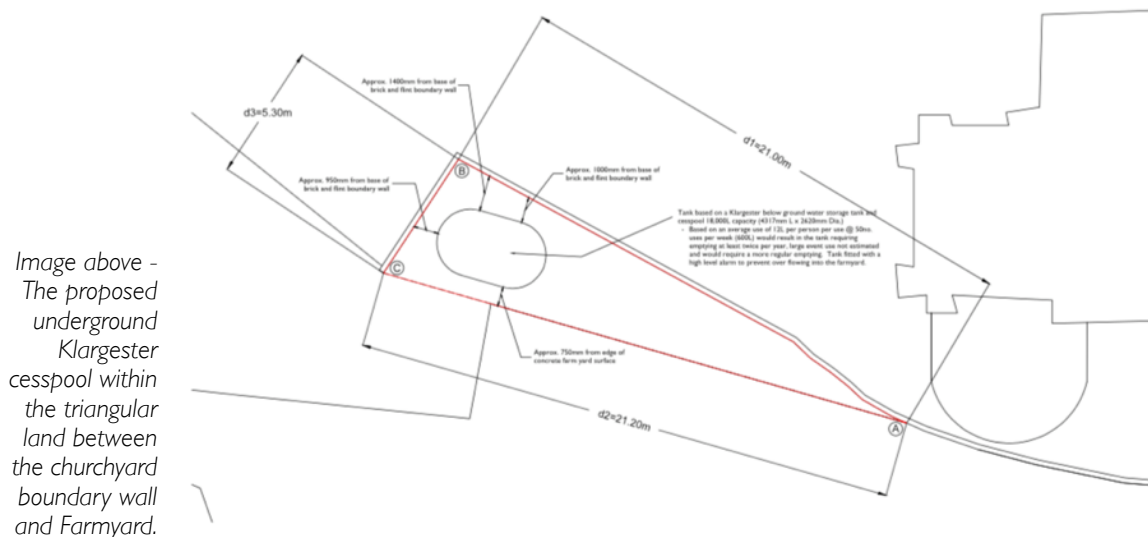
The new Klargester Cesspool will be concreted into position to allow for the potential of vehicular loadings and returned to grass seeded soil. This will help to conceal the man-hole as well as encourage local wildlife such as bugs and insects, which already exist within the rural churchyard.

Appearance

The external appearance of the proposal will be returned to soil and grass seeded with a simple galvanised steel man-hole cover, suitable for withstanding vehicular traffic, to allow for emptying and maintenance. The excavated area will be returned to grass seeded soil to conceal the man-hole.

Access

Vehicular and pedestrian access to & within the site will remain as existing.



Biodiversity impact

The existing Biodiversity will not be impacted by the development. The proposal seeks to reinstate the existing triangular site to soil but will be seeded to provide a rich meadow grass area improving the biodiversity opportunity. The proposed development will not impact the Berwick Swans habitat within the Arun Valley Impact Risk Zones.

THE CASE FOR DEVELOPMENT/PRINCIPLES OF JUSTIFICATION

This section seeks to demonstrate that there is a strong planning case in favour of the current proposals and invites the Local Planning Authority to grant planning permission.

Suitability of the existing composting WC

As mentioned above the existing composting WC provides both a practical and logistical problem to the church in finding people who are willing to empty the partially composted matter to the irregular use which either prevents it from composting properly or overfills the storage cassette into the church facilities.

Therefore it is arguable that replacing this with another composting WC is both impractical and unsanitary.

Different options have been considered by the church however, given the historic environment and archaeological importance of the churchyard the most viable option is to replace the composting WC for a traditional WC that drains foul waste to a larger cesspool, located outside of the church boundary, reducing the amount of excavation required within the churchyard. Therefore it is considered that the proposal accords with policies HER SPI, HER DMI, HER DM3, HER DM6 & C SPI of the Local Plan.

Landscape Impact

The site is within the Lyminster Conservation area and given the type, scale and sensitive design of the proposal they are not considered to cause harm to the Listed Building, the Historic Environment, the countryside nor the conservation area. Therefore it is considered that the proposal accords with policies HER SPI, HER DMI, HER DM3 and C SPI of the Local Plan.

The proposed design has been adapted to minimise the impact on the existing site by avoiding large excavations within a rural graveyard site that is not only archaeologically significant but also provides a natural and rich biodiversity habitat. Minimising the ground disturbance with preserve both the archaeological and ecological value of the rural church yard. Therefore it is considered that the proposal accords with policies ENV SPI & ENV DM5 of the Local Plan.

Other Considerations

There are not considered to be any adverse impacts on the amenities of local residents; the closest of which reside in 'Tremeadow Cottage'. Any impact on these properties is greatly reduced by the distance from the application site, together with the existing mature trees & vegetation providing screening from the installation works.

Conversely, the general improvement in providing a more sanitary WC facilities should improve the community amenity to the Lyminster Parish.

CONCLUSION

It is considered that the use of the church will be enriched and enhanced by replacing the existing composting WC with a traditional WC system utilising this small redundant area between the churchyard and farmyard to provide foul drainage facilities, which the main body of the churchyard is not able to facilitate.

The proposal constitutes sustainable development by bringing about a significant improvement in the quality and use of the existing facilities allowing more of the community and wider public to enjoy the church.

In the context of the opportunities offered by the site and locality for achieving sustainable development, the scheme responds positively, bringing modern facilities to the church securing its future as part of the wider community.

The Council is invited to share this view and lend their support to the proposal.

APPENDIX I - PHOTOGRAPHS





