

Draft Pastoral (Church Buildings Disposal) Scheme

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

BACKGROUND

By a Scheme of the Commissioners made pursuant to the said Measure on the 21st day of October 2008 the parish church of Saint Paul, in the parish of Saint Paul, Truro in the Diocese of Truro ("the building") was declared closed for regular public worship.

A suitable use has not been found for the building and it does not appear to the Commissioners, after consultation with the Church Buildings Council, that the building is of such historic and archaeological interest or architectural quality that it ought to be preserved in the interests of the nation and the Church of England.

NOW it is provided as follows:-

Future of the church building

1. The Truro Diocesan Board of Finance (the "Board") shall demolish the building and shall dispose of the materials arising from the demolition.

Disposal of the Site

2. The Board is hereby empowered to sell, give, exchange or lease the site of the building and the land annexed or belonging thereto which are together shown hatched on the plan annexed hereto, subject to and with the benefit of the Existing Matters specified in Schedule 1.

Contents

3. The contents of the building, excluding monuments and memorials, shall be disposed of as the Bishop shall direct.

Coming Into Operation of this Scheme

4. This Scheme shall not come into operation until such date or dates as the Commissioners shall determine following the making of this Scheme and different provisions of the Scheme may be brought into operation on different dates and the Commissioners shall not be obliged to bring the Scheme or any clauses thereof into operation until such time as they are satisfied that the condition specified in Schedule 2 has 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:

Signature of Authorised Signatory

Signature of Authorised Signatory

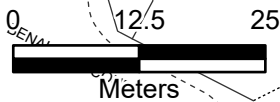
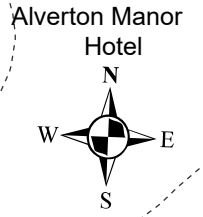
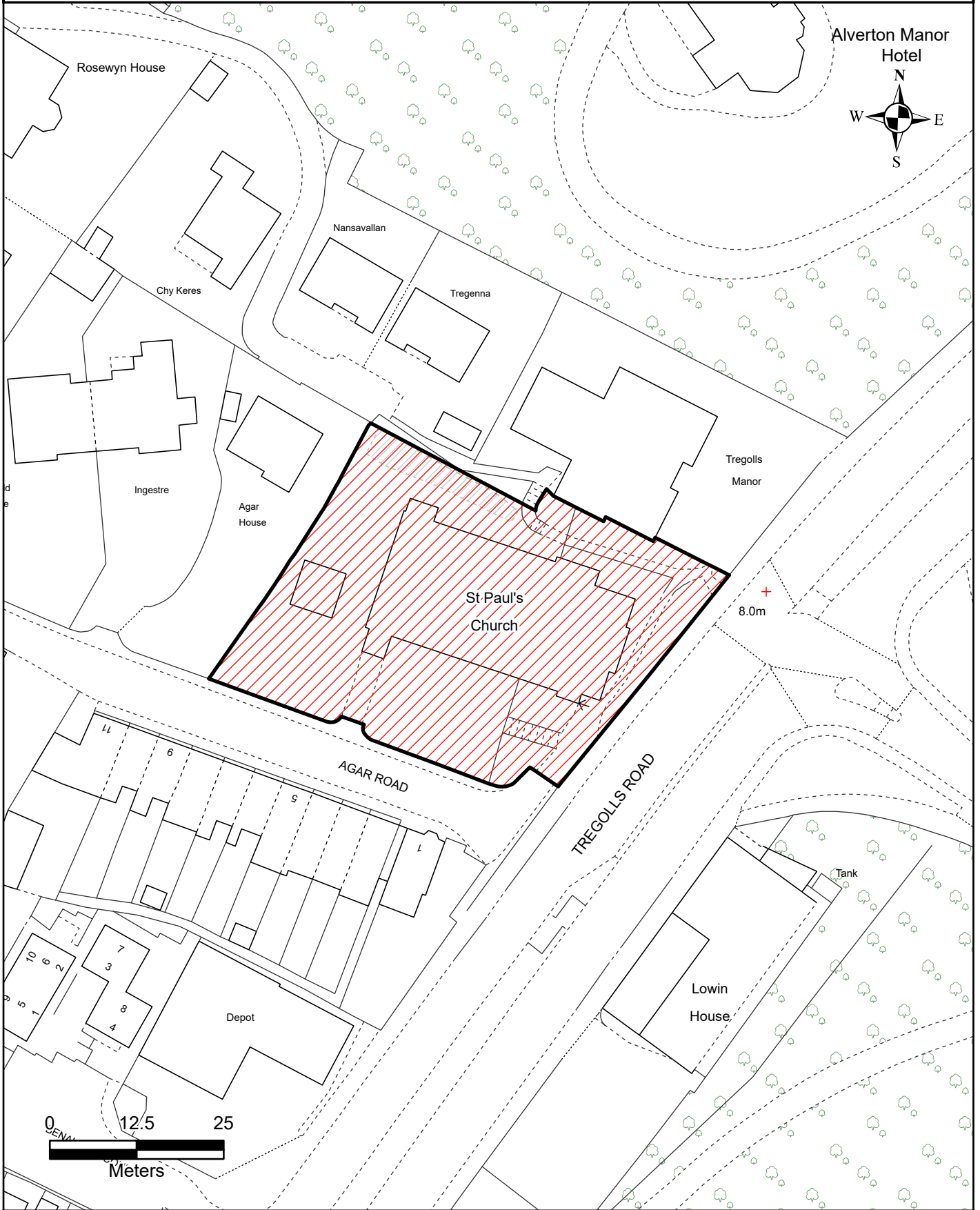
Schedule 1: Existing Matters

The rights, reservations covenants and stipulations contained or referred to in a conveyance of the neighbouring property known as Tregolls Manor and registered at the Land Registry under Title number CL374465 dated the 17th day of November 1988 between (1) Truro Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd (2) The Community of the Epiphany Trust Association Ltd and (3) West Ridge Investments Ltd in so far as the same are still subsisting and are capable of taking effect.

Schedule 2: Conditions

That the Commissioners have approved the terms of the disposal of the site.

TRURO ST PAUL



Drawn by T. Wood	Scale 1:500	Date 23/05/2024
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EXPLANATORY NOTE

MISSION AND PASTORAL MEASURE 2011 DRAFT PASTORAL (CHURCH BUILDINGS DISPOSAL) SCHEME TRURO ST PAUL DIOCESE OF TRURO

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 Truro St Paul to be demolished and for the Truro Diocesan Board of Finance to dispose of the site.

The Building

The church of St Paul occupies a prominent, sloping site on the east side of Truro City Centre at the southern end of the A390 Tregolls Road which leads eastwards to the residential suburbs towards St Austell. St Paul's is a substantial church building built in three phases in the free Perpendicular style and consists of an aisled nave of six bays with a south porch at the west end, two-bay chancel with north organ chamber and south tower and vestry, with a crypt beneath. The nave and south aisle were constructed in 1848 by an unknown architect using Killas stone with granite dressings. The east end and north aisle were added in 1882-4 and 1889 respectively to designs by the renowned Victorian architect John Dando Sedding, with the tower being completed in 1910 after Sedding's death to less-elaborate designs by his nephew Edmund Sedding. The tower provides the building with considerable vertical emphasis and has formed a notable landmark when approaching the city centre from the east. These latter additions were constructed using a combination of killas, granite and Polyphant stone. The church is listed Grade II and is situated in the Truro Conservation Area.

Background

The building is in poor structural condition as a result of two main problems – historic structural movement associated with the addition of the tower and the decay of structural elements of the east end of the building constructed of Polyphant stone. In summary, the completion of the tower in 1910 resulted in the foundations settling and cracks appearing in the walls. Internal iron ties were added in 1914 to mitigate the effects of the settlement

(which are now showing signs of corrosion). Further concrete beams were inserted in 1953 following damage by a war-time bomb.

However, the more significant reason for the poor condition of both the tower and east façade stems from the use of polyphant stone externally and for structural purposes. Polyphant is a Cornish stone, quarried at the east of the county near Launceston. It is a soft soapstone used principally for internal purposes and weathers quickly when used externally, with an attributed lifespan of 100 years in these conditions. Because of this, it is rarely used externally.

In 2012, the cost of rectifying these structural defects was quoted in the region of £3.8 million. Using the Tender Price Index formula, this amounts to around £6 million at today's prices, exclusive of VAT and professional fees.

The church building was declared closed for regular public worship with effect from 27 October 2008. After closure discussions were held with Cornwall Council on options for community-based or other uses for the building. In 2013 and 2019 the building was placed on the open market through local agents - on each occasion expressions of interest were received and pursued, but on both occasions the interested bidders eventually withdrew as they could no longer make their proposals viable due to the costs involved in addressing the structural defects. These included exploring the options of partial demolition. Outside the formal marketing campaigns, throughout this period, the building continued to be advertised on the Church of England website, from which a number of parties expressed interest in the property, none of which were sustained after visiting the property and assessing its viability.

Over the years, despite expenditure on the building by the Diocese, the condition of St Paul's has deteriorated and is now a major health and safety risk. The decay of the polyphant stone has continued, with new evidence of ongoing structural movement in the east gable wall, and substantial repairs to the roofs and external walls around the building are needed. Exposure to vandalism, pigeon infestation and general deterioration have added to the substantial liability that falls on the Diocese for this property.

As such, the Diocese of Truro has reported to the Commissioners that it has exhausted all possibilities for finding an alternative use for the building and has requested the Commissioners to determine its future. The Diocese considers that demolition would enable the site to be used for something useful for the city, with residential being the most advantageous and realistic given the access constraints.

The Views of the Statutory Advisory Committee

The Commissioners statutory advisors, The Statutory Advisory Committee of the Church Buildings Council (SAC) considered the church to be of moderate significance as a heritage asset, although the value of the church as a feature in the townscape lifted the overall assessment from moderate, to moderate to high. In this context the SAC noted the Historic England refusal of an application to raise the current listing from grade II to II*. In the absence of a suitable use – and in the last resort – the SAC agreed that while it would regret the loss of the church, it would not object to the demolition of the church as a whole; adding that a cleared site offered better scope for replacing the church with a building of quality.

Demolition and Planning Considerations

Church of England church buildings which are listed and those in a conservation area which are closed for regular public worship, and which are the subject of a Pastoral (Church Buildings Disposal) Scheme providing for demolition in pursuance of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011, are exempt from listed building control by virtue of section 60(7) of

the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. However, under an agreement made in 1978 and modified in 1986, the Commissioners have agreed to refer such cases to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for a decision on whether a non-statutory public inquiry should be held where Historic England, the Statutory Advisory Committee, the local planning authority, or a national amenity society have lodged reasoned and sustained objections to a draft Scheme proposing demolition. The Commissioners have agreed to accept a recommendation from the Secretary of State following such an inquiry.

Correspondence

Further information about the proposals may be obtained from the Case Officer, Adrian Browning by e-mail at adrian.browning@churchofengland.org .

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:

**Rex Andrew
Pastoral and Closed Churches
Church Commissioners
Church House
Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3AZ**

Or by e-mail to: [**rex.andrew@churchofengland.org**](mailto:rex.andrew@churchofengland.org)

Any communication received after Monday 2 December 2024 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 where there are also links to download copies of these notes and the draft scheme.

A M G Browning
21 October 2024