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Our ref: L01229870

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Dear Ms Howson

### **Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2015**

#### **ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, CHURCH STREET, KIRKBY MALZEARD Application No. 20/02721/LB**

Thank you for your letter of 14 August 2020 regarding the above application for listed building consent. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

#### **Summary**

The curtilage listed churchyard wall of St Andrew's Church is consistent in character and appearance along its western extent facing onto Church Street. This homogeneity in materials and form reinforces the sense of absolute demarcation between the secular and sacred within the village. While we are supportive of these works, which look to stabilise and safeguard the immediate and long-term future of this heritage asset, we have concerns regarding the proposed methodology for remedial works. We consider the visibility of the soil nail patress plates to be an incongruous and harmful addition to the curtilage listed wall and setting of the Grade I church. On the information provided by the applicant, it would seem that Cintec ground anchors may be a more appropriate approach for the tying of walls and providing additional restraint to retaining walls. We strongly urge the project engineers consider this alternative approach as a means of achieving the same aims.

#### **Historic England Advice**

Dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, with numerous later additions and phases of restoration, the Grade I church of St Andrew sits prominently on elevated land within the oldest part of Kirkby Malzeard, and occupies a roadside location within a churchyard enclosure. Due to the topography and effects of generations of burials, the western extent of the curtilage listed churchyard wall acts as a retaining wall for the higher ground inside. Despite evidence for some historical repairs, this long section of the churchyard wall has a consistent character and appearance. The homogeneity in materials and form reinforces the sense of absolute demarcation between the secular and sacred within the village. The church complex, including the churchyard and wall,



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is considered to have exceptional heritage significance which derives from its architectural styles, legible plan-form, good surviving historical fabric and its continued focal point for rural community life.

The proposals seek to repair, strengthen and reinstate a stretch of approximately 40m of wall to the northwest corner of the churchyard, following recent partial collapse and movement: 10m is to be rebuilt following collapse and 30m is to be repaired and restrained.

While we are supportive of these works, which look to stabilise and safeguard the immediate and long-term future of this curtilage listed churchyard wall, we have concerns regarding the proposed methodology for remedial works. As the physical delineation of consecrated space, the form, magnitude and materiality of a churchyard boundary contributes significantly to the heritage interest of the church. Changes to its character and appearance, including those derived through remedial works, need careful consideration if its special interest is to be maintained. The proposed use of drilled passive soil nail anchors will result in a high number of soil nail pattress plates being visible upon completion of the works. We consider the visibility of these plates, albeit colour-matched to the stonework, to be an incongruous and harmful addition to the curtilage listed wall and setting of the Grade I church. As the homogeneity in the wall's appearance reinforces its sense of absolute boundary, it is our view that the presence of the plates will contrast with the existing materiality of the wall and will draw the eye to the new structural intervention in a way in which is undesirable. This, it is considered, will erode the wall's historical character and is not compatible with the exceptional heritage interest of St Andrew's Church.

On the information provided by the applicant, it would seem that Cintec ground anchors may offer a more appropriate approach for the tying of walls and providing additional restraint to retaining walls. Crucially, with Cintec ground anchors the works are completely concealed and the unsightly pattress plates would not be necessary, thereby offering a more sympathetic solution on this occasion. We strongly urge the project engineers consider this alternative approach as a means of achieving the same aims.

Nonetheless, should the use of Cintec ground anchors evidentially prove unviable please consider the following:

- If pattress plates are deemed the only viable solution, it should be possible to hide them behind the new stone-facing of the section of the wall to be rebuilt.
- If pattress plates and Dywidag bars are deemed to be the only viable solution for the section of the wall to be repaired, would it be possible to remove facing stones, insert the anchors, pump behind or within the wall with grout and then install the pattress plate before replacing the facing stone?





- Could the lower anchors be reduced in frequency, size and embedment due to the reduction in movement on the retaining wall?

### **Recommendation**

Historic England has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of paragraphs 193 and 194 of the NPPF.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess; and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely



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