

NAILSEA HOLY TRINITY: Request for advice on setting a flagpole and standard within the church.

THE REQUEST

Nailsea Holy Trinity is to be gifted a 9' long flagpole and standard of the Royal British Legion, representative of service to the nation. Churchwarden Dr Vernon Parfitt requested advice (21 February 2023, email) on the appropriate position and mode of fixing, and asked whether Faculty were required to introduce such an object.

The visit and this report confirm that Faculty is required, and the following offers advice based on inspection made on the afternoon of 22 February. This advice does not constitute permission, which depends on a successful Faculty application.



THE BUILDING

Holy Trinity consists of a tower, nave, south aisle and chancel. Unlike many parish churches, it does not provide distinctive chapels. It is an unusually small church because it was built to serve as a Chapel of Ease to Wraxall, probably originating in the first half of the fifteenth century, and fulfilling this function as late as 1811. It has a nave arcade built in two phases,

featuring distinctive figurative capitals including St Mark and St Luke, as well as fine leaf carving.

A restoration programme by S.C Fripps c. 1861 includes the nave and chancel trusses and ceilings; the colour scheme by Henry Haig is part of a reordering of 2003-4 by Chedburn Ltd.

Its impressive recent extension presents several rooms: the ancillary nature of these activity spaces, and their limited head height, would not suit a tall item inviting public display for commemoration.

POSITION

The small, open plan of the church admits few possibilities for display of an item which would usually be set within a chapel. Great churches typically reserve a transept chapel for such display and commemoration.

Space is limited. The north and south walls display funerary plaques and monuments, some of fine quality. The nave north wall has a projection screen the view to which cannot be obscured. The west end of the south aisle serves as the baptistry: a standard relating to the armed forces would confuse this function. The chancel is a simple and clear space.



Nave, looking west



Chancel, looking east



South aisle, looking west.



View into tower, suggested location in pink

The most obvious space of sufficient height is within the west tower. This may be viewed as a typologically appropriate location. Towers at the west ends of later medieval churches have typically served as a bell tower as a call to services, the door as a processional entrance, while its direction is redolent of the setting sun, and memory- represented in the scale of west windows and the content of stained glass (e .g Last Judgment, Fairford, Gloucs).

There is space within the tower for a flagpole, to the north or south of the west window, if the pole is held toward a vertical position so that the window is not obscured. The removal of a floor level has left a horizontal band of infill, within the pink lines shown below. This will have minimal archaeological value, and is a good place for wall fixing (see below).



TYPES OF FIXING

The critical issue of obscuring the west window means that an adjustable cup bracket would best suit the task. Many manufacturers are American, but a locally made example in a relatively noble material such as brass may well achieve the best results and certainly achieve greater elegance than an off-the-peg unit.



Typical adjustable pole bracket.

A single cup may be enough in itself, especially if it has a lateral hole for a screw fixing into the pole so that it cannot fall from a soundly fixed bracket.

Depending on the weight of the pole and the angle chosen, a wire stay a little further up may also be thought necessary if separate advice on Health and Safety deems it necessary.

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