

Ref:	2021-061535	Church:	Compton Dando: The Blessed Virgin Mary
Diocese:	Bath & Wells	Archdeaconry:	Bath
Created By:	Mr Clive Howarth (08/05/2021)	Contact Tel.:	01761490644
Status:	Faculty granted, awaiting Practical Completion		

Statement of Significance

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

1.1 Setting of the Church

Approach Compton Dando from any of the four narrow lanes which leave the main roads behind and drop into the Chew Valley, and the first sight of the village is dominated by the Tower of the Parish Church. It is well sited close to the river and stands back some little distance from the main 'thoroughfare'. The tower clock and the weather vane are clearly visible to passers by.

Whilst there is no doubt that a Christian Church has existed in Compton Dando since the 12th century, the Church as we see it today is of 14th century origin, much restored during the last two hundred and fifty years.

1.2 The Living Churchyard

The Churchyard. The lych gate forms a most pleasant entrance to the Churchyard. It was built in 1915 to replace an older lych gate which was virtually destroyed in 1899 when a great branch of from an Elm tree growing on the Glebeland fell across it. The dominant tree in the Churchyard is a Cedar of Lebanon planted in 1850 by John Wilson Pedder, son of the Vicar. It grows in close proximity to the North wall of the Tower. On the Southern side of the Church a row of Lime trees flanks the path. An entry in the register reads 'Dec 13th 1748 were planted fifteen Limes on the left hand side from the Churchyard gate as you come to the Vicarage house'. The Limes were replaced with new lime trees a few years ago. The border beneath them is carpeted with snowdrops and narcissi. The churchyard is laid to grass in the main. The Churchyard was extended in 1942 and again in 1950 by taking part of the Glebeland known as Culverhayes.

1.3 Social History

Whilst there is no doubt that a Christian Church has existed in Compton Dando since the 12th century, the Church as we see it today is of 14th-century origin, much restored during the last two hundred and fifty years. In the last half-century our rector has gone from being full time and serving the parish to a house for duty priest whom we share with two, soon to be one, other parishes. Church going has fallen and has aged. But the village fiercely treasures its church. Many families have graves in the churchyard and we continue to support the village with weddings, funerals and baptisms as well as a well attended carol service.

1.4 The church building in general

The church consists of a:

- Tower
- Nave
- Chancel
- North Aisle
- Vestry

The floor rises in height from the Nave through the chancel to the Sanctuary. A severy is located at the base of the tower beneath a ringing floor. There are 6 bells and an Ellacombe apparatus. There is a traditional pipe organ in working order. The tower possesses a C19 weight-driven clock. In the churchyard there is a brick built store and a disabled toilet.

1.5 The church building in detail

Anglican parish church. C14, altered C15 and subsequently; chancel restored 1735 and 1905, porch restored 1793, north aisle rebuilt 1820 and vestry added in 1840. Consists of west tower, nave and south porch, north aisle, chancel and vestry. Coursed rubble with freestone dressings; roofs concealed behind ashlar parapets, embattled to the chancel. West tower of 3 stages, ashlar to the lowest stage; with diagonal buttresses, plain embattled parapet with gargoyles and pinnacles; 2-light plain windows to second stage and cusped windows with Somerset tracery, that on the east side has a Katherine wheel in the lower part; tall 4-light perpen- dicular style west window, with cusped ogee heads to panels and sexfoil light above; west doorway with 4-centred head and carved leaf spandrels; projecting polygonal stairtower to north-east, spirelet. Nave with clerestorey; 3-light C19 perpendicular style windows with cinquefoil heads and under square hoodmoulds and relieving arches; 2- and single-light cinquefoil headed lights to clerestorey; rainwater head at south-west dated TB/1783. Square south porch with parapet and datestone of 1793; restored ogee and hollow moulded door surround. Chancel: 2- light mullion and transom late perpendicular style windows (all C19 or C20); 3- light curvilinear style east window; datestones of 1735 and 1905. . Interior: Tall tower arch of two wave mouldings. North arcade of 2 bays with piers of alternating hollows and shafts, the capitals and abaci are treated as a strip; double chamfered arches. Pulpit and font of 1883. Monuments. Branch, died 1731, inscribed plaque in enriched border with cherubs, skulls and vegetation. (N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: North Somerset and Bristol*, 1958.)

1.6 Contents of the Church

Significant contents:

- Victorian Pews
- C20 oak choir stalls
- Old churchwardens chest
- Brass lectern
- Rectors board
- Baptisms board
- Millennium Cross & Tower of London Clay Memorial Poppy
- Branch Family Memorial
- Board commemorating The Compton Dando Church Estate Trust
- Pipe organ

1.7 Significance for mission

The Building is a traditional village church set in a prominent position overlooking the main thoroughfare. It has a modern oil fired boiler which struggles to raise winter temperatures above 16C. The layout is a raised Chancel with choir stalls, pews in the nave and flexible seating and table and chairs in the North Aisle. The Church is ideal for formal services and ceremonial services - weddings and funerals - but has its limitations for village meetings or other events. The North Aisle is handy for Cafe Church and small meetings. The main entrance is down four steps but wheelchair access is accommodated through the North door with only one step up. We are promised broadband but it has yet to arrive. With it we will be able to live stream services. The Church has a small carpark

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.

One of the bells will need to be removed and this will temporarily put the servery out of use. The servery is used extensively for summer teas and for hospitality after every service.

2.2 Set out the significance of these particular parts.

The servery is used every Thursday for morning prayer and for cafe church once a month. It is also used for refreshment after communion once a month. In the summer months, it is used for Sunday Teas - a fundraiser. Thus the best time for this work will be in the winter.

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.

Whilst the work is in progress the servery will not be available. Thus it may mean moving services away from Church into the village hall or running services without hospitality which would be regrettable. Should the work be done in the summer we would have to migrate to the village hall losing the significance of a church building and reducing a very significant source of funds from summer teas.

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.

To mitigate the impact of the proposal on the proposed works the project needs to be completed in a single stage and in the winter. The severy can be isolated behind double doors which will mitigate dust and debris entering the nave.

Sources consulted

The bell captain

Higby and Company Bell Founders

Bath & West Diocesan Association of Change Ringers

Church Architect

Plan



Interior



Exterior

