

## Statement of Need – April 2020

### Basic Facts

<b>Parish</b>	St John's and St Mary's
<b>Dedication</b>	St Mary
<b>Benefice</b>	Devizes St John and St Mary
<b>Diocese</b>	Salisbury
<b>Address</b>	New Park Street, Devizes SN10 1DS
<b>Grid Ref</b>	400557 161585 SU 005 615
<b>Local Planning Authority</b>	Wiltshire Council
<b>County</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Statutory Listing of church</b>	LB_Ref 003A/160 Grade 1 HBR_Ref 022/301
<b>Statutory designation for structures and objects within the churchyard</b>	LB_Ref 003A/160A Grade II HBR_Ref 022/300 Gates and Railing at St Mary's Church  LB_Ref 003A/160B Grade II HBR_Ref 022/303 Main Entrance Gates to St Mary's Church
<b>Conservation Area</b>	Church and churchyard lie at the edge of a Conservation Area
<b>Scheduled Monument</b>	No
<b>Protected Species</b>	None
<b>Tree Preservation Orders County Wildlife Site (or SSSI)</b>	A Group TPO exist. None for individual trees Churchyard is not designated a Local Nature Reserve
<b>Any other designations</b>	None

### General Information

- Devizes serves as the commercial and cultural centre of a Community Area with a resident population of 32,090 (Wiltshire Council, Devizes Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2011).
- The Parish of St John's and St Mary's has an electoral role of 149 in 2019. However St Mary's has one service a week with average attendance of six including the celebrant. The church is normally kept locked.
- The idea of adapting the church into a multi-use cultural event space has received overwhelming support from the town and surrounding community. Prior to the last rejected planning appeal a wide ranging program of events demonstrated this level of commitment.
- The St Mary's Church and Poor Lands Charity 201342 – Church Branch, is currently providing the funding to maintain the fabric of the building.
- The parish will be seeking funds to carry out the proposed works. The St Mary's Church and Poor Lands Charity – Church Branch have promised £250,000 for the project, now estimated at £1.3M.
- The last Quinquennial report was prepared in 2016. All the immediate maintenance issues identified in the report have been addressed; more information is given in paragraph 1.6.
- As Devizes seeks to revitalise itself and the Town taking responsibility for more local assets, such as the Market Place, Shambles, Assize Courts and other green spaces. St Mary's would be well placed to be on the cultural trail running alongside the canal from the Assize Courts, the Wharf and the Church.

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# 1 What do you need?

## 1.1 A Listed Building for Modern use

To ensure this Grade 1 listed building remains in use as an asset to the area and fulfils a role in the parish, brings benefit to the mission of the parish and is made available for both Devizes area residents and visitors, an organisational infrastructure has been set up to support the envisaged future use. This structure includes those with experience of the local arts community, both sourcing and producing a wide range of social and cultural events; fund raising skills; financial experience; marketing and promotional expertise.

St Mary's no longer has a use by the PCC as a Parish Church. It is effectively redundant with most services being held in the sister church of St John's. Devizes is in fact already over-churched, with three other active Anglican Congregations. If plans for development of St Mary's are not approved, then the PCC would have no other option than to re-apply for redundancy. It is well known that a closed building is a decaying building.

The Devizes Town Council has been regularly briefed on the work being done in preventing redundancy and has always been fully supportive of the Parochial Church Council's ideas

## 1.2 Multi-Use Cultural Centre

### 1.2.1 Main uses identified for a Modernised St Mary's

A public meeting held in 2018 identified the following uses for the building. In alphabetic order:

- Café and refreshment services in conjunction with events
- Dance performances for an audience
- Exhibitions and static displays, art, photography, sculpture
- Extension of Church functions i.e. receptions after Baptism, Wedding and Funerals
- Film shows
- Office functions for charities
- Public meetings
- Theatrical performances

### 1.2.2 Grouping these by type:

Auditorium activities

- Dance performances for an audience
- Theatrical performances
- Film shows
- Receptions after events such as Baptism, Wedding, Funerals
- Large Public meetings

Meeting room and office functions

- Office functions for charities and the venue
- Small public meetings
- Small scale leisure activities

Support functions

- Café and refreshment services in conjunction with events
- Exhibitions and static displays, art, photography, sculpture

### 1.2.3 Requirements of the building to support these uses

Building requirements

- Easy disabled access
- Secure access at night for staff
- Electrical supply to support all major functions
- Wireless internet and IT equipment, as is expected of a modern venue
- Heating controllable by room or area.
- Alarms; fire, intruder and roof alarm to protect the lead covering
- Audio equipment; loop systems etc

- Video security cameras
- Storage space for building services; office functions and individual user needs. For example play groups

#### Auditorium requirements

- A capacity of 200+ when full stage in use and circa 250 without stage, this capacity complements other venues in the town
- Provision for raised seating and, desirably, raised stage area
- Reception space and storage space for audience use, access to toilets
- Access to a final prep kitchen area with a servery – plated food or bar.
- Requires green room space for performers changing and associated storage, access to toilets.
- It is highly desirable to have separate Male and Female changing rooms - particularly for school productions
- Ideal to have performers access the stage from the side or rear of the performance space
- Fire exits in sympathy with Fire Service recommendations; exit signs ditto
- Black out of windows, electrically controlled
- Electrical sockets of sufficient number and rated power
- Facility for a lighting and sound control room in a safe & secure place
- Lighting gantry for performance use, facing east

#### Meeting room and office requirements

- Safe and secure entry to the office space and thence to the rest of the building.
- Direct access to individual rooms, the refreshment space and the auditorium space

#### Examples of such uses that have been demonstrated:

The people of Devizes have demonstrated their support of the multi-use concept since the regeneration project started. They have put on and attended a wide range of events. Notwithstanding the draw backs of a partially heated building with no toilet facilities and no catering provision – apart from one cold tap.

- Musical theatre – typically for a five night run, full light and sound backing
- Visiting Choir and orchestral events
- Talks by visiting speakers on a wide range of topics
- Chamber Choir performances
- Christmas Concerts
- Arts events as part of the Devizes Arts Festival
- Exhibitions of paintings

### **1.3 How to achieve the expanded purpose**

The aim is for St Mary's to remain a church, open to the public, with an expanded remit of acting as a cultural focus for Devizes and the community area, therefore attracting visitors to the town.

The building made available for wider public use, with the nave having a comfortable seated capacity of over 200 people, defined as a 'Medium Place of Assembly'.

This facility can be created through the construction of a modern, architecturally interesting facility in the churchyard to the north of the church, linking through a new door in the north wall and through the existing vestry door at the east end.

#### Main features:

- A new secure vestry allowing vestments, papers and church plate to be securely stored, overcoming the present security weakness that requires such items to be held offsite. The current vestry is subject to significant damp and is also the main point of entry to the church.
- A safe and secure access to this new vestry, allowing anyone to enter or leave the building without concern. Such an access would help to reclaim the north churchyard for safe public use from anti-social elements.
- A new flexibly partition area which, in addition to its role as a dressing room and rest area, can also be used for other purposes such as meetings.

- An administration office cum booking office area to accommodate a parish and visiting groups administrators, together with the necessary storage facilities
- Kitchen facilities and a servery for final preparation and serving of food and refreshments.
- Toilets, including facilities for disabled
- An architecturally exciting building complex to support the acquisition of funds to create a fully functioning facility that will encourage imagination and creativity
- An open and welcoming aspect from the town.

#### **1.4 Utilities required and access**

New mains services: three phase electricity, sewage and broadband telephony. Gas and mains water are available in the underground boiler room.

Heating from renewable sources when possible.

Main public entrance to be via the West door whilst retaining access through the South porch and doorway

Provide suitable lighting for the access paths and entrances. Step-free access from the road suitable for use by wheel chairs

#### **1.5 Other Considerations of Need**

- The existing look and feel of the interior of this Grade 1 listed building has to be retained or enhanced with minimal interference in the fabric and any changes to be reversible. They must leave an uncluttered interior preserving the light from the existing windows.
- To ensure minimal interference with the fabric, new services must be placed in an external building. The design must allow St Mary's to be continued to be seen as part of the townscape as it has for hundreds of years (apart from the addition of the modern four story Chantry Court) and that does not interfere with the best, and usually seen, views of the church from the churchyard and the public roads.
- A low level, single story construction with level access joining the church at two points. This is the lightest touch on the building. Such a construction provides ease of access and a circulation space, while continuing to allow good views of the church from the north churchyard.
- An exciting design that has proven appeal to the people of Devizes; grant making bodies and individuals
- Two proper entrance/exits to the church for practicality and fire safety.
- The axial integrity of the nave to be maintained as requested by the Church Building Council.
- The sanctuary and chancel to be reordered as worship space that can be used independently of the nave.
- Victorian pews to be removed from the nave and aisles, these have little historical significance.
- An easily maintainable, timber floor suitable for performance, including dancing.
- Access for vehicles to deliver and collect from the building
- The organ was built specifically for St Mary's by Sweetland, a Devizes-born organ builder. It must be retained within the church to fulfil its role in church services and concerts.
- Fixed wall memorials [7 off] to be kept in situ. The interior floor memorials / ledger stones [26 off] currently used as aisle paving slabs to be preserved; relocated elsewhere in the complex.
- The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and relevant fire regulations to be observed.
- A trenching survey has been carried out to establish the expected number of buried remains that would be encountered. All burials will be recorded, stored as individuals and then re-interred close to their original location. A scheme of works had previously been agreed by Wiltshire Council and the DAC has indicated that they concur with the provisions.

#### **1.6 Current State of St Mary, Devizes**

The PCC remains responsible for maintaining the Church structure in good order while the project goes forward, regardless of the level of Poor Lands support. The following works have been carried out to St Mary's Church within the last twenty years, paid for by the St Mary Church and Poor Lands Charity, Church Branch:

- Stone work repairs to Tower and South Porch including conservation of South Porch doorway.
- General repairs to roofs, rainwater goods and stonework.
- The installation of a modern video surveillance scheme to protect the lead rooves.
- Repairs and redecoration of rainwater goods.
- Renewal of Vestry floor.

- Relaying of the Nave roof South slope in lead and repair to North Nave roof parapet gutter.
  - Internal timber repairs to Nave roof structure.
  - Fitting of protective window guards.
  - Re-leading of Chancel North window.
  - Replacement of oil fired boiler with new gas boiler and incoming gas supply.
  - Relaying of the Chancel stone tiled roof.
  - Repairs to the south aisle walls
- For more detailed description of the latest Quinquennial work see the St Mary Devizes Conservation Management Plan section 6.3. Referenced in Section 8 of this document.

## 2 Why do you need it?

### 2.1 Mission based approach to building development plans

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) and congregations of the Parish of Devizes, St John with St Mary have responsibility for the maintenance and use of three parish buildings, St John's Church, St Mary's Church and the Parish Rooms situated alongside St John's Church.

Following a **Parish Away Day in October 2008** which developed the parish mission plan, it was decided to address the opportunities and challenges of these buildings together, as part of that plan, rather than simply as individual building projects without any reference to our overall mission strategy. The Church of England's stated mission is "A Christian presence in every community". Our mission statement, in the parish of Devizes, St John with St Mary, exhibiting that Christian presence in this community, is: "to be a community growing in love, faith and service; reflecting the love and faithfulness of God towards us."

The Church's Creed points to God's saving purpose and activity within the universe through the person of Jesus Christ and our sense of mission flows from our understanding of God's mission in terms of that Creed.

"We believe"

"Through him all things were made"

The Creed speaks of Christ's part in Creation - The whole world is God's world and a false distinction is often made between the sacred and secular. As Christ's Church we recognise not just a Gospel injunction to proclaim Christ Jesus in the world but also the more fundamental belief that this is God's creation and that whatever people believe (or do not believe for that matter) we share a common humanity and that we have a duty and responsibility for the integrity of the whole of creation.

"He was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary".

The Incarnation provides an imperative to serve the whole community not just needs of the church's congregation. Incarnation is about getting alongside the needs of the community, especially the poor and marginalised as Christ came among us as one of us. It is about leaving the "place of safety" and becoming vulnerable, like him. It is also about sharing the joys and celebrations of life: sharing in the gladness as well as feeling for the sadness to paraphrase the words of the Christmas Carol "Once in Royal David's City" written to illustrate this incarnational aspect of the Creed. The idea of incarnation means that we take seriously Jesus' life and teaching, his earthly example, into account in our understanding of mission as well as his death and resurrection which the Creed goes on to express.

"For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven"

Christ's death is clearly linked in scripture with the Passover feast and the Jewish understanding of the freedom God brings in the Exodus story of liberation from slavery in Egypt of the people of Israel. Christ's death, seen in terms of the Jewish sacrificial cult, is the ultimate Passover sacrifice. Here it is offered not just for one household, but offered once and for all, that death might pass over us all and that all can find a new Exodus and freedom in him.

The Church's part in this theological understanding of God's being and action Christ's Resurrection is a sign of that liberation from death and hope for all people. Together with the Ascension (and associated with the Ascension both the sending of the Holy Spirit and Christ's return in Judgement) it proclaims Christ's triumphant defeat of chaos and death, begun in creation, and speaks of an ultimate destiny for creation beyond just this physical world and of a spiritual dimension to all of life, in this world and the next.

To all of this the Church of God bears witness.

“We believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church”

Within the life of the Church, its fellowship, worship, witness and service Christ's saving work is continued. The proclamation of the Gospel is ensured through the Church's stewardship and teaching of the scriptures and through its sacramental ministry.

within creation, the Mission Dei, has been expressed in terms of the Five Marks of Mission: Tell (To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom), Teach (To teach, baptise and nurture new believers), Tend (To respond to human need by loving service), Transform (To seek to transform the unjust structures of society), Treasure (To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth). In St Mary's case there is a particular concern for the building's place in environmental, historical and cultural context in the local community.

The PCC sees that it can meet a variety of needs within the town of Devizes, the Deanery and beyond, in the way in which these buildings are developed. In particular there is need for a community meeting and assembly space for medium to large size gatherings of 200-250 people.

In **Nov 2008 the PCC invited Revd Andrew Mottram of Ecclesiastical Property Solutions** to come and spend a day to help us consider the way forward in the development of our parish buildings.

The PCC envisages the two Parish Churches continuing to serve the parish and wider needs of the Church in contrasting but complementary ways.

One, **St Mary's**, as a church which is developed primarily for mixed community use suitable for medium to large gatherings, and smaller groups, as well as continuing to be a place of worship for the parish. The other, **St John's**, as a Church which is developed primarily as a place of worship both for parish use, and for the wider civic role in town and county that it has long fulfilled.

The Parish Rooms have since been enhanced and renovated to provide ancillary facilities for St John's Church with modernised catering facilities for small to medium group use, together with new toilets and shower unit for use by a charity for the homeless.

## **2.2 Venue for activities and events**

The new design must allow the church to be a flexible venue for a wide variety of community activities. These can vary from exhibitions to orchestral concerts, from weddings to dance workshops, where the additional spaces provide break-out facilities and “green rooms” for performers during events.

The provision for raked seating and a raisable stage will provide a new facility within the town and cater for a wide varied of performance arts; thus providing a unique selling feature for the venue. The new flooring will facilitate dance, keep fit and similar activities.

## **2.3 The Sweetland organ**

The organ was installed as part of the 1854 restoration. It was built by Sweetland & Co. of Bath and was originally in a gallery under the tower; it was moved to its present position at the east end of the north aisle in 1877. The company was mainly active in the south-west of England and of national importance. It has an Historic Organs Certificate number N08432<sup>1</sup> awarded in 2000 and is considered to be of considerable significance.

It is in need of restoration and the essential work was estimated in 2015 to cost £17,350. A similar additional sum could be spent on less essential maintenance items, but would be worth doing if the church gains a new use.

## **2.4 Financial Impact and Arrangements**

A charitable company, St Mary Devizes Trust (SMDT) has been created and will maintain the church under a lease agreement with the Parochial Church Council.

The structural element of the running costs will be provided through funds, supplied by the St Mary's Church and Poor Lands Charity – Church Branch, to a Restricted Fund with SMDT. Poor Lands has also agreed to provide an additional £250,000 towards the cost of the development.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=N08432>

The PCC expects the new uses of St Mary's to be self-supporting in about two to three years, dependent on initial funding arrangements. The new build will have low maintenance and running costs compared with the existing structure and it has been agreed that it will be maintained and run with help from the Poor Lands Charity. The largest expense in running the new facility will be staff costs and it is planned to encourage the current volunteers to continue their support and SMDT will work to provide new volunteer opportunities. The ability to attract volunteers, especially in the development of an arts program, has been demonstrated by the enthusiasm of the supporters of the project when they developed a program of events in support of the previous cloister concept. This will contribute to the financial viability of the scheme.

A Marketing and Business Plan has been prepared for the PCC and is being updated as the project progresses. This details the cash flow for the first three years of operation.

### **3 Why do you need it now?**

St Mary's has no viable congregation, yet it is a very significant building in the town. If the PCC did nothing then the building would remain locked and unavailable for most of the time. The PCC would be forced to consider applying to make it redundant. If no decision is made then it would stay as an unused and unknown asset of the parish. Such unused buildings deteriorate and are forgotten, the churchyard would no longer be available, safe for use by the general public.

In 2006 the Parochial Church Council applied to have St Mary's declared redundant. The two churches in the parish were formally recombined as attendance at St Mary's had fallen significantly and it was no longer needed for regular worship.

A letter (RDT/TB/4230) dated 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2006 from RD Trahair, Property Secretary, Diocese of Salisbury pointed out that the Church Commissioners would push the Diocese to seek alternative use, such as *community use as an exhibition hall, museum, concert hall, theatre etc. A use would have to be found that left the exterior unaltered.... It is also likely that the authorities would require minimum internal changes.* It is worth noting that this letter predicates against fitting the required new facilities of toilets and offices within the nave and chancel.

A further letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> June 2006 (RDT/LC/5375) noted that RD Trahair was greatly relieved that there will be positive local support and commitment to help try and cultivate a body of local people willing to take on the building for a community project. This has now been demonstrated by the wide ranging and active support of many people of the town at public meetings, at events organised by SMDT and by attendance at the Planning Committee meeting, where Wiltshire Councillors narrowly rejected plans by a majority of 4:3

The Redundant Churches Division wrote in January 2007 (RC34/112 A M G Browning) that "Whilst the board considered the church to be of sufficient overall merit vesting in the Churches Conservation Trust, it is agreed that there was enough flexibility in the contents to support a use requiring a large and ostensibly undivided space. The Board's advice on the management of change is set out in the enclosed "Options and Impact Appraisal" which addresses the principal options and draws provisional conclusions as to their impacts."

The Pastoral and Redundant Churches Secretary wrote on 20 June 2007 (NB34/112/RA) "That other ecclesiastical avenues for the future of St Mary looking beyond the parish should be more fully explored before the diocese considered closing such a building for Christian worship."

The PCC has taken note of these suggestions and set up a St Mary's Future Group to undertake the necessary research and project management. The above attachments can be seen in the Statement of Significance which accompanies this Statement of Need.

This application was formally withdrawn in November 2009 (NB34/112B/RA) by notice from Rex Andrew of the Church Commissioners. Two factors led to this decision: firstly St Mary's was used as the parish church after the fire which badly damaged the interior of St John's and secondly a public consultation had demonstrated local support for a Community Event space and serviced charity accommodation.

If the development proposed is rejected then the building will be without a purposeful use and the PCC will again consider petitioning for it to be made redundant.



Devizes and its Community Area has been and continues to be the focus for a large increase in new housing and consequent increase in population. In the 2011 census this stood at 32,090. The Wiltshire Housing Site Allocation 2020<sup>2</sup> states that there should be 2,500 new homes built in the Devizes area between 2006 and 2026. By April 2017 some 1,501 homes have been built and 612 are planned.

## **4 What is the evidence for the need?**

### **4.1 Consultation undertaken by the PCC**

A public meeting was called in May 2008 following the PCC vote to involve the local community in determining a viable future use for St Mary's. This was one of a number of meetings to examine the options and identify actions.

Following the recommendations of Ecclesiastical Property Solutions Ltd an opinion survey was undertaken, which involved canvassing the views of local experts and influencers on what might be accomplished with the building to give it a new purpose. This survey started in May 2009 and a final report was given to the PCC in the autumn. The survey put up two concepts:

- St Mary's as a 'Medium Place of Assembly' with a capacity of about 250 persons seated, for use as an arts, sports, social and meeting place.
- St Mary's as a drop-in centre and serviced offices with small meeting rooms and storage space for charitable organisations.

Following the results from this study, which overwhelmingly showed support for the idea of community use with serviced accommodation for charities, the PCC determined to press ahead with a design to meet the specified requirements.

It determined that there would be a number of Unique Selling Points of the venue when compared with others in the town:

- A community event space for 200 to about 250 people, with raked seating available.
- A meeting venue with breakout rooms
- Serviced accommodation for charities reinforced by the provision of modern information technology services, such as broadband access, computers and projectors.

As the project has progressed more public meetings have been held to both inform and to receive and incorporate feedback on ideas.

### **4.2 Subsequent Public Feedback**

The first design proposal was presented to the congregation and the wider town and was enthusiastically received by residents who have a long attachment to the church. Wider publicity through photographs and articles in the local paper, the Wiltshire Gazette and Herald, produced significant public support and no adverse reaction.

A prospective future users seminar was held on 23 August 2012 at which the plans were presented and useful criticism obtained from the 50 or so attendees, all representing local organisations. They were keen on seeing a larger stage space and an increased provision of toilets so that excessive waiting was avoided between performances. The attendee list provided the basis for our mailing list, currently standing at over 150 people.

### **4.3 Contact with the public**

A website [www.stmarydevizes.org.uk](http://www.stmarydevizes.org.uk) has been built and is in constant use. This together with a mailing utility, allows information to be sent to the supporters list and is available to the general public. Bulletins are issued whenever there is news to impart or events to be supported.

### **4.4 The Cloister Proposal and Planning Refusal**

This cloister proposal was submitted to Wiltshire Council for planning approval but was recommended for rejection in 2013, the rejection was confirmed at a public meeting of the elected councillors of the Planning Committee by a vote of 4 to 3 for rejection.

The PCC then decide to appeal and a comprehensive package of supporting documents was prepared for the Planning Inspector. This appeal had to be on the plans originally submitted and we were not allowed to change them to meet some of the objections i.e. the entry through the church tower..

This appeal was held on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2014. The Inspector rejected the cloister proposal and his findings are in "APP/Y3940/A/14/2217381."

The table below summarises the salient points. It does not reference the points of fact.

<sup>2</sup> Whsap-adopted-2020-feb.pdf

Para Ref	Summary of the point made	Relevance
3	The proposal would not harm the settings of the adjacent listed buildings	For
9	The scheme would benefit the church	For
10	The proposed new use would benefit the community and allow the church to continue to be a place of worship	For
11	Would secure the long term future of this important building and deter anti-social behaviour within the churchyard	For
12	The scheme provides a package of benefits which can be given considerable weight	For
17	The cloister would be subservient in scale and massing to the church and its limited height would not diminish the dominating feature of the west tower. The glazed links would also provide a light touch to the church	For
18	Talking about the shape of the cloister – on balance he approved	For
19	Burials being moved	Neutral
20	Erosion of the space in the north churchyard; building close to the boundary wall; proximity to a yew tree	Moderate harm
21	Disrupts the view of the church from Commercial Road. Detracts from an appreciation of the special qualities of St Mary's	Less than substantial harm
22	Entry through the tower wall	Substantial harm
24	External appearance of the extension,	Neutral
25	Proposal at odds with LP policy PD1(B)(7) and emerging CS policies 57 and 58	Refusal
27	Loss of sizeable area of the churchyard would erode the townscape qualities of the Devizes Conservation Area	Less than substantial harm
29	The loss of space around the neighbouring listed properties would give rise to a cramped context to these buildings	Harm
30	Limited harm to the listed buildings	Less than substantial harm
32	A previous judgement: Less than substantial harm does not equate to a less than substantial planning objection. There is a presumption that preservation is desirable.	conclusion
33	There would be substantial harm to the significance of a Grade I listed building and less than substantial harm to the significance of other listed buildings. I find that this harm would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.	conclusion

The Inspector summarises his findings:

*The adverse impacts upon the historic environment would be at odds with the environmental role of the planning system and the proposal would not comprise sustainable development. It would conflict with the provisions of 'the Framework' when read as a whole. I therefore concur with the Council and EH that permission should be withheld.*

*I recognise that my findings will be of great disappointment to the appellant and those who support the scheme. On the other hand, displeasure is sometimes expressed when the decisions of local planning authorities are overturned on appeal. From all that I have seen and heard, there is sufficient common ground between the main parties to suggest that a satisfactory outcome may be possible through a revised scheme. If this addressed some of the more harmful elements of the scheme that I have found above it could tip the planning balance in favour of the appellant. However, I can only consider what is before me. As the benefits of the scheme do not outweigh the totality of the harm the appeal does not succeed.*

The PCC believe that the new proposals take into account these findings. These plans reduce the footprint of the new building, they are not close to the boundary wall and so do not cramp the view of the listed buildings; it does not require an entry through the tower wall. Some harm is inevitable but this must be balanced against the benefit of a reinvigorated building and the green space becoming useable by everybody.

#### **4.5 Conservation Management Plan**

Subsequent meetings with the DAC, Wiltshire Planning and Conservation; Historic England suggested that a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) should be produced. After some considerable research this document was produced and is available on the SMDT web site. (see Appendix 8 for the reference).

A CMP rates the attributes of the church and churchyard under the headings Exceptional; Considerable; Some; Little and Negative. These ratings have been largely accepted by the DAC; Historic England and other conservation bodies. No significant disagreement with these conclusions has been made to the Parish.

The final plan adopted will be rated against any “harm” to an asset or “enhancement” to this asset. The work involved in this study is summarised below:

Feb 2016	First meeting with Richard Morriss, conservationist, who advises on CMPs
Apr 2016	Draft framework received from Richard Morriss, this led to more research to fill in gaps
Sep/Nov 2016	Further advice from the DAC
Jan 2017	A Faculty prepared to obtain permission to remove the front three rows of pews permanently.
Feb 2017	First draft of the CMP circulated amongst parishioners for comment on the structure, the language and omissions.
Mar 2017	CMP circulated to the DAC for advice and also to Wiltshire Planning, Wiltshire Conservation, Historic England and Church Building Council
May 2017	CMP modified following informal advice from the DAC
Jun 2017	Faculty granted for the removal of the front pews.
July 2017	Initial research on ranking of suggested new uses started
Jun 2017	Ecological report on the church and churchyard commissioned as suggested by the DAC
Sep 2017	A new edition of the CMP sent to the DAC and further advice received
Oct 2017	St John with St Mary PCC and St Marys Future Group ranked suggested new uses and this resulted in a top 8 concepts.
Nov 2017	Further informal advice received from the DAC regarding the CMP. This document is now regarded as essentially complete but will need to be kept under review as new information is received or researched.
Dec 2017	Work on the CMP and new use summary. Preparing for Future Use seminar January 2018

#### **4.6 New Architect appointed**

Following the retirement of the then Church Inspecting Architect, the PCC decided to appoint George Chedburn to that role. His company has experience of regenerating church buildings and were familiar with many aspects of such work, so it was decided that Chedburn Codd would take charge of the next plan for St Mary’s Future.

#### **4.7 Future Users Seminar 2 Feb 2018**

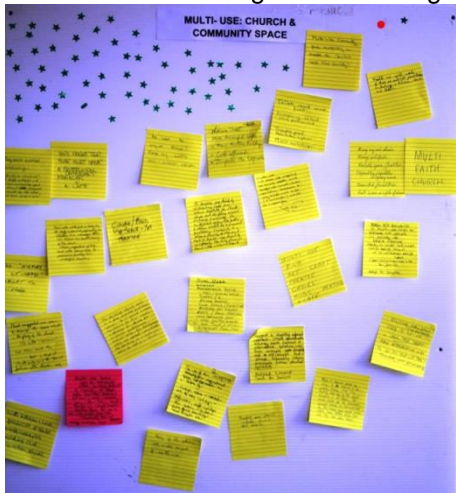
This seminar re-examined all the new uses for the building suggested over the time the project has been running. The conclusions and comments were:

- The Multi-use concept has overwhelming support from the community. However as a minimum it must have toilets; kitchen/ catering facilities and a meeting room.
- Many of the other suggested uses could be incorporated in the multi-use concept. As stand-alone uses they would not be viable.
- Once a definitive plan has been produced, specify how to run the venue and establish financial viability.
- The acoustics are very good.
- Aim to get St Mary’s on the Devizes Heritage Trail

#### Action points

- Set up a meeting to confirm the assessments made in the Conservation Management Plan. Invite the DAC; Wiltshire Development (Conservation, planning); Historic England; Church Building Council; Victorian Society; Church Care.
- Contact the Wharf to discuss their plans. Ensure contact maintained with Wiltshire Museum in Devizes

A full report on this meeting is referenced in section 8.4 of this document, but the picture below also summarises the feeling of the meeting. Green stars being approval and red ones a negative view.



Subsequent to this public seminar, meetings have been held with the DAC, Historic England and Wiltshire Conservation. One result of these follow on meetings was the Five Level Option Study.

### **4.8 Five level Option Study**

The five levels options considered were:

Level 1 Redundancy

Level 2 Reordering with all new facilities within the church

Level 3 New facilities inside and some outside the church

Level 4 New facilities largely outside the church

Level 5 The rejected large Cloister concept.

The pros and cons of each level were examined and comparing them with the results of the Future Use Seminar it was apparent that only a version of Level 4 (or 5!) would meet these needs.

The architect met with Wiltshire Conservation and Historic England to outline the latest ideas and obtain initial feedback. These ideas have now been refined and are detailed elsewhere.

### **4.9 Business Plan**

A Business Plan based on Level 4 has been drawn up, based on the starting architectural concept and taking account of the Poor Lands Charity contribution to running costs. It is thought that the underlying assumptions are conservative. The plan takes the form of two documents, a textual one detailing the underlying assumptions and a spreadsheet to show how the financials have been calculated.

## **5 Environmental sustainability**

### **5.1 *Reduced Carbon Footprint of the Development***

Enhancing the existing church to provide a large space for community activities in Devizes for 200-250 people keeps the building in active use. Taken together with the design for a new energy efficient enlarged and rebuilt vestry within the churchyard, it means the development will have a strong sustainability agenda, saving substantial costs in energy and resources compared with creating a new stand-alone community building.

### **5.2 *Energy use***

The existing church has a wet radiator heating system working with a gas fired boiler in the basement. All the windows are singly glazed and there is no insulation in the walls or roof, so the heat loss is considerable. Because it is a radiator system the whole air has be warmed in order to have a reasonably comfortable temperature at the ground level within the church. As part of the remodelling, a ground source heat pump will be incorporated using a bore hole which will distribute warm water through a new under-floor heating system. This heats up the area where the people are, at ground level, and so does not waste energy heating up huge volumes of the air above.

### **5.3 *Materials***

The new building will be highly insulated with Diffutherm (Green Guide rating: A) which is a timber based product using wood-fibre boards, which are over 95% waste. The walls are all in timber construction which embodies carbon.

There are no showers in the building and there is a relatively small demand for water, only for toilets and washing up in the catering areas. Low flow taps are used to keep the use of water down to a minimum.

### **5.4 *Benchmarks***

The new build will be designed to BREEAM rating, which has become the standard for best practice in sustainable building design, construction and operation. It has become one of the most comprehensive and widely recognised measures of a building's environmental performance.

### **5.5 *Flora and fauna in the churchyard.***

Whilst the new building is built within the churchyard, the rest of the churchyard will be enhanced and made available for the safe use of residents and visitors. Planting will ensure there are no "hidden places" out of sight of the new build. With more people using the space it should allow the churchyard to be reclaimed as a publically accessible space.

### **5.6 *How the proposal influences the way people use the building***

Being relatively central to Devizes many users will be able to walk or cycle to activities in St Mary's, as opposed to relying on a car or on public transport. It is envisaged that the building will be occupied throughout the day and not be used in the stop/start manner of many village halls. The layout allows different groups to use the building during the day, and the existence of community offices will mean the building can be monitored closely and the environmental energy use impact kept to a minimum.

### **5.7 *Long term environmental strategy***

The purpose of the new building is not only to bring St. Mary's Church back into more regular use, with a wider more secular nature, but also to provide a base for the local community and to encourage more locally based activities to flourish rather than travelling to go elsewhere.

The whole of the new building has been designed to be completely day-lit during daylight hours and with low impact LED lighting for the evenings.

The existing church will remain largely unaltered inside, without the need to add new floors at gallery level which would reduce the day light levels and be visually intrusive.

The supply of water may be supplemented through rain water capture from the church roof. Grey water will be used instead of mains or rain water, where possible.

## **6 Other development options considered**

### **6.1 *Internal versus an external solution***

The PCC originally thought in terms of a gallery in the south side aisle of the church and storage in the north aisle to accommodate the necessary facilities and had some provisional plans drawn up. This basic idea formed the high level specification given to several architects' practices. Three practices were asked to present detailed proposals based on their initial responses.

Having been shown the concept of an external build, the PCC appreciated that the construction of rooms within the church would detract from the feeling of spaciousness and impact on the clean lines of the Norman and 15C building. It might also lead to the nave appearing as a corridor, which would go against the original builder's reasons for building the side aisles. Subsequent discussions with a number of national preservation bodies have reinforced the wisdom of the decision to alter the interior as little as possible.

A new build would also have the advantage of incorporating the most recent ideas on heating sources and low running costs.

Construction on the north side of the church would have the least impact on the view of the building from the town. It is worth noting that the church is usually photographed toward the west door from New Park Street, or from the south east corner of the churchyard. By keeping the floor level the same as that of the nave, which is achieved by building into the churchyard, the height of the construction will be kept low and the impact on the churchyard minimised.

The rebuilt vestry would also address the current problem of dampness and lack of security at the main point of entry to the church.

The St Mary's Future Group and the PCC unanimously approved the enlarged rebuilt vestry concept.

### **6.2 *Other external build options***

Any building on the south or west sides of the church would have to be raised above ground level in order to have level access. This would significantly and adversely impact the external views of the church and create access problems from the south or west main entrances.

The floor level issue is only part of the problem; there would be an impact with trees, particularly to the mature copper beech tree and cedar trees adjacent to the south path. The South and West elevations would be considered the front faces of the church with main entrance at the West tower and secondary entrance at the South porch with its crenelated zig zag bands that is mentioned in the listing text. These would both be impacted detrimentally by building to this side of the Church. Finally a building on these sides would have a major visual impact on both neighbouring properties Chantry Court and the Listed Castle Hotel.






Building to the east would not allow for the circulation of people during a performance and be difficult for performers. It would also affect views of the church from the favoured south east viewpoint and is likely to impact upon gravestones and boundary trees.

Thus building to the north is the best option, part of the construction would be below current ground level and it could only be seen from a narrow part of the west entrance. View from the east - Commercial Road - would only be of the top half of the building and would be constricted by the 1.7 m high church yard retaining wall.

An alternative would be for the PCC to incorporate the required facilities into adjacent properties. The Castle Hotel is a successful commercial licenced premises and so it would not be financially viable for the parish to purchase and convert into the necessary offices. Noting also that floor level is lower by 1.7m with the associated access issues.

The building to the north contains a restaurant, two sets of office accommodation, two residential flats and a number of parking places. Again it would not be financially viable to purchase and convert. Long connecting corridors would be needed and new building would still be needed to the north for performers, with some services duplicated to provide for both members of the public at one end and performers at the other.

## 7 Examples of new build alongside historic churches

	
<p>New build at St Paul's, Salisbury</p>	<p>New extension at Sheffield Cathedral</p>
	
<p>St mark's, Colney Heath</p>	
	
<p>St Andrews Church, Holt, Norwich</p>	<p>ST Marys Funtington Church, Chichester</p>

## 8 Sources used for the Statements of Need and Significance

### 8.1 General Guidance

Church Building Council Guidance for Parishes: Statement of Significance and Statement of Need  
 Council for the Care of Churches, Pastoral Measure Report Devizes St Mary. Item 9 [b] Wilts ADP 20  
 July 06 and 29 May 1996  
 Planning Inspector's decision 2014: APP/Y3940/A/14/2217381

### 8.2 Church Commissioners Letters

RD Trahair 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2006 RDT/TB/4230, Property Secretary, Diocese of Salisbury

RD Trahair June 2006 RDT/LC/5375  
 RD Trahair January 2007 RC34/112 and attachments  
 Paul Lewis 20 June 2007 NB34/112/RA  
 Rex Andrew November 2009 NB34/112B/RA

### 8.3 Diocese of Salisbury;

RD Trahair RDT/LC/5375 Property Secretary, Diocese of Salisbury 21 June 2006  
 Pastoral secretary letter 1<sup>st</sup> August 2006 Ben 363A  
 Diocesan Advisory Committee Notes on a DAC site visit to Devizes St Mary on 19 October 2009

### 8.4 Parish reports

Summary Report on St Mary's Future Consultation 200: 19.2\_K – notes 2009.06 Summary report on Consultation Questionnaire.pdf

Written Scheme of Investigations for Mitigatory Archaeological Works April 2012 ref 3537-2. Michael Heaton Heritage Consultant: 3537-2wsiV2.doc

Future Users Seminar- Consolidation of seminar input and StMFG plans 23/08/2012; Future\_users\_Seminar-summaryV2.docx

Future Users Seminar 2 Feb 2018; FUS18\_v2.pdf

Conclusions of the Future Use Seminar 1 Feb 2018: st mary future use meeting feb 1 2018.docx

Description	File name
Business Plan descriptive document - StMFG	Business Plan_2020v1.docx
Business Plan spreadsheet - the numbers - StMFG	Running_Costs_StM2020.xlsx
Conservation Management Plan - StMFG	St. Mary's Devizes CMP_February2020.pdf
Historic Building Assessment - Matthew McMurray. A textual document	St Marys Historic Building Assessment – Matthew McMurray.docx
Historic Building Assessment – Figures - Matthew McMurray, warning a very large file.	19.1_D2_Historic_building_assessment - Figuresm.pdf
Building Investigation – Demaus Building Diagnostics Ltd	Sub_Floor Report.docx
Ecological Assessment – St Mary's Church July 1917 - Ecological Surveys Ltd.	EcA_devizes_StMary'sChurch_July_2017.pdf
Archaeological Evaluation Report (Trial Pits) – Headland Archaeology Ltd	19.1.G_Archaeological_Evaluation_Report02_sm.pdf
Study St Mary's Churchyard – burial activity - StMFG	Conservation_Study_ChurchyardV1LoRes.pdf
St Mary Devizes – Levels of Change - StMFG	St Mary's Devizes – Level of Change Feb2020.docx
Statement of Need- StMFG	Statement of Need StMary2020v1.docx
Statement of Significance – StMFG	Statement of SignificanceSt Mary2020v1.doc

ends