



Historic England

LONDON OFFICE

Mrs Sarah Anderson
Diocese of Rochester
St Nicholas Church
Boley Hill
Rochester
ME1 1SL

Direct Dial: 020 7973 3749

Our ref: E00230746

28 January 2020

Dear Sarah,

Notification under the Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (England) Orders 2010
LOCATION: CHRIST CHURCH, VICTORIA ROAD, ERITH, BEXLEY, DA8 3AN
PROPOSED WORK: Installation of general and disabled toilet facilities

We were notified on 16 December 2019 of the proposed works to this Grade II* church, which we visited on the 21st January 2020 to discuss the proposals with the church warden. Historic England does not wish to comment in great detail and wish only to raise observations for the DAC and PCC to take under consideration.

Installation of toilet facilities

Historic England has no in principle objection to the installation of toilet facilities within the west porch, which would appear sensitively sited and involve minimal physical interventions into the church fabric. The proposals seek to install three toilets within the porch area; one disabled access, one with baby changing, and one standard WC. The benefits of these works are clear, and we recognise the future opportunities this can facilitate for the church. Based on the drawings and information provided, your Diocese should consider the following observations.

The proposed partitioning between the baby changing and standard WC appears to cut across one of the windows. Details explaining how this junction between the partitioning and the window will be made have not been provided and should be worked up in more detail. Similarly, your Diocese may want to request clarification through additional sectional drawings, to ascertain the proposed treatment of the porch's south doors, and how this junction with the toilets shall be created.

The works would involve additional water and drainage servicing. We assume that this would be situated within the void created by the new raised floor and not intervene with the existing floor tiles? No details have been provided at this stage of the planned route for any of the servicing. We would strongly urge these should, where possible, follow existing service routes, and where new opening are required these are sited sensitively, to limit damage to the historic fabric of the building.



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We understand the proposals will require some ground excavation for new water and drainage works. Careful consideration will need to be given to suspected buried archaeology. I would recommend, if you haven't already, to contact my colleague Mark Stevenson (Mark.Stevenson@HistoricEngland.org.uk) in the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service, who can advise further on the archaeological considerations.

Wall Paintings Conservation Work

During our visit we also spoke about the wall painting along the south elevation of the church, which has signs of deterioration caused by salt efflorescence. The deterioration is only on the south elevation, which suggests it is experiencing moisture or humidity fluctuations. We understand the church is in the process of obtaining a report for this repair. We would urge for the report to be undertaken by a specialist paint conservator experienced in dealing with similar wall paintings and which seeks to identify and resolve the cause for this decay in advance of any repair work to the paintings being undertaken.

Tea Point

We briefly discussed the concept of providing a tea point in the west end of the south aisle. This is at a very early stage and no drawings/details been worked up. We are open to exploring this with you, and recognise the benefits these facilities can generally provide. We look forward to working with you as this element develops.

Recommendation

We would urge the above advice is taken into consideration. Please contact me if you wish to discuss these comments. It is not necessary to consult Historic England on this application again unless there are any material changes to the proposed works. We would be grateful for confirmation of the Chancellor's decision in due course

Yours sincerely

Andrew Scott

Assistant Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
E-mail: Andrew.Scott@HistoricEngland.org.uk

cc: Doreen Ives
Rev. Monica Cameron

Documents received:

As provided on the Church of England Online Faculty System



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