

RUISLIP BAPTIST CHURCH

PROPOSED ENHANCED OFFICE ACCOMMODATION AND FUNCTIONS ROOMS

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT and PLANNING STATEMENT

1.0 About Ruislip Baptist Church

- 1.1 Ruislip Baptist Church is an active Christian fellowship within Ruislip Manor with around 350 people, including children, regularly attending its activities. Its leadership team, supported by 10 staff members and a large pool of volunteers run a services of community focussed events as well as regular Sunday services. A sample of their activities include:

Holiday at Home – 3 day event for over 55's in August
Holiday Club – 1 week event for school years 2-6 in July
Café Connect – free drop in café for the local community
Springboard – activities for adults with additional needs
Action Tots
Senior Citizens New Year Party
Alpha Course – for the local community to learn about the gospel
Supporting Hillingdon Food Bank

- 1.2 A full list of the activities they run can be found on their website.

<https://www.ruislipbaptistchurch.org/events>

2.0 Design and Access Issues

These proposals have been designed following a consideration of the relevant Design and Access issues:

- 2.1 This property lies at the junction of West Way and Manor Way in Ruislip Manor. The site is roughly rectangular and comprises approx. 0.14 hectares. The frontage of the site facing West Way is 35 metres and the frontage facing Manor Way is 39.2 metres. The site lies within the Town Centre of Ruislip Manor but outside the primary and secondary shopping areas.
- 2.2 The existing buildings largely cover the application site. A 2m wide landscaped strip runs along the Manor Way frontage of the site between the north-west elevation and the footpath. The main pedestrian access to the church, secondary pedestrian accesses and some limited car parking spaces occupy the hard surfacing between the south-west elevation and the footpath on West Way.
- 2.3 To the south-east boundary of the site is the flank wall of the ground floor car park serving the residential flats on the adjoining site. An access route along two-thirds of the south-east boundary, provides one of the existing means of escape to the church premises.
- 2.4 The building in the north corner of the site was formerly a retail unit with ancillary storage accommodation above. That building is the end of a two storey terrace, which fronts Manor Way. To the rear of this building in the eastern corner of the site are some interconnected single storey buildings that abut the south-east boundary of the site but are about 2.5 metres from the eastern boundary. The space between the single storey buildings and site boundary is of very poor quality and of little practical use. Its primary purpose is to serve as a fire

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escape route. These buildings form the extent of the development proposals described in this application.

- 2.5 The church sanctuary building on the west corner of the site was constructed in 1965. A tall spire above it provides a strong focal point in the local streetscape. The eaves of this building are slightly lower than the ridgelines of the adjacent two storey residential and commercial properties, which front Manor Way.
- 2.6 Joined to the sanctuary and fronting onto West Way is the Church Hall complex, comprising meeting rooms and ancillary facilities, constructed in 2010. This building is two storeys in height with a 'flat' roof above. Whilst the parapet line of this element is about 1 metre lower than the eaves of the modern church, the treatment of the façade between the two elements allows them to be read as a single entity.
- 2.7 The residential flats to the south of the church was formerly the car park for the Windmill Public House, which stood at the top of Ruislip Manor High Street. The current building largely comprises circulation areas and car parking at basement and ground floor level and residential flats at 1st, 2nd and 3rd floor level.
- 2.8 On the western side of West Way are a mix of detached bungalows and two storey dwellings.
- 2.9 The buildings in the eastern corner of the site are currently being developed in accordance with planning permission ref 7454/APP/2019/431, allowed at appeal ref: APP/R5510/W/20/3250274 dated 14/8/2020 (Erection of a five storey building to create Use Class B8 floor space at ground and first floor levels and 2 x studio flats with associated amenity space).

3.0 The Saved Policies of the London Borough of Hillingdon

- 3.1 The London Borough of Hillingdon Local Plan adopted on 16th January 2020 supports the continued provision of cultural facilities to meet the needs of the Boroughs residents. Relevant clauses of the Development Management Plan are as follows:

Retaining existing Community Infrastructure

- 7.4 *Hillingdon's Community infrastructure (such as emergency services, community and social spaces), strategic infrastructure (such as public utilities), and cultural facilities are vital to the identity and function of the Borough, as well as its attractive and distinctive character. The Council's policy is to retain and make best use of existing recreational, leisure and community facilities. The Council will therefore exercise a presumption in favour of retaining existing recreational assets such as parks, facilities for outdoor sports and children's play areas, including allotments which have a key role in supporting community cohesion. The NPPF states that planning policies should plan positively for local communities, including public houses. Proposals involving the loss of a pub will be required to take account of the particular planning guidance for pubs produced by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA).*

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7.6 The provision of appropriate community facilities and inclusive access to such facilities is a prerequisite for the proper functioning of any community. The Council is committed to supporting continued provision and where necessary, expansion of social and strategic infrastructure and cultural facilities to meet the needs of the Borough's residents.

7.7 Development/redevelopment of social and strategic infrastructure should be designed to meet the needs of their intended occupants, taking into account any appropriate regulations and national design and space standards. New development should not unduly harm residential amenity, the environment or transport infrastructure in line with all the policies in this document. They must also be appropriate for their surroundings in terms of scale, character and mix of uses.

3.2 This application seeks to upgrade the existing property facilities to meet the current and anticipated future needs of the Church and its community focused activities.

4.0 Design

4.1 The increasing operation and maintenance costs of the older parts of the church premises and their failure to meet the changing needs and requirements of a modern community facility have prompted this application.

4.2 The proposed development would occupy the site of;

- the existing hall used for youth and other community facilities, commonly known as the 'Sidewalk',
- the existing ground and 1st floor church office accommodation, storage rooms and staff welfare facilities,
- some of the church's toilet facilities; and
- the circulation space linking all of the above.

4.3 The existing fabric on this eastern part of the site is very tired. Some of it is already beyond the end of its design life. The narrow, steep steps, upper floor and utilitarian finishes are unwelcoming and inaccessible to those with mobility issues and unsuitable as a working environment for the Church staff.

4.4 The proposed 1.5 storey development to the rear of the development site gives the opportunity to provide a slightly larger and better-proportioned hall. The existing hall is mostly used for children and youth activities, for which space is a prerequisite. The enlarged internal space would be a major benefit to this activity.

4.5 The current storage facilities within the development area will be replaced with new, purpose-built cupboards.

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- 4.6 The proposed development would also replace the existing WC accommodation in this area. This currently comprises;

- 1 disabled WC
- 1 unisex WC (for staff at 1st floor level)
- 1 men's cloakroom and
- 1 women's cloakroom.

The new facilities would comprise of:

- 6 unisex WC's, one of which would be a disabled WC unit, and
- 1 new staff WC.

This accommodation would be a huge improvement on the existing provision and would be safer and more flexible to use for individuals.

- 4.7 In addition to a new (AD K-compliant) stair, the proposals include for a new lift, providing those with mobility issues access to all parts of the proposed development area and the wider church from the Manor Way entrance.
- 4.8 The proposed two storey development on the street frontage would provide purpose-built office accommodation for the Church staff.
- 4.9 The ground floor of the new two storey office section of the development would provide a new open plan staff office.
- 4.10 The first floor of the new two storey office section of the development would provide 3 separate offices, a staff kitchen facility, (all accessible to the mobility impaired,) and a new staff WC (off of the 'ground to first' stair half landing).
- 4.11 The office accommodation would sit on a modestly expanded footprint to that of the existing 2 storey terrace accommodation, but the space created would be more versatile and accessible to all.
- 4.12 The proposed development would not result in any increase in the seating capacity of the main Church sanctuary and would not result in any increase in the number of meeting rooms, but it would result in a more attractive, comfortable and flexible environment, accessible to all.
- 4.13 The proposed development better utilises the area of the (already developed) site and replace existing, unattractive and piecemeal accommodation with a cohesive design which would restore the lines of the existing terraced shop building on completion.
- 4.14 The new Manor Way entrance creates a strong focal point and enhanced security to staff and users of this community building.
- 4.15 In street frontage terms, the completed development would better integrate the volume of the sanctuary with the adjoining retail terrace via the new 2 storey flat roof link element. Both existing elements, (sanctuary and terrace,) are still clearly articulated on the façade when viewed obliquely, but the new link element between the two is better scaled to sit between and join both. This accords with the design principles established for this link element on the previously approved application 14434/APP/2009/1745 dated 2nd October 2009.

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- 4.16 We consider there will be no loss of sunlight/daylight to any neighbouring development from these proposals. The height of the (raised) rear hall roof will still be below the level of 1st floor window cills on the rear of the Manor Way terrace. The floor level within the new rear hall would be as now.
- 4.17 No windows in the proposed development will overlook any immediately adjoining neighbouring development.
- 4.18 The single storey link element in these proposals, joining the new hall and the office accommodation block, is specifically designed to accommodate the existing (southwest-facing) fanlight windows in the site boundary wall of 128, Manor Way.
- 4.19 Unlike the existing fabric on this part of the site, the proposed development would be constructed to current energy efficiency requirements. This will significantly reduce the current energy requirements for servicing the accommodation.
- 4.20 The local plan policies seek to encourage community facilities and Ruislip Baptist Church is a locally supported establishment used by all ages and abilities. These proposals seek to improve the existing facilities, making them more welcoming and accessible to the elderly, disabled and those with young children, as well as providing purpose-built office accommodation for the Church staff.
- 4.21 The design of this proposed development has taken into account the development plan policies. We have informally consulted with the members of the church and no adverse comments have been received regarding its design and we consider it would improve the character of the street scene and considerably benefit the wide range of people who use the premises.

5.0 Access

- 5.1 These proposals do not impact any existing parking facilities either on or off site (save for those impacted by necessary temporary access for site works arising from their execution). The proposals do not envisage the creation of any additional parking demand arising from activities on the Church premises following completion of these proposals.
- 5.2 The existing parking provision accords with the arrangement shown on the previously approved application 14434/APP/2009/1745.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 It is considered that these proposals would not materially affect the amenities of any neighbouring dwellings or the locality but would positively improve the visual amenities of Manor Way and would introduce a lively and well-designed building which addresses the reasonable needs of all.