

Diocese of Durham

St. James the Great, Darlington

Ch.No.200

Incumbent – Revd Father Grieves

Inspection of Churches Measure 1955

**ARCHITECT'S REPORT
October 2010**

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1.0 PREMISES IDENTIFICATION

Church: St. James the Great, Darlington
Deanery: Darlington
Diocese: Durham
Date of Inspection: 25th October 2010 (Internal Areas) 27th October 2010 (External Areas)
Weather: 25th October – Dry Cold 27th October - Sunny, Windy

2.0 PARTICULARS OF SITE (Location, adjacent buildings etc.)

The church stands on a prominent elevated site to the north side of one of the principle roads leading to the town (Darlington) centre. This prominence has been heightened during the quinquennium with the building of a new traffic road which provides a direct link from the eastern town by-pass, and terminates on Haughton Road to the south of the church.

The land between these roads and the church is landscaped with light industrial uses to the east, the church hall and older terraced housing to the north and recently built terraced housing immediately to the west on the site of a former industrial unit.

The street (Allan Street) which lies between the church and the church hall is a well used local link road which provides a ‘short-cut’ between the east and west sides of the town, avoiding the town centre.

3.0 PARTICULARS OF PREMISES (General Construction, layout etc.)

lean- The Church which was constructed in 1872 (chancel and sacristy in 1882) consists of a aisle-less nave, shallow north and south transepts, a lofty chancel with a apsidal sanctuary, with tos to each side accommodating a sacristy which has been enlarged into the original pipe organ chamber on the north side, and a small vestry on the south side. There is an open entrance porch on the south-west corner of the nave. The building is Listed (Grade II) as a building of special architectural or historic interest.

The building is constructed throughout of load-bearing stone with brick lining, with steeply pitched slate covered roofs.

A special feature of the interior is a series of murals depicting Biblical characters and scenes which survive from a full original scheme which included a stencilled patterned background, completed in 1895 by Alfred D. Hemmings.

The artwork has been much damaged by penetrating dampness and in the chancel by a major fire in 1960, which broke out in the boiler house and destroyed the pipe organ and a large part of the sacristy.

4.0 REPAIR WORKS OR NEW WORKS SINCE LAST INSPECTION

(Date of the last inspection - 2005)

2005 – 2007 Comprehensive scheme of external repair consisting of the complete recovering of the slated roofs, repair and replacement of eroded stonework and mortar pointing, and the renewal of the stone tracery and glazing to the west window and the renewal of the glazing to the north nave windows. **Total Cost £302,080.29**

2010 Comprehensive scheme to repair the tracery of the N. transept window and renew the glazing re-open the north external doorway and provide a 'level' access with an internal oak framed and glazed porch. **Estimated Total Cost £53,000.00**

5.0 SUMMARY OF GENERAL CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

The external fabric of the building is in a very good condition following the completion of the repairs and renewals listed in the previous section.

Internally the building is sound with recent renewal of the glazing providing improved light but the poor decorative condition detracts from the overall effect.

6.0 DETAILED CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

EXTERNAL FABRIC

6.1 General Structure

The building is constructed of a load bearing structure consisting of stone and brick solid walls generally in sound condition. There is minor settlement cracking to window positions to the S. Transept, above and to the side of the arched opening to the vestry, above the west organ chamber opening, under the west window and diagonally from the west gable on the N and S walls of the nave. As most of the movement is on the south side of the building it may relate to the fall of the ground on that side.

The settlement cracking is likely to be of longstanding and does not require any action at the present time.

6.2 External Wall Surfaces

These consist throughout of squared and coursed pitched faced sandstone with dressed margins to openings, plinths and string courses.

All the stone work is in good sound condition except as listed below:-

6.2.1 North Elevations

Chancel – sound

Sacristy– some lean or open joints, particularly around doorway

6.2.2 South Elevations

Existing movement crack to lower cill to left hand nave window is partially open.

6.2.3 East Elevations

Chancel -Sound

Vestry – Sound

Sacristy –Some perpendicular joints open to right hand stonework panel.

6.2.4 West Elevations

All sound

6.3 Roof Coverings

These consist of natural Blue Welsh Slate with Green bands of Norwegian Slate reviewed in 2006.

All coverings, ridge tiles and flashings are sound except as listed below:-

6.3.1 North Elevation

Sacristy –There is one cracked and one chipped slate (adjacent to each other) close to the right hand margin. It appears that this may have been caused by someone walking across the slates.

6.3.2 South Elevation

Nave -2 small pieces of under slate have slipped slightly towards the valley gutter.

Porch –The face of the mortar bedding of the ridge has been lost to 2 areas on the east side.

Chancel – All sound

Vestry – All sound

6.3.3 East Elevation

Transepts -sound

Chancel –The slating to the mitred hips appears slightly uneven but otherwise seems weathertight.

6.3.4 West Elevation – All sound

6.4 Rainwater Disposal System

This consists of powder coated aluminium ogee eaves gutters and round down pipes. The installation connects to an underground drainage system and appears sound to all parts.

6.5 External Windows & Door

Doors – The Vestry, Sacristy and N. Transept doors are painted ledged and braced timber – all sound. The south porch door is protected by the entrance porch and is sound.

Windows – These are stained or coloured/plain leaded lights all with polycarbonate or glass over glazing except for the vestry and sacristy windows which are plastic sheet or obscure glass with ‘Vandalite’ overglazing.

All windows are sound except for:-

6 No Georgian wired overglazed panels to Chancel window are cracked or broken

6.6 External Metalwork, Woodwork & Paintwork

This is limited to the rainwater goods which are all sound and external doors also sound.

6.6 Tower, Spire, Bells & Frames

There is a single swung bell mounted within a small open bell-cote located above the sacristy roof.

This was overhauled during the 2005/7 scheme and is rung for all services.

INTERNAL FABRIC

6.8 Roof Structure

The nave roof is supported on 9 curved timber trusses with pairs of timber purlins on each side.

The transept roofs are supported on single purlins and a ridge beam spanning between the gables and the transept arches.

The Chancel roof is supported on 2 corbelled curved trusses and 4 hipend trusses. All roof trusses appear to be sound.

6.9.1 **Internal Partitions**

The internal partitions are limited to solid plastered masonry, with a lightweight stud between the chancel and the vestry infilling a masonry arch. All internal partitions are sound.

6.9.2 **Internal Ceilings**

Main areas – lathe and plaster – sound

Vestry – soft board to suspended ceiling – sound but with patched repairs.

Sacristy – lathe and plaster and plasterboard and skim-all sound

6.9.3 **Internal Walls**

Main Area – hard plastered above a varnished timber dado – all sound.

Vestry and Sacristy part timber and part plaster, sound except to high level of east wall to sacristy which is damaged from previous water ingress.

6.9.4 **Internal Doors**

These are all planked deal painted or grain-all in good condition.

6.10 **Internal Decoration**

Main Area – Flat paint to walls above varnished dado and ceilings with the remaining original painted panels – which are in poor condition, particularly where they have been affected by penetrating dampness, with paint peeling to a number of ceiling panels to nave.

Sacristy – Flat paint above varnished dado.

- Some flaking to ceiling and east gable.

Vestry – Flat paint – sound.

6.11 **Floors & Balconies**

Main Area tiled central walkway and crossing, generally sound except for some cracked or loose tiles, particularly to crossing. T & G SW timber to raised platforms including N and S Transepts, the latter which are carpeted. The timber flooring appears sound with the underfloor ventilation maintained.

Sacristy This is a concrete slab over the basement boiler house, part carpeted and part vinyl sheet – in good condition.

Chancel - patterned glazed tiles with cast iron grills over former heating pipe installation, with raised timber choir stall platforms - all areas appear sound.

6.12 **Glazing & Ventilation**

The glazing is stained or coloured and clear leaded lights throughout the main area . The West window the North Transept and the N. Nave windows have been reglazed during the Quinquennium.

All the glazing is sound except for some broken or cracked panes to the chancel windows. The Vestry window has obscure plastic glazing and the Sacristy obscure glass with 'vandalite' overglazing.

There are no opening lights within the building and openings at eaves level have been filled in however the interior appears adequately ventilated.

6.13 FIXTURES & FITTINGS

6.13.1 Furniture & Fittings

Congregational Pews – bench type varnished deal, sound but the varnish is scratched.

Choir Stalls – varnished deal with oak frontals – all good.

The high altar is normally covered but there is a modern light oak nave altar with oak clergy stools and seats – all good.

6.13.2 Organ and/or other musical instruments

The organ is an electronic 2 manual instrument manufactured by Copeland Hart in 2002.

This replaced the previous pipe organ which was destroyed by fire in 1960.

This organ is in good playing order.

6.14 Monuments and/or peculiar features

The Font is a stone and marble pedestal with wood and brass cover.

The Pulpit is a carved stone pedestal type with a relief showing Jesus talking to the 'little children' which was a gift of the Sunday School.

There is a side altar in the S. Transept and a painted, suspended painted and gilded timber crucifix above the chancel steps.

SERVICES

6.15 Heating System

(Date of last service: 23rd September 2010 - Connaught)

This is a gas fired, low pressure hot water system. The boiler is a Beeston Berkeley (138KW output) serving convector panel radiators. The installation has recently been flushed out to allow for an alteration in the N Transept and is reported to be in good working order.

The basement boilerhouse is reasonably dry with a brick floor and the concrete ceiling lined with insulation fibreboard.

6.16 Electrical Installation

(Date of last service – not known)

This consists of a single phase 240V supply protected by a 60 Amp main fuse and MCB distribution fuses and current operated earth trip switches. Wiring is mainly PVC/PVC with PVC or metal conduits.

The main lighting consists of bare fluorescent tubes fixed to the side walls supplemented by halogen flood lights.

6.17 Lightning Protection

(Date of last test:- 2007)

There are two down conductors each connected to air terminals one to each end of the main roof. The installation appears to be complete but the security cover at the west end is loose.

6.18 Fire Precautions

(Date of last test of extinguishers: September 2010) (Tees Valley Fire Protection)

1 No 6ltr AFFF Foam Spray – located at main entrance.

1 No Carbon Dioxide – located at organ console.

6.19 Sanitary Facilities

There is a washing up sink in the vestry.

There are kitchen and toilet facilities (including for disabled persons) within the church hall which is situated across the street, opposite to the church.

6.20 Disability Matters

Access – a level access was in the process of construction, utilising a previously blocked external door during the inspection. This will provide wheelchair access to the North Transept and the front seating area of the Nave.

There are 2 steps to the main south entrance but movable wheelchair ramps are provided when required.

There are 3 steps to the Chancel and 2 steps to the sanctuary. The eucharist is however administered from a nave altar.

Sound – There is a sound amplification system and an induction hearing loop within the building.

Light – There is good natural and artificial light available.

6.21 External Areas

The church has attractive planted garden areas to the west and south sides which include 4 mature deciduous trees, with a surfaced car parking area on the north side and a tarmac path on the east.

The site is enclosed on the north side (adjacent to Allen Street) by metal railings mounted on a low wall, on the east side (to Barton Street) by a brick wall, which acts for part of the length as a retaining wall and timber or post and wire fencing on the south and west sides.

The boundary enclosures are all in reasonable condition but the timber fence is overgrown with Ivy to the south west corner and may not be structural strong enough.

The east brick retaining wall also has a significant outward lean although it appears sound at present. There is also some frost damaged bricks to the curved section at the north-east corner.

It is proposed, linked to the re opening of the North door, to regrade the adjacent hard surfaced area to provide a 'level' ie ramped access.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY

Electrical Installation

Should be tested for earth continuity and resistance in accordance with the current I.E.E. regulations within 5 years from the previous test. A copy of the test certificate should be placed with the Church Log Book and **any recommendations carried out** or reported to the church Architect for further advice as soon as possible.

Lightning Conductors

To be tested in accordance with the requirements of British Standard 6651 with 5 years from the previous test. Any defects or sub-standard elements to be repaired or replaced and/or reported to the Inspecting Architect as soon as possible and a copy of The Test Certificate placed in the Log Book.

7.2 ITEMS TO BE ATTENDED TO WITHIN THE NEXT 12 – 24 MONTHS

External Walls

(i) Cut out and fill crack to lower cill to left-hand south nave window.

Roof Coverings

(ii) Reposition 2 slipped slates to valley gutter to south side of nave – S. transept.

(iii) Reface 2 No sections of bedded to each side of porch ridge.

Floor Coverings

(iv) Refix loose tiles to walkway to west end and crossing.

Lighting Protection Installation

(v) Refix loose security cover to downpipe tape to west gable.

7.3 ITEMS TO BE ATTENDED TO WITHIN THE NEXT 5 YEARS

External Walls

(i) Repoint areas of lean or open masonry joints to north and east walls of sacristy.

Windows

(ii) Replace cracked or broken panes of Georgian wired glass to chancel windows or renew all existing wired glass with clear polycarbonate to match overglazing.

Glazing

(iii) Repair cracked or broken stained leaded glazing to chancel windows.

7.4 ITEMS WHICH ARE DESIRABLE

(i) **Windows** –renew plastic or vandalite and glass glazing to Vestry and Sacristy windows.

(ii) Internal Decoration

Redecorate stained or flaking areas of paintwork listed in section 6.10

7.5 ITEMS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

(i) **External Areas** – check stability of the east brick wall and repair or rebuild as required.

- check stability of the west timber fence and repair as required.

(ii) General Structure

Maintain regular (say annual) visual inspection of structural movement cracks listed in section 6.1 and report any apparent progressive movement to the Inspecting Architect for further advice.

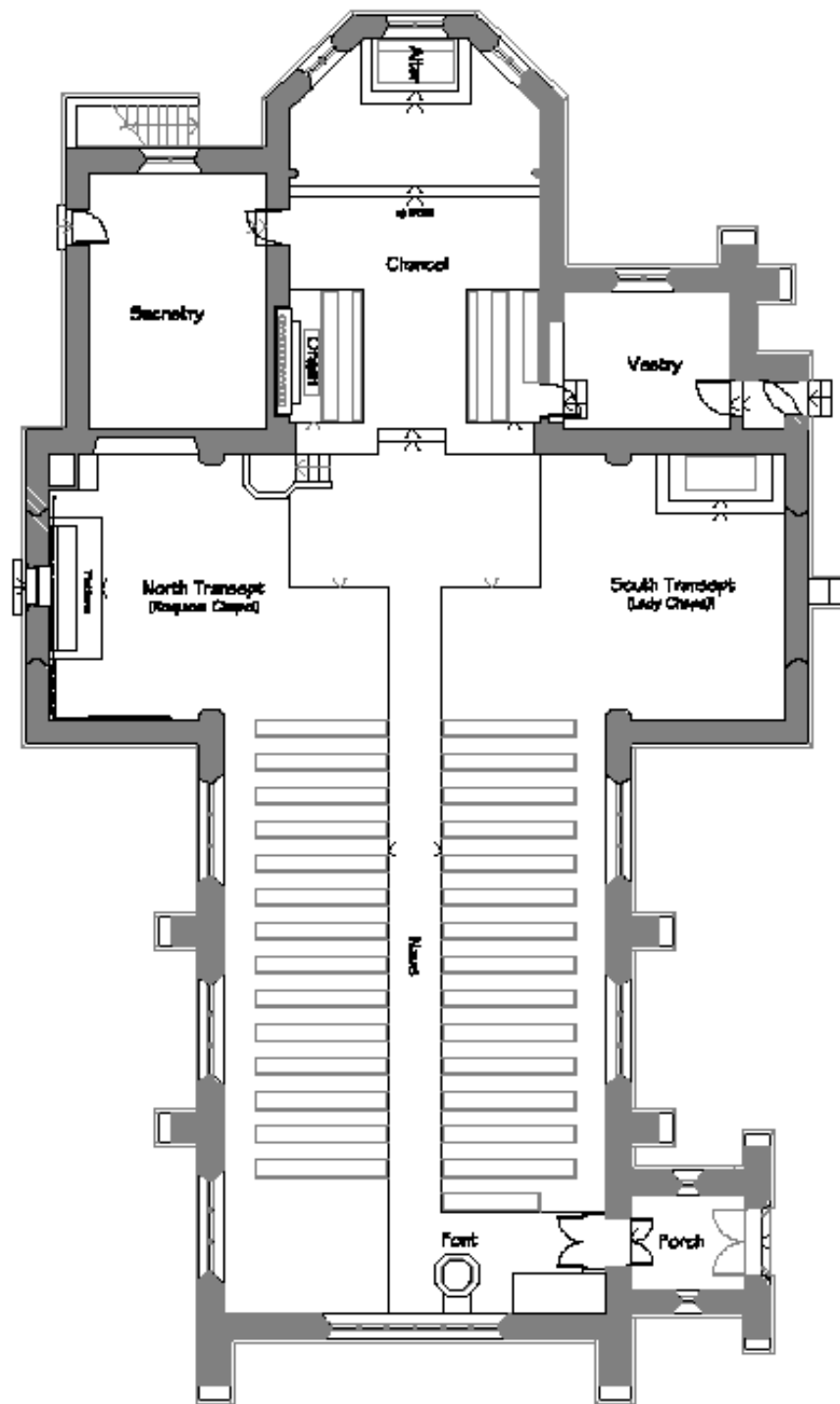
8.0 ESTIMATION OF COST OF REPAIRS AND OTHER WORKS


8.1	Items Requiring Attention Immediately	£250.00 - £500.00
8.2	Items to be Attended to within the next 12 – 24 Months	£350.00 - £500.00
8.3	Items to be Attended to within the next 5 years	£2,500 - £5,000.00
8.4	Items which are desirable but not essential	Allow £10,000.00
8.5	Items for further investigation	Allow £6,000.00

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Date: 28th October 2010

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Title: Layout Plan as Existing		Scale: 1:1150	 John Niven Architects Tel: 01209 488827 Fax: 01209 488182 Email: john@johnnivenarchitects.co.uk