



Annex E

Explanatory Note

Mission & Pastoral Measure 2011

Draft Pastoral (Church Buildings Disposal) Scheme affecting the closed church of St Peter, Astwood Diocese of Oxford

This note accompanies a draft scheme under *The Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011* which makes provision for the future of a closed church building. The Church Commissioners provide this information so that individuals and interested parties can understand the background to the proposals, make a reasoned judgement on the merits of the draft scheme and, if they see fit, a reasoned expression of support or objection to it.

The current proposal

The Commissioners have agreed to publish a draft *Pastoral (Church Buildings Disposal) Scheme* providing for the closed church of St Peter, Astwood and annexed land to be sold and converted to use as a single residential dwelling subject to planning permission and listed building consent.

Background

St Peter's, Astwood is some 8 miles from both Newport Pagnell and Bedford. It was closed for regular public worship on the 1st May 2013 owing to lack of regular attendance and because, in a parish with three other churches, it no longer fulfilled any real pastoral need. Before closure, attempts were made by the ecclesiastical parish and Diocese to explore its use respectively as a community facility or place of Christian worship by another body, but met with no expressions of interest.

Therefore, on the basis of early advice from Milton Keynes Council, the Diocese of Oxford decided to market the property for a range of suitable uses. This resulted in an offer for use as a Christian retreat but which was later withdrawn, with the remaining offers being for use as a single residential dwelling, one of which the Diocese of Oxford has recommended to the Church Commissioners. No offers were received for use for community purposes.

The building

St Peter's is Grade II* listed and was originally constructed in the 12th century but underwent changes in the 14th and 16th centuries. The building comprises nave with south aisle and porch, chancel and west tower. The nave has a concrete truss roof which replaced the earlier one lost in WWII by bomb damage; the chancel's roof is of timber. The building is constructed of coursed limestone rubble with freestone dressings.

The views of the Statutory Advisory Committee

The Commissioners' statutory advisors, The Statutory Advisory Committee of the Church Buildings Council (SAC) have recommended that an alternative use be found for St Peter's.

Planning and access

Milton Keynes Council's planning department has provided written advice on St Peter's, and has met with the prospective purchasers and representatives of the diocese of Oxford and Church Commissioners to discuss the proposals, as has a representative of Historic England. Guided by this advice, the prospective purchasers will now submit a full planning and listed building consent application to Milton Keynes Council. Access is direct from the public highway.

Burials and the churchyard

The churchyard includes a number of 18/19th century tombstones as well as two war graves and more recent burials which are still visited and tended by relatives of the deceased. Under these proposals, a covenant will be included in the Transfer giving rights of access to all persons lawfully visiting and tending graves, including the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, on a single prior written application to the owner of the property. Under section 75(3) of the 2011 Measure this covenant will be binding on all successors in title and cannot be modified or discharged by the Upper Tribunal.

Correspondence

Further information about the proposals can be obtained from Anne Griffiths (see contact details below).

Representations against or in support of the draft Scheme

Anyone may make a representation for or against any provision of the draft Scheme which should be sent to:

Representations
Closed Churches Division, Church Commissioners
Church House
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3AZ

Or by e-mail to: closedchurches.reps@churchofengland.org

Any communication received after 4 December 2017 cannot be treated as a representation.

If we receive representations against the draft Scheme, we will send all representations, both for and against, to the Bishop, whose view will be sought. Individual representors will then receive copies of our correspondence with the Bishop (including copies of all the representations) and they may comment further in writing to us in light of the diocesan response if they so wish.

If no representations against the Scheme are received the Commissioners shall make the Scheme and bring it into effect as provided for in the scheme and explained above.

Information on the Mission and pastoral Measure 2011 and its procedures can be found on the Church Commissioners' web-site at www.ccpastoral.org where there are also links to download copies of these notes and the draft scheme.

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16 October 2017

Draft Pastoral (Church Buildings Disposal) Scheme

This Scheme is made by the Church Commissioners ("the Commissioners") this day of 20....under the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011.

Background

By a Scheme of the Commissioners made under the said Measure on the 24th day of April 2013 the parish church of Saint Peter ("the building") in the parish of Sherington with Chicheley, North Crawley, Astwood and Hardmead in the diocese of Oxford, was declared closed for regular public worship.

NOW, it is provided as follows:-

Future of the church building and annexed land

- 1. The building and the land annexed or belonging thereto shown edged with a bold black line on the annexed plan (together referred to as the property) shall be appropriated to use as a single residential dwelling and for purposes ancillary thereto together with the rights granted by Schedule 1 and subject to the Existing Matters specified in Schedule 2.

Disposal

- 2. The Commissioners are hereby empowered to sell the property for the said use together with the rights granted by Schedule 1 and subject to the Existing Matters specified in Schedule 2.

Contents

- 3. The contents of the building shall be disposed of as the Bishop shall direct subject to listed building consent being granted.

Coming into operation of this Scheme

- 4. This Scheme shall not come into operation until such date as the Commissioners shall determine following the making of this Scheme and the Commissioners shall not be obliged to bring the Scheme into operation until such time as they are satisfied that the conditions specified in Schedule 3 have been complied with but may do so if they so determine.

In witness the Commissioners have affixed their Common Seal.

Executed as a Deed by the }
affixing of the Common Seal }
of the Church Commissioners }
in the presence of:- }

Schedule 1: Grant of Rights of Way

To enable the property to be used for the purpose specified in the Scheme, the following rights shall vest in the Commissioners for the benefit of the property:-

- (i) all rights and easements over land other than the said churchyard appertaining or reputed to appertain to the property (in common with all others entitled to the like rights).

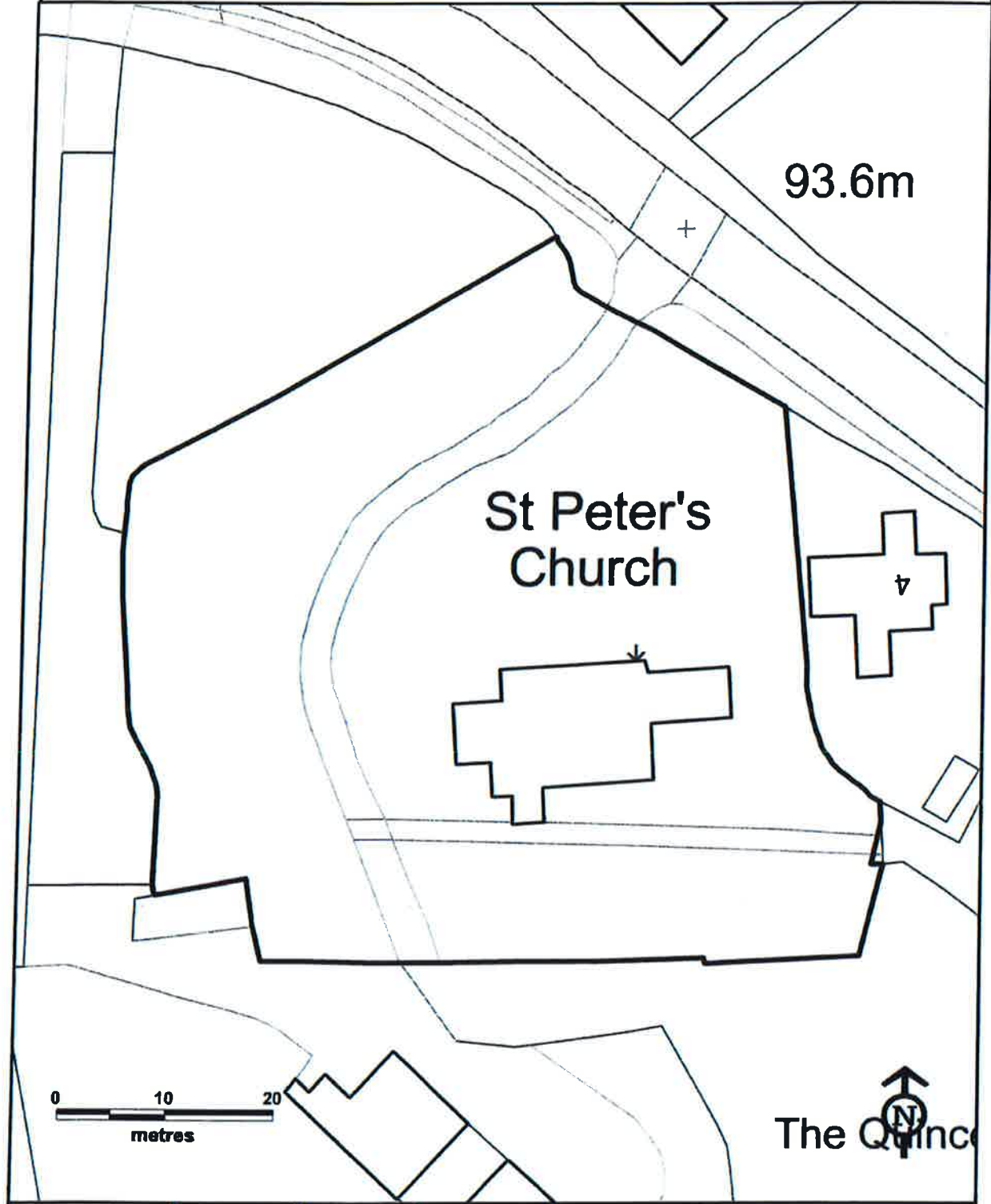
Schedule 2: Existing Matters

The rights, reservations covenants and stipulations contained or referred to in a conveyance dated the 20 November 1951 made between The Reverend Collett John Tovey (1), The Church Commissioners for England (2), and John Russell Knox and Ralph Thompson Knox Jr. (3) in so far as the same are still subsisting and are capable of taking effect.

Schedule 3: Conditions

- (i) That Planning Permission has been obtained for the proposed use.
- (ii) That Listed Building Consent has been obtained for such alterations as are necessary to enable the implementation of the proposed use.

ASTWOOD ST PETER



Drawn by
Gwen Jones

Scale
1:500

Date
13/8/2014

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