



**DAC visit report
Osbournby, St Peter and St Paul
22nd November 2021**

Present

The Revd Elaine Turner (DAC Chair), Mrs Susan Leadbetter (DAC member), Mr Graham Cook (DAC member), Mrs Rosalind Blythe (churchwarden), Mr Derek North (churchwarden), Mr John Clark, Mr Derek North, Mr Ian Neville (treasurer), Mr Peter Rogan (inspecting architect), Mr Steven Sleight (DAC Secretary).

Proposal

A delegation of the DAC had been asked to visit to consider proposals for the repair and reordering of the church.

Background

The PCC members explained that they wished the church to be more welcoming and useful not just for worship but also for the use of the wider community. This would involve improvements to rainwater drainage, the provision of toilet and servery facilities, improved heating and lighting. The parish had categorised their church as category 3, a community church.

DAC delegation comment

The DAC delegation commended the parish on the work it had already done on its Statements of Significance and Statement of Needs. The DAC delegation made the following observations:

Phases of work – the delegation noted that there were effectively two phases of work, phase 1 for the repair work of the building and phase 2 for the reordering and redevelopment. While the delegation saw this as a very sensible approach to make the building dry before new facilities were introduced, it felt that it was important that both phases were used as a part of any funding bid the parish might make, for example, to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The NLHF did not give grants simply for the repair of historic buildings; however, they would consider grant applications which sought to broaden the appeal and access to historic buildings and to encourage inclusiveness and diversity and which may include the provision of new facilities and some repair work. Most grant funders would not offer funding for any work which has already begun.

Drainage – a parish working party had dug out the French drains around the building some 25 years ago and these were no longer functioning properly. The delegation agreed that getting rainwater away from the building would be advantageous in drying out the fabric and improving environmental conditions within the building. The parish should explore

with their architect whether disposal is via a soakaway or whether there is the possibility of a connection to the mains drainage in the road. The DAC delegation also concurred with the suggestion that asbestos downpipes should be removed and replaced with something more appropriate.

Vestry – the DAC delegation was of the firm opinion that the fully enclosed shed-like vestry at the west end of the north aisle should be removed. It occupies a large space in the aisle, was an eyesore in this Grade I listed building and was damp and scarcely fit for purpose. The DAC delegation acknowledged that vestry space in the church was required and believed that the space at the base of the tower could be utilised for this purpose.

Toilet – the DAC delegation believed that the cleared west end of the north aisle would provide an appropriate space for the location of a toilet pod. Drainage could be provided relatively easily by a trench arch system in the adjacent churchyard.

Servery – the DAC delegation believed that to locate the servery in the north aisle would enable the same drainage system to be used and keep the services all in the same location. However, the parish should look at all of the options which were available to it, evaluate each and, if discounted, to explain in the Statement of Need why that is the case. It was a possibility that filtered rainwater could be utilised to flush the toilet as a part of the parish's environmental response.

Heating – it was noted that the parish had a mixture of underpew heaters and overhead radiant heaters. The DAC delegation – with the parish – understood that the future wider use of the building required a reasonable level of heating. This may be through heated pew cushions, more appropriate overhead heaters or improved underpew heaters and the parish was encouraged to talk with the DAC's electrical and heating adviser.

Rood screen – one of the concerns of the parish was the lack of space for the coffin between the half screen (the top half of the screen was dismantled many years ago) and the nave pews during funerals. An option which the parish had suggested was for the screen to be removed and placed on the east wall behind the high altar as a sort of reredos. The DAC delegation did not feel that this was a part of the project that should be pursued, as it was unlikely to receive a favourable response from Historic England. If the main problem was the location of coffins at funerals, then the DAC delegation recommended that it could be mitigated by placing the coffin in the much larger space offered by the chancel.

Display space – as a part of the proposals for wider community use, the parish was considering display cases in the south aisle to accommodate items from the village museum in the old Methodist Chapel, which had been closed. This consisted mainly of albums of photographs and documents. The DAC delegation believed that the church was probably not the best place to keep original historical documents as they would be susceptible to damp. Museum-type cases were expensive and would take up a lot of space when actually the parish was looking to create space which was more flexible and useable. It recommended that some of this information could be copied or digitised and that an IT information point could be installed to enable visitors to access documents at the press of a button.

Sound system – the DAC delegation understood the parish’s desire to install a sound reinforcement system. There were a number of contractors in Lincolnshire that could give an idea of what could be achieved and what a system might cost. Speakers and cables should be coloured to match the stonework so that they are as inconspicuous as possible

Solar panels – the parish sought the DAC delegation’s advice on the installation of solar panels on the roof of the church. The delegation explained that it may be possible to install panels on a roof where they would not be visible. However, such installations may require planning permission, which would involve consulting with the local planners and Historic England and this often proved to be a stumbling block. Nevertheless, the delegation would encourage the parish to seek the early views of the conservation officer from the local district council.

Funding bids – the delegation encouraged the parish to continue to discuss their application with the Historic Churches Support officer – Dr Matthew Godfrey – and the Church Development Officer – Mrs Fran Bell.

This site visit report records the views expressed at the site visit made by the delegation from the DAC.

It has been offered to the full DAC for comment, correction & alteration. Further comments and suggestions, which did not form part of the discussion at the site visit, might have been added to this report following consideration at the full DAC meeting.

This report, along with any necessary additional information, will be sent to the PCC, Historic England and to relevant amenity societies. This report does not necessarily represent the views of the amenity societies.

It is now in the hands of the parish to review the contents of the report and act accordingly. Until a response has been received from the parish the DAC will assume that the matters raised are still being considered by the parish and will not pursue the matter further.