



## Statement of Need

Extension and resurfacing of existing carpark, new foul water connection and associated

St. Peter's Church,  
St. Peter's Street,  
St. Albans,  
Hertfordshire  
AL1 3HG

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MDP Architects  
65 Hermitage Road,  
Hitchin,  
Hertfordshire, HP17 8RG

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## **1.0 | INTRODUCTION**

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St Peter's church is located at the northern end of its parish which encompasses much of central St Albans and extends in a SSE direction to the North Orbital road. The parish has a population of around 10,900 people. The church has around 250 worshipping members of the community on the electoral roll. There are four regular services held every week at the church which are well attended. The variety of services allows for different ages and family groups to attend and feel welcome at the church.

In addition to the weekly services regular special services for weddings, baptisms and funerals. Throughout the year celebrational services are Easter, Christmas etc are held in the church which can have numbers of those attending raised to around 350 people.

Alongside worship, groups that provide activities and events also use the main church and church hall facilities. These include Messy Church and Messy Toddlers; Organ recitals and music events including regular lunchtime concerts; Toddler time groups; Choir Practice; Church Supper Nights; Film nights; Lent Groups.

St Peter's PCC has been working hard to implement phases of an overall masterplan for re-ordering the church ensure that the thriving base for worship and community need is being met. In recent years the vestries have been overhauled with the introduction of a mezzanine level to provide basic background facilities and storage to support the activities held at the church. The church hall has had the kitchenette refitted and additional storage added for improved use. In the main centre of the church a larger project has just been completed to remove the pews; lay a new stone floor; and replace the pews with chairs. Works to improve the heating and electrical service have also been carried out.

## 2.0 | STATEMENT OF NEED

### 2.1 Needs of the Parish

Although parking for all visitors to the church and hall can not be provided the PCC would like to allow for the parking to be extended and improved particularly to include those who are less mobile, elderly parishioners or young families with small children who would greatly benefit from improved parking.

Currently there are no disabled access spaces and nine car parking spaces. These are not marked as bays, so how the cars are laid out is dependent on how users select to park their cars. There are two additional 'unmade' parking spaces covered with a thin layer of gravel which the verger's family use to park in a tandem layout. Increased capacity and a more cohesive and intuitive layout is required.



*Fig. 1 - existing parking from east looking towards the driveway*



*Fig. 2 - existing parking and verger parking on the right*

The current parking is finished with a mix of grasscrete and areas of gravel which is not ideal for visitors with mobility issues. Apart from one lamp post on the adjoining pathway there is no lighting for the existing car park.



*Fig. 3 - existing entrance from the road looking toward the south porch path*



*Fig. 4 - existing driveway looking east toward the parking entrance*

The approach to the car park is slim making manoeuvring into and out of the car park quite tricky. Lighting again is dependent on a streetlight at the entrance gateway and a second on the corner of the parking area.

The existing finish of the south porch path is brick setts which are uneven and do not provide a smooth main approach for those visiting the church. The approach to both the car park and south porch have been carefully reviewed and resigned to provide a welcoming and safe entrance to the church. The existing yew trees on this approach also are in need of pruning which will add natural light to the current route.

A small kitchenette to the rear of the nave purely for drinks is proposed to provide a much need drinks location within the church itself rather than having the reply completely of the kitchenette in the hall which is located quite a distance away. The hall also hold separate meetings and events in tandem with worship and meetings in the main church. During the floor works in the nave a drain pipe way ran under the west nave wall and a FW/Water inspection chamber created.

## 2.2 The Proposals

The proposals being considered have recently received approval from St Albans Planning department (Ref: 5/22/2590 – issued 20/01/2025) The planning decision took St Albans Planning Department two years to make a decision on due to internal staffing issues and the PCC are very keen to secure the approved scheme by making a substantial start on the works to keep this in place.

As substantial funds have been used on the previous re-ordering projects mentioned above the PCC are hoping to split the works into two phases for the car park. Firstly, to initially secure the planning permission. The second phase will then complete the works as soon as the funding for Phase two becomes available.

#### **Phase 1 – Initial works to extend the parking**

The first section of works comprises the extension of the parking area along with excavation and fitting ducting and access boxes which future electrical services can be pulled through in phase two.

There are three areas of differing build up methods which include building over existing ground levels or those requiring minor excavation. The extended car park finish at this stage will comprise the hardcore underlayer with a permeable layer of asphalt binder course over. The binder course will be edged with Everedge Titan and bays marked with brick setts to demark the proposed parking bays.

Ducting for future electrical connections to lighting and electrical car charging points will be run from the existing electrical consumer unit position in the south vestry and run down the path as indicated on plan to the location for future fittings. Ducting access boxes have been allowed for in each fitting position. Draw through strings within the ducting will be put in place to enable a clean connection in phase two of the works.

To facilitate phase one T17 a sycamore on the south boundary is proposed to be removed. This proposal has been put forward in close consultation with the arboriculturist advising on the project and details are stated in his report regarding this.

**Phase Two – South porch path relaying, widening the approach driveway, installing lighting and electric car charging points, installation of bollards and posts to limit damage to the churchyard, verger parking, bin storage provision, finish layer of permeable resin bound gravel over areas marked in the parking, drive and paths.**

Following the initial phase, widening of the driveway and verger's parking, using similar methods and build up to the phase one are proposed. Installation of further demarked edging using setts and Everedge is proposed. This will also be extended up the south porch path leading to a new proposed area of yorkstone landing directly outside the south porch.

During the excavation in this phase further electrical connection points will be created for lighting and an electrically operated traffic bollard at the main entrance gate. Due to the church's central town location greater control for user groups of the church for access to the car park is now required. Further bollards and small wooden posts will help to ensure that the car arrangements are not harming the churchyard and being used by the church parishioners and user groups. Improved lighting in all area of the development has been carefully designed to keep a low-level background lighting throughout the pedestrian and parking areas to make the approach safer. Two electrical charging points are also in the scheme to provide an environmentally sound and carbon reducing solution for the users of the car park.

During this stage of works the PCC intends to utilise the groundwork element on site to make a foul water drainage connection from the newly created manhole directly adjacent to the west wall and connecting to a newly created manhole in St Peter's Street. The existing water connection from the church hall is due to take the same route to avoid further trenches and digging.

The final stage of phase two will be to complete the parking, driveway and path with a resin bound gravel finish.



*Fig. 5 - proposed finishing materials as agreed by St Albans District Council*

### **2.3 Why the proposals are required and consultations**

The DAC have been consulted and involved in all of re-ordering projects to date. The car park extension has been included in the overview of this, with this application adding needed detail to show the requirement and proposals further.

As previously mentioned Archaeologists, Arboriculturists, Surveying Consultants, St Albans Planning and Conservation Department, Highways and the local community via the congregation and the planning proposals have commented and had a helpful impact on the proposed scheme.

### **2.4 How the proposal will contribute to the need for environmental sustainability**

As part of the design process three surveys have been carried out by consultants on the car park so we can reduce as far as practical any negative impact on any existing tree roots and historic/archaeological features that may be present on site. Using the data from a topographical, GRP radar report and report regarding the existing trees we have been able to reduce the level of required digging for the new car park build up. Where excavation is required the works have been kept as shallow as possible and will be overseen by an appointed Archaeologist and Arboriculturist where required.

The type of finishes specified are permeable and will allow surface water to drain back into the ground. The lighting proposed has been kept subtle in nature with the beams facing towards the ground. This should limit any negative effects to local bats who may be present near the site.

### **2.5 Justification for the Alterations**

Given the care taken to cause minimal impact within the churchyard to any elements of significance and that the scheme is seeking to keep the proposals as simple and minimal in nature as feasible we believe the new car park extension, driveway and improved path will add more to the church than take away. This provides the visitors with safer and improved access. Enabling a larger section of the community to visit the church for events, social activities and worship.