

**INSPECTION OF CHURCHES MEASURE**

**DURHAM DIOCESAN CHURCH SCHEME**

**CHURCH OF ST. HERBERT**

**DARLINGTON**

**Deanery of Darlington  
Archdeaconry of Auckland**

**QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTION 2011**

**DATE OF INSPECTION : 10 June 2011**

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# **CHURCH OF ST. HERBERT , DARLINGTON**

## **QUINQUENNIAL INSPECTION REPORT 2011**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Church Centre is located in the Eastbourne area of Darlington on Yarm Road, the principal East bound main road out from the town centre. It serves a residential area on the outskirts of the town, and is close to one of the principal industrial/business parks.
- 1.2 The Church is rectangular in plan with a North/South axis standing at right angles to the main road. The front entrance element is 2 storey in plan with an entrance Vestibule, Office, Toilet and Store on the ground floor with a staircase featuring a projecting bullnosed landing area leading to a Meeting Room and Store on the upper floor. The Nave is rectangular in plan with a central narrower Sanctuary flanked by the Vestry, and a staircase plus lobby linking through to the Hall. The staircase feeds a large storage space above the Sanctuary and Vestry.
- 1.3 The Hall is rectangular in plan, set at right angles to the Church and is served by a Kitchen and Store, plus Male and Female Toilets accessed by a rear entrance Lobby.
- 1.4 A Boiler Room (now redundant) is located in a basement under the Vestry and is accessed via an external staircase.
- 1.5 The Church construction consists of loadbearing brickwork external walls, which are recorded as being additionally buttressed in 1967 when the roof trusses began to spread. Further strengthening of the trusses was undertaken in 1971. The main roof is double pitched with pantiles supported by 4 No. braced timber king-post trusses with intermediate purlins.
- 1.6 External walls to the Church incorporate natural stone cills and head detailing to window and door openings, and string course details, copings etc. to the South main entrance gable. The buttresses have artificial stone cappings.
- 1.7 Windows to the Church are painted steel framed subdivided horizontally and single glazed with obscure glass. Two small ground floor windows on the front elevation are timber framed with leadwork framed coloured glazing.
- 1.8 Small areas above the main entrance staircase and part of the upper floor have felted flat roofs.
- 1.9 The Hall is steel (or concrete) framed with non-loadbearing facing brick external walls, punctuated by full height panel windows and clerestory windows below deep fascia boarding, and with a flat felted roof.
- 1.10 The Church construction is recorded as being interrupted by the Second World War, and was originally intended to be the Hall to a much larger complex. The Hall was constructed in 1969 in a style typical of that period.

- 1.11 The site is enclosed on the South frontage by 1.2 metre high stained timber fencing erected since the last inspection. The East and North boundaries have 1.2 metre high 215mm facing brick walls with 450mm square brick piers and 2 steel gated entry points. A vehicular access serves a small car park to the West of the Hall and North of the neighbouring Manse, with a square grassed area formed by the L-shaped plan of the Church plus Hall and Manse.
- 1.12 The Hall is served by a concrete external access ramp and steps constructed in March 2005, leading to the Entrance Foyer on the North side of the Hall. The front access to the Church is served by a shallow access ramp constructed in October 2000.
- 1.13 Both Male and Female Toilets have been remodelled to provide accessible cubicles in each. The Male Toilet was completed in March 2005 and the Female in January 2003.

## **2 WORK COMPLETED SINCE THE 2006 INSPECTION REPORT**

2.1 No Log Book was available providing precise details of works completed since the previous inspection. From discussions with Reverend Christine Blakesley and my own inspection it was evident however that works identified as priorities had predominantly been addressed. These included the following:

- A. Complete redecoration of both interior and exterior elements of the premises.
- B. New stained timber fencing to the main Yarm Road frontage.
- C. Installation of new Kitchen fittings and related refurbishment.
- D. Remedial work to the movement crack at wall ceiling junction to the South gable wall of the Church as part of the redecoration.
- E. Remedial work to the rear Hall Entrance Lobby floor.
- F. Monitoring and clearance of rainwater goods plus below ground drainage.

### **3 LIMITATIONS OF THE SURVEY AND REPORT**

- 3.1 This report is based on observations made from ground level. Unless otherwise stated the inspection has been purely visual and no enclosed spaces, inaccessible parts such as roof spaces, or hidden timbers etc. have been opened up for inspection.
- 3.2 Particular items not inspected or covered by this report are:-
- a) Floor or roof voids
  - b) Full testing of drainage
  - c) Parts hidden by fixed furniture
  - d) Testing of the heating installation
  - e) Testing of the electrical installation including audio system
  - f) Testing of fire alarms and fire fighting equipment
  - g) Testing of the organ
- 3.3 Items b, d, e, f and g are assumed to be subject to programmed cycles of regular inspection and testing by relevant specialists. Arrangements should be regularly reviewed to match inspection schedules to the age and condition of particular installations.
- 3.4 It should be noted that nothing in the Diocesan Scheme modifies the need to apply for Archdeacon's certificates or faculties where such authorities are necessary, before repair work may be undertaken.
- 3.5 The repair of churches in many aspects is a highly specialised subject. There is then a need to obtain specialist advice with the drawing up of a detailed specification for any work to ensure a technically satisfactory and aesthetically acceptable solution. Economy and permanence of repairs are important considerations.
- 3.6 This report indicates the condition of the buildings at a time of the inspection. It does not purport to be wholly comprehensive or to give definitive solutions for remedial work. It is a report only and should not be utilised as a specification for the execution of repairs and must never be used for such purposes, neither should it be used for obtaining quotations from builders. Professional advice should be obtained to avoid inappropriate solutions which may result in the potential aggravation of defects. Repairs should also maintain the architectural character of details, finishes etc.
- 3.7 This Report is copyright and no copies can be made of the text or photographs without the written permission of the Architect. Neither should original copies be used by outside agencies (e.g. contractors or other construction professionals) without similar approval from the Architect.

#### **4 INSPECTION CONTEXT**

- 4.1 This formal inspection was completed during a single visit on 10 June 2011, when I met the Priest in Charge who was able to identify any areas of concern.
- 4.2 Weather conditions were bright and dry following recent periods of heavy showers.
- 4.3 In Section 8 : Conclusions and Recommendations defects, where identified, are categorised for action under the following priority headings. These refer back to itemised paragraphs in the Inspection Sections 5, 6 and 7.

- A : Urgent repairs
- B : Repairs essential within the next 18 months
- C : Repairs essential before the next Quinquennial Inspection.
- D : Desirable improvements or items to be regularly monitored.

## **5 INSPECTION OF THE EXTERNAL BUILDING FABRIC**

### **5.1 SOUTH/ENTRANCE ELEVATION TO CHURCH**

5.1.1 **Walls:** Brickwork and stone detailing, including copings, generally sound but some localised patches of open joints in pointing, particularly around the gable peak and associated copings, and below stone capping details to the left of the entrance door. This situation generally remains as the last inspection.

5.1.2 **Windows:** Frames decorated since last inspection. Glazing remains as per previous inspection.

5.1.3 **Entrance Door:** Dark stained timber panelled door and related ironmongery in sound condition.

### **5.2 EAST ELEVATION TO CHURCH.**

5.2.1 **Roof:** Pantiles generally sound including pointing to ridge and infill to former vent cowls. Some areas of tile replacement noted but these have generally blended with original tiling.

5.2.2 **Rainwater Goods:** Cast iron and in relatively sound condition except for one small displaced section.. Note ongoing need for regular cleaning to avoid blockage and vegetation growth.

5.2.3 **Walls:** Brickwork plus stone and concrete copings to buttresses, window head details and cills all generally sound, but some areas of open/washed out joints/pointing below window abutting two-storey element and to the left side of the side entrance door to Vestry in particular. Some brickwork efflorescence also to Vestry door framing brickwork. Open joint to stone window cill adjacent two-storey element. There has been no apparent deterioration of these defects since the last inspection and investigation of cause of apparent differential movement.

5.2.4 **Windows:** Redecorated since last inspection including addressing of glazing and loose putty issues.

5.2.5 **Door:** Timber framed side entrance door to Vestry in sound condition.

### **5.3 NORTH ELEVATION TO CHURCH**

5.3.1 **Walls:** Constructed in common brickwork. Generally sound including pointing to eaves.

5.3.2 **Windows:** In fair maintained condition.

## **5.4 WEST ELEVATION TO CHURCH**

5.4.1 **Roof:** Comments as for East Elevation item 5.2.1. Flashing abutment to Hall apparently sound.

5.4.2 **Rainwater Goods:** Comments as for East Elevation item 5.2.2.

5.4.3 **Walls:** Condition generally as East Elevation item 5.2.3 with various areas of open joints to pointing, particularly to staircase bay and adjacent panel to the left at low level, and open joint to window cill in same bay.

5.4.4 **Windows:** Redecorated since last inspection including addressing of glazing and putty issues.

## **5.5 SOUTH ELEVATION TO HALL**

5.5.1 **Fascia:** Sound following redecoration.

5.5.2 **Brickwork:** Brickwork sound. Movement joint at abutment with Church pointed with sealant since last inspection.

5.5.3 **Windows:** All sound since redecoration.

## **5.6 WEST ELEVATION TO HALL**

5.6.1 **Fascia:** Sound following redecoration.

5.6.2 **Brickwork:** Gable brickwork in sound condition.

## **5.7 NORTH ELEVATION TO HALL**

5.7.1 **Fascia:** Sound following redecoration.

5.7.2 **Brickwork:** Brickwork panels generally sound.

5.7.3 **Windows:** Sound following redecoration.

5.7.4 **Entrance Door and Screen:** In fair condition following refurbishment in March 2005.

## **5.8 EAST WALL TO HALL ENTRANCE/TOILET ELEMENT**

5.8.1 **Walls:** Some residual crazing of render and damage to corners. Capping strip appears sound. (Note flat roof covering not inspected but apparently sound with no internal signs of distress.

5.8.2 **Windows:** Generally sound following refurbishment of redecoration.

## **6 INSPECTION OF THE INTERIOR**

### **6.1 CHURCH ENTRANCE VESTIBULE**

6.1.1 **Ceiling** : Plaster and decoration in good condition following recent redecoration including addressing of hairline cracks previously noted.

6.1.2 **Walls**: As ceiling including addressing of exfoliation of decoration to stair wall.

6.1.3 **Floor** : Granolithic floor in fair condition, but long established diagonal crack between Toilet and stair still appears to be deteriorating.

6.1.4 **Doors**: Doors and ironmongery generally in fair condition, including panelled entrance doorset, but the leaves to the inner doors to the Worship Space are still binding and have damaged the timber strip floor.

### **6.2 OFFICE**

6.2.1 **Walls and Ceiling** : In fair condition and decorative order.

6.2.2 **Floor** : Apparently sound with carpet in fair condition.

### **6.3 TOILET AND LOBBY**

6.3.1 **Walls and Ceiling** : In fair condition and decorative order.

6.3.2 **Floor**: Granolithic floor and carpet to Store in fair condition.

6.3.3 **Doors**: Leaves ,frame and ironmongery in fair condition.

6.3.4 **Sanitary Fittings**: WC and WHB in fair condition and operating effectively.

### **6.4 STAIRWELL**

6.4.1 **Walls and Ceiling**: Plaster and paintwork sound following recent redecoration.

6.4.2 **Stair Treads and Landings**: Concrete treads with ribbed nosings in fair condition as is balustrading and handrail, but latter would benefit from further coats of polyurethane.

6.4.3 **Windows**: Glazing in fair condition but with misting of some panes and one cracked unit.

## **6.5 FIRST FLOOR MEETING ROOM**

6.5.1 **Ceiling:** Still visible joints in ceiling boards but otherwise in fair decorative condition.

6.5.2 **Walls:** Lined and decorated in fair condition.

6.5.3 **Floor:** Carpeted and in fair condition.

6.5.4 **Door:** Evidence of several changes to ironmongery, locks etc. Door leaf and frame in need of related repair.

## **6.6 FIRST FLOOR STORE ROOM**

6.6.1 **Walls and Ceiling:** All in fair condition including base and sink unit, but slight musty smell emanating either from flowers or other stored materials.

6.6.2 **Floor:** Carpeted and in apparently sound condition.

## **6.7 NAVE AND SANCTUARY**

6.7.1 **Roof Structure:** Hammer beam roof trusses all in sound condition with no residual evidence of distress.

6.7.2 **Ceiling:** In fair condition following recent re-decoration.

6.7.3 **Walls:** Plaster work above dado panelling in fair condition following redecoration which has also addressed remedial work to the previous structural movement crack between the South gable wall and ceiling. (See previous investigation of cause of apparent structural movement on East elevation abutment between single storey Nave and double storey entrance element). No apparent distress in dado panelling.

6.7.4 **Floor:** Narrow timber strip flooring all in sound condition with some minor localised staining. Carpet to aisle and Sanctuary dais in very good, well maintained condition.

6.7.5 **Pews, Furniture, Fittings etc.:** Timber pews basic in design, but maintained in sound condition. Brass eagle lectern, pulpit and all other items of Sanctuary furniture in good, lovingly maintained condition.

## **6.8 VESTRY**

6.8.1 **Walls and Ceiling:** Plaster and decoration both in sound condition except for minor hairline cracks and wall ceiling abutting Sanctuary.

6.8.2 **Floor:** Carpeted, in apparently sound condition.

6.8.3 **Fixtures:** 3No. Baxi central heating boilers with control equipment wall mounted and apparently operating effectively. Note also floor mounted safe.

## **6.9 HALL LINK LOBBY**

6.9.1 **Walls and Ceiling:** Plaster and Decoration in fair condition.

6.9.2 **Floor:** Asbestos containing vinyl floor tiles. Some localised damage. Removal and replacement will require appropriate safe handling measures.

6.9.3 **Staircase:** Timber staircase leading to upper level Store. In relatively sound condition.

## **6.10 UPPER STORE ROOM**

6.10.1 **Ceiling:** Exposed soffit of timber rafter and purlin roof structure plus underfelt to roof tiling. Some localised penetration of underfelt. Otherwise structure sound with no signs of distress.

6.10.2 **Walls:** Fair faced brickwork generally sound, but with some areas of efflorescence around window opening.

6.10.3 **Floor:** Timber boarding generally in sound condition.

6.10.4 **Cold Water Storage Tank:** Located at high level on internal gable wall, apparently in sound condition.

## **6.11 HALL**

6.11.1 **Ceiling:** Suspended fibrous tiling system with integrated diffused light fittings. Some discolouration to tiles and light fittings but otherwise sound.

6.11.2 **Walls:** Plaster and decoration in good condition.

6.11.3 **Floor:** Narrow strip T & G boarding in fair/well maintained condition.

6.11.4 **Heating Installation:** Perimeter distribution pipework at low level, but no signs of impact damage. Radiators in sound condition.

6.11.5 **Windows:** Frames and glazing all in sound condition.

6.11.6 **Folding Screen:** Room dividing screen in apparently sound working condition.

## **6.12 KITCHEN**

6.12.1 **Walls and Ceiling:** Plaster and decoration in good condition.

6.12.2 **Floor:** Non-slip vinyl sheet flooring in good condition.

6.12.3 **Kitchen Units:** Complete re-fit of Kitchen since last inspection. All in excellent condition, including wall tiling etc.

## **6.13 STORE ROOM**

6.13.1 **Walls and Ceiling:** In fair condition. Note wall mounted electrical distribution board.

6.13.2 **Floor:** Painted exposed concrete showing some signs of distress but generally sound.

## **6.14 MALE TOILET**

6.14.1 **Walls and Ceiling:** Plaster and decoration in good condition.

6.14.2 **Floor:** Non-slip vinyl sheet flooring in good condition with cut-out trim/sealant around inspection chamber cover.

6.14.3 **Sanitary Fittings:** All operating efficiently but flushing sequence of urinal needs to be reviewed.

6.14.4 **Toilet Cubicles and Screen:** In good condition including ironmongery.

## **6.15 FEMALE TOILET**

6.15.1 **Walls, Ceilings, Floor, Sanitary Fittings and Toilet Cubicles:** All comments as for Male Toilet. Extract fans operating efficiently but run on period needs to be addressed. Light fitting also needs to be cleaned.

## **6.16 ENTRANCE PORCH**

6.16.1 **Ceiling:** Part plaster and part T& G timber strip. Both in fair condition.

6.16.2 **Walls:** Facing brickwork in fair condition.

6.16.3 **Floor:** Previous sub floor moisture problems have been remedied since the last inspection. New vinyl tiling in sound condition.

## **6.17 BASEMENT BOILER ROOM**

6.17.1 **Ceiling:** Concrete in fair condition.

6.17.2 **Walls:** Facing brickwork in fair condition.

6.17.3 **Floor:** Concrete with pump sump. Some concerns regarding effective operation of pump.

6.17.4 **Boiler:** Decommissioned.

6.17.5 **Electric Switch Gear:** Various ages of equipment. Some redundant and replaced by new controls in Vestry. Electrical installation not tested but apparently in efficient working order.

## 7 INSPECTION OF THE EXTERNAL WORKS

- 7.1 **Walls to East and South Boundaries:** Brickwork generally in poor condition, particularly on North East corner, with some spalling faces, open joints and deteriorating pointing.
- 7.2 **Fencing to Front Elevation:** New 1200mm high hit and miss stained timber fencing installed since last inspection, all in well maintained condition.
- 7.3 **Front Entrance Ramp:** Framing brickwork, balustrading and concrete surface all in sound condition, but open joints still apparent at abutment with front face of Church.
- 7.4 **Rear Entrance Ramp:** All elements in sound condition. Past ponding of surface being kept under review.
- 7.5 **Personnel Gates:** New steel gate to Church entrance ramp footpath in good condition. Gate to Vestry footpath in fair condition following redecoration. Large steel gate to car park entrance blocks bottom of Hall entrance ramp when open. Still need to consider potential reconfiguration.
- 7.6 **Drainage:** Following inspection of below ground drainage as noted in last inspection there is a regular need to review the condition of elements associated with the main frontage area to address any recurrence of tree root ingress.
- 7.7 **Car Park:** Consolidated stone/sub-base without surface dressing, edge definition or drainage. Still tendency to pond in heavy rain. Dispute with neighbour noted reference screen planting on West boundary.
- 7.8 **Soft Landscaping:** Generally in well maintained condition, particularly on main entrance frontage with additional shrub and flower planting since last inspection. Gravel drainage margins abutting East elevation. Grassed area on east elevation less well maintained but relatively tidy.

## 8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The premises remain the subject of responsible care and maintenance with the majority of significant remedial and refurbishment items noted in the last inspection appropriately addressed. There remain then some issues to be kept under review or remedied in priority order subject to the availability of funding. They are as follows:

8.1.1 **Brickwork Pointing:** Address repairs to open joints in brickwork, cills and copings, together with related pointing and cleaning of efflorescence per items 5.1.1, 5.2.3 and 5.4.3 (B)(£1,600)

8.1.2 **Clearance of Rainwater Goods:** Maintain clearance of gutters, displaced section, downpipes and gully outlets per items 5.2.2 and 5.4.2 (A) (£400)

8.1.3 **Boundary Walls:** Consider demolition and reconstruction or significant refurbishment of East and North boundary walls.(C) (£7,000)

8.1.4 **Car Park:** Prepare and resurface car park with macadam specification, edge kerbing and drainage. (C) (£8,000)

8.1.5 **Below Ground Drainage:** Maintain watching brief on below ground drainage to avoid blockage by tree roots etc. (D) (£300)

8.1.6 **Asbestos Survey:** Commission asbestos survey report as a prelude to any removal of identified hazardous materials such as vinyl floor tiles to Link Lobby per item 6.9.2 (A) (£550)

8.1.7 **Boundary Gates:** Review potential re-configuration of gate to car park (D) (£800)

8.1.8 **Entrance Lobby Doors:** Adjust hanging of leaves to address binding on floor per item 6.1.4 (A) (£100)

8.1.9 **Sump Pump:** Check operation of Boiler Room pump sump. (A) (£100)

8.1.10 **Urinal Cistern:** Check programming of urinal flush sequence. (A) (£65)

8.1.11 **Extract Fans:** Check run on facility of extract fans (A) (£75)

## **11 PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. South Entrance Gable to Church with ramp. Note patches of open joints.
2. East Elevation of Church. Note washed out joints below cill.
3. Vestry door. Note efflorescence and washed out joints below cill plus basement Boiler Room access stair.
4. Deteriorating condition of boundary wall on North East corner.
5. North Gable of Church plus North East corner of Toilet/Hall rear entrance element.
6. North Elevation of Hall.
7. Hall Entrance ramp and steps plus Car Park entrance gates..
8. Car Park with West boundary screen planting.
9. South Elevation of Hall/abutment with Church.
10. West Elevation of Church with grassed area.
11. Church Foyer and Staircase. Note crack in granolithic floor.
12. Staircase Landing.
13. Upper Store Room.
14. Upper Meeting Room
15. Worship Space view to Sanctuary.
16. Worship Space from Sanctuary.
17. Sanctuary.
18. Vestry with wall mounted boilers.
19. Hall looking West.
20. Hall looking East to Kitchen.

21. Refurbished Kitchen.
22. Hall Store.
23. Hall Entrance Foyer.