

Statement of need

- note this is an extract from the main faculty report sections 1-3.

1. Introduction

Holy Trinity Church has an active and lively congregation which is keen to see the growth of God's kingdom in the parish of Hurdsfield and across Macclesfield. As part of our hopes to bring growth we have developed a project to improve and develop our church site so that we have a secure foundation for creative and fruitful ministry over the next 50 years.

As we have considered this, we have developed a project called 'Building for the future' which seeks to address three areas of our church life to enable and promote the growth of God's kingdom. The three areas are:

- investing in our facilities – we are currently developing plans for a new building to replace and enhance the facilities currently provided by the church office and classroom portacabins. Our current office and classroom only have temporary permission from Cheshire East and the DAC which run out at the end of 2020 and 2021 respectively. This new building will be the subject of a separate faculty which we are currently preparing.
- investing in our site – in order to ensure that people are safe on our site we need to improve our roadways and footpaths. Along with some improved lighting and signage as well as some redecoration of the lobby and coffee lounge in the church, we propose to resurface all the roadways, to increase the parking areas, and improve access to the church.
- investing in people – we believe that to encourage growth we need to put in people resources to develop new ministries and encourage the faith in existing and new members. To ensure that we do not miss the opportunities that the project presents we are planning on looking to fund a new missional ministry post for 2 years to resource this growth.

This faculty is associated with the second aspect above, investing in our site. We have submitted a separate application, 'Faculty application report for resurfacing works and improvements' to the DAC which details the work we are hoping to do. This faculty addresses one specific part of the works, the new pedestrian walkway on the south side of the church. To enable us to install this new walkway we need to relocate the war grave that is currently located at the east end of where we would like this path to go. This faculty requests permission to relocate this war grave to allow space for this new pedestrian walkway.

2. The war grave - background

We are privileged to have the war grave for Private W. Ryder (4/80369) of the Welsh Regiment in our grounds at Holy Trinity Church, Hurdsfield (Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Ref: CEM06959, Hurdsfield (Holy Trinity). See image in Appendix 1.

As the picture in Appendix 2 shows, the war grave headstone stands alone on the corner of a grassed area. Originally this grassed area was used for burials and the whole area was covered in headstones. In the 1986 all the headstones were removed from this grassed area and were relocated to form a walkway round the edge of the grassed area (note: no remains were exhumed as part of this work). However, at this time Private Ryder's headstone was not relocated, resulting in it now standing alone on the very edge of this grassed area.

3. Why do we need to move the headstone?

In recent years, as we have seen more people attending our church, both on a Sunday as well as during the week, I and the Parochial Church Council have become increasingly concerned about the position of this lone headstone. It presents several issues including: safety for vehicle and pedestrian access to the church; potential for injury for people, especially our children and youth, who use this area for football, outdoor activities and games as well as barbeque's and picnics in the summer; and also the potential for damage to the headstone itself due to its exposed position.

As a result of our concerns we have carried out a formal review of the position of the headstone. This review concluded the following:

- its current position presents a narrow restriction to the main access route to the church entrance. This affects cars, our church minibus which we use on a regular basis for the older members of our community, as well as emergency service vehicles should they need to gain access to the building. (Image 3 shows the restricted space as our minibus is using this main access route).
- there is a significant risk to pedestrians, who share this same access route to get from our car parking areas to the main entrance of the church as well as our church office. Due to the restriction presented by the headstone, there is not enough room for both cars and pedestrians to pass by.
- there is a significant potential for damage to the headstone from vehicles as they pass by as well as general damage as it is in a very exposed position. Indeed, it was noted that the stone has some evidence of damage to the top of the stone.
- the headstone presents a risk to our children and young people as they are using the grassed area.

Taking all the above into consideration the PCC have determined that, in order to allow safe access to the church, we need to widen this access route and add a footpath alongside the roadway. This work is included in the main faculty proposal.

In order to provide a safe and sensible routing for this path, we are requesting permission to reposition the headstone (we do not propose to exhume any remains) to a nearby location. This would both alleviate the concerns we have regarding vehicle and pedestrian safety but also create an enhanced focal point for the headstone itself and in turn for our annual act of Remembrance when it is our tradition to gather beside the headstone.