

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

ASSESSMENT

1. Name and Address of Site

St. Mary's Church, High Road, Weston, Near Spalding, PE12 6RA

2. Proposed Development

Removal of Brick boiler house and replacement with new extension to form WC for church use. Trench Arch Drainage System in churchyard.

3. Assessment of Setting and Surroundings

Grade I listed building (Note listed building application is not required as this comes under faculty jurisdiction.) The village of Weston is not in a conservation area.

The church occupies a prominent position, although it is set back from the road within a large churchyard.

The churchyard is surrounded by large trees and bushes which partly conceal it from general view. The rear of the churchyard where the proposed alterations are proposed is not overlooked or visible from any public location.

The churchyard is full of gravestones most of which date from the 19th and 20th centuries.

INVOLVEMENT

4. Consultation

We have been informed by a planning officer from the Council that the trench arch system and the rebuilt boiler house unit will require planning permission.

DESIGN

5. Proposed Use

The existing ecclesiastical use remains.

6. Amount of Development

The development is limited to the rebuilding of the former boiler room in a slightly amended location to utilise an existing blocked doorway. Although the

Trench Arch system is classed as development, it is below ground and so has no visual impact on the setting of the building or the churchyard.

Pre application consultation has been made with the Environment Agency. The sewer map, which is enclosed with this application, shows that there is no sewer immediately in front of the churchyard. The only location acceptable to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the new WC is on the north or rear side of the building. Obtaining a connection to the sewer in this location would be very costly as it would involve closure of the pavement and traffic lights etc. There would be a long drain run with a considerable number of manholes required. It has therefore been accepted by the EA that in this case a trench arch system can be justified.

7. Layout and Appearance

The existing boiler house is in poor condition. It is no longer in use as the boiler has been removed.



As can be seen from the photograph above there is a blocked opening in the west end of the north aisle. The Diocesan Advisory Committee visited the church to advise on the best location for the new WC, and their advice was to construct the new WC on the west end of the north aisle, rather than utilising the existing boiler house which is too small for an accessible WC unit.

The removal of the brick boiler house and stack will improve the appearance of the church on this aspect. It also allows space to construct a small structure for a WC, utilising the blocked up arch at the west end of the aisle, without intruding into the interior of the church itself.

8. Landscaping

No landscaping is proposed other than making good to surfaces or grass that is disturbed as a result of the new work.

9. Accessibility

The WC is required to allow the church to continue with the provision of a Sunday School, which is held regularly at Weston.

The unit has been set out to allow for the provision of a full size wash basin rather than a small rinse basin. As this is the only accessible facility at the church, this complies with current building regulation requirements for accessible WC provision.

The WC will be provided with all the fittings that are required to allow for disabled use and the new internal door in the aisle will open outwards into the aisle and be fitted with all the required ironmongery and alarms.

Separate information is supplied about the trench arch system which is a method of providing septic drainage in churchyards that are remote from public sewers without causing significant disturbance to graves or archaeology, and where the WCs are not in frequent use.

10 Impact Assessment and Justification

The removal of the boiler house and its chimney stack will result in the removal of a building in poor condition which makes no positive contribution to the appearance of the church. The large chimney stack is an alien feature in this context.

The addition of a small new building in this location will utilise a former blocked doorway in the west end of the north aisle. The new building will provide a much needed WC facility for the church, which is now particularly essential due to the thriving Sunday School which meets here on a regular basis.

The small external addition at the west end of the aisle is preferable in this instance to an internal addition, as the interior of the church is very fine, and there is a ledger stone in the floor of the aisle which would be affected by the addition of a WC compartment internally.

It also simplifies plumbing arrangements if the WC can be in a small addition.

The trench arch system is designed for applications such as this where the use is infrequent and the cost of connecting to a remote public sewer would make the project financially unviable.

The percolation tests have been carried out and the length of Trench Arch system calculated is as shown on the drawings with an added length for margin of error. It has been located where in a section of the churchyard where there is a green corridor without any obvious graves being present.

Mary Anderson

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