

# APPLICATION REPORT - PA/341850/18

Planning Committee, 22 August, 2018

**Registration Date:** 17/05/2018  
**Ward:** Saddleworth North

**Application Reference:** PA/341850/18  
**Type of Application:** Full Planning Permission

**Proposal:** 1) Demolition of existing single storey (ecclesiastical) west porch and construction of new single storey extension to provide entrance porch, Vicar's Vestry, and WC accommodation 2) Construction of new DDA compliant entrance ramp to parish hall 3) Widening of the existing car park access.

**Location:** Saint Thomas Church, Church Street, Delph, Oldham, OL3 5DR  
**Case Officer:** Hannah Lucitt

**Applicant Agent :** Parochial Church Council of St Thomas, Friarmere  
Lloyd Evans Prichard

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## THE SITE

Saint Thomas Church is located within Delph Conservation Area. The detached building was constructed in 1884, with the addition of the Parish Hall to the east elevation, possibly at the turn of the century, and the flat roof porch extension to the west during the later C20th.

## THE PROPOSAL

This application proposes the demolition of the existing single storey (ecclesiastical) west porch, and the construction of new single storey extension to provide entrance porch, Vicar's Vestry and WC accommodation to the west elevation.

The proposed single storey flat roof addition would project 5.7m from the rear of the building, 7.7m in length, 3.5m in total height. Windows are proposed to each elevation, with the entrance doors and associated ramp to the south elevation.

The application also proposes the construction of a new entrance ramp to the parish hall to the east elevation and the widening of the existing car park access.

The proposed ramp would have a stone flag finish, with coursed, dressed stone and stone coping to match the existing building.

The proposal would result in the loss of a Sycamore tree.

## RELEVANT HISTORY OF THE SITE:

No relevant planning history.

## CONSULTATIONS

Environmental Health	No objection.
Conservation & Design Advice	No objection, subject to the inclusion of conditions addressing materials, window and door specification, and the protection of the original stonework.
Council's Arborist	No objection, subject to the inclusion of a s.106 agreement for tree planting on council owned land close

Highway Engineer

to the site.  
No objections to the amended scheme.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

This application was publicised by way of a site notice, press notice and neighbour notification letters. No responses were received by virtue of this notification process.

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Principle**

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraph 2 within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) reiterates that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this case the 'development plan' is the Joint Development Plan Document which forms part of the Local Development Framework for Oldham (DPD). It contains the Core Strategies and Development Management policies used to assess and determine planning applications.

The application site is unallocated by the Proposals Map associated with this document.

Therefore, the following policies are considered relevant:

Development Management Policies:

Policy 9 - Local Environment;  
Policy 16 - Local Services and Facilities;  
Policy 20 - Design;  
Policy 24 - Historic Environment; and  
Saved UDP Policy D1.5 Trees.

### **Principle of Development**

The application site is currently an established church and associated parish hall but the applicant has demonstrated the need to extend the building as currently the building is too small and not able to provide the functional requirements for a place of worship and the public benefits associated with the changes. The main use of the building will continue following the re-development.

The scale of the proposed development is modest, and is considered necessary in order for the church to continue to function and provide the services required which accords with Policy 16 of the DPD.

Given the above, the principle of development is considered acceptable.

### **Residential Amenity**

DPD Policy 9 outlines that new development proposals must not have a significant adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties. In this regard it is important to consider the impact on the neighbouring properties alongside the application site at Church Street, Gartside Street, and Lawton Street.

In this instance, it is not considered that the proposed development would have a significant impact on the amenity of neighbouring dwellings due to the modest scale of development,

and the separation distance between the application site and neighbouring dwellings to the side, front and rear.

It is considered that the impact on neighbouring amenity is acceptable in accordance with DPD Policy 9.

### **Highway Safety**

The proposed development includes the widening of the existing access into the car park and will require some minor alterations to the Lawton Street access and boundary wall. These matters can be controlled by means of a Section 106 agreement since the works lie outside the site boundary.

### **Design and impact on the Conservation Area**

DPD Policies 9 and 20 recognise the contribution that high quality design can make to regeneration and sustainable development.

Policy 24 states that development within or affecting the setting of a conservation area, including views in or out, must serve to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Proposals for all new development, including alterations and extensions to buildings and their re-use, must have a sensitive and appropriate response to context and good attention to detail. Proposals must not adversely affect important architectural or historic features or distinctive local features or structures unless it can be demonstrated that the development brings substantial benefits to the community.

Paragraph 128 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

The flat roof porch extension to the west contributes little architecturally to the church. However, its relatively simple design and use of a flat roofed construction to prevent interference with the large west window of the Church, make this a fairly innocuous addition. The proposal to rebuild a larger version, still set back from the south elevation of the Church, would have little impact architecturally.

The proposed development has clearly been designed to reflect the existing structure, with materials more sympathetic to the stone used within both the host building, and the retention of windows of architectural merit.

Paragraph 134 within the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. Given the above, it is considered that the proposal would cause 'less than substantial harm' to the heritage asset i.e. Delph Conservation Area.

The application has provided a Design and Access Statement to address the harm as identified above, which includes the introduction of important uses within the building which are currently lacking, such as the disabled WC and a ramped access point.

However, it is considered that conditions addressing materials, window and door specification, and the protection of the original stonework, should be included within any recommendation for approval, to outweigh the harm.

Given the above, it is considered that the 'less than substantial harm' caused by virtue of the proposed development, would be outweighed by the public benefits provided by the applicant. The proposed development would therefore broadly serve to enhance the Delph Conservation Area, in compliance with DPD Policies 9, 20 and 24 and Part 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Trees**

The impact that the proposed development might have on the tree protected by the Tree Preservation Order has been considered. Policy D1.5 within the largely superseded Unitary Development Plan for Oldham is concerned with the protection of trees on development sites. The applicant has submitted an Arboricultural Impact Assessment which suggests that 1 individual large, healthy, sound, prominent tree with a high amenity value would be removed to facilitate the development.

The Council's Tree Officer has commented that over the coming years, due to the future growth of the tree and the somewhat restrained growing area available, there will be conflict between the tree and the church/ wall/ footpath.

In order to address the loss of trees, the applicant has agreed to a contribution to provide three oak trees to be planted on Council owned land in the area.

Regrettably, for these reasons and the public benefits claimed, it is considered that the loss of the tree is considered acceptable, on balance, in accordance with Policy D1.5.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Committee is minded to approve the application subject to the following conditions and to the completion of a Section 106 contribution of £900 to be used for 3 oak trees to be planted on Council owned sites in Delph, and to the completion of any necessary Traffic Regulation Orders to deal with alterations to Lawton Street.

1. The development must be begun not later than the expiry of THREE years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason - To comply with the provisions of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be fully implemented in accordance with the approved plans and specifications:

#### **TO BE CONFIRMED**

Reason - For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and specifications.

3. No development shall take place unless and until samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The materials to be used throughout the development shall be consistent in terms of colour, size and texture with the approved samples.

Reason - To ensure that the appearance of the development is acceptable to the Local Planning Authority in the interests of the visual amenity of the area within which the site is located.

4. A methodology which allows the original steps and the adjacent stonework to be protected in perpetuity, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any development. The protective measures shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason - In order to avoid damage to the historic fabric.

# Saint Thomas Church, Church Street, Delph

