

Assessors report dated 4 September 2023

I met Tom Griffin from b2 this morning to discuss the PCC's application for a range of Further Orders. We went through his letter to Guy Stobart of 29 March 2023 and discussed the work variations carried out on site, the reasons for these and the additional work they have requested. I can report the following using the same reference as the letter.

1 Bells. Mike Hansford has approved the variations to the clapper and gudgeons recommended by Nicholson's. This work has already been completed. It is non-contentious, has approval from the bell assessor. I recommend a Further Order.

2 Tower roof. Existing roof timbers and falls meant the central valley had to be laid to a continuous fall - which is too long for a single sheet of lead. The approved option was to lay the lead in two sheets, and joint the lead with an end to end junction called a T-Pren connection. This is rubber gasket and is often used in these situations. However, two pieces is never as good as one. I support the change of material to stainless steel. The work has been completed. I recommend a Further Order.

3 South nave parapet gutter. This essential gutter repair required new support timbers to replace rotten and replacement lead. This additional work became necessary during the main contract. The work is a lead for lead repair with an upgrade to meet current LSA requirements. I suggest it would probably be List B in any case. Tom has sent me photos showing during and after condition, the work has been well executed. I recommend a Further Order.

4 Archaeology, masonry. A number of quality C12 carved chevrons and figures, as well as C17 gravestones were revealed during the re-construction of the east path retaining wall, the gravestones were laid upside down as copings. The better ones were kept to one side for possible display. The church propose a stainless steel cradle system for each item and fixed to the wall. The cradle has elegance and would have no impact on the artefacts. I have asked they are [1] recorded by their archaeologist Keith Faxon, [2] kept in a safe place and allowed to dry out naturally, [3] the potential presence of any wall paintings in the proposed north aisle location should be tested and determined by Ruth McNeilage their consultant wall painting conservator, [4] the proposed heights of the cradled stones should be reviewed so they are high enough to be above a danger level for children, and [5] any interpretation materials or cabinetry associated with these salvaged stones will need to be design and approved in principle for Informal Consent, followed by consultation and then a Formal application for Approval. As this is introducing new furniture and fixtures I suggested it would have to be a Faculty - Sarah please confirm.

5 Archaeology, chancel. Keith Faxon recorded the lower walls before re-plastering. Sections of the replacement plaster have been left off to illustrate the historic layers of construction. Bob Croft supported the proposal when he visited in 2022. Copy of finished work photos have been supplied and the work looks well. I recommend a Further Order.

6 Archaeology, south porch. Archaeological excavations either side of the south porch revealed shallow graves of articulated skeletons - in places these were about 150mm below surface level and exactly where a new resin bound gravel path was due to be laid. The new finish requires a deep excavation to provide a stable sub-base, this would have disturbed the revealed skeletons. Keith Faxon recorded the skeletons in place. On the east side he laid protective layers with a covering membrane and followed up with a loose gravel finish. Paving on the west side was laid direct on to lime mortar which in turn was over protective backfill and membranes as before. Keith Faxon carried out full recording, no archaeology was disturbed and a report is due. The work has been

completed. A light touch with a responsible approach. I recommend a Further Order to cover variations in surface finish and to record the reasons why this was required.

7 North door ironmongery. A timber lock box and rim lock previously existed but had been removed some years before works commenced. A replacement timber lock box and rim lock similar to previous has been fitted. This reinstates what was there before. I recommend a Further Order.

8 North aisle dais. Removal of the additional and very plain timber dais along with the carpet [probably unapproved and not appropriate in any case] is supported. Existing altar to be retained and sit at floor level. This will reveal the parquet timber flooring and provide enough clear width to allow level access from north aisle to chancel. Two distinctive benefits. I recommend a Further Order.

9 North churchyard steps. There is a public footpath along the north side of the churchyard with a grass bank separating the path from the churchyard. It is possible for an abled person to scramble over the shallow bank. A formal breach of the bank with shallow steps will ease access. The tree surgeon has recommended the eastern of the two existing scramble points as this will reduce the impact on the tree roots. Planning permission has been granted. Work should be largely above ground and will require archaeological supervision. Sarah - This is new work in a church yard. Can this be a Further Order or is a Faculty required?

10 Boiler Room. The proposal is to re-build the boiler house on an enlarged footprint to increase storage capacity. This is not a repair, it is a replacement building which looks similar to existing. The PCC have planning permission. The works are generally acceptable and we should support. I have suggested they hang the boiler[s] on the wall to free up floor space storage. They only have planning drawings at present and I suggested they apply directly for Informal consent, which I would support out of Committee using the delegated authority to accelerate things, then consult and follow up with a standard full Formal application. I am assuming this needs a Faculty - Sarah please confirm.

Sarah - Please advise on the correct use of Further Orders and the faculty recommendations. Just to remind everyone, the church is Grade 11* listed and medieval [or earlier] in origin.