

EDW /

St Matthews Church, 44 Clarence Street, Cheltenham, GL50 3PL

29 November 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by EdgeDesignWorkshop Ltd. on behalf of St Matthews Church for a planning application for a proposed external signage at 44 Clarence Street, Cheltenham, GL50 3PL.
- 1.2 The purpose of this statement is to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to support the proposed development.
- 1.3 This document should be read in conjunction with the proposed drawings 1657_300-308.

2.0 Context

- 2.1 St. Matthew's Church is Grade II listed [reference IOE01/15716/32] due to its special contribution to the history, appearance, and character of Cheltenham. Built between 1876 & 1879 it is located in a prominent position on the corner of Clarence Street and St Georges Place. The church is designed in a Gothic Revival style and is constructed of ashlar stonework with dressed masonry to the openings and quoins. It is also within the 'Old Town' character area of the Central Conservation Area of Cheltenham.
- 2.2 The planning history for the site is as follows:
 - Updating existing signage for new branding involving updating one sign, resitting one sign, reinstating one sign. Installing a new sign in car park area. Upgrading noticeboard and lights to back illuminated noticeboards - Withdrawn. Ref: 23/00169/ADV.
 - Restoration works to an external light well at St Matthews Church—Approved. Ref: 17/02443/LBC.
 - Partial demolition of existing chimney stack to south vestry of church –Approve d. Ref: 07/00819/FUL.
 - Change of use of bookshop to church use and construction of disabled access ramp (retrospective) –Approved. Ref: 99/50003/COU.
 - New Shop Sign to The Right of Shop Entrance and Logo Above Door onto The Glass - Approved. Ref: 90/00908/LA.
 - Erection Of Ground Floor Extension on North Side to Relocate Rectors Office and Parish Office and Provide Disabled W.C. And Charitable Christian Bookshop –Approved. Ref: 88/01365/PF.
 - Erection Of Ground Floor Extension on North Side to Relocate Rectors Office and Parish Office and Provide Disabled W.C. And Charitable Christian Bookshop –Approved. Ref: 88/01368/LA.
 - Erection Of Extension at Ground Floor to Form Christian Bookshop with Parish Offices -Refused. Ref: 88/00539/LA.
 - Erection Of Extension to Form New Christian Bookshop and Church Offices with Remodelling of Church Entrance Porch –Refused. Ref: 88/00536/PF.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 We have been appointed by St Matthew's and the Minster to review their brand assets and produce a strategy for external signage that reflects the unique character of St Matthew's Church and provides clear displays for information and wayfinding around the building, and to the nearby Cheltenham Minster, which is the oldest building in Cheltenham.
- 3.2 This application is submitted in response to the withdrawal of a previous application for external signage [reference 23/00169/ADV]. Previous comments from the conservation officer to this application include:
- "The character of advertising signs in the immediate vicinity of the proposal site is principally defined by that to commercial and public buildings, and banners hanging from street lighting columns. Overall, signage appears to be relatively restrained. The 2no. signs proposed for the car park are too large and detract from the architecture of the Church."
 - "The bold blue adds to the visually intrusive nature of these signs, which also appear overly large for the message they convey. "
 - "The sign proposed for the lower section of the tower, is too large almost the same size of the window to the right in elevation. This detracts from the architectural value of the building. The comments as regards the blue colour and the overly large size for the text as above also applies to this sign."
 - "The size of the 2no. signs flanking the main entrance (west end/north elevation) appear to be acceptable; however, if they are internally illuminated (see above), they are unacceptable."
 - "The scheme will detract from the appearance of the Grade II* listed church and the signage is not in keeping with the character of the conservation area in the immediate vicinity of the proposal site. These elements will detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area (a designated heritage asset)."
- 3.3 In our view the brand assets of St Matthew's and the Minster do reflect the churches in a positive manner, however the previous signage application perhaps didn't capture the essence of the branding in a succinct way, and therefore the signs appeared rather large, with a colour scheme that was too harsh for the historic setting.
- 3.4 We also believe that St Matthew's Church should have its own identity, and whilst intrinsically linked to Cheltenham Minster should celebrate its own identity. We therefore advised that sign boards should be reduced to include only St Matthew's Church on most of the signs, allowing them to be smaller in scale and clearer with their message.
- 3.5 We also reviewed signage in the local area, which we agree with the previous comments from the conservation officer are quite restrained, yet clear in their messaging.



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3.6 The proposed design of the external signage is therefore very restrained and limited in both its text and scale. The background colour of the signs will be mild steel allowing them to contrast the buff-coloured stonework but complement the dark windows and roof.

3.7 The proposed signage includes:

Sign 1

One totem sign, measuring 650 x 1500mm which will be erected adjacent to the visitor car park and indicating the location of The Cheltenham Minster.



Sign 2

Five low level 'no parking' signs mounted on post at low level around the perimeter of the car park.



Sign 3

One fixed sign mounted on the Clarence Street elevation adjacent to the church office, measuring 370 x 700mm.



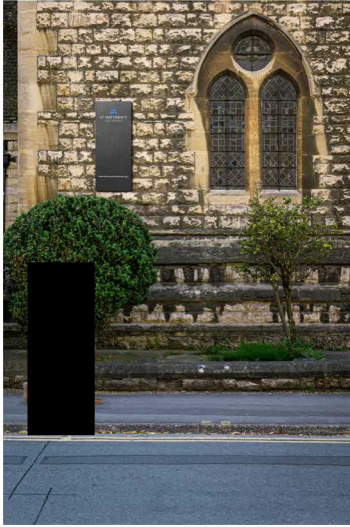
Sign 4

Two 367 x 490mm lockable signs mounted either side of the church entrance, allowing informative text to be neatly framed and amended as necessary.



Sign 5

One 600 x 1500mm sign to be mounted on the St George's Place elevation.



4.0 Summary

- 4.1 We believe that we have designed subtle yet bold signage that contrasts but complements the existing historic building. The signs will also complement the wider setting and provide clear communication for visitors to the area.