

**ST. MICHAELS HOUSE
ALL HALLOWS CAMPUS
BELSEY BRIDGE ROAD
DITCHINGHAM
NORFOLK
NR35 2dt**

Planning and Listed Building Application for

PHASED REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING BOILER FLUE.

Submitted to
South Norfolk District Council

**HERITAGE, DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT**



December '23
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Archidite Ltd.

St Michael's House Belsey Bridge Road Ditchingham HDAS
December 2023

1.0 Preliminary

This statement sets out to provide a brief written framework to underpin the need, heritage, access and design rationale for the proposal to carry out phased replacement of the existing boiler system and flues of the existing property and associated works taking into consideration the following as part of the application: -

- a. Exterior of property
 - i. Plans and elevation as existing drawing 01.
 - ii. Phase one additional flue drawing 02
 - iii. Phase two removal of the existing flue and provision of additional new flue

2.0 Location and Description

2.1 The application site lies south of Belsey Bridge Road which is accessed via the Thwaite Road to the east or the Norwich to Ditchingham main road to the west. The site forms part of a larger campus including the Besley Bridge Conference centre, now closed, and the pre-school centre. St Michaels House is also currently vacant. The Emmaus community is the main leaseholder on the site and they are continuing with their improvement and alterations to the buildings in line with recent planning and Listed Building consents.

St. Michales House is currently vacant awaiting a new lease holder following the convent vacation in 2018. It was leased to the With Community but the covid pandemic unfortunately had to withdraw from the lease. It stands by itself as a detached building within the campus. There is a need however to maintain the building and part of this is to provide a low level of heating during the winter months to prevent further deterioration of the fabric.

2.2 St Michaels House

Situated to the North West of the site adjacent the Belsey Bridge Road the structure was erected in the mid nineteenth century and consists of a brick built building with a tiled, slated and flat roofs. Red facing brickwork. English bond to original part of the building. Metal, timber, brick mullioned windows, with leaded Payne's Timber doors. The building is currently vacant.



Illustration 1. All Hallows Chapel, former All Hallows Convent, Ditchingham Norfolk

2.3 Architectural and Heritage Background. The building has recently been subject of and inspection by Historic England and is now a Listed Building. The adjacent buildings of The Chapel and Abbe Pierre House have also been listed and being within close proximity the application has to be read in the context of this building as well. The site and its buildings worked together to serve the community over period of many years. In recent times over the last 25 years the campus had undergone a major change.

After 150 years the convent was closed and new ways for the campus to carry on the work of the former community was found. The Former School to the east of the site was extended and altered and turned into a conference centre know and the Belsey Bridge conference centre. This has recently closed. A small part of the former school to the north East of the site is currently runs as a preschool centre. The centre swathe of the site is from north to the south is occupied by the Emmaus community. St Michaels House is currently vacant and a Tennent is being sought.

The site is overseen by the Community of All Hallows trust which remains very active in the site and its continued development.

2.4 Site Area The site area as outlined in red is approximately 8500 sq.m. and is open to mature trees, grass land, Access roads, turning areas, parking and pathways. St Michaels House lies to the North West of the site.

2.5 Topography of the Site The site contains no features of historic or landscape importance, neither does the site lie within a designated Conservation Area. It is understood that there are no Tree Preservation Orders placed on any trees on the site. A GPS survey level at the front, north, of the site is 16.40m AODN and the corresponding level at the rear, south, of the site is 21.42m AODN. Thus there is a gradual rise from the North of the site to the South where the Chapel is to be found.

2.6 Background to the Application . All Hallows trust have ben advised by their Boiler maintenance company that one of the existing two boilers in the boiler room is no longer fit for purpose and needs replacement. This boiler together with the existing working boiler feed into the twin flue. The boilers are over 20 years of age. The existing flue also like the working boiler has a short term use of up to 3 years. The heating Engineer has recommended that a new boiler is provided to replace the existing. However, there is a problem in that the new range of boilers are no longer compatible

with the existing flue. It is therefore a requirement that the new boiler has its own flue. There will be two phases of work. The first phase being the replacement of the condemned boiler with a new flue as seen on drawing 01. The second phase being the replacement of the existing twin flue and boiler with a second new boiler and flue as shown on drawing 03.

3.0 List Descriptions

3.1 This application for Listed Building Consent is also accompanied by a Heritage Statement that offers a comprehensive overview of the development in relation to the historic building issues. Nevertheless, these documents may not be read together so the statutory list descriptions of the buildings are also reproduced below.

3.2 All Hallows Chapel (listed as part of Abbe Pierre House) The statutory list description for Chadds is as follows:

Official list entry

Heritage Category:

Listed Building

Grade:

II

List Entry Number:

1480051

Date first listed:

28-Feb-2022

List Entry Name:

Former Community House (Convent), now known as Abbe Pierre House and Holy Cross House

Statutory Address 1:

Former All Hallows Convent, Belsey Bridge Road, Ditchingham, Norfolk,
NR35 2DT

Statutory Address:

Former All Hallows Convent, Belsey Bridge Road, Ditchingham, Norfolk,
NR35 2DT

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

Norfolk

District:

South Norfolk (District Authority)

Parish:

Ditchingham

National Grid Reference:

TM3349992339

Summary

Convent, formerly known as Community House, built for the Sisters of Mercy in 1876, possibly to the designs of Henry Woodyer.

Reasons for Designation

Community House, a convent built for the Sisters of Mercy in 1876, possibly to the designs of Henry Woodyer, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural interest:

- * it demonstrates a high degree of architectural quality in which each elevation has distinctive visual interest whilst the overall composition achieves a harmonious effect due to the repeated rows of gables and pointed arch windows;
- * it is possibly associated with an eminent ecclesiastical architect with many listed buildings to his name, whose work within the Gothic Revival is a dynamic and imaginative interpretation of the medieval style;
- * its use of distinct volumes and forms of decoration express the various functions of the building, in accordance with the basic tenets of the Gothic Revival;

- * the internal configuration survives, along with the majority of the original fixtures and fittings, including the staircases, doors, fireplaces, panelling in the refectory, and fitted cupboards in the service areas, providing an important illustration of how the convent was run;

- * the finely detailed chapel enhances the architectural calibre of the building with its decorative stone dressings and particularly delicate tracery in the chancel.

Historic interest:

- * it survives in a form that directly illustrates and preserves its original function, providing important evidence of how the convent was run;

- * it has historic significance as part of a group of buildings bearing testimony to religious and female emancipation in the C19.

Group value:

- * it has strong group value with the House of Mercy and the entrance arch, walled garden and glasshouse which are both listed at Grade II.

History

The first building at All Hallows Convent was a House of Mercy – an institution to reclaim young women – which was built in 1859 to the designs of Henry Woodyer (Grade II listed). It was the initiative of the Norwich Penitentiary Association and was strongly promoted by two local landed families, the Sucklings and the Crosses. The founder of the community was one of the Crosse daughters, Lavinia Crosse. A house had initially been established nearby at Shipmeadow on the Norfolk/ Suffolk border in 1854, but the location proved to be unhealthy and a new site was acquired at Ditchingham on the main Norwich to Bungay road.

Homes to care for and rehabilitate fallen or unfortunate women - prostitutes, unmarried mothers, victims of incest and rape, and others - had existed since the C18. The first was the Magdalen Hospital in London which opened in 1758, and by the 1830s establishments existed in Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol and other provincial cities. In the 1840s a movement arose in the

Anglican Church to provide for such unfortunate/ penitent women but with the additional feature of attached orders of nuns who would run the establishments and provide Christian care. It was spearheaded from 1848 by the Reverend John Armstrong and was supported by the parallel movement for Anglican religious sisterhoods - the first was established in London in 1845 in a convent designed by Butterfield.

Henry Woodyer (1816-1896) was a Victorian architect of power and originality, working largely on churches or other religious buildings. His early training is not clear: he may have been a pupil of Butterfield, and he may have worked with Pugin, whose writings inspired him. He set up his own office in 1845 and quickly attracted commissions, particularly from High Church Anglicans inspired by the recent Oxford Movement and the architectural developments of the Gothic Revival. Woodyer himself had Anglican High Church sympathies. Unusually for an architect he was also a person of private means and thus could choose his commissions. A search on the National Heritage List for England (the List) shows that he designed or worked on over 90 listed buildings, including the Grade I listed Holy Innocents at Highnam, Gloucestershire.

Woodyer was possibly approached for the Ditchingham commission on the strength of his House of Mercy at Clewer in Windsor (1854-1858) which he had designed for his friend the rector there. In effect, Woodyer created a new building type: an asylum for women combined with a convent, requiring both integration and separation for the two functions. He was successful in his endeavour at Clewer, and after Ditchingham, Woodyer designed a further four Houses of Mercy: St Peter's Convent in Horbury, Yorkshire (1862-1864); the Devon House of Mercy in Bovey Tracey (1865-1868); Great Maplestead House of Mercy (1866-8; demolished 1964); and St Thomas House, Basingstoke (1884-1885). All the surviving sites are listed at Grade II with the chapels at Clewer and Basingstoke listed at Grade II*.

At Ditchingham, Woodyer was commissioned to design a House of Mercy and integrated chapel for thirty penitents (Grade II listed), along with a gatehouse, Gothic entrance arch, walled garden and glasshouse (the arch, walled garden and glasshouse are listed at Grade II). An orphanage and school for parentless girls of the middle classes was built in 1862, also by Woodyer.

A separate convent, known as Community House, was built for the Sisters of Mercy in 1876. It is not known if Woodyer was asked to design this building or if another architect was responsible. The Sisters provided work for women who

would have otherwise gone to prison or the workhouse, establishing a laundry facility for a large area in the Waveney Valley and an embroidery school. Women came in from the surrounding villages to be taught 'white work' and ecclesiastical embroidery which was sold throughout the country and even as far as Canada.

The first map to show the site is the first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1885. It depicts the gatehouse on Belsey Bridge Road and to the east a walled garden divided into four sections with a glasshouse. Behind the walled garden to the south is the House of Mercy (Female Reformatory) with a small outbuilding to the north-west and a garden to the south. To the east is Community House, the convent building occupied by the Sisters of Mercy, and further to the north-east is the Female Orphanage with gardens to the south.

The second edition OS map of 1905 shows the chapel on the south-east corner of Community House which was built in 1893-1895 to the designs of Augustus Frere who may also have been responsible for the new extension to the north-east wing. Frere was a London-based architect who is associated with two listed buildings: the Grade II listed Church of St John the Baptist in The Lee, Buckinghamshire which he designed (1867-1869), and the Grade I listed medieval Church of Holy Trinity in Cold Ashton, South Gloucestershire which he restored in 1894. The chapel attached to Community House received a circular extension with a conical roof in the 1950s by the architect J P Chaplin.

In 1965 All Hallows became a community home for young people until government funding was withdrawn in 1980. In 2018 the remaining seven sisters left to become a dispersed community. Community House is now occupied by Emmaus, an organisation which supports people to work their way out of homelessness. It is known as Abbé Pierre house (after the founder of Emmaus), whilst the late C19 wing extension is known as Holy Cross House.

Details

Convent, formerly known as Community House, built for the Sisters of Mercy in 1876, possibly to the designs of Henry Woodyer.

MATERIALS: red brick laid in English bond with brick dressings and a roof covering of plain red clay tiles.

PLAN: the building has a long rectangular plan orientated north-south with a

rear north-east wing, further extended to the east probably in the 1890s, and a chapel on the south-east corner, built 1893-1895.

EXTERIOR: the two-storey building is in the Gothic style with steeply pitched roofs surmounted by decorative ridge cresting and tapering square chimney stacks with simple moulded brick cornices. The numerous gables all have stepped brick cornices. The principal west elevation, which faces the House of Mercy, has a moulded brick storey band at first-floor level and is divided into seven gabled bays. The five recessed inner bays are lit on the first floor by pairs of Gothic arch casement windows under Gothic relieving arches, the tympanums of which are decorated in basketweave brickwork. The three central bays have wide Gothic arch openings of three orders forming a loggia, divided by buttresses with off-sets, and flanked by a pair of windows in bays two and six. At each end are wide projecting gabled bays. The right one is lit by a canted bay under a mono-pitched roof with a large rectangular window under a Gothic relieving arch. The first-floor windows have been replaced with uPVC windows. The left bay is dominated by an external chimney breast with corbelled brickwork, and contains the six-panelled entrance door which retains the original letter box, bell pull and security grille, under a decorative gabled porch.

The north elevation is less coherent, consisting of the original service wing and the late C19 extension with an enclosed yard. On the right is an adjoining single-storey building with a pitched roof and two gabled bays which rise through the eaves, lit by pairs of lancet windows. The east gable end is lit by a group of three tall lancets. To the right is the gable end of another single-storey range with a projecting chimney breast rising through the apex. At right angles to this is a secondary entrance with a shallow pointed arch plank door and a projecting semi-circular bay containing a revolving door to allow the nuns to take deliveries.

To the right again is the late C19 extension, now known as Holy Cross House. A brick wall encloses the service yard, followed by a three-storey block which has a stone string course engraved with SCUDAMORE MEMORIAL WING on the principal east elevation. This range is also in the Gothic style with a steeply pitched roof, ridge cresting, dentilled brick cornicing, and on each gable end a projecting decorative chimney breast with tumbled in brickwork which rise through the apex. The frontage is divided by buttresses into three gabled bays which rise through the eaves, and is lit by windows in recessed pointed arches of gauged brickwork, in a combination of single windows, pairs and groups of

three. The pair of windows lighting the attic of the central gabled bay is set within two recessed arches. The south elevation of the extension is formed by the two-storey rear wing which has the same decorative roof treatment already described. It is divided into three gabled bays, with the outer bays larger than the central one, and is mostly lit by single Gothic windows.

To the left is the refectory belonging to the original building. It is dominated by a wide, double-height gabled bay lit by an expansive projecting window, set within a panel of applied timber framing. The window has wooden mullions and transoms and is surmounted by a hipped gable with three trefoil-headed windows, divided by decorative brackets, containing stained glass leaded lights.

At right angles to this is the long rear elevation to the principal range of the convent. It has eight bays, of which bays three to seven form a row of continuous gabled bays, lit on both floors by single, pairs or groups of Gothic windows set within recessed Gothic arches which mostly have tympanums with basketweave brickwork. Projecting from the third bay is a conservatory with a hipped roof and wooden frame, added probably in the late C20. The second bay is recessed and contains a large five-light window with wooden glazing bars and moulded mullions that lights the principal staircase. Above the three central lights is a group of three pointed arch windows with diamond leaded lights. The end gabled bays are wider: that on the left projects forward and has a pointed arch door on the right return.

Adjoining the south-east corner of the principal range, via a flat-roofed corridor with a projecting entrance and Gothic arch door, is the chapel that was built in 1893-1895. It is also in the Gothic style, of red brick with stone dressings and a red clay tile roof covering, except for the slate-clad apse. The main body of the chapel is under a pitched roof with a carved stone eaves cornice and a parapet on the east gable end with trefoil stone kneelers. Rising from the apex is a decorative broached fleche with trefoil-headed, two-light openings on each face. The clerestory is lit by lancet windows with leaded lights and stone arches, and a stone band runs across at sill level. On the principal south elevation, the aisle is under a lean-to roof lit by lancet windows, with two tall projecting gabled bays at either end lit by three tall lancets, that on the right grouped under a moulded stone arch. The north aisle has three gabled bays lit by pairs of lancets with stone arches and sills.

At the west end is the double-height circular extension dating to the 1950s which has a conical roof with corbelled brick eaves and a row of pointed arch

windows around the top. At the south end is the five-sided apse, separately roofed, and lit on three faces by lancets filled with stained glass under cinquefoil-headed arches. The other two faces are recessed and contain an upper stone panel of carved sunflowers. On the left of the apse is the gable end of the south chapel which is lit by an elaborate star-tracery window, and on the right is a single-storey range under a pitched roof, which is likely to be the vestry. This has a dentilled brick cornice, two dormer windows and a decorative chimney stack. It is lit on the east gable end by a five-light window with brick mullions and a shallow pointed relieving arch with basketweave brickwork in the tympanum.

INTERIOR: this has relatively plain fixtures and fittings, many of which survive, along with the original plan form. Most of the corridors have quarry-tiled floors and are punctuated by pointed arches, around which are painted bands with biblical quotes. The doors are mostly of the vertical plank type, some with chamfered stiles and rails.

The principal north-south aligned range has a long central corridor with rooms along either side, many of which retain plain wooden fireplace surrounds with cast iron insets and grates, although two of the fireplaces have stone surrounds. At the northern end is a large room which is likely to have been the original chapel. It has a canted ceiling with scissor braces resting on shaped corbels, and matchboard cladding to dado height. One of the rooms at the south end has similar cladding as well as panelled window jambs. Also at the south end is the principal open well staircase with quarter pace landings, a panelled soffit and closed string. The balusters and newel posts are chamfered, the latter with faceted finials and engraved crosses. The first floor has a similar long corridor with a canted ceiling and exposed tie beams resting on shaped brackets, with small rooms on each side which were very likely the original cells for the nuns.

The rear north-east wing of the original convent, which has a similar stair (although with less decorative newel posts), contains the former service areas and the refectory. This is lit by the seven-light window, and has trefoil arch roof trusses with ornately chamfered tie beams, two purlins and arched wind braces. The room is lined in matchboard cladding to dado height set into panels with chamfered edges. At the northern end of the room, the panelling forms the lower half of a screen which has six arched upper panels filled with leaded lights, rising to form the wooden front of the gallery. The service rooms include the former kitchen, which retains the substantial surround to the range (removed), and a room lined with fitted cupboards.

The late C19 extension to the rear wing, now known as Holy Cross House, also contains former service rooms, a few of which retain wooden work benches. Other rooms have plain wooden fireplace surrounds with cast iron grates. The first floor and attic contain small bedrooms, a few of which have small decorative fireplace surrounds.

The chapel is entered via the linking corridor through a pointed arch door with fillets and, above, a large memorial stone to Mother Lavinia, the superior and foundress of the convent. The nave has an arcade of four moulded Gothic arches resting on circular piers with an open wooden screen consisting of rows of two-light trefoil-headed arches which form the top of the stalls. In front is a row of closed back benches with shaped ends. Above the clerestory windows is a continuous panel of sunflowers, probably in terracotta but now painted white. The boarded roof has two purlins and braced trusses in the form of trefoil arches with decoratively carved tie beams. The south chapel contains a panelled and painted altar with a triptych depicting the crucifixion, and has a painted ceiling incorporating Tudor roses and fleur-de-lys.

At the east end, the moulded stone chancel arch springs from three attached shafts on stone corbels. The apsidal chancel itself is richly decorated. The ribbed ceiling is painted blue with golden stars and has a frieze painted with a biblical quotation, and around the walls is a painted blind arcade with delicate ogee tracery and brattishing in gold leaf. Behind the altar, the reredos depicts the painted figures of saints in delicate arches surmounted by finials, also picked out in gold leaf. At the west end, the lofty circular mid-C20 extension is dominated by four concrete ribs, painted white, which rise to the apex of the timber-lined conical roof. Stairs give access to the organ loft which is supported on timber piers.

Sources

Books and journals

Elliott, J, Prichard, J, Henry Woodyer, a gentlemen architect, (2001)

Pevsner, N, Wilson, B, The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2: North-West and South, (2002)

Other

Brittain-Catlin, T, 19th- and 20th-Century Monasteries and Convents (2014)

End of official list entry

4.0 Design And Heritage impact.

4.1 The Proposal. Form, Materials, Colour and Architectural Scale

4.2 Proposal. The building concerned with this application is currently a vacant building with great potential. This is an application for the phased replacement of the existing boilers and flues and associated works.

This will ensure that the heating system will be in a good state of repair moving forward and thereafter in a cyclical maintenance programme of 5 years.

4.3 Building Form and Materials.

Please refer to drawings ARC-2312-400uk 01,02,03 & 04 indicating the scope of the proposals.

The picture below indicates the existing twin flued stainless steel chimney serving the existing boilers. This will be removed during phase two works. The existing plan and elevation can be seen on drawing 01.



ITEM Phase One.

Phase one works will consist of the decommissioning of the existing condemned boiler, the provision of the new oil-fired boiler and flue. This can be seen on drawing 02

Materials: It is proposed that the new flue will be also on stainless steel. Where the flue is cut through the existing wall this will be done by hand and salvaged bricks set aside for re-use in making good where the hole was formed. The bricks will be cut in to the existing and bonded all in lime mortar.

Heritage impact:

Considered low. Provision of the additional flue will be visually visible, but it is away from the main building and therefore is to a large extent only visible from the North and east which are masked by trees.

ITEM Phase Two.

Phase Two works will consist of the decommissioning of the existing remaining boiler, the provision of the new oil-fired boiler and flue. This can be seen on drawing 03. The existing flue will be removed, and all disturbed surfaces made good to marry in with the existing.

Materials: It is proposed that the second new flue will be also on stainless steel. Where the flue is cut through the existing wall this will be done by hand and salvaged bricks set aside for re-use in making good where the hole was formed. The bricks will be cut in to the existing and bonded all in lime mortar.

Heritage impact:

Considered low. Provision of the additional flue will be visually visible. The removal of the existing twin flue will be a visual advantage as the bulk of this will be removed. The new flues will be away from the main building and therefore is to a large extent only visible from the North and east which are masked by trees.

Other Works.

There are no other works proposed.

5.0 Landscape and Screening. Not applicable.

5.1 Existing Landscape. Not applicable.

6.0 Access. Not applicable.

6.1 Vehicular. Not applicable.

6.2 Pedestrian and Disabled. Not applicable

7.0 Conclusion.

7.1 Within the context of this proposal and the ethos of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings it is important to remember that the fabric of St Michaels House has been subject to a constant pattern of alteration, renewal and replacement, to conform to the changes that have occurred during the life of the building. The replacement of flues can be seen as simply a continuation of this process.

7.2 It is considered that this is a carefully thought out and simple non interventionalist proposal that will, if approved, contribute to the Continued use of this building.

Drawings

ARC-2312-400UK 01,02,03 & 04.