LUCKINGTON CHURCH

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

1. Historical Significance

Luckington Church is listed Grade I. At the base of the North window in the Chancel is an inscription stating *"William DeColerne, Abbot of Malmesdbury built the Lady Chapel and the Tower of this church about AD 1265"*. The lower stages of the Tower and the Nave arcade are remainders from this original period. The North door is C14th. The Belfry stage was added to the tower in the C15th as were the Nave & Aisle windows and roof structures. The North Porch is C18th. The Chancel was rebuilt and the South Chapel added during a major restoration in 1872, under the direction of the Architect A W Blomfield. The Vestry was added in 1912 by W D Caroe. There are fine painted texts over the North and South doors dated 1663.

The churchyard was "closed" by the service of notice under Section 215 of the Local Government Act1972, transferring the responsibility for its upkeep and public safety to Wiltshire Council. It contains 10 box tombs that are separately listed, and have been subject to a recent restoration programme.

2. Design

In November 2018 a Faculty was submitted to the Chancellor of the Bristol Diocese, for part of the church's vestry to be turned into an accessible toilet. This is now time expired, and doubts have been expressed over its true accessibility, as there are chancel steps which can not easily, or permanently, be avoided on the access route. It is thus now proposed to install purpose built metal accessible toilet cabin, externally, between the church tower and its North Porch. Although well screened on three sides it is planned to clad it in timber, allowing it to be better insulated, and to make it more ascetically pleasing, reducing its 'industrial' impact.

At the same time as the Faculty was applied for a Planning Application, (18/10706/FUL), was submitted for the required associated sewerage and drainage works. These were approved, subject to an archaeological survey, but like the Faculty is also time expired. Although this application's sewerage works are in the same place, we have been advised that a 'biological' system, as originally proposed, would fail due to the likely low level and intermittent use. A simple septic tank is thus now envisaged. This again will be below ground, with only its access hatch visible.

We are advised by the manufacturers that the propose toilet cabin only needs a 5inch thick concrete raft, so topsoil will only be removed for this base. For the majority of the sewerage pipe run, where it is not adjacent to the church walls, it is planned to follow as nearly as possible the existing, but disconnected, water supply route. Thus minimising disruption. The main area to be excavated will be that for the septic tank, and as previously, we accept that this process should be subject to an archaeological investigation, so that any artefacts of interest and any human remains are properly unearthed, recorded, and reinterred in accordance with good practice.

3. Public Access

The church and churchyard are open to the public at all times. The path from the South to the North East gate is a public footpath, part of the Macmillian Way hiking trail through the Cotswolds.

The “Church” car park to the South of the churchyard, is on land owned by Luckington Court, although the church has rights of access.

The proposed works will involve the temporary closure of the footpath at the NE gate, and a diversion through the private gateway to the Luckington Court driveway, at the NW corner of the churchyard, is to be arranged for the brief period that this will be necessary.