

Statement of Significance – Major projects

Section 1: The church in its urban / rural environment.

1.1 Setting of the Church

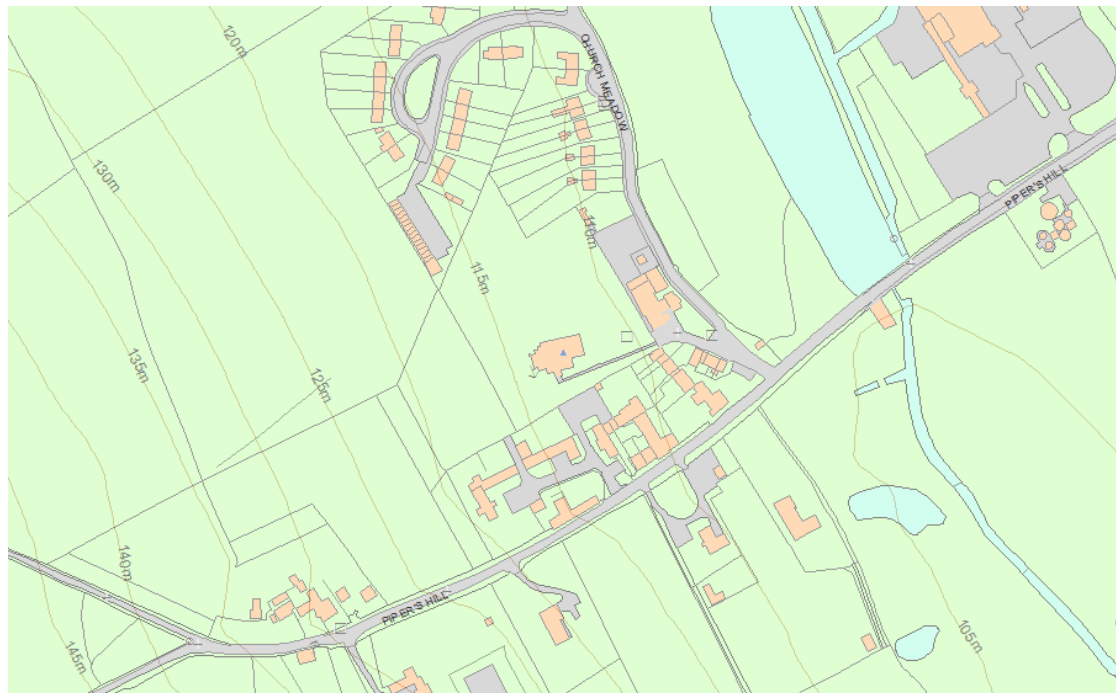
The Church is set in the village of Great Gaddesden in West Hertfordshire. The River Gade, a noted chalk stream runs nearby and the whole area of the Gade Valley is designated an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Whilst the Church dominates the centre of the village, the community is well spread out and includes a number of hamlets - Bridens Camp, Gaddesden Row, Jockey End, St Margarets and Water End. Some are over two miles away. The setting is very rural. There is both arable and animal farming with the majority of the land belonging to the Halsey Estate. The Halseys have farmed in Great Gaddesden since the mid 16th century.

Whilst a number of small businesses operate out of Great Gaddesden and there is a thriving Garden Centre, there are no longer any shops, there is one pub in Bridens Camp and a restaurant in Water End. The Church is therefore a focal point in the centre of the village

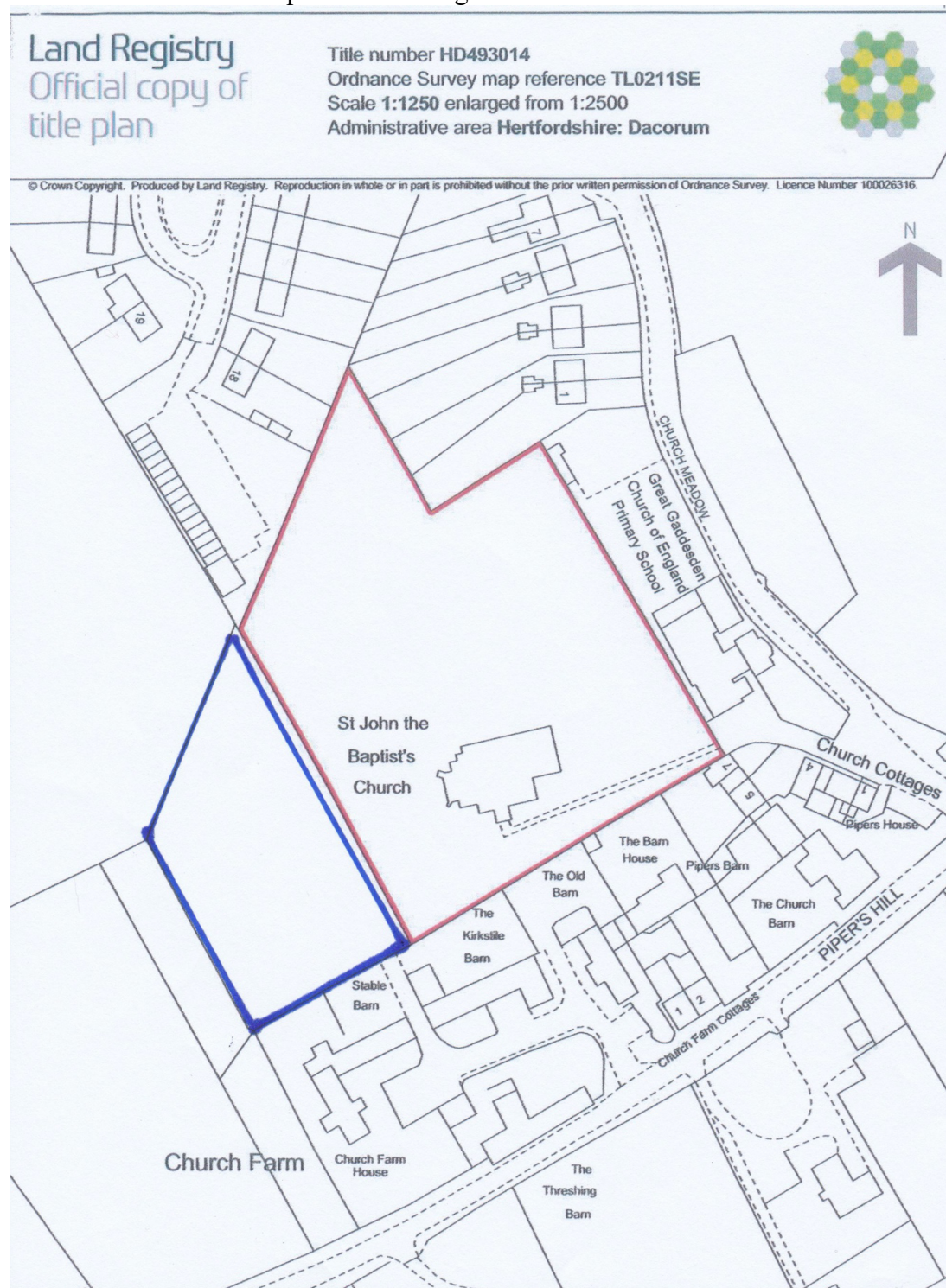
A village junior school adjoins the church. The village hall is on the other side of the busy B440 Hemel Hempstead to Leighton Buzzard Road. The School has no hall so events of substance take place in the church.

The building itself is off Pipers Hill and the Post Code is HP1 3BY and the Grid Reference on Sheet 166 of the Ordnance Survey Map is 02551110.



1.2 Churchyard

There are two extensive churchyards. The land registry plan is below. The Old Churchyard is hatched in red and the new in blue. The old churchyard has the Village War Memorial, a Grade II listed structure. There is a Lych Gate at the entrance to the churchyard near the school. In addition to the entrance path shown there are paths around the church enabling disabled access via the North door. Another path leads to the new churchyard. The PCC have decided to close the Old Churchyard and hand over responsibility to the local authority. That process is on going. The Old Churchyard is used for fetes and other community activities. It has become overgrown in some areas so providing a habitat for a variety of wildlife. A well used walkers footpath runs through both.



This official copy issued on 1 July 2009 shows the state of this title plan on 1 July 2009 at 08:43:29. It is admissible in evidence to the same extent as the original (s.67 Land Registration Act 2002).

This title plan shows the general position, not the exact line, of the boundaries. It may be subject to distortions in scale. Measurements scaled from this plan may not match measurements between the same points on the ground. See Land

1.3 Social History

There are 54 people on the electoral roll, 14 of whom are not resident in the parish. Two services are held each week, a Parish Communion at 11am on Sunday and a Communion service at 9.00 on a Tuesday. The service on the second Sunday each month is a Café Church. The average attendance at a Sunday service has been increasing since Covid and is now 24 adults and 2 children, with about 60 on big occasions and school services. The congregation is predominantly older but we have a growing number of young people including pre-school children. In addition, during school term time there is a Friday assembly/service for our church village school attended by approximately 60 pupils and associated parents/guardians. The church is open every day during daylight hours. We do not have a church hall. There is a parish hall some distance away across a very busy main road. The school does not have a hall so it relies on the church for significant events – school assemblies, end of term performances, nativity play, and carol service to name a few.

1.4 Building & contents

Over the centuries the building as it is today, is a development from a very basic structure.

In common with many other churches, there is a variety of materials reflecting these developments and when they were added. For example, the Halsey chapel is brick whilst the west end tower is flint. The main body has a rendered exterior with a substantial timber roof (restored in the 1990s) and which is covered with lead, whilst the Chancel and Halsey Chapel roofs are tiled.

There are beautiful stained-glass windows at the east end, the north and south aisles and with a lovely “St Francis” window in the north aisle. The floors are tiled and with various memorial stones embedded. There are also a significant number of wall memorials.

The tower houses a ring of 6 bells and there is an enthusiastic team of ringers.

The church clock chimes on the hour. There is a pulpit and font. In 1861 the church underwent significant reconstruction, the tower was rebuilt with a much larger arch from the nave to the tower base. At the same time deal wood pews were installed. The church was reopened on 13th May 1863.

In 1975 the pews were replaced with oak pews from the old church in Shenley and which included four medieval poppy-head finials. This was with the exception of 6 pews in the north aisle. In 2014 the rear oak pews in the Nave were removed to create space for various activities. These were put into storage.

In 2020 a new electronic organ was donated to replace the old organ which was on its last legs. This has been removed and further space at the rear created.

In 2021 the font was moved to the east end of the North Aisle to create a baptistry area and three of the pews from the rear of the Church replaced the 6 deal pews the Vestry is now in the Halsey Chapel. Photographs of the interior and exterior of the building are on the Church Website www.greatgaddesdenchurch.com

Section 2 : The significance of the area affected by the proposal.

All areas of the internal Church will be affected as the heaters will be visible and glow red when switched on. They are at a height above the pews and where people can congregate – West end of the Nave and the Font.

Section 3: Assessment of the impact of the proposal

3.1 The Impact

The impact is predominantly visual especially in the Nave and where these heaters will be seen. Less so in the two aisles, the Chancel and the Halsey Chapel

3.2 Mitigation of the Impact.

We have particularly chosen these heaters because their visual impact is less. The fixing plates and some wiring can be coated in a colour to match the paint on the mortar.

Wiring will go over the arches so as to be almost hidden.

Please see photo below of one of the existing four heaters.



