

Conservation & Design Observations

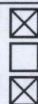
ML

Ref No: -2012/2080 **Site:** Church of St Mary & St Thomas, Church Street, Wymondham

CO Name: DE

Proposal: Two new single storey extensions to the south-east and north-east of the church, with new railings and path within the east monastic tower

Listed Building
Affects Setting of LB
In Conservation Area



Conservation & Design Architect Initial Comments:

Site Visit: Pre-application

General Comments:

This is a revised approach to the alterations and extensions to the abbey church previously approved in 2002, the development of which has been the subject of a number of pre-application meetings and discussions.

The application is supported by a 'Statement of Need' which provides details of the new and improved facilities as part of 'The Abbey Experience' project. A detailed Design & Access Statement supported by a Conservation Management Plan sets out details of the significance of the abbey church and how the proposed design has responded to this.

I have no objections to the principle of extending to the south-east and north-east, which was established with the previously approved scheme. The design approach ensures minimum intervention to the historic fabric of the existing building and proposals for the east tower now include a paved link connecting the two extensions by unblocking existing door openings and a simple wrought iron railing enclosure rather than the two storey glazed infill previously proposed. Enclosing of the former St Margaret's Chapel to the north-east to create an interpretation, learning space and choir vestry provides an opportunity to significantly enhance this area by removing the existing unsightly fence, oil tank and redundant brick flue from the underground boiler room. The proposed external elevational treatment is simple in detail using a combination of stonework and glazing, an oak boarded door and a sedum and wildflower roof which in my view, is entirely appropriate in this location. The form of the extension to the south-east follows and extends the line of the south aisle and its overall scale is appropriate in relation to the existing massing and scale of the abbey. Careful consideration has been given to the relationship between the new extension and the existing architectural features and details. The extension has been designed in a distinctively contemporary manner but is simple in detail using traditional materials which relate positively to the character of the existing building, including natural stone and glazing and aterne coated, stainless steel, standing seam roof which resembles the appearance of the existing lead roof. Internally, there is a distinctive structural system consisting of exposed, profiled steel 'trees', visible through the glazing to the east elevation, creating a high quality, contemporary design solution.

Issues of sustainability including energy use, energy efficiency and opportunities for renewable energy technologies have been carefully considered as an integral part of the design process. These include the provision of natural lighting; passive solar gain controlled with external louvres; photovoltaic cells to the glazing in the roof lights; use of low embodied energy materials wherever possible; rainwater harvesting for flushing of toilets and a green roof to the north-east extension.

Overall, I would positively support the proposals as distinctive C21 additions to the abbey and I would recommend approval subject to the conditions noted below.

Further negotiations required: No

Recommendation: Approve

Suggested conditions for approval:

1. External materials for approval including stonework, stainless steel roofing and external paving. Sample panel of stonework, 1 metre square to be constructed on site for inspection and approval by LPA.
2. Full working details to min scale of 1:20 to include typical junctions between new extensions and exiting historic fabric at a scale of 1:5.
3. Full details of all glazing including PV cells to roof lights and infill glazing to east arch opening; oak solar shading louvres; external door to north; details & specification of green roof; external railings.
4. Full details of unblocking of existing openings.
5. Making good to match existing where necessary as a result of the works.

Officer Initials: David Edleston Conservation, Design & Landscape Manager

Date: 12 December 2012