

17th August 2016

Re: Holy Trinity Church, Bosham - 16/02039/HEPE & 16/02037/PRE

Thank you for making a HEPE application relating to Holy Trinity Church in Bosham and for being able to meet us on the 15th July 2016 with Historic England and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. I think this meeting was very helpful and gave a strong steer on what was required for an application to be made.

As discussed, the basis of this should be the provision of a *Statement of Need* which explores the uses and functions of the church in a holistic manner and how these can be best accommodated within the existing building. This is essential to provide a compelling reason for why any additional space might be required as any scheme is going to result in harm. This harm needs to be justified both in terms of substantial public benefit and mitigated wherever possible. Establishing the bare minimum of space required is part of this process and the starting point for any design.

As things stand the 150sq metres of floor space proposed has not been qualified and therefore cannot be justified.

The principle of a structure in the grounds of the church is likely to represent the least harm as this will not directly impact on the Church building though setting will of course remain the paramount issue. A stand-alone design enables greater versatility in terms of design and construction but also allows it to be changed or even more easily removed in the future. In this respect a more lightweight structure is likely to provide greater benefits as well as provide subservience in its materials and finish.

The present designs which we reviewed at the meeting resulted in a number of similar issues. These include the scope and scale which appear excessive and have not been qualified; the designs themselves which are considered overly complex and have the potential to distract from the appreciation of the church, this includes the potential for light emissions at night; and the materials, especially the use of flint and brick which whilst part of a local palette, add to the sense of weight and bulk.

The use of a spire is naturally problematic as this is a prominent architectural statement and visual device which acts as a focal point and in the context of a church is likely to directly conflict with it.

Any design will need to be both elegant and understated and I imagine is likely to be reliant more on proportion and finish than architectural features. Needless to say, the current schemes would not be capable of support for this reason and the issues expressed above.

I hope this clarifies the main concerns at this stage. If you have any queries please let me know.

Kind regards,

Senior Historic Buildings Adviser
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Chichester District Council