

12 DCNW2004/1305/F - RAMP ACCESS TO SOUTH ENTRANCE DOOR OF CHURCH AT ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS CHURCH, CROFT, LEOMINSTER**For: P.C.C. of St Michael's Church per Bartosch and Stokes, 1 Bath Mews, Bath Parade, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 7HL****Date Received: 8th April 2004****Ward: Bircher****Grid Ref: 44990, 65421****Expiry Date: 3rd June 2004**

Local Member: Councillor W.L.S. Bowen

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 This application seeks planning permission for the development of an access ramp on the south side of St Michael and All Angels Church, Croft. The Church is a Grade I Listed Building though no Listed Building Application is required by virtue of ecclesiastic exemption. The church is a very attractive mid 14th Century building, extended in the 16th century and restored in the 17th and 19th Century. The church lies to the east of Croft Castle. The site falls within a Historic Park and Garden.
- 1.2 The application originally requested a ramp constructed stone to match the existing, together with handrail. This proposal was not supported by the Historic Buildings Officer and after protracted negotiations the scheme has been revised. The application now seeks consent for works to raise the pathway along the line of the original path at an increased elevation. The existing steps would be preserved with an overlay of a breathable membrane.

2. PoliciesGovernment GuidancePPG1
PPG15
PPG16Leominster District Local PlanA1 – Managing the Districts Assets
A2(D) – Settlement Hierarchy
A11 – Parks, Gardens and other Historical Landscape Features
A18 – Listed Buildings and their Settings
A22 – Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites
A24 – Scale and Character of DevelopmentHerefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft)

S1 – Sustainable Development

S2 – Development Requirements
S7 – Natural and Historic Heritage
DR1 - Design
LA4 – Protection of Historic Parks and Gardens
HBA1 – Alterations and Extensions to Listed Buildings
HBA4 – Setting of Listed Buildings
ARCH3 – Scheduled Ancient Monuments

3. Planning History

None

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 The Environment Agency raised no objections to this application.
- 4.2 English Heritage raised no objections to the revised proposal.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.3 The PROW manager raised no objection to this application
- 4.4 The County Archaeologist raised no objection to this proposal subject to a condition to allow for site observation.
- 4.5 The Head of Engineering and Transportation raised no objections to this application
- 4.6 The Head of Conservation raised no objection to the revised proposal, subject to appropriate conditioning.

5. Representations

- 5.1 The National Trust have maintained their objection to the revised proposal. The National Trust would prefer to see a timber ramp installed to remove the need for any ground works.
- 5.2 Croft and Yarpole Parish Council raised no objections to this application.
- 5.3 The Garden History Society raised no objections to this application
- 5.4 The full text of these letters can be inspected at Northern Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officers Appraisal

- 6.1 St Michaels Church, and indeed Croft Castle and the surrounding grounds, are of national importance and as such although this proposal is modest in scale it is nevertheless of great importance.
- 6.2 From a planning policy perspective there are no objections to this development subject to the implications upon the Listed building and wider area. Concern was raised over

the original submission, which called for a stone structure, due to the physical and visual impact of this concept. It was considered that the preferred options for this ramp were either a wooden ramp, or the physical building up of the pathway. Both these options have the advantage of being totally reversible, enabling the total protection of the church. Both these options were explored in some detail and while advantages exist with both options, the building up of the pathway has been chosen as the preferred choice. This scheme involves the use of the existing access point through the hedge, unlike the wooden ramp which would require a new opening. The existing opening would be widened to allow for a footpath of 1.1 metres width. The footpath would follow the existing lie of the footpath, creating a gradual incline to the entranceway. The existing steps will be retained and preserved. This proposal will involve minimal intervention physically and visually the impact will be limited. It is considered that the proposal will not harm the associated Listed Building or the wider area.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be approved subject to the following conditions:

1 A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission))

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2 D03 (Site observation – archaeology)

Reason: To allow the potential archaeological interest of the site to be investigated and recorded.

3 Prior to the commencement of development the existing steps shall be recorded by drawing and photographs with said records submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the preservation of this building of special architectural and historical importance.

4 B01 (Samples of external materials)

Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings.

5 Prior to the commencement of development the method of protecting the area of wall to the nave of the church, adjacent to the steps, on the south facing elevation shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the preservation of this building of special architectural importance and to safeguard the character and appearance of this building of special architectural and historical importance.

Informatives:

1 N15 (Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC

2 N03 (Adjoining property rights)

- 3 ND03 (Contract Address)
- 4 - NC01 (Alterations to Submission/Approved Plans)

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.