



Faculty – Grade I listed, early C 16th, north-east Lancashire town centre church (restored by Paley, Austin & Paley in c. 1889) – Faculty application to upgrade and renovate the neighbouring Grade II listed, old Grammar School (c. 1812), which serves as the Parish Rooms, for use as a new 'Centre of Hope' – DAC recommending proposals for approval by the court – Objections originally raised informally by the Georgian Group, which did not wish to become a party opponent – Faculty granted subject to conditions

Application Ref: 2025-110533

IN THE CONSISTORY COURT OF
THE DIOCESE OF BLACKBURN

Date: Sunday, 21 December 2025

Before:

THE WORSHIPFUL CHANCELLOR HODGE KC

In the matter of:

ST BARTHOLOMEW, COLNE (No 2)

THE PETITION OF:

THE REVEREND ALEXANDER JAMES OEHRING (Rector)

MRS AMANDA KROUKAMP and

MRS LOUISE GARNETT (Churchwardens)

This is an unopposed online faculty petition determined on the papers.

Informal objections had been received from the Georgian Group, which did not wish to become a party opponent to the determination of this faculty application

The following cases are referred to in the judgment:

Re St Alkmund, Duffield [2013] Fam 158

Re St Bartholomen, Colne [2025] ECC Bla 1

Re St Laurence, Combe [2022] ECC Oxf 5

JUDGMENT

Introduction and background

1. Earlier this year, on Ash Wednesday (5 March 2025), I handed down my written judgment (bearing the neutral citation number **[2025] ECC Bla 1**) on an earlier faculty petition (Reference: 2023-083893) concerning this Grade I listed, medieval town centre church (which is situated within a conservation area). Amongst other permitted works, I granted a faculty making permanent works that the parish had previously carried out pursuant to an archdeacon's licence for temporary minor reordering. This had authorised the removal of four pews, a pew frontal, and two altar rails within the church's north chapel, and the installation of free-standing shelving and refrigerators for storage for the church's food bank. It now falls to me to determine a further unopposed online faculty petition, dated 9 September 2025, by the Rector, the Reverend Alexander James Oehring, and the churchwardens, Mrs Amanda Kroukamp and Mrs Louise Garnett. They seek a faculty authorising the renovation and extension of the neighbouring, Grade II listed former grammar school, which now serves as the parish rooms, so as to create a new '*Centre of Hope*'. The proposed works include:

- (1) The demolition of a 1980s extension to the north side of that building.
- (2) The building of a two-storey extension on the north side of the building, to be accessed via a ramp on the north side, to house kitchen, toilet, and storage facilities, a lift, and a staircase to the first floor, and an office area.
- (3) The refurbishment of the existing parish rooms, to include new, wooden-framed, double-glazed windows.
- (4) The creation of a large storage pod on the ground and first floors.

Full details appear from Andrew Hawthorne Architects' drawings numbered 01, 02, 03, 04E, 05E, 06, 07E, 08E and Stannah's lift drawing plan, dated 25 September 2023. The total cost is presently estimated to be somewhere in the order of £800,000, for which the parish are hoping to secure grant funding. Should I grant this faculty, I am asked to allow three years for the faculty to be implemented. It is estimated that the works will take about a year to complete, even after the parish have secured the necessary funds. These proposals have the full support of the Parochial Church Council.

2. In my earlier judgment, I explained (at paragraph 2) how the food bank operated by the church is a central part of its community outreach and mission in the town of Colne. At

paragraphs 6 through to 10, I also described the town of Colne, and this, its parish church; and I set out the church's listing details. The subject of the present faculty application is listed separately from the church, as a Grade II listed building. It stands adjacent to, and to the south-east of, the church building, on the north side of Church Street, which runs west to east through the centre of the town. Like the church, it was first listed on 29 January 1988. The listing entry reads:

Built as the town's first grammar school. A triangular pediment with oval panel is inscribed THIS / Grammar School / was erected by voluntary subscription / 1812. Stone with ashlar quoins and dressings. Slate roof. Two storeys. Symmetrical 5-bay composition, ground floor windows with plain surrounds, first floor windows have semi-circular heads with keystone and imposts. Deep stringcourse between floors and quoins in strong relief.

In my earlier judgment, I recorded that I had visited the church, and attended their service of morning worship, on Sexagesima (the second Sunday before Lent). At paragraph 31 of my earlier judgment, I explained how, at the conclusion of the morning service, I had introduced myself to the Rector. He had proceeded to explain to me the dire state of the neighbouring parish rooms, and the aspirations of the parish to restore them to a proper working state and condition, which might reveal something of their former glory. Despite the dismal weather, I was directed to view their exterior, which I duly did. I recorded how this building was “*clearly in need of considerable restoration and refurbishment, whereupon it would have the potential to make a significant contribution to the parish's community outreach and mission*”.

3. The short statement of needs prepared for this faculty application notes that community use of the church and its ancillary buildings is growing, and is encouraged. The parish consider that there is considerable scope to extend the mission and ministry of the church in the local community. It explains that the parish rooms are within the grounds of the church. Originally a grammar school, the upper storey has, until recently, been used as a museum celebrating the Titanic connection in Lancashire. Currently, the Mothers' Union, the Sunday School, Barty Bear (Mums and Toddlers), and Rainbows meet there.

4. The parish have produced an illustrated, 11-page booklet explaining their proposals for their ‘*Centre of Hope*’. This explains that the original old Colne Grammar School, built in the early 19th century, is a Grade II listed building, although the wooden structure here previously was built in 1558, and even counts a former Archbishop of Canterbury, John Tillotson, as one of its former pupils. The parish's vision

... is to transform the building into ‘The Centre of Hope’. We long for this space to provide vital services and a community space for all. We want to see people lifted out of poverty and deprivation through practical support and provide space where community and friendships can flourish.

The booklet sets out the church's current offerings. It then sets out the parish's ‘*proposed ambitions and requirements*’ and identifies ‘*future opportunities and expansions*’. As to the former, the booklet lists:

- (1) Two large rooms for groups to meet and for the community grocery to operate on the upper floor.
- (2) Installation of disabled access upstairs and downstairs, including a lift to the upper floor and a ramp into the building.

- (3) Two storage rooms: one for the Toddler Group downstairs and another for the Community Grocery upstairs for better space utilisation.
- (4) A modern kitchen with facilities to cater for the café and community grocery, usable by external groups.
- (5) New toilets and a shower cubicle to accommodate destitute individuals.
- (6) A reception area to facilitate easier access to food and facilities, alongside an office for confidential consultations with support services.

Under the heading *'Architectural Overview'*, the booklet explains that the plans for the renovation of the 'Original Old' Colne Grammar School focus on transforming the building into *'The Centre of Hope'*, ensuring it meets the needs of the community. This includes modernising facilities and enhancing accessibility, such as adding a lift and ramps for disabled access. *'Key Features of the Renovation'* are said to include a modern kitchen for catering, storage rooms for community groceries, a reception area for support services, and new toilets, including a shower cubicle for those in need. These enhancements aim to provide comprehensive support to the community.

5. Amongst the supporting documents uploaded to the Online Faculty System for this application is a photographic record of the existing Parish Rooms, with some ten external, and 14 internal, images. I have included some of these images at the end of this judgment.

Consultation responses

6. *Historic Buildings & Places* (formerly the Ancient Monuments Society) have been consulted. Their ecclesiastical caseworker feels some regret that a symmetrical design is to be made asymmetrical by the projected extension. However, he is conscious that those involved in this project are probably past that point in a scheme which has been long in consideration. Moreover, the extension is itself very low-key; and Historic Buildings & Places accept that the overwhelming imperative is to invest in the future of a handsome listed building which clearly, to judge from the photographs, is in a poor internal state. In these circumstances, they are content to defer to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (the **DAC**) on this application.

7. *Historic England* have also been consulted. Their specialist staff have considered the information received; and they do not wish to offer any comments on the proposals.

8. *The Church Buildings Council* has been consulted. It does not consider that the proposals will affect the significance of the Grade I parish church, and so is content to defer to the DAC in this case. In the CBC's response, dated 22 May 2025, the Assistant Church Buildings Officer comments that in order for the Chancellor to have full information, it is advisable for the parish to further develop both their statements of significance and of needs, and to commission an archaeological assessment of the planned location of the new extension to the Parish Rooms.

9. *The Georgian Group* have been consulted about the proposals to renovate and upgrade the Old Grammar School, now the Parish Rooms. Initially the Group's Senior Conservation Adviser for Northern England registered the following concerns with the application:

Church Rooms is a handsome and characterful building, built as a Grammar School and meeting room in 1812 in a modest classical style. The building has subsequently been in parish use for mixed functions. An extension was added to the northern end of the building in 1986 to form a kitchen.

The proposals are for a scheme of internal and external works and alterations to make the building usable for mixed parish functions. Works of particular note include the replacement of the existing extension with a new two storey extension, formation of an opening in the north wall at 1st floor level, formation of storage rooms in the main rooms, and the formation of an access ramp.

Advice and Recommendations

The Group overall welcomes the applicant's intention to bring Church Rooms back into sustainable use to serve the needs of the parish and local community.

The Group registers our disappointment that the applicant's Statement of Significance makes no mention of Church Rooms (Grammar School) at all. We therefore must strongly advise that it is not fit for purpose in the context of this application and that an appropriate statement of significance should be submitted.

Proposed Extension Design

The Group recognises that the applicant has revised design for the proposed extension, this is clear from the plans submitted. We are unable to find any revised elevation drawings or materials specifications to explain the changes to the scheme. Whilst we are sure this is a simple oversight on the OFS, we regret to advise that we are unable to make an informed assessment of the revised scheme. We would be pleased to offer further comments upon sight of the relevant elevation drawings and materials specifications.

Internal Storage Cupboards

The Group thanks the applicant also for having submitted additional supporting documentation including a photographic survey and a brief statement explaining the need for the storage rooms. We advise that we acknowledge the stated needs of the parish for storage, however we are disappointed that there is no evidence that our recommendation to consider alternative locations for the storage has been considered. We therefore advise that we maintain our concern that the proposed storage cupboards have the potential to cause harm to the building's significance as a listed heritage asset.

We maintain our former advice (6/2/25) that the proposed storage cupboards will obscure key architectural features of the building; nominally the arched window in the south gable wall at 1st floor level and the fitted cupboards in the south gable wall at ground floor level. We advise that these features (as shown in the photographic survey) contribute strongly to the historic character and significance of the space; the window balances an opposed window in the north gable wall and the cupboards contribute evidential value and offer legibility of the ground floor's original schoolroom function. The subdivision of the large open rooms would furthermore erode the historic large single room volumes which are an important component of the building's original design. We therefore advise that the formation of the proposed storerooms has the potential to cause harm to the special architectural significance of the building as a listed heritage asset.

The Group also repeats our advice that we are not insensible to the need for storage to suit the parish's needs and ensure the project is viable. We therefore maintain our query whether storage could be more sensitively accommodated elsewhere in the proposed building. We repeat

our recommendation that the applicant explores alternative options to avoid the need for the proposed subdivision of the rooms in the main listed building.

Conclusion

The Group acknowledges and thanks the parish for having engaged positively to make some welcome revisions to the proposed scheme for Church Rooms and we advise that we are content to withdraw our concern with the design of the proposed extension. We do however maintain significant concerns that the proposed formation of storage rooms by subdividing off portions of the main hall spaces, has the potential to cause harm to the building's special architectural and historic significance as a Grade II listed heritage asset. We accordingly recommend that the applicant revises the application to address the above advice and recommendations.

The Group advises that if the DAC is minded to grant a faculty for the proposed scheme, they must be fully satisfied and convinced of the need for the proposed storage in terms of project viability and that the storage needs of the parish/community could not be accommodated more sympathetically elsewhere within the building or the proposed newbuild extension.

The Group would be pleased to meet with the applicant and other stakeholders to discuss our concerns further if this would be considered helpful.

10. Unfortunately, Historic England had accidentally deleted the proposed elevation drawings from the supporting documents when they had added their advice. The DAC Secretary therefore re-added the drawings to the supporting documents section of the online faculty system and sent this to the Georgian Group for their further comments. This produced the following further response from the Georgian Group, after they had viewed the proposed elevations:

The Group are pleased to advise that we register no objection to the design of the proposed extension, and we withdraw our former concerns on this point.

The Group registers significant concerns however that the elevations show proposals to replace all the windows of the listed building with new timber framed Double-Glazed units. This is extremely concerning and has a high potential to cause significant and irreversible harm to the building's special architectural significance as a grade II listed heritage asset.

We advise that the windows are an intrinsic part of the building's modest neo-classical design and contribute strongly to its handsome historic character. The construction of the windows as illustrated in the applicant's supporting photographic survey, show delicate glazing bars and lightweight proportions which are highly characteristic of early-nineteenth-century architecture and window design. Altering these historic, potentially original, windows consequently has the potential to significantly harm the building's special architectural significance as a listed heritage asset

The Group acknowledges from the applicant's photographic survey that some of the windows are in very poor condition, however we are highly concerned that no comprehensive window schedule has been submitted to explain the age, condition or significance of the existing windows. We advise that we expect such a document to form the core of an application for window replacement, and it should be a key element of any justifications. We furthermore

advise that no drawings, sections, or detailed specifications of the proposed replacement windows have been submitted. We therefore advise that it is quite impossible for us to make a fully informed or accurate assessment of the impact of the proposed scheme of window replacement.

We strongly recommend that the applicant commissions a joiner or heritage professional with experience and expertise of/in traditional and historic windows to produce a detailed window schedule describing the age, condition, and significance of each window on an individual basis. This should be supported by comprehensive photography and should examine whether the windows are in a repairable condition. This window schedule should be an essential part of the justifications and demonstration of the need for the proposed scheme of total window replacement. We recommend that if the parish are unwilling to submit appropriate supporting documentation to explain the proposed scheme of window replacement, a faculty should be refused.

11. In response to the Georgian Group's comments on the Parish Room windows, the Rector has found a photograph of the windows in the 1980s when they were not the same as they are now. This indicates that the current design of the windows is fairly new. The church architect has also confirmed that he has been doing some research into the window patterns from historic photographs. He states that he is acutely aware of the Georgian sections being slim and 'delicate'; and he is working with a local joiner in looking into producing purpose-made sections that are more akin to the original design than the sections available commercially. The parish had wished to incorporate double-glazed units from an energy-saving point of view, but the architect recognises the conflict both in relation to the reflective properties of double-glazing and the timber sizes the Georgian Society are mentioning. The planning application was put in with double-glazed units in order to establish the principle of their use; but the architect is more than happy for the DAC to stipulate their wishes or to 'condition' their approval subject to a satisfactory glazing bar detail being worked out. The final designs for this project are not yet fixed; and the architect would be happy to liaise with the DAC on its finer details. The joiner he is working with has previously worked with the architect successfully to match as closely as possible existing timber details; and he is confident that a suitable solution can be found.

12. Rule 4.5 (4) (a) of the Faculty Jurisdiction Rules 2015, as amended (the **FJR**), requires consultation with the local planning authority to be undertaken if any works or other proposals involve the demolition of a listed building of any grade, or its alteration or extension to such an extent as would be likely to affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. At the same time as he applied for planning permission, the appointed church architect also applied for listed building consent. I am told by the Diocese's senior church buildings officer that most of the councils in this diocese outsource their conservation planning advice to Growth Lancashire. According to the church's appointed architect, the Growth Lancashire officer was involved in the church's planning application. On 7 May 2025 *Pendle Borough Council*, as the local planning authority, granted full planning permission (under Application Ref: 25/0018/FUL) for the demolition of outbuildings and the erection of a two-storey extension to the Parish Rooms, with an access ramp, including minor internal alterations and improvements. I am satisfied that the required consultation has taken place with the local planning authority. With the agreement of the Senior Church Buildings Officer, I have therefore dispensed with the need for any further consultation with them.

13. Prior to the grant of planning permission, the planning officer with the Historic Environment Team of Lancaster County Council (who also acts as the DAC's Archaeological Adviser) wrote to the Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager of Pendle Borough Council on 23 April 2025. He confirmed that he had looked over the amended plans submitted as part of the application for planning permission and listed building consent, had spoken to the church architect, and had attended a site meeting. Despite previous concerns about the potential impact of the proposals on the underground charnel house that lies at the north-west corner of the present building, the planning officer was now confident that an engineering solution could be designed that would allow the preservation in situ of the charnel house and its contents as part of the proposed development. Whilst the entrance shaft had not yet been identified, and might lie on the line of necessary foundations, it should be possible to avoid any direct impact, or to provide (if necessary) an alternative access. The planning officer would still recommend that any ground investigative work, as noted on the '*Site Survey plan*', should be undertaken jointly by archaeologists and engineers. Such works should make appropriate provision for the discovery of any human remains, which would need to be agreed in advance with the diocesan authorities. Once this investigative work has been undertaken, it should be possible to establish a scheme of appropriate archaeological mitigation works. To allow the necessary investigations, and subsequent mitigation works, the planning officer had recommended that a full archaeological planning condition should be applied to any consents that might be granted. I note that the officer's suggested wording has been incorporated as condition 10 of the planning permission that was granted on 7 May 2025.

The DAC's Notification of Advice

14. By its Notification of Advice, dated 18 July 2025, the DAC has recommended the proposals for approval by the court. It advises that they will not affect the archaeological importance of the church building, or any archaeological remains existing within the church building or its curtilage. However, the DAC advises that the work, or part of the proposed work, is likely to affect the character of the church as a building of special architectural or historic interest, and that FJR 9.9 therefore applies. Accordingly, notice of this faculty application has been displayed on the diocesan web-site, as required by FJR 9.9. No objections have been received, either in response to this notice, or to the usual public notices, which were duly displayed between 19 September and 19 October 2025.

15. The Notification of Advice records that objections have been raised by the Georgian Group, and have not been withdrawn. The Committee's principal reasons for approving the works or proposals despite those objections are as follows:

The Committee noted the concerns raised by the Georgian Group in relation to the replacement of delicate Georgian single-glazed windows, with double-glazed timber-framed units. The PCC has responded to these comments with some photographic evidence that the windows were replaced in the 1980s and were therefore not the original Georgian windows. The Committee noted that slim detailed double glazing is available and so the impact of new double-glazed windows may not be as harmful to the significance of a listed building as stated by the Georgian Group. The DAC also considered that window surveys should not be required for the 1980s windows on the site. As full details of the replacement window units are not yet available, the DAC elected to condition that details of the proposed timber double glazed window units is approved by the DAC prior to works commencing to ensure that a slim fitting is proposed.

The Committee noted that the PCC had supplied additional evidence showing that storage was required on both storeys of the extended building: on the ground floor for the Community Grocery foodbank, and on the first floor for the bulky toys required for the 'Tiddlers' toddler group and children's work. The Committee also noted that the new storage area layouts were reversible and so were not detrimental to the intrinsic design and historic value of the Grade II listed building, although details of the location and type of fixings is missing from the drawings. Therefore, despite objections from the Georgian Group, the Committee was content that the need for large storage space had been sufficiently justified in the faculty documentation. The DAC elected to condition that the type and location of the fixings for the storage unit are submitted for DAC approval before works commence to confirm that the storage areas are reversible.

16. The Notification of Advice therefore recommends the proposals for approval by the court subject to the following two provisos:

(1) That final details of the proposed timber, double-glazed window units are agreed by the DAC before any works commence.

(2) That final details of the type and location of the fixings for the large storage cupboards on the ground and first floor are agreed by the DAC before any works commence.

Consideration of the petition

17. When this online faculty application was first referred to me, and once I had considered it in detail, I noted that the Notification of Advice recorded that objections had been raised by the Georgian Group, and that these had not been withdrawn. On 11 December 2025, I therefore directed, pursuant to rule 9.3 of the FJR, that special notice should be given to the Georgian Group, with 21 days from the date of service for them to respond. I also suggested that they should be provided with a copy of the DAC's Notification of Advice.

18. With commendable speed, the Georgian Group's Senior Conservation Adviser for Northern England responded by email to the Registry on 16 December 2025, as follows:

As a point of clarification, The Georgian Group's response to faculty application 2025-110533 was not intended as a formal objection but was rather intended as advisory to your DAC and Chancellor. We do not wish to be a formal party opponent to the determination of the faculty.

The Group has read the further information submitted by the parish with regards to the windows and we accept that there is good evidence that the current windows are probably replacement units being notably different to those shown in historic photographs. The Group is therefore content to withdraw our concern with their removal. We furthermore welcome the information that the parish is working with an experienced joiner to develop an appropriately sympathetic design for the replacement units. We recommend that the replacement units should be of solid timber and small glazing pane construction secured by integral glazing bars. Whilst we would prefer replacement units to be single glazed, we are content to defer to your DAC and the LPA Conservation Officer to determine whether the use of double glazing may be justified in the context of this building.

The Group defers to your DAC and Chancellor to determine if the proposed storage cupboards are considered to be suitably justified against the harm which they would cause.

We once again repeat for clarity that we do not wish to be a formal party opponent to the determination of the faculty.

I hope that the above is helpful to you in determining the application.

19. As was the case with the earlier faculty petition, the present petition is not formally opposed. I am satisfied that it is expedient, in the interests of justice, for me to determine it without a hearing, and on the basis of the supporting documents and other material that has been uploaded to the Online Faculty System, and has been considered by the court. Proceeding in this way will help to further the overriding objective of the FJR of dealing with this application justly, cost-effectively, proportionately, expeditiously, and fairly. In determining this petition, I have taken into account the several points made by the Georgian Group in response to these proposals.

The legal framework

20. This grade II listed, former Sunday School building is located within the curtilage of the church of Saint Bartholomew, Colne. As such, it falls within the jurisdiction of the consistory court, and is subject to the ecclesiastical exemption from listed building consent, but not the need for planning permission. At paragraph 33 of my earlier judgment, I explained the legal framework against which any faculty application for permission to carry out works to a listed church building falls to be considered and determined. This is not controversial. The consistory court must necessarily have regard to what have become known as the Duffield guidelines (named after the decision of the Court of Arches in the leading case of Re St Alkmund, Duffield [2013] Fam 158), as explained and expanded in later cases. It is sufficient for me to refer to the following summary of the relevant principles, which I take from my decision (in the Diocese of Oxford) in the case of Re St Laurence, Combe [2022] ECC Oxf 5 (at paragraph 19):

In summary, for the purposes of the present case, which concerns a Grade I listed church building, I must consider:

- (1) The degree of harm that these proposals, if implemented, would cause to the significance of the church as a Grade I listed building of special architectural or historic interest; and*
- (2) Whether the petitioners have demonstrated a clear and convincing justification for their proposals, in terms of any resulting public benefits which would outweigh that harm.*

In doing so, I have to bear in mind:

- (a) That the burden rests on the petitioners to demonstrate a sufficiently good reason for making any changes to this listed church building;*
- (b) That the more serious the harm, the greater the level of benefit that will be required before the proposed works can be permitted;*
- (c) Since this building is listed Grade I, only exceptionally should serious harm be allowed; and*
- (d) Whether the same, or substantially the same, benefits could be obtained by other works which would cause less harm to the character and special significance of this church building.*

21. In the present case, I bear firmly in mind that I am not considering any proposed changes to a church building itself, but rather to a Grade II listed building in close proximity to, and within the curtilage of, a Grade I listed church, which is used for secular purposes associated with the church's mission to its local community. The building is not a place of worship; but it is used, and is proposed to be used, to further the church's mission. The changes proposed to be made to this secular building are intended to further advance that mission. In the particular circumstances of the present case, therefore, I am satisfied that I should have regard to the considerations I have identified above when determining this faculty application.

Conclusion and reasons

22. I am satisfied that the parish have demonstrated that the changes proposed to be made to the Grade II listed Parish Rooms will cause no harm to the setting, the appearance, or the significance of the neighbouring Grade I listed church building. But I must also consider their impact on the Grade II listed Parish Rooms themselves.

23. I accept the assessment of Historic Buildings & Places that there is an overwhelming imperative to invest in the future of this handsome listed, secular building which, on the basis of the photographic records, and my admittedly cursory, and unfocussed, external inspection, is in an extremely poor physical condition. Such investment is most unlikely to be forthcoming otherwise than by way of implementing the parish's present proposals. I agree with the DAC's reasons for recommending that these proposals should be approved by the court, despite the Georgian Group's initial expressions of concern. The court considers that these concerns have either already been adequately addressed, or that they will be addressed by the provisos suggested by the DAC, which (suitably modified) will be incorporated by way of conditions in the faculty to be granted by the court. The parish are to be highly commended for the strength, and the imagination, of their impressive outreach work to their local community, which forms the inspiration for the present project. The parish are also fortunate to have been able to assemble such an impressive team of people, both dedicated, and qualified, to serving Colne, by bringing their diverse skills and experiences to bear in support of the church's mission, led by a Rector who, for 11 years, served as a captain in the Royal Engineers, overseeing military construction. I am satisfied that the parish have demonstrated a clear and convincing justification for their proposals. Any resulting harm to the significance of the Grade II listed Parish Rooms, will be moderate, and no more than is required to bring about the renovation, and the upgrading, of the Parish Rooms. I am satisfied that the use of double-glazing is justified, both in the context of this listed building, and also in the interests of sustainability and the pressing need to have due regard to the Church of England's net zero guidance. I am also satisfied that the parish have justified the need for the proposed storage cupboards, notwithstanding the moderate (but reversible) harm that this will cause to the internal appearance of the building. I bear in mind the parish's extensive need for storage for its food bank, as demonstrated by the state of the north chapel of the church when I viewed this earlier in the year. I consider that rather than simply leaving it to the DAC to agree the final details of the proposed timber double-glazed window units, and the type and location of the fixings for the large storage cupboards on the ground and first floor, these should also be approved by the Chancellor. This will ensure that this court retains the ultimate control over these aspects of the works rather than surrendering this to the DAC.

24. The cost of the works is estimated to be somewhere in the order of £800,000, which will need to be raised before the works can commence. I will therefore allow three years for the works to be completed, so as to allow sufficient time for the necessary fund-raising.

25. Once the works to the Parish Rooms have been completed, the parish will need to address the present condition of the north chapel by formulating proposals for the removal of the free-standing shelving and refrigerators presently used as storage for the church's food bank. This will be the subject of an additional condition of the faculty.

26. So, for these reasons, I grant this petition as asked, subject to the conditions that:

(1) Before commencing any works: (a) the PCC are to ensure that sufficient funding is available to complete the works; and (b) the parish are to notify their insurers, and are to comply with any recommendations or requirements they may make or impose.

(2) The parish are to comply with the conditions contained within the full planning permission granted by Pendle Borough Council on 7 May 2025 (under Application Ref: 25/0018/FUL), subject to such variations as may be permitted by the local planning authority (and approved by the DAC).

(3) Final details of the proposed timber double-glazed window units are to be agreed by the DAC (and approved by the Chancellor) before any works commence on site. If practicable, these should be of solid timber and small glazing pane construction, secured by integral glazing bars; but they may be double-glazed.

(4) Final details of the type and location of the fixings for the large storage cupboards on the ground and first floor are to be agreed by the DAC (and approved by the Chancellor) before any works commence on site.

(5) Within 12 months after completion of the works to the Parish Rooms, the parish are to apply for a faculty for the removal from the space formerly occupied by the north chapel of the church of the free-standing shelving and refrigerators presently used as storage for the church's food bank, and for the restoration of that area of the church.

I order that a faculty to this effect shall pass the seal.

27. In the usual way I charge no fee for this written judgment; but the petitioners must pay the costs of this petition, including any fees incurred by the Registry in dealing with this faculty application.

David R. Hodge

The Worshipful Chancellor Hodge KC

The Fourth Sunday in Advent

21 December 2025

1. The west elevation of the Parish Rooms



2. View of the Parish Rooms from the north-west



3. The south elevation of the Parish Rooms



4. The north elevation of the Parish Rooms



5. The Parish Rooms from the north-east, with the east end of the church on the right



6. The east elevation of the Parish Rooms



7. Upper level window: west elevation



8. Lower level window: west elevation

