

Diocese of Durham

St Alban's, Trimdon Grange

CH61

Incumbent – Revd Michael Gobbett

Inspection of Churches Measure 1955

ARCHITECT'S REPORT

May 2011

Registered Architect

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1.0 PREMISES IDENTIFICATION

Church/Chapel:	St Alban's, Trimdon Grange
Deanery/Circuit:	Sedgefield
Diocese/District:	Durham
Date of Inspection:	19 th May 2011
Weather:	Dry and Sunny

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

The church site is located on a corner, adjacent to the main street through the village, where there is a bus stop and a small local authority maintained landscape area (west side), with narrow open grassed areas on the south and east sides. The north side is partially adjacent to the end of a residential terrace and large stone building which abuts the church meeting room.

The surrounding area is primarily residential private terraces and semi-detached local authority housing.

The village primary school lies about 100 yards to the south.

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

The premises consist of the main church building which is a simple brick and slate rectangle with a chamfered apse and glazed pitched roof south entrance porch, and a flat roofed brick built meeting room added in 1958, to which a part glazed west entrance porch with toilet and boiler room was added in 1999.

4.0 REPAIR WORKS OR NEW WORKS SINCE LAST INSPECTION

Date if known: 16th December 2006

The following work was noted during the inspection as having been carried out since the last inspection:-

1. Repointing of external brickwork to the main part of the building.
2. Repair of timber window frames to the main part of the building.
3. Making good and redecoration of internal finishes to the vestry.
4. Broken uPVC gutters replaced.

5.0 SUMMARY OF GENERAL CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

The buildings are generally in very good order, having undergone a comprehensive scheme of repairs and improvements in 1999.

The main defects noted at the last inspection which related mainly to the external brickwork, which was not included in the improvement scheme, and the timber windows to the main part of the building, have been dealt with.

The Electrical Installation remains sub-standard in parts, as reported in 2005, and the artificial lighting to the church also requires attention.

6.0 DETAILED CONDITION OF BUILDINGS

EXTERNAL FABRIC

6.1 General Structure

The buildings are constructed in brick throughout in English bond to the main buildings and cavity brickwork to the meeting room and recent extension.

The structure is generally sound. Movement of the heads of the window openings to the meeting room reported at the inspection before last have been re-pointed and no further movement appears to have taken place.

6.2 External Wall Surfaces

These consist of common stock brick (main building) or facing brick to the meeting room and extension and are generally sound except as described below.

6.2.1 North Elevations

Meeting Room – original recessed joints quite lean in places particularly above the adjacent out building.

Main Building – generally sound.

The painted concrete cills are cracked to the centre. This is a defect of long standing and whilst it is not considered to be a structural issue they may be the cause of moisture damage to the internal finishes.

6.2.2 South Elevations

Meeting Room – Sound

Main Building – generally sound except for minor openings to joints close to ground level, and a small missing section to brick to the foot of the gable buttress.

There are painted concrete cills which have 2 or 3 cracks each. These have not worsened since the last inspection.

Porch – sound to both sides. The artificial stone cills are surface cracked on the west side but otherwise appear sound.

6.2.3 East Elevations

Meeting Room – all sound

Main Building

Apse – sound except for minor openings to joints close to ground level.

6.2.4 West Elevations

(i) **Meeting Room** – (small area only exposed) joints slightly lean to the upper and outer margins.

(ii) **Extension** – (new brickwork) sound

(iii) **Main Building** – generally sound.

6.3 Roof Coverings

These consist of natural Welsh (Blue) Slate with purple bands to main building and second hand Welsh slate to new extension with single ply Sarnafil covering on slab insulation board to meeting room laid in 1999.

6.3.1 North Elevation

Main Building – sound except for a few slipped or loose slate to the chancel and there is a build-up of algae under the ventilator.

6.3.2 South Elevation

Main Building – this was relaid over an insulation layer in 1999 and is sound, except for a patch of algae to the right of the porch below the fleche.

Entrance Porch – (east side) sound
- (west side) sound

6.3.3 East Elevation

Main Building – hipped end to apse – generally sound except for missing slates to south and east faces and a few loose slates to north face.

6.3.4 West Elevation

Meeting Room Porch – Covering sound. The mortar pointing to the lead flashing is slightly cracked.

6.4 Rainwater Disposal System

Pitched roofs drain to UPVC eaves gutters and downpipes, all sound.

6.5 External Windows & Doors

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Meeting Room – painted metal sashes in timber outer frame – appear sound except for loss of decoration to timber cills which are not readily accessible because of metal guards.

Main Building – leaded panels in large section painted timber frames are in good condition.

Old Entrance Porch – the lower sections of the framework and the doors were renewed as part of the 1999 alterations and are in good condition.

All the leaded windows have been replaced or repaired prior to the last inspection and overglazed with polycarbonate and are sound.

6.6 External Metalwork, Woodwork & Paintwork

Windows – galvanised metal guards (meeting room and vestry) – generally sound except for surface rusting to fixing screws.

Timber window frames to main building have been repaired and redecorated and are sound.

Barge Boards – flaking paintwork to east and west gables was being redecorated at the time of the inspection.

North Entrance Porch – painted or stained in good condition.

South Porch – sound but requires repair of a small area of painted render above the door.

Hall Porch – Good

External Handrail – exposed metalwork requires redecoration.

Cast iron Vent pipe – (to south side of meeting room) – requires redecoration

6.7 Tower, Spire, Bells & Frames

(Date Bell(s) last serviced: Not known)

There is an original ventilation fleche near the west end of the main building which has a slated cap and painted alternating timber louvered and solid panels. This was overhauled as part of the improvement scheme in 1999 and appears generally sound but occasional water ingress is reported in certain driving rain conditions, the source of which is not obvious. The woodwork is in need of re-decoration and some repair to the cill sections.

There is a single bell located on the west gable under a timber canopy which is only rung occasionally as it is of a poor sound. The metalwork appears sound but the timber hood required repair and redecoration. At the time of the inspection it was reported that an owl was using the location as a nest site.

INTERNAL FABRIC

6.8 Roof Structure

Main Building – Consists of 3 cruck timber trusses with intermediate ‘A’ frames to the nave with one timber cruck truss and 1 No ‘A’ frame to the chancel, all with timber purlins. These all appear sound.

6.8.1 Internal Partitions

Meeting Room – plastered brick (vestry/toilet) – sound.

- Plasterboard stud (kitchen and stores) – sound.

6.8.2 Internal Ceilings

Main Building – painted plaster panels between roof timber framework, generally sound except for surface flaking under roof fleche and slight mildew to the lower level on the south side

Meeting Room – plasterboard and plasterskim throughout. Generally sound except for some slight unevenness at the west end.

6.8.3 Internal Walls

Meeting Rooms – plastered throughout. Generally sound, except for minor surface mildew to the north-east corner of the kitchen.

Main Building – plastered above painted SW dado boarding. Appears to be sound except for surface flaking under north centre window. (the window cill behind the organ could not be inspected)

6.8.4 Internal Doors

Meeting Room – painted or new veneered flush doors all in good order.

Main Building – painted or varnished solid or glazed timber – all in good order.

6.9 Internal Decoration

Flat paint to all plastered surfaces in generally good condition except flaking plaster on the ceiling caused by water ingress from the north side of the roof fleche, under the north centre window cill and to the inner wall of the south entrance porch, and slight mildew to the kitchen, ceiling to church and ceiling to porch.

6.10 Floors & Balconies

Meeting Room and Vestry – carpeted solid

Kitchen – PVC tiles - sound

Main Building – partially carpeted (to walkways and chancel) suspended timber which appears sound.

6.11 Glazing & Ventilation

Meeting Room and Vestry – obscure single glazing – sound

Main Building – Leaded quarries or stained glass in good condition.

There is a very limited natural ventilation in the building which causes mildew to form on colder internal surfaces. There is an extract fan to the kitchen, which was not working at the time of the inspection and is to be renewed. and one to the new porch toilet.

6.12 Fixtures & Fittings

6.12.1 Furniture & Fittings

Oak eagle lectern, oak Bishop's Throne all in good
Oak reredos with carved oak crucifix and two female figures, and altar rail condition
Oak pulpit and oak clergy pews

The font is a plain stone pedestal on a stone base located at the west end.

6.12.2 Organ and/or other musical instruments

The organ is a 2 manual pipe instrument with 10 stops by Nelson & Co, serviced by Harrison and Harrison. Regularly played and in good order. Date of last inspection 11th May 2011.

Upright piano by Emil Lippack.

6.13 Monuments and/or peculiar features

Trimdon Grange Miners' banner
Alabaster War Memorial (Great War)
Stone War Memorial (Second World War)
Six brass on timber plaques

SERVICES

6.14 Heating System

(Date of last service: Annual)

This consists of two fanned wall mounted gas-fired boilers. One for the main building is a Potterton Profile 100 e and one for the Meeting Room is a Potterton Puma 100 combination boiler which also provides domestic hot water. These serve convector radiators in the meeting room and fanned convectors and column radiators in the Main Building.

The installation is controlled by programmable time switches and room thermostats.

The installation is reported as being in good order except that the domestic hot water facility to the combination boiler is faulty.

6.15 Electrical System

(Date of last service: 21 February 2005)

This is a 2 phase standard supply with earth leakage protection to both phases which were operational at the time of the inspection.

Distribution is PVC/PVC to the meeting room and MICC to the main building.

The installation was partially renewed and extended in 1999.

A inspection carried out by the Local Authority in 2005 found that although some improvements had been carried out, the installation was only poor to fair and showing signs of age in parts. The detailed recommendations included six items requiring urgent attention. These include poor earthing of equipment it is not known if these upgrades have been carried out.

The portable electrical appliances are tested annually (last test January 2011)

6.16 Lightning Conductor

(Date of last test: N/A)

None Present

6.17 Fire Precautions and Fire Safety

(Date of last test of extinguishers: September 2010)

Meeting Room	- 2 gal water
Kitchen	- 1 Kilo powder - 1 fire blanket
Main Building	- CO ₂ - 9 litre water

The fire exits are marked with emergency lighting to the meeting room exits and fire evacuation plans are displayed within the building.

6.18 Sanitary Facilities

There is an accessible toilet designed to current (Part M) standards adjacent to the meeting room entrance.

There is a single toilet adjacent to the vestry.

Both facilities are in good order.

There is a catering standard kitchen which is kept in good order.

6.19 Disabled Persons Facilities

Access - There is level access to both entrances. The floor is level throughout with one step to the chancel.

Sound - There is no sound reinforcement system or induction loop in the worship area.

Sight – The artificial lighting level in the main building is poor but it is understood that the church have obtained proposals to renew the light fittings.

6.20 Security Situation

The building is in a fairly prominent location and is partially overlooked on all sides which has been helpful in deterring intruders which have included an attempt to steal lead from the north porch roof.

The south porch door and internal door are bolted internally and the new entrance porch has a security mortise lock.

6.21 External Areas

These consist of open grassed areas on the south and east sides, a small tarmac car park on the west side and a paved and landscaped area on the north side.

All external areas are well maintained.

6.22 Areas not Inspected

(This may not be an exhaustive list)

Attic Spaces
Underfloor Voids
Organ Pipe-work

7.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 **ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY**

Roof Coverings

- (i) Replace loose or slipped slates to north and south and east faces of chancel.
- (ii) Repair small tear in to the upstand in single ply covering to hall.

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.

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

External Woodwork

- (i) Repair and redecorate timberwork to bell housing or consider replacing with more durable, low maintenance material.
- (ii) Clean down and re-decorate timber window cills to meeting room (see also next item)

External Metalwork

- (i) Replace rusting screw fixings to metal window guards to meeting room with non-ferrous screws (This work could be incorporated with the re-decoration of the window cills listed above) which will require the temporary removal of the grills.
- (ii) Renew paintwork to external metal handrail balastrade.
- (iii) Redecorate cast iron vent pipe to south side of meeting room.

Roof Ventilator

- (i) Check slate and lead coverings, repair as required.
- (ii) Repair and re-decorate exposed timber work.

Internal Decoration

- (i) Following repair of the roof ventilation (see previous item) prepare and redecorate damaged area of ceiling within the worship area.
- (ii) Cleandown and redecorate area of ceiling on south side of worship area wall to north-east corner of kitchen and ceiling within the porch which has been affected by mildew.

Note: Preparation should include the use of a fungicide. wash
Consideration can also be given to using a fungicide additive to the paint.

External Walls

- (i) Carefully seal fine cracks in concrete window cills using a flexible external mastic.

Internal Walls

- (i) Repair and redecorate cill to central window on north side of worship area (This work should be done after the crack to the external cill has been sealed) and any residual dampness has dried out.

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

External Walls

Rake out and re-point lean areas of brickwork using a 1:1:6 mix to north and west walls of meeting room.

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

There are no items in this category

7.5 **ITEMS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION**

Lighting Installation

Consider replacing/renewing the lighting within the main church area.

8.0 ESTIMATION OF COST OF REPAIRS AND OTHER WORKS

Notes:

To assist the Parish, the Diocese and potential funders, including English Heritage, the following approximation of costs is provided as a guide for budgeting purposes.

The costs are based on typical costs for the work described currently at the date of the report i.e. no allowance is made for any special arrangements which may be required or for the effect of inflation.

An allowance is made for Architects and any other relevant fees where these may be payable and for VAT.

Where work might be expected to be carried out by unskilled or voluntary labour, no allowance has been made except for materials.

8.1 **Items requiring immediate attention**

£250.00

8.2 **Items to be attended within the next 12 – 24 months**

£1,500.00

8.3 **Items to be attended within the next 5 years**

£500.00

8.4 **Items which are desirable**

None

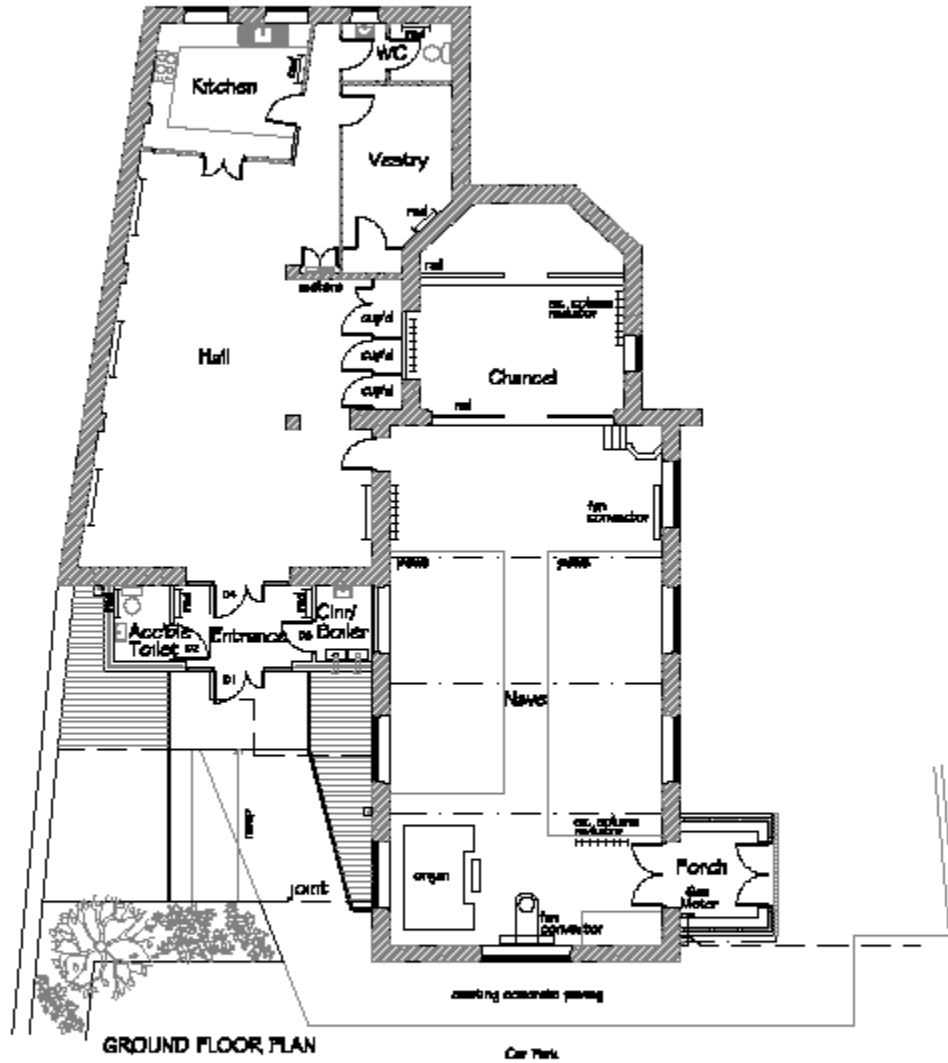
8.5 **Items for Further Investigation** (which may require further work depending on findings of the investigation)

£5,000.00

T.O.h.P. Architects

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Date: 27th May 2011



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