

**LOCATION:** [ST MARGARETS CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHURCH, IFIELD STREET, IFIELD, CRAWLEY](#)  
**WARD:** Ifield  
**PROPOSAL:** DEMOLITION OF EXISTING SINGLE STOREY ANNEXE AND ERECTION OF A TWO STOREY EXTENSION TO CHURCH HALL

**TARGET DECISION DATE:** 2 April 2020

**CASE OFFICER:** Mr H. Walke

**APPLICANTS NAME:** The PCC of St Margarets Church, Ifield  
**AGENTS NAME:** Jane Jones-Warner Associates

**PLANS & DRAWINGS CONSIDERED:**

Drawing Number	Revision	Drawing Title
532/PL 001	A	Site Location Plan & Proposed Block Plan
532/PL 100	B	Proposed Ground Floor Plan
532/PL 101	A	Proposed First Floor Plan
532/PL 200	A	Proposed Sections A-A & B-B
532/PL 201	A	Proposed Sections C-C & D-D
532/PL 300		Proposed East Elevation
532/PL 301		Proposed South Elevation
532/PL 302		Proposed West Elevation
532/PL 303	A	Proposed Visuals
532/SU 001		Site Location & Existing Block Plan
532/SU 100		Existing Survey Site Plan (Ground Floor)
532/SU 300		Existing East Elevation
532/SU 301		Existing South Elevation
532/SU 302		Existing West Elevation
532/SU 303		Existing North Elevation

**CONSULTEE NOTIFICATIONS & RESPONSES:-**

- |     |  |                                    |
|-----|--|------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Historic England                       | Comments provided                  |
| 2.  | Natural England                        | No comments received               |
| 3.  | Ifield Village CAAC                    | Comments provided                  |
| 4.  | CBC Planning Arboricultural Officer    | No objection subject to conditions |
| 5.  | CBC Environment Team                   | No comments received               |
| 6.  | CBC Contaminated Land                  | Comments provided                  |
| 7.  | CBC Environmental Health               | No objection                       |
| 8.  | CBC Energy Efficiency & Sustainability | No comments received               |
| 9.  | CBC Urban Design                       | No comments received               |
| 10. | Listed Building Officer                | No objection subject to conditions |
| 11. | Archaeology Officer                    | Comments provided                  |
| 12. | Ecology Officer                        | No objection subject to conditions |
| 13. | National Amenity Societies             | No comments received               |
| 14. | WSCC - Public Rights of Way            | Comments provided                  |
| 15. | WSCC Highways                          | No objection subject to conditions |

**NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATIONS:-**

The Lychgate;  
1 and 2 The Lychgate;  
2 Langley Lane;  
The Vicarage;  
15 Aldingbourne Close;  
Rectory Farmhouse Annexe;  
Rectory Farm;  
Rectory Farmhouse.

### **RESPONSES RECEIVED:-**

Three responses have been received, from two neighbouring houses.

In principle, one response supports the extension, which will cater for a range of church related groups and events. However, it raises concerns about overlooking from the proposed first floor windows to windows and the rear garden of the adjoining house, due to the proposed use of clear glazing. Concerns are also raised about light spillage. A suggested solution is the use of obscure/stained glass.

The extension would harm views of the church and churchyard from the Lychgate and is out of character with the church and conservation area. One response queries where the old graves will be relocated to.

Noise disturbance already occurs at times from use of the church and Ifield Barn Arts Centre. This may worsen. Parking, vehicle movements, pedestrian movements and related noise from use of the proposed hall could cause disturbance to neighbouring properties. Concern is expressed about people spilling out from the hall into the graveyard. There may also be cumulative impacts where events in the proposed church hall coincide with ones in the church, The Plough or the arts centre and a query is raised about opening and licensing and other arrangements for use.

Concerns are raised about the access lane to the north of the church. This is in a poor state of repair, frequently blocked (such as by deliveries to the pub) and may be inadequate for construction and subsequent access to the site. Emergency vehicles may not be able to gain access. There is limited parking in the area and no disabled parking. The road by the Lychgate is a turning area, not for parking. Visibility is limited at the junction of Ifield Street and Rusper Road. Proposal will affect a public right of way. Contractors' vehicles will also cause parking problems on narrow roads.

Trees should not be removed and the proposal could affect the veteran Yew tree which is said to be 500 years old.

### **THE APPLICATION SITE:-**

- 1.1 The application site is formed by the curtilage of St Margaret's Parish Church, a Grade I listed building dating back, in part, to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The church has a square tower at its western end with pitched roof over. Two lower pitched roofs step down to the east over the main body of the church. The entrances to the church are from the north into the North Aisle and from the west into the tower. The main church walls have a rough rendered finish. There is a modern brick built single storey extension with a shallow pitched roof behind a parapet wall to the south west of the church. This extension is attached to the south side of the tower.
- 1.2 The list description for the church states:

*"Comprises chancel, nave with north and south aisles of 3 bays, north porch of timber and west tower. Nave and chancel C13, arcades and aisles early C14. The tower was built in 1884. Walls of Tunbridge Wells and Colgate sandstones covered with modern rough-cast cement. The roofs of chancel and nave are now covered with tiles with shingled spire to tower. C14 nave roof of steep pitch, trussed rafters with tie-beams and tall King posts. Late C12 Sussex marble font. The screen at the west end of the north aisle is made from timber from the County Oak which stood on the County boundary on the main London Road and was felled in 1844. Interior contains 2 early C14 stone effigies of a knight and lady under the easternmost arches of the nave arcades, thought to be those of Sir John de Ifelde and his wife. Brass tablet on south wall of chancel to the brothers*

*Makersyth, died 1592 and 1599. Tablets to Seyliard, Spencers and Lemins. The churchyard contains some good C18 chest tombs. Mark Lemon, the first editor of 'Punch' (1841-1870) is buried here."*

- 1.3 The church is surrounded by a churchyard containing a number of mature trees. The churchyard contains a Grade II listed Table Tomb lying to the west of the tower. The site lies within the Ifield Village conservation area and the church and graveyard form an Archaeological Notification Area. There are a number of substantial trees within the graveyard and some trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders lie to the east within The Vicarage. The Vicarage and Church Cottage to the east are also both listed buildings. Rectory Farmhouse (west of the church) and Ifield Barn Arts Centre (north of the church) are both locally listed buildings.
- 1.4 The church lies at the south western edge of Ifield, with Ifield Meadows lying to the west. It is situated just outside Crawley's Built Up Area Boundary and within the West of Ifield Rural Fringe defined in the Local Plan. There is a public right of way running across the churchyard, from the Lych Gate on the access from Ifield Street south of the church to the western boundary. Ifield Street, up to the Lych Gate, is adopted public highway. The lane running to the north of the church is not adopted, but does provide access to the Arts Centre, a public car park, a gate into the churchyard, Rectory Farmhouse and Ifield Meadows.
- 1.5 The churchyard shows on Council records as potentially contaminated. Ifield Meadows, the area to the south, west and north of the church, is designated a Site of Nature Conservation Importance, a Biodiversity Opportunity Area and also Local Green Space.

#### **THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:-**

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought to demolish the existing single storey extension (11m maximum length, 5.25m width, 4.4m height) to the south west of the church and to erect a replacement two storey extension with an increased footprint. The replacement extension would form an L shape, projecting south from the tower before turning east across the south elevation of the church. The proposed main hall element of the extension would be set 4 metres away from the church's south elevation. This would have a steeply pitched roof, with a height of 8.6 metres, and tall aluminium windows to its east and west elevations. The pitched roofslopes would extend down almost to ground level. The south elevation would have ground floor folding aluminium doors. The north elevation would feature a small projecting store, with slightly shallower roof pitch over. A lower pitched roof element (5.25m height) would run northwards towards the church, with a smaller flat roofed element forming a physical link between the extension and church tower.
- 2.2 The proposed ground floor would house a main church hall, kitchen, office and sacristan's room, together with ancillary space such as a store and toilets. The extension would be linked to the church by a lobby and hallway. The more limited first floor, located on the west side of the extension, would have a choir vestry and meeting room, with some storage and plant space. There would be a void over the main hall to give increased internal height to that room.
- 2.3 The proposed materials are clay tiles for the roof and a combination of sandstone and horizontal timber cladding for the walls. The link to the church tower would be primarily glazed with a steel standing seam roof.
- 2.4 Associated works to facilitate the extension would involve the removal of some existing trees and the relocation of a number of graves.
- 2.5 In support of the application, the applicant has submitted the following documents:
  - Design, Access and Heritage Statement
  - Statement of Needs
  - Arboricultural Report
  - Preliminary Ecological Statement
  - Contaminated Land Statement
  - Sustainability/Energy Efficiency Statement
  - Archaeological Statement

- 2.6 Following comments received, revised plans have been submitted amending the design and layout of the proposed extension. These followed concerns raised by the Council's Heritage consultant about an awkward juxtaposition of roofs between the two main elements of the extension. Further information has also been provided through a Bat Survey Report and to address queries about highways and parking issues.
- 2.7 The proposal was the subject of pre-application from the Local Planning Authority and has also been the subject of pre-application discussions with various amenity and church bodies as well as Historic England over the last few years.

### **PLANNING HISTORY:-**

- 3.1 No previous planning history.

### **PLANNING POLICY:-**

#### National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2019 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- Section 2 – Sustainable Development. This section states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives: an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations, and an environmental objective to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. This includes making effective use of land and helping to improve biodiversity.
  - Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities. Seeks to promote social interaction, including opportunities for people to meet, and to ensure that places are safe and accessible. The fear of crime should not undermine community cohesion or quality of life.
  - Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport. This section states that opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use should be pursued.
  - Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places. The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Paragraph 127 sets out a number of key design considerations, including ensuring that development is sympathetic to local character and history.
  - Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Sets out the requirements expected of applicants and requires local authorities to conserve assets, recognising that they are an irreplaceable resource, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to future quality of life. Paragraph 192 states:

*“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”*

Paragraphs 195-196 give the following guidance on assessing the harm to a heritage asset:

*“195. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:*

- a) *the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) *no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) *conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) *the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

*196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

#### Crawley Borough Local Plan (2015-2030) (adopted December 2015)

4.2 The following Local Plan policies are relevant to this application:

- Policy SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) states that in line with the planned approach to Crawley as a new town and the spatial patterns relating to the neighbourhood principles, when considering development proposals the council will take a positive approach to approving development which is sustainable.
- Policy CH1 (Neighbourhood Principle) states that the neighbourhood principle will be protected and enhanced by maintaining the neighbourhood structure of the town with a clear pattern of land uses and arrangement of open spaces and landscape features.
- Policy CH2 (Principles of Good Urban Design) seeks new development proposals will be required to respond to and reinforce locally distinctive patterns of development and landscape character, to protect/enhance heritage assets. The policy deals with continuous frontages, interconnected, recognisable places and flexible development forms.
- Policy CH3 (Normal Requirements of All Development) states all proposals for development will be required to make a positive contribution to the area; be of a high quality urban design, provide and retain a good standard of amenity for all nearby and future occupants of land and buildings; be able to meet its own operational requirements necessary for the safe and proper use of the site; retain existing individual or groups of trees; incorporate “Secure by Design” principles and demonstrate how the Building for Life 12 criteria would be delivered. Development proposals must adhere to any relevant supplementary planning guidance produced by the council including residential extensions.
- Policy CH6 (Tree Planting and Replacement Standards) states that where development proposals would result in the loss of trees, applicants must identify which trees are to be removed and replaced in order to mitigate for the visual impact resulting from the loss of the tree canopies.
- Policy CH9 (Development Outside the Built-Up Area) sets out a range of criteria against which proposals for such development will be assessed. These include grouping with existing buildings, respecting local character and views and avoiding traffic or other disturbance. With regard to the West of Ifield Fringe, the policy states that proposals should “*respect this area of locally special rural fringe, its nature conservation and recreation value, its positive relationship with the urban edge and links to the wider countryside will be encouraged.*”
- Policy CH11 (Rights of Way and Access to the Countryside) states that proposals involving the loss of a Public Right of Way must ensure re-provision to an equal or better value. Proposals which detract from the character of a right of way should mitigate their impact.
- Policy CH12 (Heritage assets) states that all development should ensure that Crawley’s designated and non-designated heritage assets are treated as a finite resource, and that their key features or significance are not lost as a result of development.
- Policy CH13 (Conservation Areas) states all development within a conservation area should individually or cumulatively result in the preservation or enhancement of the character and appearance of the area. A Heritage Impact Assessment should be submitted in support of proposals. The policy also states that there may be structures within conservation areas that do not contribute positively, for which a case for demolition will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- Policy CH15 (Listed Buildings and Structures) requires works to listed buildings to be consistent with their character, appearance and heritage value. A Heritage Impact Assessment should be submitted to demonstrate how listed buildings will be protected.
- Policy ENV1 (Green Infrastructure) seeks to conserve and enhance Crawley's multi-functional green infrastructure network.
- Policy ENV2 (Biodiversity) states that all developments will be expected to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity and where possible to enhance existing features of nature conservation value within and around the site.
- Policy ENV6 (Sustainable Design and Construction) all development, including extensions, should address the criteria set out, addressing issues such as energy reduction/efficiency, carbon emissions and tackling water stress. A Sustainability Statement demonstrating how sustainability objectives have been achieved during the design process, or will be achieved during the, and construction processes should be submitted.
- Policy ENV9 (Tackling Water Stress) states new dwellings should where viable and technically feasible, meet the Building Regulations optional requirement for tighter water efficiency.
- Policy ENV10 (Pollution Management and Land Contamination) states where a site is known or suspected to be at risk from contaminants or materials that present a hazard to health, information must be provided detailing the methodology through which risks will be addressed, and ensuring the treatment and/or removal of all such contaminants and materials prior to the commencement of development.
- Policy IN3 (Development and Requirements for Sustainable Transport). Development should be concentrated in locations where sustainable travel patterns can be achieved through the use of the existing transport network, including public transport routes and the cycling and walking network. Developments should meet the access needs they generate and not cause an unacceptable impact in terms of increased traffic congestion or highway safety. Developments will be permitted unless the cumulative impact on the transport network is severe and cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.
- Policy IN4 (Car and Cycle Parking Standards) states development will be permitted where the proposals provide the appropriate amount of car and cycle parking to meet its needs when it is assessed against the borough council's car and cycle parking standards.

#### Supplementary Planning Documents

4.3 The Supplementary Planning Documents are non-statutory documents which supplement the policies of the Local Plan and are applicable to this application. In particular:

#### Urban Design SPD (adopted October 2016)

The Urban Design SPD includes a range of design guidance to provide further detail on the design and heritage policies within the Local Plan. It provides guidance on the specific characteristics of individual conservation areas. Although primarily aimed at residential extensions, it includes a minimum rear window to window distance of 21 metres. The SPD also includes the Crawley Borough Parking Standards which refer to minimum parking standards. There is no specific church hall standard but, for places of assembly/leisure, the standard is one space per 15m<sup>2</sup> floorspace. For cycle parking, it states that: 'All cycle parking must be sheltered and secure and in accordance with local guidance and best practice design.' For places of assembly/leisure, one cycle space is sought per 4 staff and visitor parking assessed individually.

#### Green Infrastructure SPD (adopted October 2016)

This SPD provides clear guidance on how to meet the requirements of Local Plan policies in relation to Crawley's Green Infrastructure assets. It provides further guidance on Policy CH6: Tree Planting and Replacement Standards.

#### Planning and Climate Change SPD (adopted October 2016)

This SPD includes further guidance on sustainability policies within the Local Plan (Policies ENV6, ENV7, ENV8, ENV9 and IN3).

#### Ifield Village Conservation Area Statement (February 2018)

This Statement assesses the character of the conservation area and provides guidance on future development. It refers to the church dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The Statement highlights the importance of the Grade I listed church, alongside other historic buildings and open spaces. No specific guidance is given on the church, but the Statement confirms that the retention of the listed

buildings is important and that any works should be consistent with the character, appearance and heritage value of the building.

## **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:-**

5.1 The main issues for consideration in this application are:

- Principle of development
- Design, listed building and other heritage impacts
- Impact upon neighbouring amenity
- Transport, parking and public right of way issues
- Arboricultural issues
- Ecology
- Sustainability
- Contaminated land

### Principle of development

5.2 The church benefits from a relatively small existing single storey extension. The proposal would create a larger extension in a similar location. The extension would form a new hall and provide related facilities for church activities. The church has submitted a Statement of Needs in support of the planning application. The statement highlights the existing problems caused by overcrowding and shared use of existing space on Sunday mornings, inadequate toilet and kitchen facilities, inadequate office space and the loss of shared use of other facilities due to the recent split of Ifield parish. The statement also highlights the growing population in the area.

5.3 During pre-application discussions, the possibility of using another nearby church owned building, Lychgate Cottage, for the proposed purposes was raised. The church has addressed this, stating that the location, layout and room sizes make Lychgate Cottage unsuitable for the proposed uses. It is proposed instead to renovate that building for use as two flats.

5.4 Officers consider that the applicant has demonstrated a need for facilities of the type proposed in order to support the church's activities, address existing overcrowding and lack of space and also to provide space for use by the wider community. Subject to detailed consideration of other issues, including the impact upon the listed building, the principle of the proposed facilities is considered acceptable.

### Design, listed building and other heritage impacts

5.5 The proposal represents a sizable extension to a Grade I listed building. Policy CH12 states that Crawley's designated heritage assets must be "*treated as a finite resource*" and that their key features or significance should not be lost as a result of development. Policy CH15 states that any works should be consistent with the character, appearance and heritage value of the listed building, in line with national legislation, policy and guidance. Policy CH13 states that development within a conservation area should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

5.6 The existing single storey extension forms an unsympathetic addition to the church. The Council's conservation adviser states that it "*has no architectural merit and negatively impacts the setting of the listed church, its removal is therefore welcomed.*" The CAAC concurs with this view. Its removal is considered beneficial in terms of impact upon the surrounding heritage assets.

5.7 The proposed extension has been the subject of pre-application discussions with both Historic England and council officers. Historic England states it is satisfied that its comments have "*been addressed constructively by the applicant and their architect*" through these discussions. In its comments on the current planning application, Historic England's only remaining concern was about a patio to the south of the extension and its impact upon the church's setting and the character of the churchyard. Similar concerns were raised by the Council's conservation consultant. The applicant has reduced the patio significantly, such that it now simply represents a threshold over which the proposed external doors would fold, rather than a more extensive area. This is considered acceptable.

- 5.8 Historic England has raised no other objection, but highlights that the issues and safeguards outlined in its advice need to be addressed to meet the requirements of paragraph 190 and 194 of the NPPF and that the Local Planning Authority should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.
- 5.9 The Council's conservation consultant has provided a detailed assessment of the scheme. She highlights the need to keep the church in active use in order to secure its viable future and thereby help to protect the listed building itself. However, she also notes that the scale and mass of the scheme would cause harm to the listed church, although she feels that this would be a less than substantial impact. She states that the extension "*will be read as a later addition, its siting and position ensures that the (external) views of the existing aisle will still be read from the formed courtyard and, whilst attributing a large mass and scale, it will still be read as subservient to the historic core.*" She also addresses the listed Table Tomb, concluding that, again, there would be some harm to its setting from the mass and scale, but that the extension would not intrude into the space between the tower and the Table Tomb. This too is considered a less than substantial impact. In conclusion, the Council's conservation consultant considers that the public benefit of securing a long term future for the church outweighs the harm to the setting and views of the Grade I listed church and listed Table Tomb.
- 5.10 The CAAC expresses sympathy with the application due to the need for a church hall serving the wider community. It raises concerns though about the proposed use of timber introducing too many finishes, about the small, flat roofed projection to the vestry/sacristy and about the windows within the extension.
- 5.11 Setting aside the impact upon the heritage assets, it is considered that the extension is well designed and of high quality. Its steep roof pitch, whilst increasing its height, forms a substantial and plain tiled roof to the south elevation. Whilst affecting views of the church from the south, it would have an uncomplicated south elevation that would not compete with the church in terms of features such as architectural detailing or fenestration. The windows to the east and west have a strong vertical emphasis, reflecting the proportions of the main church windows. A small flat roof area to the north, about which concerns were raised by the conservation consultant, has been deleted from the scheme, producing an improved roof form. The proposed materials are a clay tiled roof, with timber clad walls over a sandstone plinth/wall. Whilst these introduce some new materials, it would not be appropriate to match the rendered finish of the church because this could compete with and detract from the church's appearance and would not assist with it being viewed as a later addition. The proposed materials would have low key, fairly muted tones, appropriate to the site.
- 5.12 The extension would have a limited physical attachment to the church, and this would be to the church tower at the point where the existing extension is attached. The extension at this point has been designed to be low in height and extensively glazed. This will help to reduce the impact upon close views of the church's structure at this point.
- 5.13 The Council's Archaeology consultant has provided detailed comments on the proposal. The Archaeology consultant is satisfied that these issues can be addressed by a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken. The CAAC feels that these works should be undertaken now. Following discussion of the issues, officers accept the archaeologist's advice and consider that a condition requiring further investigation ahead of works is appropriate. The applicant will need to be aware that, depending on any below ground archaeological assets discovered, there is potential for construction works to be delayed to accommodate further investigation.
- 5.14 In conclusion, on heritage issues, the physical impact upon the listed church would be very limited, since an existing extension is already attached in the same location. However, despite the design being of an appropriately high quality and a significant improvement on the design of the existing extension, the proposed extension would block views of the listed church, particularly from the south, and, as a result, have a detrimental impact upon its setting. The Council's conservation consultant notes that the existing extension causes harm to the church's setting and considers the harm from the proposal to be "*less than substantial*" for both the church and the table tomb. The harm does count against the scheme in heritage terms and must be considered in determining the



planning application. If the harm is, on balance, considered acceptable, related heritage matters, such as materials and archaeology, could be satisfactorily addressed through conditions.

#### Impact upon neighbouring amenity

- 5.15 The proposed extension would be located fairly centrally within the churchyard. The nearest residential property would be Rectory Farmhouse to the west. The occupants of that property have raised concerns about possible overlooking from the first floor choir/vestry/meeting room's west facing windows. The proposed windows would be 26 metres from the nearest part of the Rectory Farmhouse, the nearest part of the building is single storey. The nearest first floor windows facing towards the extension would be around 36 metres away. There is some fairly substantial vegetation along the boundary. Council policy seeks a 21 metre distance from facing first floor windows to avoid unacceptable overlooking. Overall therefore, it is not considered that the proposal offers significant potential for overlooking to occupants at Rectory Farmhouse or its garden. Other nearby residential properties are in Ifield Street. These would be over 50 metres from the proposed extension and also significantly screened by existing trees. The distances and orientation of the buildings are more than sufficient to avoid impacts such as overshadowing or overdominance.
- 5.16 Concern has also been expressed about the use of the proposed hall and the potential for noise disturbance. Whilst the proposed extension is in part intended to deal with existing overcrowding issues, it also offers potential for increased use of the site. This could involve larger groups and/or activities over extended periods. In terms of public activity and movement, this is already a fairly busy area due to the church, theatre, public house and movement to/from Ifield Meadows. The proposed extension may accommodate large groups and be used for evening activities. The main hall's doors are orientated to face south. If open, this would direct any noise southwards. The previously shown patio area has been deleted from the scheme. The extension is some distance from adjoining houses and the proposed extension is unlikely to generate significant noise, particularly given its context. Overall, it is not considered that the proposal would cause significant disturbance to adjoining residents through noise or related movement to/from the site.

#### Transport, parking and public right of way issues

- 5.17 There is no vehicular access to the site. The only accesses are pedestrian, through the Lych Gate to the east, through the gate to the north and from Ifield Meadows to the west and south. The nearest vehicular routes are Ifield Street (public highway) and the private road to the north of the church.
- 5.18 The church has no dedicated parking provision. However, the agent has confirmed that the church has an agreement for shared use of the car parks to the north of the access road, which serve Ifield Barn arts centre and The Plough public house. It is understood that the church contributes towards the upkeep of the arts centre car park. Between them, these car parks can accommodate a total of 60 cars. The agent states that this is ample provision, as peak times vary across the three uses.
- 5.19 Considered against the Borough Council's adopted parking standards, the extension would generate a requirement for 8.2 additional car parking spaces on top of the 10.3 spaces that would be required by the existing church's floorspace. The church does not have land on which these 19 car parking spaces could be physically accommodated. Whilst the existing parking arrangements seem to generally operate satisfactorily, the proposed extension could increase parking demand and also its potential usage could overlap more with peak demands from the arts centre and pub.
- 5.20 The Local Highway Authority requested some further information from the applicant and has subsequently considered this in detail. Following receipt of additional information and assessment of the consultation comments received from local residents and the CAAC, the Local Highway Authority has concluded that, whilst there may be some increase in traffic movements, there is no evidence to suggest that the highways impact would be severe, as per the NPPF test. However, it is requested that the church continues to use its best endeavours to maintain the agreements on use of the nearby car parks and conditions covering a Travel Plan, cycle parking provision and a Construction Management Plan are recommended.

- 5.21 There is an existing public right of way (public footpath 1541) running across the churchyard, from the Lychgate on Ifield Street in a south-easterly direction to an access into Ifield Meadows on the churchyard's western boundary. The public right of way runs to the south of the church and the proposed extension would slightly encroach onto it. The public right of way would therefore need to be diverted. The County Council's Public Rights of Way team has commented on the application and highlighted that this will need to be addressed under the appropriate provisions in planning legislation. In this case, the churchyard appears to offer ample space to enable the slight diversion of the footpath around the extension. It is not considered appropriate therefore to raise an objection in principle to this. The applicant is clearly already aware of this issue anyway, but an informative is recommended to address this and to highlight the need for consent under s.257 of the Town and Country Planning Act.
- 5.22 The agent has highlighted that the main aim of the extension is to provide additional floorspace to deal with existing church overcrowding, rather than to increase numbers of users of the building. Some increase in vehicular movements may result from the extension, such as when it is used for non-church related activities and for functions. The church serves a local area though and it is likely that most visitors would be able to travel sustainably. Overall, it seems unlikely that significantly increased vehicular movements and parking demand causing congestion in the surrounding area would result from the extension. A Travel Plan can help to highlight the issues and encourage travel by non-car means. In conclusion, whilst there are a number of transport and movement related issues to be addressed, officers are satisfied that these have been considered and can be reasonably addressed by condition and through a subsequent Public Path Order application.

#### Arboricultural issues

- 5.23 The applicant has submitted an Arboricultural Report covering 38 trees and one group of trees. The report assesses five trees as Category A (high quality), 22 as Category B (moderate quality) and 11 trees and the group as Category C (low quality). The church is located on the western edge of Crawley and is clearly visible from Ifield Meadows to the west. It has a rural setting enhanced, in part, by the visibility of the trees within the churchyard. These contribute positively to the setting of the listed church and to the character of the conservation area.
- 5.24 The proposal includes the removal of five trees (Yew (T21), Holly (T27), Elder (T28), Lawson Cypress (T29) and Hawthorn (T33)). Importantly, the substantial ancient Yew (T20) to the east of the proposed extension would be retained. This tree has significant visual impact and great merit due to its great age. The other Yew (T21) is a Category B tree and 8 metres high. The other four trees due to be removed are all Category C. One of them, the Elder, had been leaning significantly and has subsequently collapsed anyway. Under policy CH6 and the Green Infrastructure SPD, a total of 14 replacement trees are required. The church is confident that the replacement trees can be accommodated within the churchyard.
- 5.25 Access for demolition and construction activities would be difficult. There is no vehicular access to the site of the proposed extension. There are also important mature trees adjacent to the existing pedestrian accesses. Whilst these are not proposed to be removed, protection measures will need to be in place to ensure that harm is not caused during construction.
- 5.26 The Arboricultural officer states that he has "*no objections in arboricultural terms*" subject to a satisfactory Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan. These can be secured by condition.
- 5.27 The proposed tree loss is unfortunate and three of the trees to be removed are clearly visible from outside the site as well as from within the churchyard. The harm resulting from their loss, visually in their own right and with regard to the setting of the listed church and the conservation area, must be taken into account in reaching a decision on the application. This must be balanced though against the proposed replacements, which can be agreed in locations that, over time, will allow the new trees to make their own contribution to the character and appearance of the site.

#### Ecology

- 5.28 The applicant initially submitted an ecology report with the application. This included survey results which did not find any protected species on site, but noted the site generally offering potential for use by wildlife. Most impacts could be easily addressed by careful site clearance. The report stated that bats probably used the church itself, but no evidence of bat activity was found in the existing extension. Further investigation of potential use of an elder tree, to be removed and with significant cavities, was recommended. In addition, a further survey for badger activity or setts was recommended before any development.
- 5.29 Following comments from the Council's Ecologist, a further bat survey was undertaken and report submitted in April 2020. This confirmed that the main body of the church is a bat roost, but not the existing extension. The elder tree has fallen over since the initial survey. The report sets out a range of measures and controls to be adopted during construction in case any unexpected ecological interest is discovered. The Council's Ecologist is satisfied with this, subject to conditions addressing ecological protection during construction activities and to the provision of bird and bat boxes.

### Sustainability

- 5.30 The applicant has submitted a sustainability statement setting out a range of measures that have been considered in developing the proposal. A fabric first approach has been adopted, using materials and insulation to help reduce energy consumption. The location of the hall and other main rooms, with south, east and west facing windows, maximises opportunity for natural light and solar gain. Renewable energy has been considered and the church is keen to pursue solar PV on the south roof slope. That does not form part of the current application though and would need to be carefully considered in the context of the heritage assets. Water efficient fittings and LED lighting are proposed. Further work is required on heating, but the application carefully considers sustainability and, subject to an appropriate condition, is considered acceptable in this respect.

### Contaminated land

- 5.31 The site shows on Council records as potentially contaminated. This appears to relate solely to its use as a burial site. The Contaminated Land Officer considers the risk to be low, although highlights that exhumations will require a licence. The applicant is undoubtedly aware of this, but can be further advised through an informative.

### **CONCLUSIONS:-**

- 5.32 This proposal requires a difficult balance between the benefits of the scheme to the church and wider community and the harm that would result to the setting of the listed church and other heritage assets. In an ideal world, the listed church would not be extended in this way. However, heritage policy highlights the contribution of ongoing active use to retention and maintenance of key assets. This proposal has been developed and revised over a considerable period of time, taking account of comments from Historic England and the Council's conservation consultant. Neither objects to the current proposal. For the reasons set out above, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of neighbouring amenity, traffic and parking. Ecological impact can be addressed by condition and, whilst the tree loss is unfortunate, replacements can be achieved and it is not felt that the harm, on balance, warrants refusal. It is considered that the benefit of the removal of the existing extension, the provision of significantly improved facilities for the church and wider community and the quality of the design justify approval, despite some harm being caused to the heritage assets and their setting. Approval is therefore recommended.

### **RECOMMENDATION RE: CR/2020/0014/FUL**

PERMIT subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.  
REASON: To comply with Section 91 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.
2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plans as listed below save as varied by the conditions hereafter:

(Drawing numbers to be added)

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. No development shall take place until a written programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:
  1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording;
  2. The programme for post investigation assessment;
  3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording;
  4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation;
  5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation; and
  6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.The development hereby approved shall then be carried out in strict accordance with the agreed programme of archaeological work.

REASON: To allow adequate archaeological investigation before any archaeological remains are disturbed by the approved development in accordance with policy CH12 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030.
4. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the approved Plan shall be implemented and adhered to throughout the entire construction period. The Plan shall provide details as appropriate but not necessarily be restricted to the following matters:
  - the anticipated number, frequency and types of vehicles used during construction;
  - the method of access and routing of vehicles during construction;
  - the parking of vehicles by site operatives and visitors;
  - the loading and unloading of plant, materials and waste;
  - the storage of plant and materials used in construction of the development;
  - the erection and maintenance of security hoarding;
  - the provision of wheel washing facilities and other works required to mitigate the impact of construction upon the public highway including the provision of temporary Traffic Regulation Orders);
  - tree protection measures; and
  - details of public engagement both prior to and during construction works.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety, the public right of way, protection of trees and heritage assets and the amenities of the area in accordance with policies CH3, CH11, CH12 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030.
5. No development shall be carried out unless and until a schedule of and samples of materials and finishes to be used for the external walls and roofs of the extension hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in strict accordance with the agreed details.

REASON: To ensure the satisfactory protection of the Grade I listed church, the listed Table Tomb and the Ifield Village conservation area, to enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of amenity by endeavouring to achieve a building of visual quality and in accordance with policies CH3, CH12, CH13 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030, the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document and the relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework.
6. No development shall be carried out unless and until full details, including drawings at a scale of not less than 1:10, showing the interface between the extension hereby approved and the church itself have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall address the foundation, floor, wall and roof abutments. The details shall demonstrate that the proposed extension will be self supporting and allow for differential movement between the proposed extension and the historic church. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the agreed details.

REASON: To ensure the satisfactory protection of the Grade I listed church in accordance with policies CH12 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030, the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document and the relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. No development shall be carried out unless and until full details, including drawings at a scale of no less than 1:10 showing elevations of each window type, with more detailed 1:2 or full size vertical and horizontal sections, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include any provision for obscure or coloured glazing or films to be applied to the glazing. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the agreed details and maintained as such thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: To ensure the satisfactory protection of the Grade I listed church, its setting and the surrounding Ifield Village conservation area in accordance with policies CH12, CH13 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030, the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document and the relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework.
8. No development shall be carried out unless and until details of the retention and, where appropriate, relocation of the gravestones forming the floor of the existing annexe and the gravestones within the churchyard affected by the extension hereby approved have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in strict accordance with the agreed details.  
REASON: To ensure the satisfactory protection of the Grade I listed church and the Ifield Village conservation area and in accordance with policies CH3, CH12, CH13 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030, the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document and the relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework.
9. No development shall commence until an Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The existing trees, bushes and hedges shall be protected as set out in the approved Tree Protection Plan before any works or any deliveries of materials, equipment or other construction related facilities take place. The protection measures shall be retained for the duration of the development and shall not be damaged, destroyed, uprooted, felled, lopped or topped during that period without the previous written consent of the Local Planning Authority. The demolition and construction works shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement. Any trees removed without such consent or dying or being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased during that period, shall be replaced in the following planting season with trees of such size and species as may be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: To ensure the retention of vegetation important to the visual amenity, the ecological quality and for the environment of the development, to protect the setting of the Grade I listed church and the listed Table Tomb and to protect the character and appearance of the conservation area in accordance with policies CH3, CH7, CH12, CH13 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030, the Urban Design and Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Documents and the relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework.
10. No above ground development shall take place unless and until there has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of soft landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, details of any to be retained. The landscaping scheme shall include details of planting for a minimum of fourteen new trees.  
REASON: To ensure the satisfactory protection of the setting of the Grade I listed church, the listed Table Tomb and the Ifield Village conservation area and to ensure appropriate tree replacements in accordance with policies CH3, CH6, CH12, CH13 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030, the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document and the relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework.
11. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the buildings or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner, and any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.  
REASON: To ensure the satisfactory protection of the setting of the Grade I listed church, the listed Table Tomb and the Ifield Village conservation area and in accordance with policies CH3, CH12, CH13 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030, the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document and the relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework.

12. No part of the development shall be first occupied until covered and secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with plans and details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: To provide alternative sustainable travel options to the use of the car in accordance with policies IN3 and IN4 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan, the parking standards set out in the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document and the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.
13. No part of the development shall be first occupied until such time as a Travel Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall be completed in accordance with the latest guidance and good practice documentation as published by the Department for Transport or as advised by the Local Highway Authority. Following approval, the Travel Plan shall be implemented and remain operational for the lifetime of the development unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: To encourage and promote sustainable transport in accordance with policy IN3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan and the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.
14. Demolition work, tree removal and the construction of the development hereby approved shall be carried out in full and strict accordance with the recommendations and mitigation measures set out in the Preliminary Ecological Assessment (June 2019) and the Bat Survey Report (May 2020) to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.  
REASON: To ensure that the proposal avoids adverse impacts on protected and priority species and in accordance with policy ENV2 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan and with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
15. No development shall commence until wildlife mitigation and enhancement measures, comprising no less than one bat and two bird boxes, have been provided on site in a location to be determined by a competent ecologist. Details confirming compliance shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to use of the completed building. The enhancement measures shall be maintained as such thereafter.  
REASON: To ensure that the proposals avoid adverse impacts on protected and priority species, to contribute to a net gain in biodiversity and in accordance with policy ENV2 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan and with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
16. Within three months of the occupation of the development, a post-construction report shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, verifying that the development has achieved the minimum Energy and Water standards for BREEAM 'Excellent'.  
REASON: In the interests of sustainable design and construction in accordance with Policies ENV6 and ENV9 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015.

## INFORMATIVES

1. The applicant is advised of the requirement to enter into early discussions with and obtain the necessary licenses from the Highway Authority to cover any temporary construction related works that will obstruct or affect the normal operation of the public highway prior to any works commencing. These temporary works may include; the placing of skips or other materials within the highway, the temporary closure of on-street parking bays, the imposition of temporary parking restrictions requiring a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order, the erection of hoarding or scaffolding within the limits of the highway, the provision of cranes over-sailing the highway.
2. The proposed extension would affect the existing Public Right of Way (public footpath 1541). The applicant is advised that the granting of planning permission does not authorise obstruction of, interference to or moving of any Public Right of Way (PROW). It will be necessary to permanently divert public footpath 1541 to enable the development to take place by means of a Public Path Order (PPO) under section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This must be applied for by the developer to the Local Planning Authority and the order confirmed prior to any development taking place. West Sussex County Council Public Rights of Way Team is not able to grant a temporary path closure (which may be need to protect public safely during the development) as a precursor to a PPO. The Public Rights of Way Team will only consider an application for a temporary path closure once the Local Planning Authority has made and confirmed a PPO.

3. The applicant is advised that any exhumations will require a licence. Details can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-an-exhumation-licence>  
There is also Environment Agency guidance on grave yards and cemeteries that may be applicable.
4. The applicant is advised that the Local Planning Authority considers that the details submitted to comply with Condition 16 of this consent should, where feasible, demonstrate that the water consumption levels of new components fitted within the building should achieve the performance levels under column 3 of the following table:  
[http://www.breeam.com/NC2018/#08\\_water/wat01\\_nc\\_a.htm#Water\\_efficient\\_consumption\\_levels\\_by\\_component\\_type](http://www.breeam.com/NC2018/#08_water/wat01_nc_a.htm#Water_efficient_consumption_levels_by_component_type)

#### 1. NPPF Statement

In determining this planning application, the Local Planning Authority assessed the proposal against all material considerations and has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions where possible and required, by:

- Providing advice in a timely and manner through pre-application discussions/correspondence.
- Liaising with consultees and the agent and discussing the proposal where considered appropriate and necessary in a timely manner during the course of the determination of the application.
- Seeking amended plans/additional information to address identified issues during the course of the application.

This decision has been taken in accordance with the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework, as set out in article 35, of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.



# ArcGIS Web Map

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