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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE, JUSTIFICATION, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed Development at
Marshall Rooms
Iron Acton
23.1558

Prepared by
Verity & Beverley Ltd
Architects and Designers

SITE

The Marshall Rooms constructed in 1993 is a detached building which currently serves as a meeting space/ church hall for the Parish Church of St James the Less. The building is situated off a private lane close to the centre of the village of Iron Acton. The application site is within the Iron Acton Conservation area.

The property has been traditionally constructed with a rendered exterior with stone quoining over a stone plinth. The gable roof is finished with concrete double roman tiles which abut the gable end parapet walls. There are stone mullion windows with metal casements alongside timber doors with a mix of arched and flat heads.



North and East elevations

SCHEME DESIGN PROPOSALS

The proposals are for internal and external alterations to form a modest three-bedroom dwelling whilst keeping within the existing building envelope and retaining the double height space internally. External proposals on the west elevation are to enlarge two existing windows on the ground floor and introduce a new first floor window all to overlook the adjacent churchyard but not the adjacent properties. All new windows are to have traditional stone surrounds with hood moulds to match the existing windows of the property. The existing door on the west elevation is to be removed and infilled to match the existing materials. On the north elevation the double doors for the existing storage room are proposed to be removed and infilled with materials to match the existing. On the south elevation the proposed design includes relocating an existing rooflight as well as two new rooflights to allow more natural light into the living space of the property. A new solar panel array is also proposed to be installed on the southern roof. Heating and hot water are to be provided by a new air source heat pump on the west elevation, making the works a sustainable upgrade.

JUSTIFICATION

In 2019, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St James the Less publicly announced its intention to remodel aspects of the church, to allow for the provision of toilet facilities, a multipurpose meeting/quiet room and vestry, hospitality facilities, and flexible space for use by the community including an area dedicated to education.

To fund these updates, which are necessary to ensure the future of the church, it is proposed to gain planning consent for a change of use of the Marshall rooms and then to sell the site with planning consent.

The Marshall Rooms is significantly smaller and less equipped than the nearby Parish Hall, which is owned by the community and provides excellent indoor and outdoor community space. With catering, bar facilities and a car park. The Marshall Rooms is unable to offer any of these facilities and as such this makes them less attractive as a gathering space in the village. Consequently, Due to the limited use, the Marshall Rooms are currently a loss-making asset for the PCC, with an annual deficit of c.£2,000.00 per annum.

Additional to this Parish files indicate that in the years following their completion, the Marshall Rooms went through a mildly fractious period of relations with the neighbours who share an access lane to the Marshall Rooms. The PCC and Redevelopment Group are of one mind that this should be avoided as far as is reasonably possible. To this end, an informal consultation with the property's immediate neighbours has been conducted along with a formal consultation targeted at all areas of the ecclesiastical parish.

If the rooms were to become used more regularly, we contend that due to the restricted access this would have even more of a detrimental impact on access and parking for the property's neighbours.

PLANNING HISTORY

P93/1087 Erection of building for use as church meeting room with ancillary office and toilet accommodation
Approved 28th April 1993

CONCLUSION

In summary, the proposed alterations would be an improvement to the overall appearance of the existing building and complementary to the surroundings whilst reducing the number of people who currently access the building via the private road. The proposed materials are all to match the existing materials and will have very little impact on the surrounding area. The introduction of solar panels and an air source heat pump would provide this property with a very good sustainable and ecological improvement.

ACCESS

Vehicular and pedestrian access will not be affected by the proposals.

Verity & Beverley Ltd
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