

CHURCH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL OSBOURNBY

Statement of Significance – Major projects

This document must be accompanied by the Standard Information Form 1A

Section 1: The church in its urban / rural environment.

1.1 Setting of the Church

The existing church of St Peter and St Paul in its current form has been established for 700 years. It lies at the centre of the village of Osbournby on a west to east line in the parish of South Lafford and provides both a focal and meeting point for the village. The church holds a commanding position and straddles a triangle of land between High Street and London Road and is adjacent to the village primary school.

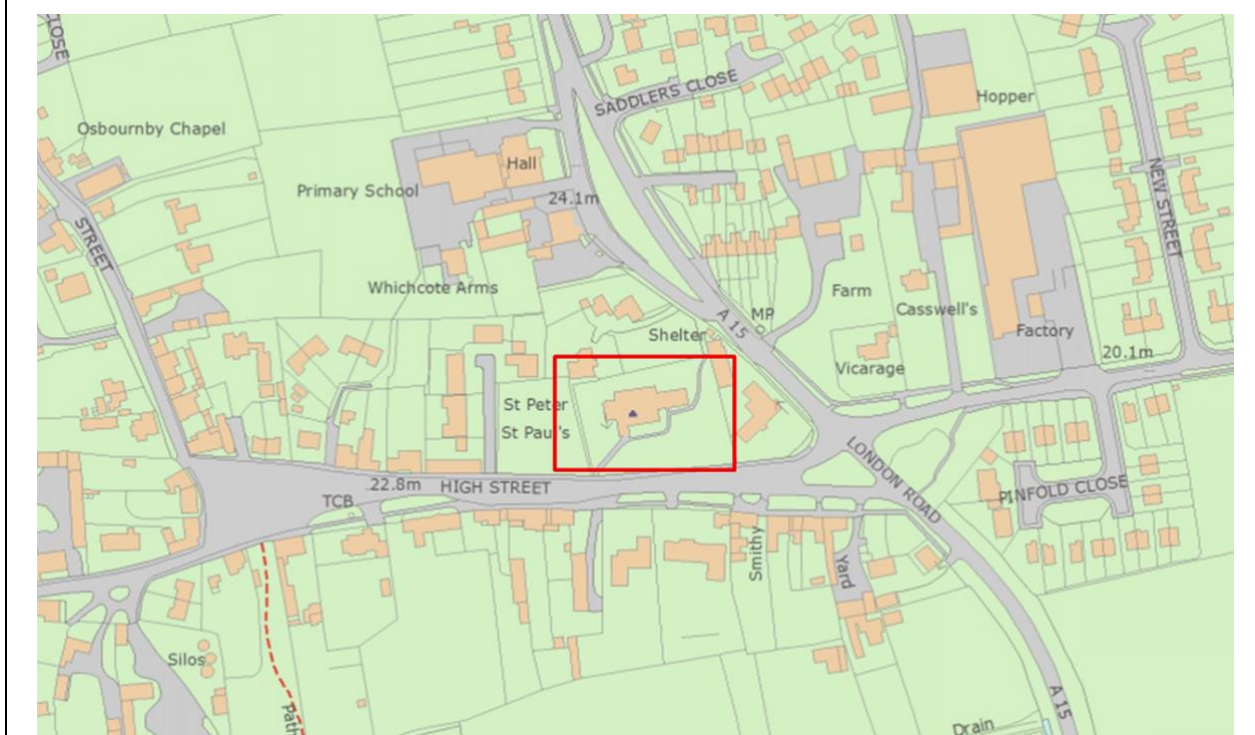
The Domesday Survey records a church here in 1086 in the possession of Gilbert of Ghent, the wealthiest landowner in the county at that time. A priest also appears to be associated with this church for under the entry for (Scott) Willoughby, it is mentioned that Guy of Craon had jurisdiction of half a church there ‘and over a priest who belongs to Osbournby’.

There is further evidence that a church has existed on this site since Saxon times and that the village existed since the late 9th century, as the very name originates from a Danish form of ‘Osbern’s settlement’, dating from their early colonisation period.

The church of St Peter and St Paul is mostly Decorated in style. The west bay of the south aisle, which embraced the tower, has been demolished. The north aisle is Perpendicular, although the arcades of both aisles are Decorated and of four bays. The font is Norman and drum-shaped, with restoration by Charles Kirk in 1873.

The church is Grade 1 listed and is located within the Osbournby Conservation Area.

The map below shows the position of the church at the centre of the village of Osbournby:



1.2 The Living Churchyard

The churchyard (closed in 1888) is also significant in the village and current villagers have relatives buried within the churchyard or have had their ashes interred on the north side of the building in a section of consecrated ground.

There is also an adjoining cemetery under the control of Osbournby Parish Council. Both the churchyard and the cemetery are visited regularly by village families and many graves are maintained in pristine condition with the regular changing of flowers and tributes.

The cemetery contains a Commonwealth grave from World War 1; Herbert Cooper, a private in the 2nd / 1st battalion of the Lincolnshire Yeomanry, who died on 19 September 1915, age 25. (Commonwealth War Graves Commission CEM Number: 4211)

1.3 Social History

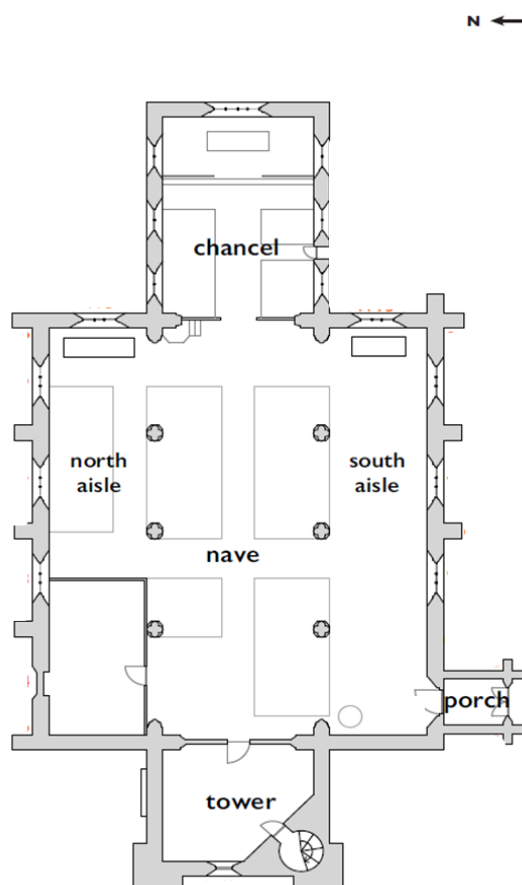
The church of St Peter and St Paul can seat approximately 350. It has been used historically and continues to be used today for traditional events including regular and seasonal services in addition to christenings, confirmations, marriages and funerals. Additionally, it is used regularly for community events such as concerts, exhibitions and social gatherings.



This evidence demonstrates that despite falling regular attendance, the church continues to unify the village as a community at times of crisis, need and celebration. There is the intention to relocate the village museum in the church in due course from its original building which is no longer available.

1.4 The church building in general

Although there is evidence of a church on this site from the 9th century, the present building was established in 1320, during the reign of Edward II. St Peter and St Pauls is built of local Ancaster limestone with ashlar quoins (large masonry blocks) providing support. The roofs are a mix of tiled, leaded and copper covering. There is evidence that it has been replaced at least twice in its lifetime.



There is a tower of three stages, without spire, on the west side with a south and north aisle.

The south aisle has a doorway to the now non-existent rood loft. The north aisle has a piscina (washing receptacle), and a further piscina, a sedilia, (a seat for clergy) and an aumbry (a cupboard set into the church wall to hold the sacrament vessels securely) can be found in the chancel, in addition to the surviving dado panel from the remains of the C14 chancel screen destroyed during the reformation. It was reported that the rood loft was sold on 1st April 1566 to John Audeleye, who made it into a bed.

At the west end of the nave is a painted Royal Arms of George III dated 1797 and a raised and fielded charity board. There also remains some stained glass in the church which dates to the C14-15. Within the church there are a number of rare medieval bench ends of high significance. These are richly carved; some of which depict St George and the Dragon, Adam and Eve with the apple tree and a fox preaching to geese. Perhaps the rarest and most significant is the one featuring the Crucifixion; purported to be one of only three in the country to remain intact.

1.5 The church building in detail



Built circa 1320, the church of St Peter and St Paul, Osbournby, is constructed of local coursed limestone rubble with ashlar quoins and dressings, with plain tiled, leaded and copper roofs. It is comprised of a west tower, nave, chancel, north and south aisles and a south porch.

The C14 west tower is of three stages and has a roll moulded plinth, chamfered string courses, a plain parapet and clasped corner buttresses.

In the belfry stage are reticulated two light C14 cusped ogee headed belfry lights with quatrefoils (four circle design), wave moulded surrounds and hollow moulded heads. In the west wall a single lancet.

A modern clock face is top centred on the middle stage.

The south aisle porch is faced with a mesh gate for bird prevention purposes. The C14 gabled south porch has a moulded triple engaged shafted outer doorway with annular impost and double chamfered arch, with setback gabled buttresses. This leads into the main porch area which contains the significant four bay nave arcades comprised of moulded columnettes with stone seats on both sides, embellished with stone carved heads, ogee arches and cusp tops with finials.

The central church entrance is through a triangular headed early C18 four panelled oak door.



The C14 south aisle has a wide three-light window and two further three-light windows with curved intersecting tracery to the heads, daggers and ogee tracery, recorded in the 16th century to have contained stained glass dedicated to Norman knights.

The side walls have cusped ogee headed panels above the benches supported on engaged annular shafts. On the south side are three windows matching those to the north as well as a plain four-centred arched priest's door.

In the eastern corner of the wall there is a piscina and a recessed panel below the easternmost window containing a small brass memorial plate. There are a number of other reveals and marble plaques including commemoration of those fallen in the two World Wars.



Stacked against the wall within the sanctuary area of the chapel are 2 slate headstones.

The C14 chancel has a chamfered plinth and plain parapet. In the north wall are three, two-light windows with ogee tracery to the pointed cusped lights in hollow chamfered surrounds. The C17 four-light east window has cusped tracery to the tall lights and a cinquefoil over.

Within the sanctuary area, the chancel south wall features a sedilia of medium / high significance with ogee topped arches with foliate carvings and finials and human head figurative details above each column and respond. The sedilia is comprised of columnettes and end carvery responds with a clergy bench seat, similar to the arcading in the porch, but more elaborately designed. There are three windows, each two lights wide with early English style tracery. There is also a priest door, currently partially blocked by the choir stalls.



Beyond are a number of significant features including a contemporary piscina with cusped ogee arched opening. On the north side is an aumbry with ogee head. In the north aisle is a plain piscina and an elaborately decorated statue bracket with brattishing and panels with shields and chevrons. The church organ is also contained within the north chancel area.



Fittings: C19 carved oak pulpit and pews. The surviving lower dado panels of the C14 chancel screen remain with fleurons and cusped mouchettes.

The north aisle has a bricked up doorway and three, three-light C15 windows with cusped heads to the lights and chamfered four centred arched heads. In the east wall is a tall matching three light window. The central window features C14 – C15 stained glass.

The east wall is the back of the north arcade to the nave, with simple rectangular lintel top to the east end, figurative stop ends with hood mould above the east end respond. The aisleway between the nave and north aisle pews is of stone flags and some ledger slabs, finely carved in black marble or slate.



A number of fine monuments are featured on the north and south aisle walls dating from the 1720s. There is also a fine and unusual painted stone wall plaque. More specifically, in the north aisle between the central window and the window within the vestry there is a fine early wall monument dated 1720. The bottom of the plaque has a figurative detail, which is partially concealed and set within a carved stone corbel, which looks fairly early in date and appears to be the top of a capital or a respond to an arcade or arch.



Further wall plaques are set between the 2 windows and are again relatively early and dated 1722 and set into an older carved bracket. Between the easternmost window and the east wall is one further painted stone wall plaque matching that on the opposite side of the chapel area.

Along the top of the wall to the final two bays there is a recessed cast concrete wall plate.

The nave - In the south east angle of the nave is a statue bracket with a human face to the underside. In the south aisle is a four centred arched doorway to the rood loft and a brattished statue bracket.

The C17 tower access door is a simple pine door with old hand forged latch, triangular shaped top and frame and is historic in its own right.

The east wall contains the chancel arch, a 2 centred arch with engaged columnette to the respond. Around the arch is a painted panel, probably installed in the C19. The south wall consists largely of the south arcade, there is no clerestory.



1.6 Contents of the Church

The west wall of the nave originally contained the tower arch, which is still discernable. Above the tower access door is a Royal Coat of Arms of George III dated 1797 and a raised and fielded charity board. There is also a triptych of Commandment boards with a painted figure of Mary in the centre by T.Philips of Bourne and a further painted panel of a High Priest.

It is recorded that the original altar steps, destroyed during the reformation, have been used to reinforce the tower.



In the nave there is a fine collection of C14 oak bench ends of high significance including St George and the Dragon, Adam and Eve and Reynard the Fox, together with cusped blank arcading and foliage. There are also a number of later Victorian carved bench ends. In addition, the chancel holds three loose bench ends of high significance, including one of only three remaining in country of the Crucifixion.



One of the significant features in the church is the font. Positioned in the south aisle, it is a circular 11th or 12th century tub font with later octagonal cover with a metal finial. The font is raised on an octagonal step with an additional step on the north side and is decorated with pelleted intersecting blank arcading to the sides and hobnail decoration to the rim.

The pulpit is incorporated into the chancel screen featuring some mediaeval carving to the lower panels with Victorian additions. There is also a President's chair inscribed with "Praise Be The Lord" in oak stored against the chancel screen at the east end of the nave south corner, with a brass lectern to the side of the pulpit.



The former clock mechanism is also located within the church adjacent to the north aisle as an item of historical interest and is dated 1740.

Within the vestry there is one children's chair, some children's metal-framed tables and one old Jacobean chair dated 1653. There is a metal cupboard containing a brass plate and an old safe by Thomas Withers. The nave also contains a Celtic design cast iron heating gutter covering the now defunct heating trench.

The west tower retains three bells; none of which are currently being used due to the lack of a belfry floor. There is a mediaeval bell frame mounted diagonally in the tower with 3 bell pits. The bell frame is in a poor condition and the bells have been removed and mounted on the intermediate chamber floor as a temporary measure. There is currently a loudspeaker bell system.



Monuments - In the Belfry, a raised lead plaque is retained on the inner south wall, dated 1729 commemorating Richard Hanley, church warden. The north aisle contains a plaque to Wm. Greene, yeoman, d. 1722; the design by Robert Copeland features fluted Doric pilasters which support acanthus leaf capitals and a round arch. Also in the north aisle there is a similar monument to John Greene, dated 1720, with scrolls and Death's head to an oval panel.



1.7 Significance for mission

The church is ideal for continued use for regular Sunday services, baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals and seasonal celebration services, in addition to fund raising activities including the ongoing bi-annual clothing sales, concerts, exhibitions and social gatherings.

The condition of the church, significantly the considerable damp penetration and consequent damage to the structure, fabric and rare artefacts both externally and internally, may prevent this longer term as highlighted by the Quinquennial Reports. Extended use is also a priority to bring the church alive to an increasing number of village residents. It is envisaged that this would be possible through the additional facilities of toilets and a servery area and the installation of the village museum.

Section 2: The significance of the area affected by the proposal.

2.1 Identify the parts of the church and/or churchyard which will be directly or indirectly affected by your proposal.

The project proposal encompasses the entire church building of St. Peter & St. Paul, Osbournby as outlined in the Quinquennial Report of May 2017 and reinforced in the Quinquennial Report of 2022. This report highlighted 96 actions for repair plus a further 26 to be the subject of ongoing maintenance. Of the 96 actions highlighted, 50% were prioritised as being required

within the following 2 years. More specifically, 6.25% of the actions were required immediately, 20.8% required within the first year and a further 22.9% required within 2 years of the report. Almost 3 years have elapsed since that report, predominantly without corrective action.

The priorities include corrective drainage action to rectify severe damp penetration, major repairs to stonework throughout the church, a significant project to make good the Belfry in order to re-hang the bells and appropriate corrective action to the roof elements over the Nave, North Aisle, South Aisle and Porch. There is no access to the Tower roof to undertake regular maintenance work; the access floor having long gone. This needs to be reinstated as do safety rails around the tower ramparts.

Ancillary actions encompass some fabric of the church including preservation of the rare and historic medieval bench ends. There is an additional proposal to add toilet facilities and a servery to provide extended use of the church within the local community.

2.2 Set out the significance of these particular parts.

The proposals set out essential corrective actions and maintenance, remedial actions to restore areas to a safe and usable condition and preventative actions to ensure further damage is not incurred in the near and foreseeable future.

The significance of the corrective and remedial actions, including the drainage proposals, is that the action will prevent further damage being incurred through rainfall and the consequential damp, mould and fabric damage to the building and its contents; without which, much of the building will simply be rendered unusable.

Similarly, the repairs to the stonework and roof replacement will prevent further damage occurring and restore the integrity of the building, ensuring it is useable for worship for successive generations of the village.

The Belfry and the Tower roof is currently too dangerous to access and necessary, regular maintenance activities have had to be curtailed due to the health and safety risks involved in attempting to gain access. Restoring access will also facilitate the restoration of voluntary maintenance to provide ongoing safety and preservation of the church.

The contents of the church also require improved conditions and the significance of some of the contents, including the rare bench ends will benefit from extended preservation and longevity.

Section 3: Assessment of the impact of the proposals

3.1 Describe and assess the impact of your proposal on these parts, and on the whole.

The Quinquennial Report of 2022 highlighted issues with recommendations to be completed (A) immediately, (B) within 1 year and (C) within 2 years. The previous reports of 2012 and 2017 also highlighted issues which are still to be completed.

The impact of the proposals will be to restore the integrity of the fabric of the building, prevent further damage occurring and restore the fitness for purpose to the church. The impact on the community will be to provide a welcoming building for worship and a centre to the community for additional uses ranging from fund raising for the church and ongoing maintenance to use by local groups ranging from prayer groups and Christian fellowships to potential for the Women's Institute and other community groups.

Further impact on local schools is also anticipated through the publicising of the significant history associated with the church. Dating evidence shows Christian activity in Osbournby from the Saxon times through to the Norman conquest and exceptional features which escaped Henry V111's Reformation of the Church such as the rare bench ends which are only a few to have survived the purge of all Catholic religious art.

3.2 Explain how you intend, where possible, to mitigate the impact of the proposed works on the significance of the parts affected and the whole.

The proposals are based on the need to repair the church before it reaches a stage where it cannot be restored economically. No mitigation is required as the proposals seek to repair and protect the significance of the building and its' contents exclusively, with the possible exception of the addition of toilet and servery facilities. It is intended that these may be integrated into the vestry area adjacent to the north wall.

Sources consulted

- The Quinquennial Report.of 2012, 2017 and 2022.
- Peter Rogan *BA DipArch(Leics) PGDip ACIOB MCIAT AABC RIBA.*
- PCC of South Lafford.
- Lincoln Diocese – the Diocese and Historic Churches Support Officer.
- The Historic Religious Buildings Alliance.
- Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum 1642-1660, published by HMSO London, 1911.
- Publication – Monuments of Superstition C.1566.
- The National Churches Trust.