

## **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 Pastoral Measure 1983 and confirmed by Her Majesty in Council on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of October 1999 the parish church of Saint John, Chatham (“the building”) in the parish of Saint Mary and Saint John, Chatham in the Diocese of Rochester 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 by a thick black line on the annexed plan (together referred to as “the property”) shall be appropriated to use for Christian worship, services and other religious activities in accordance with the rites and customs of the Church of England and/or any other Christian body designated by the Bishop of Rochester and for any ecclesiastical purposes of the parish and for social, cultural and community purposes and for purposes ancillary thereto subject to the Existing Matters specified in Schedule 1.

#### **Disposal**

2. The Rochester Diocesan Board of Finance (“the Board”) is hereby empowered to lease or licence the property for any or all of the said uses subject to the Existing Matters specified in Schedule 1.

#### **Contents**

3. The contents of the building shall be disposed of as the Bishop shall direct subject, so far as it is required, to listed building consent being granted.

#### **Legal Effects of Consecration**

4. The legal effects of consecration and, in particular, the jurisdiction of any court or person with respect to the granting of faculties shall continue to apply to the property.

#### **Coming into operation of this Scheme**

5. This Scheme shall not come into operation until such date or dates as the Commissioners shall determine following the making of this Scheme and the

Commissioners shall not be obliged to bring the Scheme or any part thereof into operation until such time as they are satisfied that the conditions specified in Schedule 2 have been complied with but may do so if they so determine.

In witness of which this Scheme has been duly executed as a deed by the Church Commissioners.

Executed as a Deed by the Church Commissioners for England acting by two authorised signatories:

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Signature of Authorised Signatory

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Signature of Authorised Signatory

# CHATHAM ST JOHN



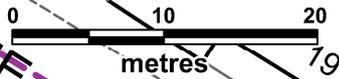
Car Park

St John's Church

Tap 'n Tin

RAILWAY STREET

12.3m



Drawn by g.odonnell			Scale 1:500	Date 05/05/2021	Rev No.
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### **Schedule 1: Existing Matters**

The rights, reservations covenants and stipulations contained or referred to in a conveyance dated the 26<sup>th</sup> day of September 1926 between the incumbent of the benefice of Chatham St Mary (1) the incumbent of the benefice of Chatham St John (2) the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England (3) the Dean and Chapter of Rochester Cathedral and the Rector of St Mary's Chatham (4) and C E Skinner and Son Ltd in so far as the same still subsisting and are capable of taking effect.

### **Schedule 2: Conditions**

- (i) That the terms of the lease or licence have been approved by the Commissioners.



## EXPLANATORY NOTE

### MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE 2011 DRAFT PASTORAL (CHURCH BUILDINGS DISPOSAL) SCHEME CHATHAM ST JOHN DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

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 Proposals**

The Commissioners have agreed to publish a draft Pastoral (Church Buildings Disposal) Scheme providing for the closed church of Chatham St John to be used for Christian worship, services and other religious activities in accordance with the rites and customs of the Church of England and/or any other Christian body designated by the Bishop of Rochester and for any ecclesiastical purposes of the parish and for social, cultural and community purposes.

The proposal will involve some minor alterations to the interior including some pew removal and the insertion of kitchen and wc facilities.

#### **Background**

The church of St John, Chatham was declared closed for regular public worship with effect from 15 January 2001. Between 2001 and 2006 use-seeking attracted interest for a range of essentially social, cultural and community uses. However, of the various expressions made, none resulted in firm proposals. In 2007 the Diocese developed a proposal to lease it to a Community Assets Vehicle to facilitate access to Government funding to refurbish the building as part of the wider regeneration of the area, for a range of commercial and community uses, but this initiative was not successful. The Diocese has since worked with local partners including Medway Council, to assess the viability of bringing the building back into church use so it can form a crucial element in plans for community regeneration.

The current proposal provides for the building to return to worship use as part of a renewal and re-missioning of Chatham town centre by the Church of England and for related social, cultural and community purposes. The responsibility for the building will remain with the Diocese who will licence it to the Parish of St Mary and St John's who will form a new congregation to worship there under a Bishop's Mission Order. The draft Scheme does not provide for the building to return to use as a parish church.

#### **The Building**

St John's is located on the west side of Railway Street in Chatham town centre on a prominent corner site, standing within a small area of curtilage. The church was built in 1819-21 to designs by the renowned architect, Robert Smirke in the Classical style with a shallow chancel and sanctuary added in 1863/4, and vestries and porch added in 1905. It is constructed of brick, faced with Kentish

ragstone with limestone dressings and slate roofs. Its most notable contents are a limestone font, Stuart Royal Arms, stained glass and the reredos. The church is listed Grade II\*.

### **The Views of the Statutory Advisory Committee**

The Commissioners' statutory advisors, then the Advisory Board for Redundant Churches have indicated that St John's is of sufficient architectural quality and historic interest to be preserved by conversion to a suitable alternative use.

### **Burials and the Churchyard**

There is no churchyard. There are a small number of interments in vaults inside the building.

### **Correspondence**

Further information about the proposals may be obtained from the Case Officer, Adrian Browning by e-mail at [adrian.browning@churchofengland.org](mailto:adrian.browning@churchofengland.org) or by telephone at 01722 438664.

### **Representations against or in support of the draft Scheme**

Anyone may make a representation for or against any provision of the draft Scheme.

Representations 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](mailto:closedchurches.reps@churchofengland.org)

Any communication received after Monday 27 September 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' website at [www.ccpastoral.org](http://www.ccpastoral.org) where there are also links to download copies of these notes and the draft scheme.

A M G Browning  
16 August 2021