

## Quinquennial Survey of Fabric 2021

Of

St Mary's Church, Cockerton,

for


The Parochial Church Council of  
St Mary's Church, Cockerton

Ref: 493018

7 December 2021



Prepared by:

<p>Signed</p>  <p>Mark Watt • BSc(Hons) MRICS MCABE For and on behalf of Savills (UK) Ltd</p>	<p>Dated 9 December 2021</p>
--	------------------------------

## CONTENTS

1.00	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	4
2.00	SUMMARY OF WORKS CARRIED OUT SINCE LAST INSPECTION	4
3.00	STRUCTURAL CONDITION	4
4.00	WALLS AND MASONRY	4
5.00	TOWER	5
6.00	ROOFS, GUTTERS AND CEILINGS	5
7.00	RAINWATER DISPOSAL, DRAINAGE AND EXTERNAL DECORATION	6
8.00	INTERNAL DECORATION	6
9.00	FLOORS AND GALLERIES	6
10.00	GLAZING AND VENTILATION	6
11.00	ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION	7
12.00	HEATING	7
13.00	FIRE PREVENTION	7
14.00	FURNITURE AND FITTINGS	7
15.00	CHURCH GROUNDS	8
16.00	BOUNDARY WALLS	8
17.00	ENVIRONMENT SITUATION	8
18.00	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS	8
19.00	PRIORITY OF ADVISED REPAIRS	9
20.00	LOCATION PLAN	10
21.00	FLOOR PLAN	11
22.00	GENERAL NOTES	12

### 1.00 BRIEF DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The Church is situated to the west of Cockerton Green, which is a conservation area in a district of Darlington.
- 1.2 The building was built in 1900 (foundation stone on east buttress) and extended at the west end in 1967 to provide a Narthex with adjacent offices and toilets, and a staircase to the Gallery. The original entrance now forms the Sacrament Chapel. The building is not listed.
- 1.3 The external materials are random sandstone with terracotta copings, cills and window dressings and a plain tile roof covering. The stone and tile materials have been used in the extension.

### 2.00 SUMMARY OF WORKS CARRIED OUT SINCE LAST INSPECTION

- 2.1 The following items of works are recorded as completed since the last inspection:
  - Internal decoration of Nave and chancel;
  - Repairs to flashings, sealing of coping stones and selective re-pointing above the chancel arch;
  - Gutter joint repairs/sealing;
  - Regular servicing of the boiler;
  - Asbestos management survey undertaken and priorities actioned including sealing/consolidation of soffits in the boiler room;
  - Clearance of undergrowth adjacent to south walling;
  - Easing of windows on the stairs.

### 3.00 STRUCTURAL CONDITION

- 3.1 The building remains in a sound structural condition with no major defects noted. The overall appearance is good. The main item of concern is the apparent continued water ingress to the chancel arch.
- 3.2 As previously reported there has been some minor structural movement at the south-west corner of the church indicated by minor cracking to the masonry. Some past re-pointing had been undertaken which generally remains sound although some very minor cracking was observed to one area of re-pointing. Therefore the cracking should continue to be kept under review and, if progressive movement is identified, further investigations carried out into potential impact from drainage issues or nearby trees. However, it should be noted that thermal- and moisture-induced cracking is not uncommon in this type of stone construction.

### 4.00 WALLS AND MASONRY

#### Interior

- 4.1 The walls internally are finished in plaster with terracotta mouldings to the Chancel arch and window dressings. All generally sound with only minor defects – an example is some minor dampness at low level affecting the decorated finish. In some instances this can be traced to defects in the external rainwater goods. Salting caused by moisture penetration persists above the chancel arch. Possible continued causes appear to be the condition of external pointing above roofline, defective rainwater goods and deterioration of the bell-cote.
- 4.2 Previous signs of dampness are much improved following works to the gutters, clearance of vegetation and internal decoration using Classidur Traditional Paint. There remains some evidence of rising damp damage to the plaster at the base of the Chancel arch and along the base of the south wall, which at this stage is not considered to warrant any remedial action, with the exception of works to the rainwater goods, however should be kept under review.

- 4.3 The previous reports noted:
- 4.4 *“stone deterioration at the apex of the north and south walls in the Sacrament Chapel, suspected to be from water penetration, appears to persist. There is no obvious cause externally, or readily apparent issues with the flashings or roof detailing. However, due to this appearing to be a persistent issue, it is recommended that intrusive investigations are carried out to locate the source of water penetration which is suspected around the flashings. There is some minor displacement to the decorative coping at the south side and a possible crack to the lead cover flashing. The cover flashing upstand appears to be shorter than the recommended minimum. It is also possible that there is a leak to the gutter stop end which should be inspected and rectified in the first instance. Further close-hand investigations should be carried out into these areas. However, in order to provide a long-term effective solution it is recommended that consideration is given to lifting and re-bedding the coping stones on a DPC in conjunction with inspection and possible replacement of the lead soakers and flashings”*
- 4.5 The recommended works are now completed and whilst the visible evidence of damp penetration remains, moisture readings on the adjacent timbers and indicative readings taken in the masonry suggest drying of the structure and residual moisture only. The stone work should be dry brushed clean to facilitate monitoring of the situation, before any further intrusive works are considered.

### Exterior

- 4.6 The external stonework is very much the same as reported at the last inspection and the same comments apply. Generally the stonework is in reasonable condition for its age. However some of the re-pointing is of a very poor quality with a hard mortar mix, and in some cases over-pointed onto the stone. The original mortar remaining in certain areas is of good quality and requires little attention. A programme of replacement should be drawn up in order that the stone is not eroded by the hard mix – this is occurring in some places. Some heavy weathering to the mortar pointing that has also occurred at the south-east corner of the church should be the first pointing priority.
- 4.7 Refer also to comments on internal walls and historic structural movement.

## **5.00 TOWER**

- 5.1 The louvre vent on the east side of the bell-cote is damaged and in need of repair to prevent weather entry. There is heavily deteriorated mortar pointing to the mortar joints of the terracotta capping. There is also some heavy weathering and deteriorated pointing in the lower sections of masonry. Whilst the masonry is not considered to warrant any repair, in view of the continuing water ingress to the chancel arch the pointing should be taken into account in the programme of re-pointing mentioned previously.
- 5.2 The leadwork to the roof ventilators is laid above the roof tile rather than as soakers. This may cause a problem later. The comments made in previous reports are still relevant. The fleche ventilators require a detailed inspection with particular attention to the lead skirts and flashings.

## **6.00 ROOFS, GUTTERS AND CEILINGS**

- 6.1 The roof to the original Church is an open structure with the main truss members falling to terracotta corbels. There is some spill-off from the general lighting on the roof members which improves the overall atmosphere in the Church. From floor level there appear to be no major defects. A closer inspection at some time would be advisable.
- 6.2 The ceilings to the extension are of plasterboard and skim finish and in adequate condition.
- 6.3 As mentioned in previous reports. The roof covering throughout is of plain red tile and is in fair condition although there are a few isolated slipped/broken tiles which ideally should be

secured/replaced. The water table on the north side of the Nave has some open joints near the base with vegetation. This requires early removal.

- 6.4 Gutters are in a variety of cast iron patterns and have recently been worked on to seal leaking gutter joints. Unfortunately a number of joints were noted to still be leaking. There is also some minor corrosion bleeding through the paint finish. Some stop ends, which abut the masonry walls, are suspect, due to localised washing of the stone surface below, in particular around the chancel arch which may also be contributing to the internal dampness noted. Vegetation was found to be clogging the gutters in some locations.
- 6.5 The guttering is vulnerable to blockage due to the close proximity of the overhanging trees and needs to be cleared regularly. There is also a risk of back edge corrosion to the gutters where it is not possible to paint. A thorough close hand inspection and overhaul of the gutters including lining of the internal surfaces is recommended.
- 6.6 The roof void above the boiler room, as accessed from the kitchen roof hatch was inspected during this inspection. This revealed that no insulation is provided above these areas, which should be considered. Gaps were also noted to the edge of the ceiling boards above the boiler room and no fire stopping into other areas of the church. This should be considered as part of the fire risk assessment and ideally the edges sealed to improve fire separation to the boiler room.
- 6.7 It should be noted that no other roof voids have been inspected during this or previous quinquennial inspections and therefore it would be prudent for suitable access to be provided and inspections made.

## **7.00 RAINWATER DISPOSAL, DRAINAGE AND EXTERNAL DECORATION**

- 7.1 All drains should be checked and cleaned on a periodic basis— at the time of inspection no issues with the underground drainage were apparent.
- 7.2 See notes and recommendations above at 6.4 and 6.5 with regards to the cast iron gutters and downpipes.

## **8.00 INTERNAL DECORATION**

- 8.1 The internal decoration is considered to be in fair condition although some minor inherent dampness has caused some very minor damage to the lower level paintwork in the chapel, which should be touched up.

## **9.00 FLOORS AND GALLERIES**

- 9.1 Within the limits of inspection all floors remain in good condition – timber in the aisles with carpet over concrete to the central Nave and Chancel. Unevenness below the carpet in the Chancel has been identified as deterioration and powdering of the rubber-backed carpet.
- 9.2 The oak-faced step at the Chancel arch remains in sound condition. This should be kept under observation however it is worthy of note that no apparent deterioration has been caused since the last three quinquennial inspections.
- 9.3 Some loose and uneven floor boards were identified under foot to the pulpit, which ought to be secured.

## **10.00 GLAZING AND VENTILATION**

- 10.1 All windows remain in a sound condition. The north side Chancel windows contain opening lights. The stained glass window in the central bay on the north side of the Nave was replaced circa 16 years ago. Windows adjacent the staircase have been eased since the last inspection. Due to the height

of the windows, glazing ought to be safety glazing, however is not marked as such. Protective film is recommended.

- 10.2 Window protection is provided to all windows, generally in good condition and painted black, except for one on the Chancel south window which is galvanised. All the fixings are into the stone joints and are secure.

## **11.00 ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION**

- 11.1 The lighting system is by high-level fittings and these enhance the character of the interior with an element of up-lighting to the roof structure. At the time of the inspection all fittings were in good visible condition. Whilst not in contravention of regulations it is not advisable to have a plug socket in such close proximity to the sink.
- 11.2 The main electrical installation is of some age including a dated distribution board (DB) located in the boiler room. The DB is not labelled as it ought to be. It is recommended that a fixed electrical test in accordance with IEE wiring regulations is carried out in the near future. As there have been changes in legislation since the last test the need for repairs/upgrade works should be anticipated.

## **12.00 HEATING**

- 12.1 The boiler room is generally well organised with some material stored in part, but well away from the actual boiler. Only limited storage is recommended. The boiler is regularly serviced and maintained, the most recent service having been carried out in November 2021, which also included inspection of the flue. Annual services should continue to be carried out. A fire extinguisher is situated next to the door (see also item 13.1).
- 12.2 The heating system is a hot water radiator installation. The heating was in operation during the inspection and found to be working well.

## **13.00 FIRE PREVENTION**

- 13.1 There are a number of extinguishers situated around the building. They are placed in the Gallery, at the rear of the Nave, at the Chancel arch, in the Vestry Office and in the Boiler House. There is a CO<sub>2</sub> extinguisher adjacent to the photocopier in the Office and in the Gallery there is also a CO<sub>2</sub> extinguisher. Servicing was last carried out 18/05/2021 and should be undertaken annually. It is recommended that all are serviced at the same time.
- 13.2 The 'new' escape has improved the fire safety of the building.
- 13.3 A fire risk assessment has been prepared for the building and duty holder roles established in accordance with the Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order 2005. The fire risk assessment should be kept under review and recommendations therein followed.

## **14.00 FURNITURE AND FITTINGS**

- 14.1 A previous pipe organ has been removed.
- 14.2 The Nave is furnished with chairs which have been spaced to accommodate Covid19 recommendations. The resulting spare chairs have been stored in the gallery to be reinstated in due course.
- 14.3 The Narthex and Office are furnished with good fittings and the spaces are well organised. The toilets have been amended to provide a single unit to DDA recommendations and improved kitchen facilities. All are in good condition.

**15.00 CHURCH GROUNDS**

- 15.1 Generally the grounds are well maintained and provide an attractive approach to the Church.
- 15.2 The recent storm Arwen has brought down one of the mature trees growing from the side of the beck and was being cleared at the time of inspection. There is a further tree adjacent waiting to be felled. There are a number of mature trees in close proximity to the south side of the church which would benefit from some management. An arborist's report is recommended to establish safety and any required works. Please note comments with regards to historic movement noted at the south-west corner of the church which can be influenced by the trees subject to the ground conditions.
- 15.3 Landscape treatment is good and well managed. It would be desirable to cut back the edges of the turning area at the rear of the church and redress and level the gravel which has become sparse and is being encroached on and becoming slightly muddy.

**16.00 BOUNDARY WALLS**

- 16.1 The boundaries are as follows:
- East – wall and railings with gates: movement and distortion of the wall has occurred over the years due to the influence of the nearby trees. Re-pointing and consolidation is required. Further ongoing movement should be expected whilst the tree continues to grow in close proximity.
  - North – wall and outbuildings: possible joint boundary with adjacent owner. The ownership of the wall should be established to confirm liability. Re-pointing work is required.
  - West – open to the beck with fence beyond.
  - South – stone wall with cottage at south-east end.

**17.00 ENVIRONMENT SITUATION**

- 17.1 The Church stands at the west end of the Green within its own grounds and is not affected by any unsightly buildings on adjacent land. It is noted that public access is available through the grounds and, to some extent, this could be an advantage to prevent vandalism to the fabric.
- 17.2 An asbestos management survey has been prepared for the building which has confirmed the presence of asbestos insulating boarding (AIB) to the soffits of the extension and also fibre cement undercloaks. There are also asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) to the ceiling of the boiler room and vinyl tiles in the office. The immediate issues have been addressed to safely manage the materials in-situ. It is recommended that advice is sought as to options for coating the AIB soffits to prevent degradation in an attempt to avoid the unexpected need to undertake licenced removal which would present an increased financial burden.

**18.00 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS**

- 18.1 The following are noted for further investigation and/or monitoring:
- Water ingress across Chancel arch
  - Monitor cracking at southwest corner.



### 19.00 PRIORITY OF ADVISED REPAIRS

#### 19.1 Of utmost urgency – Estimated Cost £5,000

- Removal of vegetation to gutters and in water tables (item 5.1)
- Overhaul gutters, including potential need for gutter lining (6.5)
- Consideration to sealing gaps in boiler room ceiling with firemastic (6.6)

#### 19.2 Essential within next 6-18 months, estimated cost £6,000 (subject to findings of close hand inspection)

- Further inspection and repairs to water table/roof above Chancel Arch including bell-cote and including repointing, louvre repair and repairs to rainwater goods (Item 4.1 & 5.1)
- Attend to slipped tiles (Item 6.3)
- Coating of soffits (17.2)

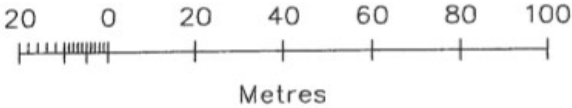
#### 19.3 Necessary within the Quinquennium £6,500

- Keep under observation tree branches overhanging Vestry roof (item 6.4)
- External decoration (item 7.2)
- Inspection of roof spaces
- Periodic Electrical Test
- Secure loose floor board in pulpit (9.3)

#### 19.4 Ultimately desirable

- Prepare a programme of re-pointing (item 4.5).
- Repairs to boundary walls (subject to ownership)
- Cleaning of stained glass
- Improvement to gravel drive (15.3)
- Touch up decoration in Nave (8.1)
- Protective film to stair windows (10.1)
- Replacement carpet in chancel

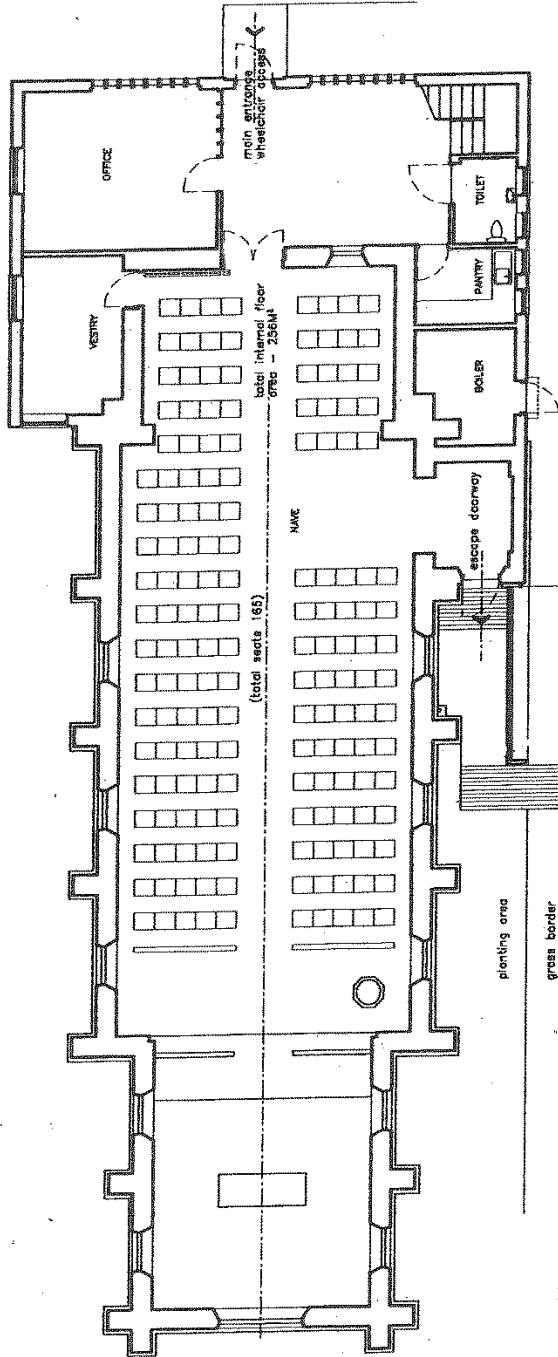
20.00 LOCATION PLAN



21.00 FLOOR PLAN

St Marys Church, Cockerton

20.2

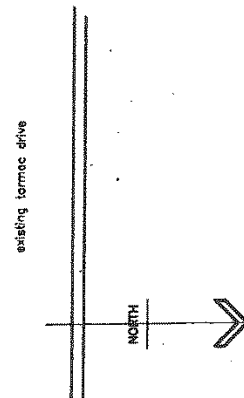


Floor plan

Indicating the new doorway and ramp completed November 2010

and

Future proposed location for font and extended seating



## 22.00 GENERAL NOTES

- 22.1 Any electrical installation should be tested every quinquennium and immediately if not done within the last five years (except as may be recommended in this report) by a competent electrical engineer, and a resistance and earth continuity test should be obtained on all circuits. The engineer's test report should be kept with the Church Log Book. This present report is based upon a visual inspection of the main switchboard and of certain sections of the wiring selected at random, without the use of instruments.
- 22.2 Any lightning conductor should be tested every quinquennium (in addition to any works which may be recommended in this report) in accordance with the British Standard Code of Practice, No CP 326 1965, by a competent electrical engineer, and the record of the test results and conditions should be kept with the Church Log Book.
- 22.3 A proper examination and test should be made of the heating apparatus by a qualified engineer each summer before the heating season begins. The PCC should consider arranging an Inspection Contract with the insurance company.
- 22.4 At least one fire extinguisher of the right type should be provided. There should also be one additional extinguisher of the foam or CO<sub>2</sub> type where the heating apparatus is oil-fired. (There are three main types, and it is essential to have the appropriate one in the appropriate place. Advice should be sought from the Local Authority Fire Prevention Officer).
- 22.5 This is a summary report only, as is required by the Inspection of Churches Measure; it is not a specification for the execution of the work and must not be used as such. The surveyor is willing to assist the PCC in applying for an Archdeacon's Certificate or a faculty, as may be required to comply with the regulations.
- 22.6 The PCC is reminded that their minutes must record the fact that the application is being made for a certificate or faculty and that a copy of the minutes must accompany the application together with a full specification, drawings where applicable, and an estimate of the cost of the work. In any application for grant aid, a full specification is always required.
- 22.7 The PCC is strongly advised to enter into an annual contract with a local builder for the cleaning out of gutters and downpipes twice a year.
- 22.8 Although the Measure requires the Church to be inspected by a surveyor every five years, it should be realised that serious trouble may develop in between these surveys if minor defects are left unattended. It is strongly recommended that the Church Wardens should make, or cause to be made, a careful inspection of the fabric at least once a year, and arrange for immediate attention to such minor matters as displaced slates and leaking pipes. Guidance may be had from the pamphlet 'How to Look After Your Church' obtainable from Church House Bookshop, Great Smith Street, London, SW1.
- 22.9 The PCC is reminded that insurance cover should be index-linked so that adequate cover is maintained against inflation of building costs. It is of course important to ensure that the basic sum insured is adequate at inception of index-linking, as this will deal only with future inflation. The Ecclesiastical Insurance Office Ltd, which covers the majority of Churches in this country, will send its regional surveyors without charge to offer guidance as to the appropriate level of assessment in every case.