

HERITAGE STATEMENT

St John in the Wilderness
26 - 28 Whalley Road
Shuttleworth
Ramsbottom
Lancashire



ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS

LOCATION

The building occupies a raised position alongside Whalley Road – the A56 Bury to Rawtenstall Road. The site area is approx 0.23 acres and the site boundary is defined by stone walling with gated access from Whalley Road to the front (West) and Church Road to the rear (East). Stone steps and a pathway lead to the main entrance porch with the pathway extending to the rear door and along the rear elevation.

There are residential properties to each end of the boundary (North & South) and farmland to the rear (East).

The site has not been used for burials but there is a small remembrance garden on the West side adjacent to the building.

The gardens to the front are laid with grass and there are substantial trees which are not protected by TPO's.

The site is not understood to be of any archaeological interest.

HISTORY

The Church of St. John the Baptist in Shuttleworth was originally designed by Cates as a school and for use as a space for occasional preaching. However, on completion, it was altered and extended to the designs of E.H.Shellard to become a District Church, largely by the addition of a East aisle and bell tower.

Whilst the building is attractive, it appears to be the result of two separate architectural design phases, both of which took place between 1845 and 1848. The stained-glass windows are suggested to be later additions: a mix of C19th and C20th.

Conversion to residential would represent a third phase of work.

STANDING

Notwithstanding the fact that the building contributes positively to the streetscape, the Church of England records describe both the exterior and interior fabric as of 'low significance'.

The local authority has the building listed as 'of special architectural or historic interest'

St Johns is not a Nationally listed building.

SUPERSTRUCTURE

St Johns is a modest chapel structure, Gothic in style, and is constructed from local Pennine gritstone, in irregular sized courses. The building has a floor area of circa 245 sq metres.

The main hall of the building is approx. 20 metres long and 8 metres wide and the main lathe and plaster roof, is divided by the original timber A frames, into 5 bays. There are external stone buttresses, corresponding to the bays, along each elevation and at each corner.

The building also has a low-level East aisle, approx. 4.3 metres wide and 20 metres long. This secondary aisle has a lathe and plaster timber roof structure, similar to that of the main worship area.

In the West elevation there is an entrance porch that has been added later and is possibly early English in style.

The main space is separated from the East aisle by 3 stone archways, and an arched doorway. The East corner of the aisle houses the vestry.

There are double lancet. stained leaded glass windows of various sizes to all elevations. The lead glass is not of the same period as the original construction and for the most part is of little intrinsic value.

Atop the North gable is the added bell tower and there is a chimney stack that extrudes from the East aisle roof, together with a morerecently added stainless steel boiler flue.

The diminishing slate roof covering, is heavy gauge slate believed to be Westmorland Burlington Blue.

DEVELOPMENT

It is our desire to renovate and rehabilitate this property, whilst preserving and protecting a building that has served as the hub of the Community for many years. It has fallen into disrepair in recent times, but this gives a unique opportunity for restoration and the creation of a signature dwelling.

To a greater extent, the superstructure of the building will remain as is. There will however be a programme of considered enhancements to facilitate use of the space as a 3 / 4-bedroom dwelling.

What follows is a list of the works to be carried out, what impact they will have on the fabric of the building and their subsequent impact on any heritage concerns.

EXTERNAL ENHANCEMENTS AND IMPACT

1. The roof will be stripped and re-laid to current code using the existing slate. The re-laying will incorporate an array of roof windows covering both elevations. The layout of the windows is designed to satisfy the requirements of building regulations, to illuminate an otherwise dark interior and to deliver on the desired design aesthetic of a 'bright open space'. The cast iron gutters will be removed and replaced with a more contemporary aluminum system.

IMPACT _ NEUTRAL

The use of the existing slate is welcomed and certainly maintains the integrity of the majority of the roof structure. It is our opinion that carefully considered, understated, flush fitting roof windows, whilst changing the original aesthetic of the roof, are essential for any domestic future use and are thus an acceptable amendment to the building and one with minimal heritage impact.

2. There are plans to add two small dormers on the east elevation. This is being done to combat the loss of space under the eaves in the two primary bedrooms, increase the available light and to take advantage of the views to the moors behind the property. The dormers will be understated, zinc or slate wrapped, yet they will continue the contemporary enhancements to the property.

IMPACT _ NEGATIVE

The fact that the dormers are on the Eastern elevation and thus invisible from Whalley Road, mitigate both the heritage and visual impact on the building. Whilst they do stand proud from the existing roofline, what they bring to the space is a huge benefit to the user in connecting the sleeping areas to the outside world.

3. The majority of the existing fenestration will remain, but the leaded glazing will be removed and replaced with the [Insulead® window](#). Touchstone's slim window profile has become a popular solution for stone mullion glazing situations. Stone mullion windows are often narrow by definition and therefore Insulead® has a minimal sightline. This is particularly important when it comes to replacement glazing for historic buildings where there is a need to replace a single glazed window with energy efficient double or triple glazing.

IMPACT _ POSITIVE

It is our opinion that these bespoke, heritage specific, lead windows, whilst changing the ecclesiastical aesthetic of the existing windows, are another essential for any domestic future use and are thus an acceptable and necessary amendment to the building and one with minimal impact. I would go so far as to say these particular windows are without doubt an enhancement to this building. Notwithstanding the fact that the current windows are single glazed and thus not energy efficient, they are also not original features.

4. There are plans to alter the stonework underneath the double lancet windows in the south gable end and install single glass doors. The stone will be cut out and new openings formed with the existing stone sill being moved upwards.

IMPACT _ MINOR NEGATIVE

This is one of the two obvious alterations to the external fabric of the building. It is our opinion that the need for 'daylight' in a family home also mitigates the impact of this alteration. The style of doors will match the windows supplied by Touchstone and any stonework will be carried out by heritage specific stonemasons to make sure that the integrity of the overall aesthetic is maintained. Our design approach is to make sure that whatever we change looks like it belongs.

5. There are plans to alter the stonework to the rear elevation and install an array of bi-folding doors. The stonework between the first and third windows will be removed to form the opening. The supporting beam will be faced with the same local stone as the superstructure.

IMPACT _ MINOR NEGATIVE

This is the second of the two obvious alterations to the external fabric of the building. Once again, it is our opinion that the need for 'daylight' in a family home also mitigates the impact of this alteration. The style of doors will match the windows supplied by Touchstone and any stonework will be carried out by heritage specific stonemasons to make sure that the integrity of the overall aesthetic is maintained. Our design approach is to make sure that whatever we change looks like it belongs.

6. The existing chimney stack and more modern boiler flue on the East side will be removed.

IMPACT _ NEUTRAL

Neither the chimney nor the flue are to be integrated into the new development. Removal of the modern flue has no heritage impact and we are mindful that their removal of the chimney does not detract significantly from the authenticity of the roofline and the overall aesthetic of the building. Thus any heritage impact is minimized.

7. The bell tower and bell will be retained and refurbished as a feature.

IMPACT _ NEUTRAL

8. The 4 trees closest to the building on the West side will be dismantled and removed

IMPACT _ POSITIVE

The remaining trees will be professionally pruned thus enhancing the streetscape and alleviating excessive clearing of leaves from cars, paths and gardens.

EXTERNAL SUMMARY

The common thread with all the significant external alterations is the provision of light to an otherwise dimly lit interior. Given that all alterations are to be carried out with the due care and attention to the heritage of the building, we feel they are just, thus mitigating any heritage impact. Notably, the design elements of the areas being removed from the structure, are duplicated elsewhere so visible evidence of the historic appearance will remain.

The external amendments are carefully considered, minimal in heritage impact, do not detract from the overall aesthetic of the church and are absolutely necessary to facilitate comfortable modern living that conforms to building regulations.

OVERALL IMPACT_POSITIVE

INTERNAL ENHANCEMENTS AND IMPACT

The C of E have determined that all liturgical items within the building are to be either removed and placed in storage off site or destroyed, under witness, on site. These items to include, but not limited to the altar, the lectern, the pulpit, the font and the organ. The pitch pine pews are to be left in situ and will be re-purposed in the new house

9. There will be a steel frame mezzanine and associated studwork installed across the first three roof bays to create the lobby, the stairway, the bedrooms and bathrooms. The impressive full height aspect of the building will be retained in two bays at the South end.

IMPACT _ MINOR NEGATIVE

The only impact to the fabric of the building will be the installation of the stone pads to site the steelwork. Some of the scale of the original space will be compromised by the mezzanine but again we feel that the needs of a modern living space, mitigate this impact.

10. The primary internal roof timbers will be sandblasted and left exposed. There will be insulation installed between the secondary rafters and then they will be further insulated with plaster board.

IMPACT _ POSITIVE

Whilst sight of the rafters will be lost, the sandblasting of the primary timbers will actually enhance the original roof design and detail.

11. Due to the presence of a significant amount of dry rot, the internal timber cladding to the walls will be removed.

IMPACT _ NEGATIVE

The removal of this cladding is essential due to the rot present. The cladding is only present on two elevations and it's removal will facilitate the cleaning and restoration of the stone walls back to the original state.

12. Due to the presence of damp, the render on the gable ends will be removed.

IMPACT _ NEUTRAL

The stone walls will be cleaned and if the condition allows, they will be left as exposed, repointed original stonework. If the stone is found to be in poor condition the walls will be lime rendered. The aim here is to return to original as the lime render would likely have been added at a later date.

13. The existing stud work inside the archways will be removed and replaced as per the drawings supplied.

IMPACT _ NEUTRAL

As these are elements added post construction there is no heritage impact in this area

14. The stone archways will be sandblasted and returned to their original state

IMPACT _ POSITIVE

This return to original state is an enhancement

15. Due to the presence of dry rot, the wooden floor will be removed and replaced with a concrete slab

IMPACT _ NEUTRAL

The floor is in a bad state and has been patched in numerous places. We would also like to install a floor that is more structurally sound to take the load of the staircase and more resilient. It is also worth noting that we are removing an element that would no longer be seen.

16. The original doors will be sandblasted and renovated and restored to their original condition

IMPACT _ POSITIVE

This return to original state is an enhancement and offers no heritage impact

INTERNAL SUMMARY

The majority of the existing interior design elements of the church are to be incorporated into the new scheme. The removal of some elements is necessitated by significant deterioration or by the presence of invasive dry rot.

Once again, we have to weigh the needs of modern living against the impact on the heritage of the asset and in this case, we find the scheme is particularly sensitive to the history of the space and thus minimises any impact.

Once complete this development will doubtless breath life back into St Johns...to the benefit of the homeowner and the local community

OVERALL IMPACT_POSITIVE