

Diocese of Durham

**St Marks
MILLFIELD**

Ch No. 148

Incumbent – Revd O. Eriksson

Inspection of Churches Measure 1955

ARCHITECT'S REPORT December 2010

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1.0 PREMISES IDENTIFICATION

Church: MILLFIELD, St. Mark
Deanery: Wearmouth
Diocese: Durham
Date of Inspection: 30th November 2010/21st December 2010
Weather: 30th November - Heavy Snow
21st December Dry and very cold

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

The church stands on a slightly elevated site a little distance from a main road in what is an inner city mixed residential area. The adjacent church hall to the south serves as a local community centre and there are terraced houses to the east and west sides. At the time of the inspection a new residential home was under construction.

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

The building consists of nave with side aisles and short transepts, an apsidal chancel with vestry erected in 1872 and an independent choir vestry with a flat roofed corridor link, which was added in 1933. The whole building is constructed in large size pitched face sandstone masonry (artificial stone to the vestry) with pitched blue slated roofs.

4.0 REPAIR WORKS OR NEW WORKS SINCE LAST INSPECTION (June 2000)

2005

March – Pew platforms removed from west end to form enlarged reception area – G M & G Marley

2007

August – Portable access ramp provided for use at main (west) entrance.

December – External Vestry doors replaced – H. Nordstrum

December – Accessible toilet formed within existing toilet area to vestry area.

2010

September – Flat roof areas to choir vestry refelted and parapet copings repointed.

September – West gable abutments repointed.

5.0 SUMMARY OF GENERAL CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

The building structure is generally in sound condition. The roof coverings have been renewed in 2001 and are in good condition. The external masonry to the church is quite eroded in places and requires repointing, particularly at higher levels. Internally the building is attractive and in good condition except for areas of decoration damaged by penetrating dampness, this tends to look worse than it is.

6.0 DETAILED CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

EXTERNAL FABRIC

6.1 General Structure

The building is constructed in load bearing sandstone with a trussed timber roof. The building is generally structurally sound with no obvious signs of settlement or structural failure except for horizontal movement to stonework joints of the choir vestry, which does not appear to have seriously worsened since the last inspection. There is also a stepped movement crack internally above the north doorway.

6.2 External Wall Surfaces

These consist of large squared course grained sandstone blocks with snecked random coursing. The stonework is sound but with varying degrees of surface erosion. The Choir vestry has been built with reconstituted stone to generally match the church.

6.2.1 North Elevations

Church - Generally sound with surface erosion and/or descaling of individual stones and some carved features, such as the drip course over the north door and the stone capitals to either side. Peaks to 3 dormer windows including the copings have been repointed with a cement rich mortar. The stone columns on both sides of the circular window are broken. 2 sections to stone coping to the north porch have been previously renewed in concrete.

West Porch – General erosion, with lean joints to outer corner.

Choir Vestry – There is some horizontal movement, under left hand window, of stonework resulting in 10mm joints at the centre of the wall which have been repointed.

Vestry - Individual stones projecting significantly and descaling in many cases. Particularly lean area of pointing to lower right corner of apex.

6.2.2 South Elevations

Church - Generally sound but with face erosion to many stones. The coping stones to the dormers have been rebbed and the straight sections to the right hand were renewed prior to 2000 with Art stone. There is a small hole to the lower right corner of the right dormer.

South transept - Gable generally sound but there are some particularly eroded individual stones around the margins.

Dressed stonework to the gable buttresses is laminating on a number of stones.

Chancel

There are deeply eroded and laminating stones to the apse particularly to window jambs.

Porch

There are open vertical joints towards the outer edge of the porch and a number of eroded stones.

There is ivy growth to 2 buttresses at the east end.

There are open joints to the full height of the outer corners of the choir vestry wall.

6.2.3 East Elevations

Generally sound with some erosion of individual stones to the dressed stonework of the south aisle.

The joints to the chancel gable are particularly lean.

There are full height stepped open joints to the choir vestry.

6.2.4 West Elevations

Generally sound except for extensive erosion of individual stones particularly to the south aisle and disintegrating carved items such as the hood-moulds, 3 sections of which are missing over the entrance doors, and a section over the right-hand door is poor the cylindrical stone shafts are in poor condition. The pointing particularly at upper levels is lean, although this appearance is exaggerated by the pitched face nature of the stone some earlier cement rich mortar has almost completely dropped out. The mid tie stone for the two columns to the right side are extensively eroded with one having been partially repaired. The stone roofing to the porch was replaced during the 1995 – 2000 Quinquennial.

6.3 Roof Coverings

The roofs are covered with Blue Welsh Slate throughout which were stripped and re-laid over an underlay in 2001 re-using the original slates and are generally in good condition.

There is a flat section of roof to the link corridor this has been refelted in 2010.

6.3.1 North Elevation

Choir Vestry - In good condition except for one or two chipped slates

Chancel - Sound

The apex finial has lost its upper section

Vestry East Side – Appears sound.

Vestry West Side - Appears sound (not visible from ground level)

Transept East Side - Appears generally sound

Transept West Side - Appears generally sound except for one loose underslate at the valley gutter

Nave - In sound condition

Aisle - This appears generally sound.

6.3.2 **South Elevation**

Choir Vestry – This appears to be in reasonable condition.

Nave & Aisle - Generally in good condition.

Organ Chamber - One broken slate in the centre of the slope

Transept West Side - Good

Transept East Side - Good

6.3.3 **East Elevation**

Choir Vestry - Sound

6.4 **Rainwater Disposal System**

Most of the rainwater goods have been renewed in powder coated aluminium. Generally these are in very good condition except as follows:-

North & South Aisles - There are no covers to the ground gullies

At the time of the inspection a section of gutter had been dislodged by snow sliding off the roof.

6.5 **External Windows & Doors**

The windows consist of leaded panels throughout, most are plain squares with stained glass in the sanctuary and transepts. Most windows have polycarbonate overglazing which is in sound condition, although older panes have become opaque. Defective metal guards to north side of choir vestry have been renewed in polycarbonate. There are broken panes to the left window light to the transept gable.

The metal guards to the west windows are beginning to rust towards the foot.

The external doors are constructed of deal with a grained varnish finish to the north and west doors and are in a sound condition.

The external door to the Choir Vestry has been renewed in oak during the Quinquennial.

6.6 **External Metalwork, Woodwork & Paintwork**

Rainwater Goods - All in reasonable condition.

Metalwork - Steel security cage to boiler house is rusting

The metal ring to the west circular gable window requires redecoration.

The grills to the small windows to the north transept gable are all broken.

6.7 **Tower, Spire, Bells & Frames**

(Date Bell(s) last serviced: 1993)

Small bell cote to west gable. Stonework repointed and repaired and bell mountings renewed in 1993. The bell is reported in working condition and appears sound, but should be checked and serviced.

INTERNAL FABRIC

6.8 **Roof Structure**

This consists of 9 arched timber trusses to the nave with 2 trusses and hipped timbers to the chancel with lean-to main timbers to the aisles and dressed rafters on timber purlins. The roof structure appears sound, but there is an on-going problem with the slippage of the herring-bone timber linings between the rafters with the odd board dropping out. At the time of the inspection an area of 2 pews to the west end were roped off for safety.

6.9.1 **Internal Partitions**

Internal walls are generally of solid construction and appear to be sound.

The partition forming the new crèche area is part double glazed and part plasterboard timber stud and is sound.

6.9.2 **Internal Ceilings**

Church - Consists of diagonal "V" timber boarding fitted between the rafters. Some boards had slipped and a few dropped out previously. These were checked, refixed or replaced to the north but there has been recent further slippage to the south side. The boarding to Chancel ceiling was redecorated prior to 1990. There is surface damp bloom to the boarding and framework in the vestry.

Crèche - Artexed plasterboard, small area of damage due to previous roof leak.

Choir Vestry – Painted plaster generally sound but with minor cracking to east end and a shrinkage crack to the junction of the west gable.

Toilet – Recent uPVC boarding – sound

6.9.3 **Internal Walls**

Church - Emulsioned exposed stone in good condition except where effected by present or previous penetrating dampness particularly to arches of organ chamber and adjacent south wall, and east wall of north transept where individual painted stones are stained and to the transept and chancel gables.

Choir Vestry - Previous areas of damp and perished plaster to north east and south east corners remain undecorated.

Toilet – The upper edges of the external walls have been stained by previous damp penetration.

6.9.4 **Internal Doors**

These are all painted "V" boarded timber in good condition.

The choir vestry has built-in cupboards of oak and plywood

6.10 **Internal Decoration**

Emulsion to walls and oil paint to woodwork, all in reasonable condition except where affected by penetrating dampness, particularly noticeable to west side of chancel gable and arched opening to organ chamber, north transept gable at high level and to the outer margins of the south transept gables.

6.11 **Floors & Balconies**

Stone and reconstructed stone flags to walkways - irregular surface with some loose stones. The surface of some original flags to the porch are damp suggesting that there is no adequate damp-proof membrane. There is a slight depression adjacent to the pulpit steps.

Suspended timber to pewed areas now lowered and part carpeted at west end and crèche - appears sound.

Sanctuary - This has been levelled and carpeted throughout except for marble and brass floor feature which has been left exposed.

Choir Vestry - Oak block - appears sound.

Vestry Corridor – Painted concrete paving – sound.

Clergy Vestry – Part concrete over boiler house, part Tongue and Groove flooring - all of which is carpeted.

6.12 **Glazing & Ventilation**

The glazing consists of leaded lights throughout and because it is overglazed there is no permanent ventilation. However the building appears to be adequately ventilated by "natural" air infiltration.

There appears to be insufficient ventilation for the hot water boiler located in the pantry.

6.13 **FIXTURES & FITTINGS**

6.13.1 **Furniture & Fittings**

Oak nave altar and kneelers.

Oak panelled High Altar with gilded timber revedos

Metal & brass pulpit on stone base

Metal & brass lectern

Metal & brass high altar rail

Linked modern upholstered chairs in choir

Painted stone font, located at west end
Fixed varnished pine pews
All fixtures and fittings are in good condition.

6.13.2 **Organ and/or other musical instruments**

This is a T.C. Lewis & Co, London, 1872, 2 manual with 18 stops, it was comprehensively overhauled about 15 years ago, is regularly tuned and is in good playing order.

The ceiling to the organ chamber has been lined with polythene sheeting to guard against dust and water penetration.

There is a Zener upright piano and a small 2 manual Crumar 2002 electronic organ.

6.14 **Monuments and/or peculiar features**

Some brass wall plaques and a stone incumbents board - all in sound condition.

SERVICES

6.15 **Heating System**

(Date of last service: March 2010)

Gas fired L.P. Hot Water system serving large bore cast iron pipes supplemented by modern electric fan convectors, with a Concord "C" Boiler - 330,000 Btu. output.

The header tank was dripping at the time of the inspection, as it was at the previous inspection suggesting a possible leak in the system.

The system is regularly serviced and otherwise appears to be in good condition.

6.16 **Electrical System**

(Date of last Inspection – Imminent)

3 Phase 415 Volts with miniature circuit breaker distribution fuseboard and MICC Cable circulation. The installation was renewed prior to **1995** and should be in reasonable condition.

A 13 amp spur at the west end has a loose unprotected cable connection. There is one earth leakage trip to the sub-board in the vestry.

6.17 **Lightning Conductor**

(Date of last test: N/A)

This was removed prior to 1995 and has not been replaced.

6.18 **Fire Precautions**

(Date of last test of extinguishers: March 2010)

2 No 9 litre water at the west entrance and vestry

1 No CO₂ adjacent organ

6.19 Sanitary Facilities

Pantry cupboard with sink and electric oversink heater. New WC and basin with electric space and water heating adjacent in choir vestry area. This toilet has been altered in 2007 to provide full disabled person accommodation.

6.20 Security Situation

Whilst this is an inner city parish which has been prone to the occasional vandal attack or attempted break in, the site is overlooked by houses, the vicarage is adjacent and the building is floodlit at night, which all helps to minimise security problems. Some vandalism is related perhaps to the use of the adjacent community centre but a convenient "hanging out" area between the two buildings has been security fenced since the last inspection. Additional supervision is also provided to protect parked cars during special or larger services.

6.21 Provision for the Disabled

- (i) **Access** - There is a natural ramped access to a position adjacent the main entrance, with 240mm of steps to internal floor level. Internally the narrowest door opening is 720mm between the church and the choir vestry. A movable metal ramp is provided at the main entrance.
- (ii) **Sight** – the natural and artificial light appears to be adequate
- (i) **Sound** – there is a sound amplification system with an induction loop facility within the building.
- (ii) **Toilet** – One single WC is fully accessible for disabled persons.

6.22 External Areas

The ground surrounding the church buildings is open with grass and flower beds on the north and west sides. A low brick wall which is in part a retaining wall with metal railings on top forms the boundary. There is pedestrian access only from the west side with a vehicle drive from the main road to the north. The garden area on the east side which was previously used in association with the Church Community Garden Project and is overgrown and the ground level maybe above the internal floor level in places. This area is now fenced off from the church yard.

The path on the west side is composed of concrete planks which are breaking up in places and are becoming somewhat uneven with open joints which attract vegetation.

There is a graded access path from the south-west corner of the site (adjacent to the hall entrance) and a temporary ramp is provided at the church entrance when required.

6.23 Areas not Inspected

(This may not be an exhaustive list)

Underfloor voids.

Roof Spaces.

Organ Pipework.

Boiler House – access not available at the time of the inspection.

Note: As the roof slopes were covered by snow on the occasion of both visits it was not possible to confirm the full condition of the covering.

It was reported that all the repairs recommended by the previous inspection had been carried out **see also** Recommendation item 7.1 (iii)

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY

(i) **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.

(ii) **Internal Ceiling** – refix any loose timber ceiling boards to nave and aisle

(iii) **Roof covering**

recent Repair or replace any missing or loose slates which may have been caused by the severe weather conditions.

(iii) **Internal Floors**

Refix or rebed loose paving stones to main walkways

(v) **Rainwater Disposal**

- Replace section of gutter removed by snow to north side.

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

(i) **General Structure**

- Repair or replace broken stone columns to north gable of transept
- Check all carved stone features above and around west doorways and remove any loose sections of stone.

(ii) **External Metalwork, Woodwork and Paintwork**

- Clean and re-decorate rusting metal to boiler security cage
- Clean and re-decorate rusting metal ring to circular gable window
- Clean and redecorate rusting metal guards to west windows
- Renew corroded wire grills to small windows to north transept gable.

(iii) **External Glazing**

- Renew broken panes to left window light to transept gable.

(iv) **Tower and Bells**

Service and overhaul bell and bell mountings

(v) **External Areas**

Remove under-growth to the east and south sides of the Choir Vestry and re-grade the ground to a minimum of 150 below the internal floor level.

7.3 **ITEMS TO BE ATTENDED TO WITHIN THE NEXT 5 YEARS**

(i) External Walling

Draw-up and implement a phased scheme for repairing and re-pointing all areas of open, lean or defective pointing listed in section 6.2 using lime mortar.

(ii) Internal Walls

Remove existing impervious paint finishes where the surface has broken down e.g. to the east wall of transept, and transept and chancel gables back to the underlying surface and redecorate using a porous paint such as NATURAL EMULSION or Distemper.

Remove areas of perished wall plaster to choir vestry and renew using a lime based plaster and decorate as above

(iv) Ventilation

Provide trickle ventilation to pantry

7.4 **ITEMS WHICH ARE DESIRABLE BUT NOT ESSENTIAL**

There are no items in this category

7.5 **ITEMS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION**

There are no items in this category

8.0 ESTIMATION OF COST OF REPAIRS AND OTHER WORKS

8.1 ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY

£500.00 - £1000.00

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

£2,500.00 - £5,000.00

8.3 ITEMS TO BE ATTENDED TO WITHIN THE NEXT 5 – 10 YEARS

£10,000.00 - £20,000.00

8.4 ITEMS WHICH ARE DESIRABLE BUT NOT ESSENTIAL

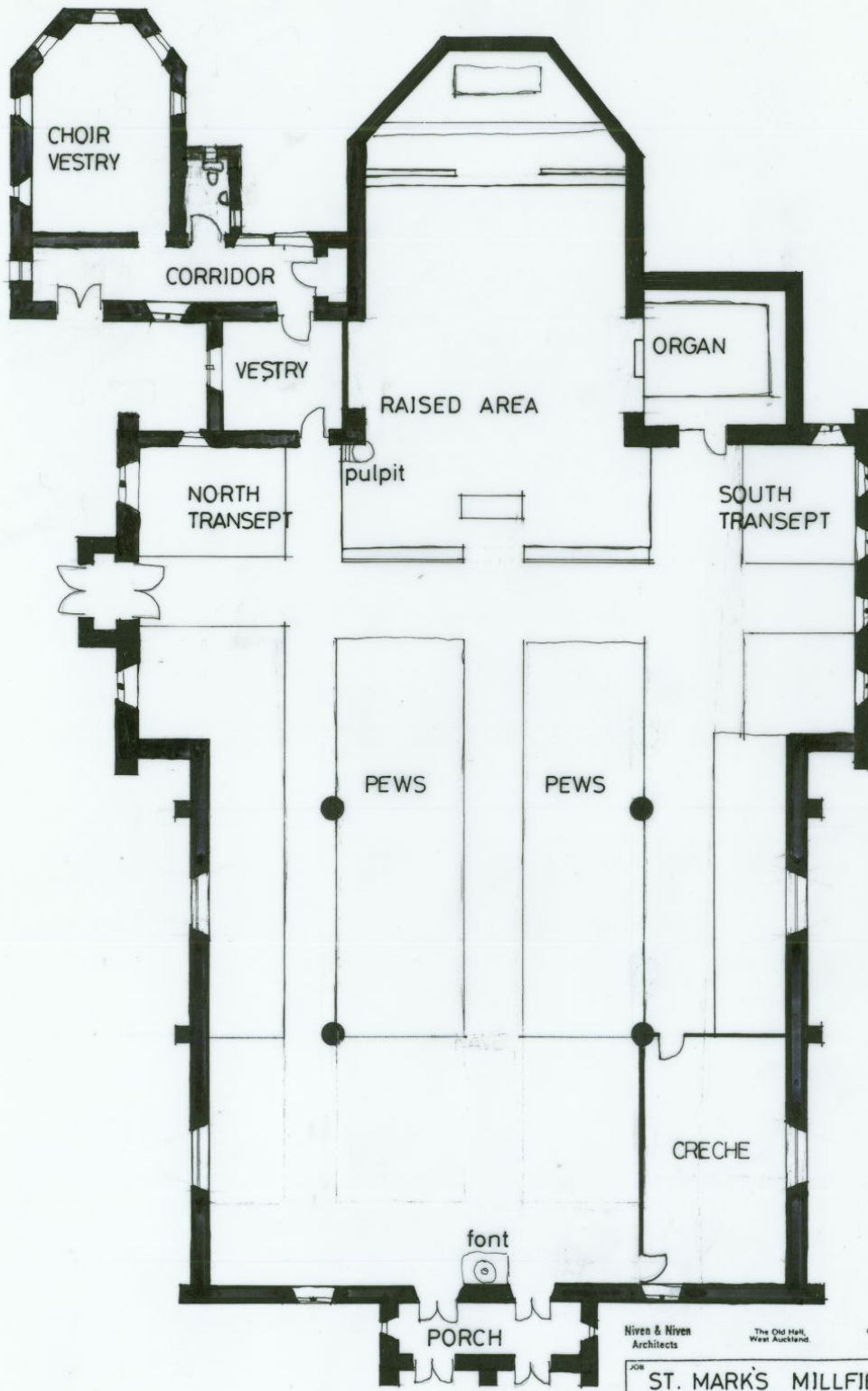
N.A.

8.5 ITEMS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION

N.A.

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Date: 19th January 2011



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 Job: ST. MARK'S MILLFIELD.
 Title: SKETCH FLOOR PLAN
 Date: OCT 90
 Drawn by: SNS.
 Checked by: [Signature]
 Drawing No.: C33/FP