

Neutral Citation Number: [2024] ECC She 2

**DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD
In the Consistory Court**

Her Honour Judge Sarah Singleton KC
Chancellor

In the Matter of ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST GOOLE - Construction of parking area in the churchyard

Judgment

1. The Application

The works proposed are the construction of a 21-space car park in the churchyard to formalise existing parking arrangements. There is a shortage of available parking for visitors to the church and Parish centre and parking in the churchyard already occurs. These plans are intended to create an accessible and sustainable site and prevent damage to the churchyard particularly caused by prolonged periods of wet weather.

This proposal is the first phase of a project for the redevelopment of St John's churchyard, to include spaces for relaxation, quiet reflection, outdoor worship and gatherings.

2. The Church

St John the Evangelist is a grade 2 listed church constructed between 1843 and 1848. Goole had only recently been developed. The town was created at the site of the junction between the newly built Aire and Calder canal with the River Ouse to create an inland port. The church construction was paid for by the Aire and Calder Navigation Company.

The church is important to its local community and to the Diocese. A large number of occasional offices are conducted and it is estimated that more than 10,000 people visit per year. In addition the church is one of two resourcing churches in the Diocese of Sheffield. The site is a busy venue and proper parking arrangements are necessary.

3. The impact of the works

These works do not touch upon the character of this church as a building of special architectural or historical interest. An archaeological watching brief will be deployed during the works.

A bat and ecological survey carried out between 2021 and 2024 concluded that the level of impact did not require additional compulsory mitigation.

4. Consultation, Planning Permission and Public Notice

The Petitioners have given notice of these works to Historic England who do not consider that statutory consultation is necessary for these works.

A validated planning application has been made to the East Riding of Yorkshire Council.

Public Notice requirements have been completed and no objections have been received.

5. DAC

The DAC recommended these works for approval at their meeting of 28th February 2024 subject to a proviso that wooden sleepers be deployed in the marked spaces rather than rubber wheel stops. This in fact reflects a decision which had already been taken by the PCC of the church in response to the advice of the DAC structural engineering advisor.

6. Decision and Reasons

These works have been carefully planned to have a low impact visually and to protect the grass surface of the churchyard, to minimise disturbance of grave sites and to fulfil an obvious need for visitors to the church.

The cost of these works is some £25,000 and the Petitioners plan to seek available funding. The impending deadline to apply for such funding, I hope explains the brevity of this judgment to accompany a direction issued on the online system that a Faculty be issued as sought in respect of this well planned and uncontroversial petition.

Sarah Singleton KC

**HHJ Sarah Singleton KC
Chancellor of the Diocese**

14th April 2024