

Design & Access Statement (including Heritage Statement) *Conversion of church to form an art and craft centre*

From current use classification of D1 to C1 + D1

Church of Cleator Moor, St John the Evangelist, Leconfield Street, Cleator Moor

For Miss Hui Wang



January 2021,

This report should only be used in relation to planning consent.

1. Purpose and background

1.1. Purpose

- i. This report has been prepared as support and background information by Hui Wang for the conversion of the existing church to form a art and craft centre St John the Evangelist Church, Cleator moor.
- ii. This document should be read in conjunction with all submitted drawings, appendices and other relevant information and documents that form part of the planning application.

1.2. Background

- i. The church is located off Leconsfield Road in Cleator Moor, West Cumbria.
- ii. St John's Church was consecrated on 25th June 1872, and is Anglo-Norman in style. The building consists of a large and lofty nave, with clerestory windows, with large aisles on both sides, and has a church tower measuring 68 feet high.
- iii. The Church ceased to be a place of worship on 19th March 2017 and has remained redundant since that time.

- iv. The meritus architecture includes snecked sandstone blocks with quoins and buttresses with chamfered plinth to chancel. In addition, there is a 3-stage, Romanesque style west tower and nave with aisles and chancel and a number of other intricacies besides. The property is grade II listed.
- v. A building was designed by Messrs John Augustus Cory (1819-1887) and Charles John Ferguson (1840-1904) of Carlisle and planned to seat 900 people. The completed church was consecrated in 1872 as recorded by a brass plaque. The church was redecorated in 1899 at the expense of John Stirling (of Montreal mine) when the brick nave arches were covered in concrete. ICBS records also show an approved grant for repairs in 1953-5 under the instruction of architects F G Jackson and C B Martindale. In 1972 a new high altar was introduced and the altar rail repositioned to enlarge the sanctuary and new windows at the E end. Choir stalls were moved to the W end and a Lady Chapel created in the S aisle. A screen was inserted across the base of the tower in 2008.

2. Design

2.1. Design

- i. The proposed design seeks to make use of, and retain, the existing structure as intact as possible.
- ii. Whilst the existing windows are of no real architectural significance they are an essential part of the building's character. The internal layout of the proposed keeps the first floor back from the external walls. One thing is removing the pews to gain space for the business use. This approach allows the building to retain its open form and the external unaltered.
- iii. The space inside of the organ will form a new toilet.
- iv. Free standing stud and timber partition wall will be put between the buttresses and the wall in both side of the nave when require to separate the bays for display the crafts.
- v. To retain the existing volume and openness the whole building is to be kept full height.

2.2. Use

- i. Currently, the building is redundant, previously used as a place of worship. This application is for change of use to form an art and craft centre.

2.3. Amount

- i. The existing building has a gross internal area 380m².

2.4. Layout

- i. The proposed layout is as existing with minor alterations.

2.5. Scale

- i. The proposed building has an external footprint of approximately 540m².
- ii. The proposed site has an overall area of 3483m².

2.6. Landscaping

- i. No major landscaping is proposed.

2.7. Appearance

- i. The external fabric is to be as existing.
- ii. The windows are to be as existing.

3. Access

- i. Vehicular access is through stone gate piers to the NE of the church off Leconfield Street, with a tarmac path continuing along the N boundary

- ii. There is access from Crossfield Road to the SE which provides access through stone gate piers and modern metal gates.
- iii. The pedestrian access will be remain to the public from Leconfield Street to second world war memorial and tend plots in the Garden of Remembrance.
- iv. Pedestrian access is to the NW of the church into the car park of the adjacent supermarket, down sever steps.
- v. Parking in area to W by hall and in supermarket car park to N

4. Heritage Statement

- i. The Church of England Heritage Record 607277 provides the following descriptions:

The tall square tower of St John's ensures its presence on approach. The church was built in one phase and Romanesque or Neo-Norman Theme is continued throughout with every arch and window opening having a round-head. Lean-to aisles above the nave with a clerestory above. The 3-stage W tower has in its base a round-headed window on each side and in the upper level paired belfry openings under a containing arch with blind recesses either side. A door on the S side provides access to the belfry. The main door to the church is on the N side of the N aisle, raised by 5 steps, with handrails to either side. The door is positioned within a decorative carved opening of 3 orders with chevron and floral details, and attached columns with waterleaf columns. It fills a whole bay. The nave is of 4-bays marked by single round-headed windows at aisle and clerestory level, each beneath a hoodmold. Buttresses are positioned between each bay. The lower windows are all protected by rusting grills. The clerestory windows have been replaced with Perspex. The E wall is pierced by 3 round-headed lancets, the central being the tallest, and with a continuous hoodmold over the windows and a sill beneath. The chancel roof is lower and more steeply pitched than the nave.

The interior is huge and lofty, ceiled by a continuous, high, vault-a pointed barrel vault with transverse arches in the nave [Pevsner explains that this was of yellow brick and pink stone but these have been hidden by rendering and painting white]. The combination of clerestory windows and only a little stained glass ensures there is plenty of natural light. The 4-bay nave is articulated by N and S arcades carrying round brick arches on sandstone columns (clusters of 4 with carved acanthus capitals). The original construction was in brick and sandstone and the brick is visible though the render and paint around the arches. The columns, arches, and corbels remain as exposed stone, the rest is painted white. A dog-tooth/chevron-style detail runs continuously at still level beneath the clerestory and round the arcades. Carpet extends up the main aisle with pews either side, fixed on raised wood boarded pew platforms. Other areas of floor are paved in stone flags. Decoratively carved choir stalls have been relocated to the W end, in front of the base of the tower. A round moulded tower arch is screened by a wood partition and curtain at ground level. The space at the base of the tower is ceiled by a domed vault and doubles as a baptistery and vestry. The aisles are ceiled by quadrant vaults. At the W end of the N aisle is a simple tea point. At the E end are 3 steps leading to a door, concealed behind a curtain, which accesses a space to the N side of the chancel (former organ chamber). The S aisle has the organ in the W bay, and a Lady Chapel altar in the E bay. Ribs rest on carved stone corbels. At the E end, 2 steps (with inserted handrails) lead up to the chancel beneath a high round moulded chancel arch. The chancel area is simple since furniture has been moved out and the area has been carpeted. A 2 bay opening to the N side, with a central round pier, is screened at the lower level by a curtain beneath a wood rail. This area was once occupied by the organ and is now used for storage. The curtain continues around to the E wall where it forms a backdrop to the high alter which is raised on another step. The roof is formed differently to the

nave, with intersecting ribs, and is painted dark blue with gold text and stars. The walls of the chancel have exposed stone around the base. A small round-arched door in the S wall leads to the former vestries. Conversion of the church form an art and craft centre.

ii. There is no structural change internal and external. The space at the site of the organ will form a new toilet/washroom. A stud and timber partitioning wall will form the toilet/washroom at the site of the non-functional 60% already removed organ.

iii. The free standing stud timber partitioning wall will be put between the buttresses and the wall in both sides of the nave when required to separate the bays to display the various crafts.

iv. The pews will be reposition or removed as required to make the necessary space for the proposed use.



Figure 1: Nave looking towards to the base of tower.



Figure 2: Nave looking towards to the chancel.



Figure 3: Internal detailing to be retained.



Figure 4: Bell tower