

**St Peter's Church, Ribchester Road,  
Salesbury, Lancashire,  
BB1 9HT**

Proposed Extension to Church  
and Car Park Facility

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

April 2018

PWA\_17-421\_PS01

## Report Control

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 PWA Planning is retained by the Vicar and Parochial Church Council of St Peter's Church, Salebury ('the Applicant') to progress a full planning application for the proposed extension to the church and car parking facility ('proposed development') at St Peter's Church, Ribchester Road, Salesbury, Lancashire, BB1 9HT ('application site'). This Planning Statement's purpose is to assess and conclude on the acceptability of the proposal in terms of relevant national and local planning policy, along with any material considerations.
- 1.2 The planning application is made to Ribble Valley Borough Council (the Local Planning Authority) as a full detailed application and relates to the red edge application site boundary defined by the Location Plan (drawing no. 5115-0782 (01)001\_2.2). The extension is to be situated within the land associated with St Peter's Church.
- 1.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This Planning Statement will demonstrate that the proposals accord with the provisions of the relevant policies of the Development Plan, and moreover that there are other significant material considerations which indicate that planning permission ought to be granted. In addition, the statement will seek to demonstrate that there are no technical reasons which could hinder the grant of planning permission.
- 1.4 This Planning Statement, alongside a review of the site history and relevant policies, provides a description of the proposed development together with an appraisal of the planning merits of the scheme as a whole.
- 1.5 This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted application package, which includes the following documents: -
- 1 APP form, relevant certificates and notices;
  - Drawn information: -
    - Location Plan (drawing no. 5115-0782 (01)001\_2.2);
    - Existing Site Plan (drawing no. 5115-0782 (01)002\_2.2);
    - Existing Ground Floor Plan (drawing no. 5115-0782 (02)001\_2.2);
    - Existing Roof Plan (drawing no. 5115-0782 (02)002\_2.2);
    - Existing Elevations (drawing no. 5115-0782 (03)001\_2.2);
    - Existing Section A-A (drawing no. 5115-0782 (04)001\_2.2);
    - Proposed Site Plan (drawing no. 5115-0782 (07)001\_2.2);

- Proposed Roof Plan (drawing no. 5115-0782 (07)002\_2.2);
- Proposed Elevations (drawing no. 5115-0782 (08)001\_2.2);
- Proposed Section A-A (drawing no. 5115-0782 (09)001\_2.2);
- Proposed View 3D (drawing no. 5115-0782 (00)021\_2.2).
- Planning Statement (this document);
- Landscape Drawings:
  - MLD\_18129\_001 RevA - Landscape Masterplan
  - MLD\_18129\_002 - Planting Plan
- Design and Access Statement;
- Bat Report (ref. BAT SURVEY EPS report 911 Salesbury St\_\_ Peter);
- Heritage Statement (ref. St Peter's Salesbury - draft heritage statement 16th March)
- Tree Report (ref. Tree\_Report\_at\_St\_Peter's,\_Salesbury\_-\_July'14)

1.6 The aforementioned documentation reflects the validation requirements of Ribble Valley Borough Council.

1.7 The remainder of this statement is structured as follows: -

- Section 2 - Site Description;
- Section 3 - Proposed Development;
- Section 4 - Planning Policy Assessment;
- Section 5 - Material considerations;
- Section 6 - Conclusions.

## 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site, which extends to approximately 0.6ha, is located off Lovely Hall Lane, in the centre of the village of Salisbury. The site is rectangular in shape and comprises a central church which benefits from large grounds surrounding the existing building.
- 2.2 A location plan showing the site within its immediate setting is submitted with this application (drawing ref. 5115-0782 (01)001\_2.2), whilst an aerial image of the site within its wider setting is illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Aerial Image showing the location of the site (not to scale)

- 2.3 The site is located within the village of Salisbury and is in close proximity to both Copster Green and Wilpshire. The site is bounded to the north by a graveyard, a cricket ground to the north east, Salesbury Common (Hazel Moor) to the east. The southern boundary of the site is bounded by the B6245 (Ribchester Road) and Lovely Hall Lane abuts the western boundary of the site.
- 2.4 Vehicular access is currently located to the western edge of the site, directly off Lovely Hall Lane with a pedestrian access located at the junction of Lovely Hall Lane and Ribchester Road. The land, as indicated on the Location Plan comprises of a church located in the middle of the application site.

An existing site plan is provided with the supporting documents (drawing no. 5115-0782 (01)002\_2.2).

- 2.5 The application site is not within an area defined as at risk from flooding according to the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Map. The site is located within Flood Risk Zone 1 which has a low probability of flooding. The site is located within the Green Belt, defined by the Districtwide Local Plan. The existing church is not listed and does not fall within a Conservation Area; however, it is considered by the Council to be a non-designated heritage asset.

### **Relevant Planning History**

- 2.6 A search of Ribble Valley Borough Council's planning register has been carried out to understand the planning history relevant to the site and the proposed development. In this instance it was found that there are no historic planning applications relevant to this application.
- 2.7 As part of the design process for this planning application, pre-application discussions have taken place with the Council. These have revolved around the principle of the development, which is largely accepted, and details of the design in relation to the existing church. Details of design have remained central to pre-application discussions, the details of these are included within the submitted Heritage Statement. It is however considered that the design submitted with this application, reflects a scheme that can be found acceptable in heritage terms and in keeping with the surrounding context.

### **3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1 It is proposed to erect an extension to the existing church, with an associated car parking facility, at St Peter's Church, Lovely Hall Lane, Salisbury. The extension would be of single storey in height and would provide a community facility for the residents of Salisbury. In respect to the siting of the proposed extension, please refer to the Proposed Site Plan (drawing no. 5115-0782 (07)001\_2.2), which is provided within the supporting documents associated to the application.
- 3.2 It is proposed that the new extension would be located to the north of the existing church building. It is the applicant's intention to deliver a scheme which respects the vernacular and enhances the local sense of character, therefore the design of the property will seek to complement the existing church building, both through design and choice of materials.
- 3.3 Great care has been given to design a scheme which works with the existing topography and built features in order to further minimise the impact of the development. The proposed development looks to utilise the existing church grounds to allow for the extension. The new building has been carefully designed, not to obscure the roof when viewed from the graveyard and cricket ground. The architect's intention is to design a modern pavilion-like extension in glass and stone to match the existing building but is complimentary in scale. Please refer to the supporting Design and Access Statement for further details on the on the design of the proposed extension. Furthermore, the design has been informed by the comments of a heritage consultant who established the elements of the building which are of principle importance and should therefore be safeguarded as part of any development proposals. A Heritage Statement, which provides further context is submitted as part of the associated supporting documents.
- 3.4 The proposal also includes 11 car parking spaces to the north west of the church building. This will assist with enabling access to the church for disabled and able bodied members of the congregation. The existing access on the west of the site will continue to be utilised.
- 3.5 The proposed development will include the removal of 9 evergreen bushes and 2 saplings on the north site. The car park location will be kept away from the tree line. A Tree Risk Management Appraisal (July 2014) has been submitted with this application.
- 3.6 Prior to the submission of the application, a public consultation event took place at the church on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> April. In total, 53 people attended the event, the responses of which were overwhelmingly positive and reflect the finding of the Statement of Need included in Appendix 2 of the Design and Access Statement.

## 4 PLANNING POLICY ASSESSMENT

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that:

“where in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the Development Plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material consideration indicates otherwise”.

4.2 In this instance, the Development Plan for the application site comprises of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 (2014). Additionally, key policy documents that comprise ‘material considerations’ include to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and any local supplementary planning guidance documents considered relevant to the proposal. These material considerations are set out at Section 6 of this statement.

4.3 Currently the proposal maps published within the now replaced Districtwide Local Plan remain adopted until a revised set of plans are produced as part of the Housing and Economic Development DPD become adopted.

### **Ribble Valley Borough Council - Core Strategy 2008 – 2028**

4.4 The Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 was adopted in December 2014 and therefore can broadly be regarded as containing relevant and up to date policies in the consideration of this application. Furthermore, the following policies are considered to be relevant to the determination of the application, however they will be afforded weight in accordance with their consistency with the NPPF and this is discussed further in the Material Considerations section of the statement: -

- *Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development;*
- *Key Statement EN1: Green Belt;*
- *Key Statement EN2: Landscape;*
- *Key Statement EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity;*
- *Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets;*
- *Policy DMG1: General Considerations;*
- *Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations;*
- *Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection;*
- *Policy DME3: Site and Species Protection and Conservation;*
- *Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets.*

- 4.5 **Key Statement DS2:** Sustainable Development looks to mirror Paragraph 14 of the NPPF which details the sustainable development principle that seeks to guide both authorities and developers. Further to that it places emphasis on the Council to develop proactive relationships with applicants to ensure that where possible applications are approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposals at hand are both well considered and respectful to the surrounding vernacular and as such the development is not thought to generate any adverse impacts. Furthermore, the reasoning behind the application is to provide extended community facilities, such facilities would enhance the lives of the existing residents and provide for easily accessible local community space. Based on this and the more extensive guidance outlined in the NPPF it is concluded the proposals constitute sustainable development and therefore adhere to this key statement.
- 4.6 **Key Statement EN1:** Green Belt, will be maintained to safeguard the surrounding countryside from inappropriate development. The development of new buildings will be limited to the purposes of agriculture, forestry, essential outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of the designation.
- 4.7 The proposed development is considered compliant with all relevant policies of the Core Strategy. However, this is subject to the proposed development meeting national Green Belt policy outlined by the NPPF, which are to a degree replicated in Key Statement EN1. Within the NPPF, Green Belt policy is set out in Chapter 9, it states that the fundamental aim of the policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. As such the NPPF lists development types that are appropriate in the Green Belt. Paragraph 89 states a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate, however exceptions to this do include; *'the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building'*. If this is not the case, then very special circumstances must exist where potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations (Paragraph 87 and 88).
- 4.8 Pertinent to considering the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is not only the net-built footprint and surface infrastructure, but also the form, mass and layout of the proposed development. As such, when considering these factors, a more expansive arrangement of development does not necessarily equate to a greater impact upon the openness. Issues relating to amount, layout, scale, landscaping and appearance are discussed in detail within the DAS. Notwithstanding this it is clear the proposal represents acceptable development within the Green

Belt in so much that the proposals have been developed in a considered manner which has taken into account the existing built form and indeed made clear attempts to retain the open field surrounding the site. The development represents the infilling of space within a developed site that benefits from an expansive curtilage. Moreover, the proposals are for an acceptable rural use which would bring notable benefits which would clearly and demonstrably outweigh any perceived harm.

4.9 **Key Statement EN2:** Landscape, mainly focuses on protection of the Forest of Bowland AONB through ensuring development contributes to the conservation of the area by enhancing and protecting the landscape and character. The statement does offer more general coverage by linking the policy to the protection of all landscapes outlining that the Council expects all development to be in-keeping with the character of the landscape.

4.10 In the Council's justification for the policy they state that:

*"The Council considers that it is important to ensure development proposals do not serve to undermine the inherent quality of the landscape. Particular regard, consistent with the designation as AONB, will be given to matters of design and impact with an expectation that the highest standards of design will be required. The Council will also seek to ensure that the open countryside is protected from inappropriate development. Developers should adopt a non-standardised approach to design which recognises and enhances local distinctiveness, landscape character, the quality of the built fabric, historic patterns and landscape tranquility."*

4.11 As previously outlined the proposal would seek to use materials that are sympathetic to surrounding development and remain clearly subservient and incidental to the existing church. The proposed layout and associated elevation drawings, detail the intention to develop the site in a logical manner which sits well within the existing parameters of the site. The extension would not be of detriment to the Open Countryside and is arguably an enhancement of the existing arrangement. On that basis, in the context of policy Key Statement EN2 Landscape, the proposed extension is seemingly not in conflict with the Development Plan and therefore this policy would not represent justification to refuse this application.

4.12 **Key Statement EN4:** Biodiversity and Geodiversity and **Policy DME3:** Site and Species Protection and Conservation both look to provide protection for, amongst other things, features of ecological importance. The policies are in place mainly to add further protection to designated sites of environmental and ecological importance, of which the site is not. However, the overriding theme is that development should be able to mitigate any perceived negative impacts. Subsequently a bat survey was undertaken which concluded as follows:

*“The proposed building alterations are unlikely to cause disturbance to bats or result in the loss of a bat roost or cause injury or death of a European Protected Species – (Bats) or result in any significant impact on a local bat population.”*

4.13 It is therefore concluded that the proposal can be delivered in a manner which is not at conflict with Key Statement EN4 or indeed Policy DME3.

4.14 **Policy DMG1:** General Considerations assists in ensuring that development proposals are in line with numerous broad considerations by providing a series of overarching considerations regarding the quality of developments. The policy categorises the criteria under 6 headings which are as follows:

- Design;
- Access;
- Amenity;
- Environment;
- Infrastructure;
- Other.

4.15 The design of the proposed conversion is thought to be well-considered and of a high standard that both provides a quality addition to the church whilst being reflective and sympathetic to local character. The design has ensured the extension is of acceptable scale in the context of surrounding development and would not compromise the operation of the adjoining church. The policy summarises that regarding access any proposals be safe, suitable and consider the potential traffic implications.

4.16 The proposed development is contained within the existing planning unit which, in addition to the acceptable scale of the proposed building, ensures the proposal won't be detrimental to local amenity. Furthermore, the local undulating landscape suggests further that development in this location would be low impact, providing the design is acceptable. In relation to the section of the policy which refers to environmental considerations the site does sit within the Green Belt area, which has been discussed above. The application is supported by a bat survey which considers the impact the proposal will have on protected species and concludes on the acceptability of the proposal, concluding that there is no evidence of bat activity at the property. The proposal is considered to be compliant with Policy DMG1 as a whole.

4.17 **Policy DMG2** outlines further strategic considerations. The policy assists in the interpretation of the development strategy and underpins the settlement hierarchy for the purposes of delivering sustainable development. Furthermore, development will be required to be in keeping with the character of the landscape and acknowledge the special qualities of the area by virtue of its size, design, use of materials, landscaping and siting. As mentioned previously it is anticipated this has been achieved within the proposal at hand.

4.18 **Policy DME2:** Landscape and Townscape Protection states that proposals which induce significant harm to important landscape or landscape features will not be supported. Such features are outlined as including:

1. *Traditional Stone Walls.*
2. *Ponds.*
3. *Characteristic Herb Rich Meadows and Pastures.*
4. *Woodlands.*
5. *Copses.*
6. *Hedgerows and Individual Trees*
7. *Townscape Elements such as the Scale, Form, and Materials that Contribute to the Characteristic Townscapes of the Area.*
8. *Upland Landscapes and Associated Habitats Such as Blanket Bog.*
9. *Botanically Rich Roadside Verges (That are Worthy of Protection)."*

4.19 As with previous policies, it's considered that the supporting information details sufficient detail as to qualify the proposals impact as acceptable. Effort has been made as to ensure disruption to existing features is minimal and the development sits well within the existing setting.

4.20 **Key Statement EN5** states that there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their setting. This will be achieved through:

- *Recognising that the best way of ensuring the long term protection of heritage assets is to ensure a viable use that optimises opportunities for sustaining and enhancing its significance.*
- *Keeping Conservation Area Appraisals under review to ensure that any development proposals respect and safeguard the character, appearance and significance of the area.*
- *Considering any development proposals which may impact on a heritage asset or their setting through seeking benefits that conserve and enhance their significance and avoids any substantial harm to the heritage asset.*
- *Requiring all development proposals to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness/sense of place.*

- *The consideration of Article 4 Directions to restrict permitted development rights where the exercise of such rights would harm the historic environment.*

4.21 **Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets** infers the Council will make a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings. It is considered that this proposal adheres to the main thread of this policy but also Key Statement EN5 (listed above). St Peter's Church is not statutorily listed, it is a non-designated heritage asset site due to its communal and historic values. The Heritage Statement summarises that the design of the proposal responds positively to the conservation priorities as established through the appraisal of heritage values and significance. Also highlighting that there is strong and compelling evidence that the design of the chosen scheme satisfies two primary priorities; 1. Conserving the significance of the unlisted Church; and 2. Providing a facility that is fit for purpose and sustainable. It is clear that every effort has been made to satisfy the requirements of Paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

## 5 MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

### National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

- 5.1 The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions as per Paragraph 2 of the Framework and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 5.2 The NPPF sets out Government planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The golden thread running throughout the NPPF is the Government's presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 14) whereby proposed developments which correctly balance the requirements of economic, social and environmental issues should be granted planning permission unless there are strong reasons that permission should not be granted. The NPPF also strongly supports economic and housing development.
- 5.3 Sustainable development is broadly defined in Paragraph 7 of the Framework as having three dimensions; namely economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 17 sets out the core planning principles which include the need to:
- *“Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs...*
  - *Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings...*
  - *Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable...”*
- 5.4 In terms of economic benefits, the construction of the proposal would offer the opportunity to provide support for existing community and suppliers in the area during construction, contributing to the local economy.
- 5.5 The social aspect of sustainability is met, in that the proposal will result in the creation of a high-quality environment and comprises a compatible use in keeping with the current site use. The principle of an extension of the church is a location which permits for efficient operation of the existing use, to meet the needs of the local community.
- 5.6 Turning to the environmental aspect of sustainability, the site is not subject to Tree Preservation Orders, Heritage assets or protected species. It is not within an area at risk of flooding as defined by the Environment Agency.

- 5.7 Paragraph 28 regarding 'Supporting a prosperous rural economy' outlines that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas. It outlines that this can be done through the approval of well-designed new buildings.
- 5.8 Paragraph 56, in relation to design, states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. This considers the design principles in detail, ensuring that the proposed development is compliant with the requirements of the Framework in contributing positively to making places and landscape better for people.
- 5.9 Paragraph 61 infers that whilst visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.
- 5.10 As noted in the previous section Chapter 9 related to the protection of Green Belt land. In doing so it outlines that green belt has 5 purposes which are as follows:
- *“to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
  - *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
  - *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
  - *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
  - *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.”*
- 5.11 The proposal would clearly not lead to any unrestricted sprawl and would not result in the merger of settlements. The fourth bullet point in paragraph 5.10 above is of more relevance given the church is a building of character and an undesignated heritage asset, however this statement and the accompanying supporting information have successfully demonstrated that the submitted design would not be of detriment to the historic value of the church and has been positioned well in order to retain existing views and the openness of the site.
- 5.12 Further to the above the proposed development looks to deliver extended community facilities. This is a material consideration in that such facilities would enhance the vitality of the rural village and help provide additional services to those who are, to a degree, isolated from the borough's larger settlements. Paragraph 89 also lists that extensions or alterations to buildings are not inappropriate

in the Green Belt, providing the they do not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. This is considered to be the case in this instance.

- 5.13 Chapter 10 of the Framework considers climate change, flooding and coastal change. Paragraph 100 states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk. Paragraph 103 states that when determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere. The application site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 and therefore it is not considered the proposal poses any additional risk to flooding in the local area.
- 5.14 Paragraph 187 of the Framework states that Local Planning Authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and that decision takers at every level should seek to approve application for sustainable development where possible.
- 5.15 Paragraph 197 states that in assessing and determining development proposals, Local Planning Authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.16 Paragraph 215 states that due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans in accordance to their degree of consistency with the Framework, in that the closer the policies in the plan are to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that should be afforded.
- 5.17 This statement and supporting documents have demonstrated that this application is consistent with the NPPF.

## 6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 PWA Planning is retained by the Vicar and Parochial Church Council of St Peter's Church, Salesbury to prepare and submit a full planning application for the proposed erection of an extension and associated car parking facility at St Peter's Church, Lovely Hall Lane, Salesbury, BB1 9HT.
- 6.2 The works would result in a number of key benefits which are deemed relevant to the determination of the application, namely: -
- The enhancement of local character and distinctiveness through the implementation of a well-designed and considered extension which sits well within the existing planning unit;
  - Support for existing businesses and suppliers in the area during construction, contributing to the local economy;
  - The delivery of a facility that will meet both the need of the local community and the church as demonstrated within the Statement of Need in Appendix 2 of the DAS.
- 6.3 This statement has shown the proposal to be acceptable when considered alongside the Development Plan policies. The application has undertaken the necessary steps to obtain the thoughts of the determining authority through pre-application discussions and as such the acceptability of the proposal has already been established in principle. The proposal is considered to be wholly compliant with the adopted Development Plan and is additionally acceptable when assessed against the NPPF.
- 6.4 The scheme is supported by the necessary technical report and other evidence which clearly demonstrate that there would be no harmful impacts resulting from the proposed development and hence no reason that planning permission ought not to be granted. In addition to that, there are other material considerations which support the granting of planning permission and which should be afforded significant weight in the determination of the application.
- 6.5 For the reasons identified within this statement, it is considered that detailed planning permission for the development should be granted and the application is commended to the authority.