

EASTBOURNE BC

ST ELISABETH'S CHURCH

DRAFT PLANNING BRIEF

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INTRODUCTION

This Planning Brief has been prepared in order to provide a planning framework for the future use of St Elisabeth's Church in Eastbourne. The church has been declared redundant, but it is a Grade II Listed Building and so every effort will be made to retain the building because it is part of the nation's architectural and historical heritage.

However, the church also has some serious problems. It was closed for worship because it no longer met the needs of the parish which has relocated its activities into the church hall which is adjacent to the church building. In addition, the building suffers from inherent design faults that are allowing water penetration. Costings are available for the traditional repair of these problems although other solutions may exist.

This Brief is not only a planning framework for future users. Its second important aim is to encourage and support a viable use of the church building so that community needs for employment, housing or leisure can be met. Nobody benefits if a fine building remains unused for long periods, and this Brief aims to facilitate the process of finding a viable use for the church within a reasonable time span.

1 BACKGROUND

St Elisabeth's Church was built in 1935/6 following the donation of a generous bequest from a local parishioner. As a result of that bequest – which was very large and earmarked for a new church in the Eastbourne area – St Elisabeth's was constructed on a scale that even now seems disproportionate to its location in the Old Town area of Eastbourne. The adjoining vicarage and church hall were built as a group at the same time and as part of an overall design concept.

The church was built by Eastbourne based architects (PD Stonham & Son & ARG Fenning) who were advised by Consulting Architects, Tatchell & Wilson (London). The bold design had strong parallels with the work of outstanding architects such as Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, and Sir Edward Maufe at Guildford Cathedral and its architectural merits were recognised in 1994 when it was included as a Grade II Listed Building.

However, the church had serious design problems from the outset due to the use of ferrous rods as wall ties, instead of the non-ferrous rods that had been documented:

“... even before its consecration in February 1938, difficulties were emerging with the construction of the building and there were signs of water penetration. Over the years this has steadily got worse. The parish has looked at a number of schemes during this time to demolish the building, or to move in with the neighbouring

Roman Catholic Church, or to reduce the height of St Elisabeth's but without any success. They have now come to the conclusion that that the neighbouring parish hall would satisfy their needs much more fully in the community they serve and have asked the Diocesan Pastoral committee to start the process of declaring the church building redundant."

The legislation setting out how the Church of England closes a consecrated church (declares it redundant) and resolves its future, is called the Pastoral Measure 1983. The Diocese of Chichester considered proposals to make St Elisabeth's Church redundant in May 2001, and this took effect from 1st July 2002. The Pastoral Measure charges the Diocese with responsibility for seeking a suitable alternative use for the building within a three-year period. The Diocese of Chichester plans to pursue this search using informed marketing by professional agents, aided by a planning brief provided by Eastbourne Borough Council, and advised by English Heritage and the Advisory Board for Redundant Churches.

An outline of the planning history of the site is included as Appendix 1 to this report. The Appendix summarises the planning and building applications that have been submitted for the site since the building works in 1935.

SITE ANALYSIS

2 LOCALITY

St Elisabeth's Church is located in the Old Town area of Eastbourne on Victoria Drive and is about three kilometres west of the town centre (see Plan 1). The surrounding neighbourhood is mainly residential and suburban with housing that was largely 2 storey and contemporary to the church.

3 SITE

The main church site has an area of 2,520 m² while the area of the larger site (accommodating the vicarage and church hall as well as the church) is 5,510 m². The site slopes steeply away to the rear of the church with a fall of approximately 5 metres across the site. The church has a 7m wide pedestrian access to Baldwin Avenue to the rear, and there is direct vehicle access to Victoria Drive at the front of the site which is partly shared with the church hall and the vicarage. Other site details are shown on Plan 2, including the location of a telecommunication mast at the front of the site, and the electricity sub-station in the south east corner. There are no noteworthy trees or landscaping on the site.

Both the church and the church hall occupy the majority of the respective sites and there is little scope to provide on-site parking or access. However the vicarage has a large garden at the rear and this has the potential to provide off-street parking for the church building.

The various servicing agencies have been approached for their comments and these are available on request. Extracts from relevant plans showing the location of gas, electricity, and sewerage infrastructure are included in Plans 3-5.

4 BUILDING

St Elisabeth's church is a very high and large 1930's brick building which has accommodation on three levels because of the fall in slope across the site. It is approximately 15-20m wide, 44m long, and an estimated 25m high.

Lower Ground Floor Level

Large Meeting Room (former Crypt Chapel), Choir Vestry together with Boiler Room, Kitchen, lower level Porches and male and female Toilets.

Upper Ground Floor Level (entry level)

The accommodation comprises Nave with west, south and north porches, north and south aisles, north and south transepts and chancel, which with the nave is a single uninterrupted space, Lady Chapel (north side), Clergy Vestry (south side). Off the main nave is the Parish Office (north side) and Switch/Bell room (south side).

First Floor Level

Meeting Room (south transept) which was formerly the library, and the Organ Loft (north transept).

Details of the accommodation are shown on Plan 6 and illustrated in the accompanying photographs.

5 BUILDING CONDITION

As noted above, there were a number of faults in the original design and construction of the church which have been evident for many years. The church has commissioned several specialist reports on the condition of the building, and a landmark report by Coster associates in 1993 identified a number of serious problems.

In summary the basic design faults fall into three categories:

- The poor design chosen for the cavity wall
- The lack of appropriate weathering details, and
- The use of unprotected ferrous steel

Some were seen as “correctable”, but others were seen as so serious and advanced as to be “non-correctable”:

5.1 CAVITY WALL (Non-Correctable DESIGN FAULT)

“To damp-proof the wall, two layers of slates were included between the central concrete core and the outer brick skin... although documented as non-ferrous, investigation has revealed that all the ties exposed are ferrous metal. As the facing brick skin is porous, these ties are vulnerable to corrosion... it is doubtful that this vertical damp proof course is effective... the long term effect of this construction is two fold. Firstly that damp/moisture/vapour can pass through and remain within the wall construction. Secondly, due to corrosion the ties can rust to a point where they are not mechanically connecting together the three layers of the wall. This will lead ultimately to structural instability, as each layer of the wall is not in itself stable in its own right.

“It would appear therefore that there is no cost effective way of correcting this fundamental latent defect. At this time the main walls exhibit no significant signs of distress... our recommendations would be that the vulnerable structure should be monitored on a regular basis.”

5.2 WEATHERING DETAILS (Correctable)

Water Penetration around Windows

“Water is entering, particularly on the weather side of the Church, due to the method of detailing the main structure to the stone window surrounds... it would be possible to re-detail the embrasures to preclude water penetration, although again, this would be a particularly expensive operation, requiring partial re-construction.”

High Level Water Penetration

“We believe that the only long term solution would be to reconstruct the upper and parapet sections of the main wall to include proper traying and damp proofing arrangements. This would be an extremely expensive operation due to the working height, but might have been practicable if other more significant latent defects had not existed.”

5.3 UNPROTECTED FERROUS STEEL (Correctable)

Use of Steel Lintels

“Although a design defect, it would be possible to replace or treat the lintels and re-build the window surrounds in a planned programme of repair, although the cost would be substantial”.

5.4 PROBLEMS DUE TO SCALE OF BUILDING (Correctable)

Brickwork Erosion

“This is a correctable problem by simply replacing severely eroded brickwork, however the cost is exacerbated by the height and extent of the Church which is effectively fully brick faced.”

Erosion of Mortars

“Although the design has contributed to this defect, it would be a practical operation to re-point the brickwork generally, although again the sheer size and height of the building substantially adds to the cost of the operation.”

5.5 PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM CAVITY WALL FAILURE (Correctable)

Degraded Internal Surface Finishes

“It would be necessary to remove if not all, full sections of plaster, de-contaminate and re-plaster. Due to the difficulties of effective de-contamination, an alternative wall finish may be more practicable. Again this would be an expensive operation.”

5.6 ESTIMATED COSTS

In 1993, Coster Associates estimated the cost of repairs to be up to £1,000,000, but a subsequent report by CM Parker Browne in 2001 estimated that these costs had doubled, and that £3,185,000 would be needed to carry out the repairs if professional fees, a contingency sum, and preliminaries were also included (details are included in Appendix 2).

Despite this, the Council for the Care of Churches had reported in November 2000 on the growing recognition of the architectural value of the building and in view of this, it had noted that:

“The structural problems, while not to be disregarded, do not seem to have grown too severe in the interim. The Council would hope that the church could remain in use for worship.”

Copies of the specialist reports are listed in the Bibliography and are available on request. Extracts are included in Appendix 3.

6 HERITAGE VALUE

The original church building and the adjoining church hall and vicarage are Grade II listed buildings. The church was originally listed on 8th February 1994, but its statement was then amended on 17th August of that year to highlight the importance of the murals by EW Tristram (sanctuary) and Hans Feibusch (basement room). Five years later (16th September 1999), the church hall and vicarage were also listed (Grade II), recognising the architectural significance of the group of buildings, and not just the church building.

6.1 GENERAL

The conservation value of the church and adjoining buildings has been recognised by English Heritage, the Council for the Care of Churches, and the Twentieth Century Society. The Council for the Care of Churches

describes the value of the church as follows:

... the importance and quality of the building, both for its architecture and fittings, has emerged more strongly. The style, though still unfashionable in the early 1980's, is now appreciated as a major element in 20th century English architecture and might nowadays attract grant aid for repairs (reflected in its recent listing). The building also has considerable landscape value, towering above the houses and visible from some distance. The structural problems, while not to be disregarded, do not seem to have grown too severe in the interim. The Council would hope that the church could remain in use for worship (Pastoral Measure Report, November 2000).

-The church has particular architectural and historical value for the reasons set out below.

6.2 A COHESIVE ARCHITECTURAL GROUP

Together with the church hall and vicarage, it is part of a unique architectural group of buildings

The church hall to the north and the vicarage to the south were built at the same time as and as a group with the church. The buildings are of the same style, materials and period and are enclosed by a low brick wall with three gates on the road frontage. The two ancillary buildings are constructed of the same brick as the church but externally are of a neo-Georgian style, whilst the interiors are in a 1930's style.

6.3 THE MURALS

The church has two sets of murals which have important historical and artistic value. The Conservation of Wall Painting Department at the Courtauld Institute of Art was asked to report on the value of both sets of murals – by Hans Feibusch in the crypt, and by EW Tristram in the sanctuary - and their comments are as follows:

HANS FEIBUSCH

... Given the quality, scale, importance and good condition of the paintings, they should certainly be saved... technically it should be possible to transfer the paintings, although this would necessarily involve some damage... once detached, the paintings would need to be replaced on a new support – either on to other walls or on to artificial supports... there are advantages and disadvantages to both these alternatives... either of these alternatives will be costly and will damage the paintings... the cost will depend on the difficulties of removal and the eventual new support chosen, and may vary from conservator to conservator... if a suitable new “institutional” location were found for the paintings, that you would have a good chance of raising substantial funding... as a very last resort, the paintings may be “saleable”; that is their market value may be sufficient for them to be sold, with the buyer bearing the costs of transfer... (Courtauld Institute of Art, June 1994).

EW Tristram

I do not feel that these paintings are of high aesthetic merit, but they are certainly of considerable historical importance... I am not aware of any original paintings by him which surpass the Eastbourne examples in extent or importance, so I certainly feel that they should be carefully preserved (Courtauld Institute of Art, April 2003).

6.4 AN INTACT PERIOD EXAMPLE

The church is an intact example complete with original fittings and furnishings of a 1930's period church in the modern Gothic style.

6.5 SCALE AND PROMINENCE

The immense scale and prominence of the church in the landscape is described by English Heritage as follows:

The exterior is extremely plain with emphasis given to height by the very narrow windows and by breaks

forward and back of the wall plane. As a very suave piece of architecture it compares very well with other churches of its date which use an abstracted Gothic in combination with great size. The style of these churches has been described as the "bare style" and Gavin Stamp has written that this kind of "emphasis on unbroken planes and unadorned brickwork in urban settings" was a development from the work of Victorian architects such as Butterfield, Brooks and Street in very plain modes. The greatest examples of this kind of church architecture are to be found in northern England, particularly the Manchester-Liverpool region... Outside London this kind of church is very rare in the south east, the only comparable building being Edward Maufe's Guildford Cathedral, (1936-61).

The character of the church, with its large unrelieved areas of red brick, its great height and slit windows, is particularly dominant, especially on its hill top location. Any conversion, which would need to take an imaginative approach to works to the church, should take these characteristics into account (English Heritage, April 2003).

These and other statements are available on request and extracts can be found in Appendix 4. The official Listed Building Schedules can be found in Appendix 5.

7 PLANNING POLICY

7.1 Local Plan

The Revised Deposit Draft of the Local Plan 2001 will provide the planning framework for the future use and development of the church building. Key policies from the Local Plan are listed below, and other relevant policies are included in Appendix 6. Where relevant, these policies build on the national framework laid down in Planning Policy Guidance No 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment (PPG 15).

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

NE 17 Noise

NE 27 Environmental Amenity

Urban Heritage and Townscape

UHT 18 Protection of Listed Buildings

UHT 20 Retention of Historic Buildings

Housing

HO 10 Conversions and Change of Use

HO 20 Residential Amenity

Transport

TR 2 Travel Demands

TR 11 Car Parking

LEISURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

LCF 20 Retention of Community Facilities

UTILITIES AND SERVICES

US 8 Masts within the Built-up Area

7.2 east sussex Structure Plan

Most of the relevant Structure Plan policies are covered by the Local Plan policies listed above and in the Appendix. However, the Structure Plan includes specific guidance on provision for the arts which is relevant to this brief. The policy is as follows:

LT 18 Provision for the visual, creative and performing arts will be encouraged and supported, particularly:

- In the coastal towns
- Proposals which involve the renovation and refurbishment of existing buildings of historic character
- The provision of studio and workshop space for arts practitioners and the clustering of like activities
- Multi-purpose facilities capable of accommodating Arts events along with other, including outdoor, activities

8 TENURE AND COVENANTS

8.1 TENURE

As a redundant church, ownership of the church building is now vested in the Diocesan Board of Finance. The adjoining vicarage is owned by the Diocesan Pastoral Board and the adjoining church hall (now the parish church) is owned by the parish of St Elisabeth's through the Diocesan Board of Finance as trustees.

8.2 COVENANTS

Like much of Eastbourne, the site forms part of the estates (the "Chatsworth Estate") that were once owned by the Duke of Devonshire. As a result, it is subject to various covenants, one of which restricts the use of the site to a church and ancillary buildings. Although the Diocese has been advised that the Chatsworth Estate would be willing to modify these covenants to enable a redevelopment to go ahead, the formal consent of the Chatsworth Estate would still be required [1]. A copy of the covenant is included in Appendix 7.

Land in the south-east corner of the site is let to the South Eastern Electricity Board for use as an electricity sub-station, for a term of 50 years from the 1st June 1973.

GUIDELINES

9 OBJECTIVES

The church building is a unique property with a number of complex development constraints and opportunities. For instance it is a Grade II Listed Building, it has a number of design faults which would be expensive to repair, and car parking is limited. On the other hand, it is a large site in a residential area with good access offering opportunities for conversion to a range of appropriate uses. Government Planning Policy Guidance (PPG 15) also requires the Council to adopt a flexible approach to the future use and development of the church building if the Listed Building is to be retained.

9.1 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

Future use opportunities for the site will be guided by the Local Plan, and will need to be in line with the Council's Corporate Plan. The latter includes objectives to create:

- A Prosperous Place - A place for business investment and as a tourist destination, which retains and grows existing businesses

- A Place to Enjoy – With quality spaces for relaxation and play, Sports and Leisure activities, and Arts and Heritage activities.
- A Place for Everyone – With a decent home for everyone.
- A Place for the Future – Applying the principles of sustainability

9.2 SITE OBJECTIVES

In view of the above issues and the aspirations of the Corporate Plan, the following are the objectives for the site:

- Future Uses - To provide opportunities for a use or uses which meet a local need, for instance for employment, leisure, community uses, arts and housing.
- Amenity – To ensure that a future use of the site does not create unacceptable levels of traffic, noise, or loss of amenity.
- Design and Conservation - To retain and enhance important architectural and historical features of the Grade II Listed Building.
- Transport - To provide adequate vehicle access and car parking, and to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes such as buses, bicycles, and walking.

10 SITE GUIDELINES

10.1 FUTURE USES

To provide opportunities for a use or uses which meet a community need, for instance employment, leisure, community, arts and residential uses.

Because St Elisabeth's is such an unusual development opportunity, the Council recognises that it will need to be as open as possible to proposals that come forward. In particular, it will adopt a flexible and open-minded approach to the future use of the building, and will not rule any uses out except for those such as intensive retailing or industry which unavoidably generate unacceptable traffic or noise levels, and undermine local amenity in this residential area.

The Council would therefore support offices, leisure uses, small work units, spaces for the performing or visual arts, community and craft uses, and residential use for apartments or flats.

Other possible uses that have been identified in consultations for this brief include a research or high technology workshop housing very large pieces of equipment; a workshop or specialist facility for a national museum or gallery such as the Science Museum or the Tate Gallery; an arts workshop or production space; a performing arts space for productions or training; a Museum of the Theatre; and a music or recording studio (in view of the building's high quality acoustics).

10.2 LISTED BUILDING GUIDELINES

To retain and enhance important architectural and historical features of the Grade II Listed Building.

The church building is a Grade II Listed Building and therefore proposals will require Listed Building Consent. As such, the priority will be to retain and protect the building and its valuable architectural and historical features.

Because of the design and structural problems of the building, the Council will try to deal flexibly with proposals to refurbish or re-use the building. In this respect, its overriding concern will be to ensure that some

or all of the identified architectural and historical values are retained or enhanced, namely:

The Cohesive Architectural Group

A key architectural asset of the church building is its setting in a contemporary building group together with the vicarage and the church hall. The loss of any of these three buildings would undermine the heritage value of each building, but major alterations to the church and its west end in particular, would be of more concern because it is so central and dominant in the group.

The Murals

The murals by Hans Feibusch in the crypt of the church are of great historical and artistic importance. The murals are of great value in their own right, but their setting in the crypt is an integral part of this importance because it is an important part of the artist's story, and because they would be liable to damage if they were to be removed.

The Feibusch murals should therefore be preserved in situ and a proposal would need to demonstrate how the crypt and the murals are to be incorporated into an overall plan for the church.

The EW Tristram murals in the sanctuary are also of historical importance but they can be relocated to a secure and appropriate setting without damage or undue loss of their values.

An Intact Period Example

The statements on the value of the church highlight the many contemporary features of the church that are still in the building and intact. These are described in the Listed Building Schedule (Appendix 5) and in the various heritage reports, and include the following features:

Wide nave with narrow aisles

Ribbed ceiling

Woodblock floor

Travertine marble floor to chancel

Light oak pews

Arcade with Clipsham stone arches

Lady Chapel

Metal screen to Lady Chapel

Stained glass window in Lady Chapel

West window

Stone font and Clipsham stone pulpit and lectern

Wrought iron altar rail

South staircase

Whilst it may not be possible to retain all of these features, the Council would expect most of these features to be retained or recognised in a future development proposal for the church. This might be

through retaining the feature - or a sample - in a development proposal, or finding a new home for the feature where its value can still be recognised. The refurbished church hall on adjoining land may be able to provide a home for some of the fittings and furnishings, but this should be pursued through discussions with the parish and the Diocesan Board.

Scale And Prominence

English Heritage elaborated on the scale and prominence of the church (Gavin Stamp's "bare style") in their brief disquisition on the subject. The building's prominence is integral to its status as a listed building and therefore this aspect must be given priority at this stage. A development proposal must therefore be a refurbishment of the building within its existing shell but with scope for modifications to that shell.

10.3 TRANSPORT PLANNING

To provide adequate vehicle access and car parking, and to encourage the use of sustainable and alternative transport.

As with other areas, the Council is willing to be flexible in its transport requirements if this will enable a development to proceed which retains the Listed Building and its values. However there are safety and amenity constraints which limit this flexibility.

Transport Assessment and Travel Plan

An overall Travel Plan [2] will need to be submitted alongside any planning application in order to ensure that future travel needs for the site are managed holistically. The Plan would incorporate a Transport Assessment developed in consultation with County Highway officers, and would need to address the issues identified below as well as the following

- Measures to encourage walking, cycling, and greater use of buses
- Operating arrangements for access and car parking at the front of the site in conjunction with the church hall and vicarage
- Car parking provision and the scope for parking at the rear of the vicarage
- Demand management measures which could reduce the need for car parking and vehicle use
- Provision for people with disabilities eg nominated car spaces and access from car parks to buildings.

Parking

There is little existing provision for parking on the church building site and only limited opportunities for on street parking. East Sussex CC Parking Standards would apply to the area and the "Zone 4" requirements would apply to the site. This means that at least 75% of the maximum parking requirement would apply unless there are significant "extenuating circumstances". The Standards are set out in Parking Standards at Development (ESCC, February 2002) which is available from the County Council.

In order to encourage a future use and development of the site, the Council would support the use of land at the rear of the vicarage for parking with access from Baldwin Avenue. A possible layout is indicated in Plan 7. To pursue this option, interested parties should contact EBC Development Control to discuss layout requirements, and the Diocesan Board/Pastoral Board to negotiate the purchase of vicarage land.

Very limited off street parking is also available at the front of the site but this could be expanded with an improved and formal layout using angle parking. On street parking opportunities in the area are very limited due to existing waiting restrictions across the site frontage.

At present, the three buildings – church, church hall, and vicarage – are all owned by the Church and there is linked access across all three properties with limited informal parking. If the site falls into separate ownership with a new development, then access and car parking will need to be clarified and rationalised. There may still be opportunities for shared access/parking, but this would need to be formalised through a planning agreement or similar. This should form part of the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.

Vehicle Access

Vehicle access for the site would be partly at the front (as at present) and partly at the rear. It may be possible to provide access to parking behind the vicarage from Victoria Drive, but this will be difficult due to the narrow width, steep gradient, and the need to build retaining walls. As described above, access and parking at the front of the site would need to be clarified in conjunction with the church hall and vicarage. As part of this exercise, the front wall may have to be altered for safety reasons and to provide appropriate visibility into and out of the site. This in turn would need to be incorporated into:

- The application for Listed Building Consent, and
- The request for modification to site covenants from the Chatsworth Estate.

There is a 7.8m wide access strip to Baldwin Avenue at the rear of the site and this is sufficiently wide to accommodate 2-way vehicle movement, a pedestrian footway and a margin. This could be constructed to provide access to car parking at the rear of the vicarage if that possibility is pursued. Pedestrian and vehicle visibility splays would be as indicated on Plan 7 and an existing lamp post would also need to be relocated.

Provision may need to be made for loading and unloading for the site and would need to be incorporated into the scheme.

Sustainable Transport

There are two bus stops close to the site which offer regular day time services to the town centre. The Travel Plan would need to demonstrate how future staff and visitors to the site can make best use of these services and thereby minimise the need to use cars.

Safe and convenient access to the site by bicycle should be provided for and provision should also be indicated for on site access and parking for cyclists.

On site provision for pedestrians should also be identified, and in particular the means by which pedestrians will walk easily from Baldwin Avenue to Victoria Drive. This is particularly important to encourage church users to arrive on foot, thereby reducing parking requirements and traffic congestion associated with services in the church hall building.

10.4 AMENITY

To ensure that a future use of the site does not create unacceptable levels of traffic, noise, or loss of amenity.

The future use or development of the church building will need to ensure that it is a “good neighbour” to surrounding houses and within the residential neighbourhood. The Council will need to ensure that traffic and noise are acceptable, and will ensure that local residents have the opportunity to view and comment on any proposals as part of the planning process.

In addition, a cohesive landscape plan will be required demonstrating how outdoor spaces will be treated in terms of soft and hard landscaping, and how private amenity spaces (if required) will be taken care of.

10.5 OTHER

Telecom Masts

As a high and prominent location in the town, planning consent has been granted for two telecom masts on the site. Only one of these applications has yet been implemented (in the form of a street lamp at the front of the church), but the operators of both masts would need to be consulted in working up any future development proposals for the site.

Sustainable Development

The Council supports the principles of sustainable development and will encourage proposals which demonstrate these principles through, for instance:

- Energy efficiency in terms of solar energy, better insulation, and alternative energy use
- Sustainable transport measures
- Waste reduction
- Greater use of renewable products and resources

The planning application should demonstrate how the development proposal has responded to these issues.

NEXT STEPS

11 CONSULTATION AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

If a planning application is submitted for development on the site, the following consultations would be carried out:

- The application would be advertised in the local press
- A notice would be posted on site
- Occupiers of nearby homes would be notified in writing, and
- Organisations which have an interest in the site would be notified, including for instance East Sussex County Council (Highways Division), the Church Commissioners, Orange and BT Cellnet Ltd (telecom masts), and the Environment Agency.

As a Listed Building, Listed Building Consent will be required for any alterations to the building (internal or external) or any development within the building curtilage (including fences and walls). Proposals would be referred to English Heritage, the Courtauld Institute and the Twentieth Century Society for comment.

12 CONTACTS

If you need any more information or would like to discuss this brief in more detail, please contact:

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PLANS

PHOTOGRAPHS

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Report on Costs of Remedial Works

February 2002

Advisory Board for Redundant Churches

Advice to Commissioners

April 2003

Courtauld Institute of Art, Conservation of Wall Painting Department

Report on Paintings by EW Tristram

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

PLANNING HISTORY

Council records indicate that there have been few major changes to the church and adjoining buildings since they were constructed in 1935-8.

1934/5

Plans for basement and boiler rooms approved in June 1935 for architects Peter D Stonham Son & Fenning (Architects of Eastbourne) and consulting architects Tatchell & Wilson (London)

Building consent for church, August 1935

Plans approved for adjoining vicarage with four bedrooms, garage and two maid's bedrooms approved in April 1935

1989

Plans approved for kitchen additions in basement in May 1989

2000

Building consent for 8.0m telecom antennae and equipment housing, April 2000

2001

Application for 12.5m telecommunications mast and equipment housing approved in September 2001 (not yet constructed)

2003

Planning and Listed Building Consent granted in March 2003 for mechanical and heating services on the roof of the church hall. This is to support the conversion and upgrading of the church hall to accommodate church facilities which are being relocated from the main building.

APPENDIX 2

COST ESTIMATES

July 1993

Coster Associates

Budget Costs for Guidance Purposes Only of Repairs as Outlined in Coster Associates Overview Report

£

Unprotected Steel Lintels	75-85,000
Water Penetration around Lancet Windows	115-125,000* or 50-55,000**
Brick and Mortar Erosion	35-45,000
High Level Water Penetration	95-110,000
Degraded Internal Surface Finishes	30-35,000
Main Walls, Ferrous TIE/DPC Replacements	500-600,000
TOTAL	£850-1,000,000

* Option A - Constructional

** Option B – Amelioration only

November 2001

CM Parker Browne, Chartered Quantity Surveyors

Report on Costs of Remedial Works (July 1993 costs in brackets for comparison)

£

Unprotected Steel Lintels	220,000 (75-85,000)
Water Penetration around Lancet Windows	230,000 (115-125,000 or 50-55,000)
High Level Water Penetration	190,000 (95-110,000)
Degraded Internal Surface Finishes	70,000 (30-35,000)
Work to Main Walls	1,180,000 (500-600,000)
Internal Decorations	22,000
Preliminaries	600,000
Contingency Sum	258,000
Total Construction Costs	2,770,000
Professional fees and Expenses @ 15%	415,000
TOTAL	£3,185,500 (£850-1,000,000)

APPENDIX 3

BUILDING REPORTS

Professor J Heyman, February 1984

Advice about Problems that have Arisen Concerning St Elisabeth's Church

The defects for which remedial action is required arise from the form of construction of the walls... the brickwork is cracking because of rusting of embedded steel, and the remedy is to open up the surface and treat the cause, either by removing the offending steel, or by treatment in situ and replacement of brickwork.

I do not regard any of this work as a major operation. Rather it is in the nature of a slightly larger than usual item to be added in to a more or less routine refurbishment of the structure... I see no need to mount a major campaign of prophylactic restoration, with all square headed windows, for example, opened up; only those showing present defects should be treated."

Corinne J Bennett ARIB, Purcell Miller Tritton & Partners, February 1984

Brief Report on the Church

I consider that there is no case for the demolition of this church, but that repairs should be carried out in accordance with Mr Fords' recent findings, and that his report of October 1980 sets out the problems of the building in a very balanced way... I would hope that the PCC will be encouraged to repair and retain their church when the threat of demolition is removed.

Tim Oakshott ARICS, Coster Associates, June 1993

Overview and Summary of the Condition of the Fabric of the Church Building

Design Faults

It is important to point out at this stage in the report that the design and record drawings, although reflecting the overall design concept, depart radically in terms of detailing from the actual construction techniques adopted.

As a consequence of the construction, problems have been experienced from very early in the life of the building and this has led to premature remedial works.

These problems can broadly be grouped into two categories, namely Correctable and Non-Correctable latent defects.

Correctable Design Faults

i) Use of Steel Lintels

Steel lintels in the form of rolled steel joists have been used over openings particularly square headed windows. These joists were unprotected and have rusted causing corrosion expansion, which has, and is, bursting open the brickwork above window openings. This increases the propensity to water and frost penetration, thus exacerbating the situation. A secondary matter in these locations is that the window embrasures are in moulded brickwork, unbonded and thus requiring to be fixed by cramps or straps. These straps are ferrous metal and as brickwork is porous corrosion expansion is occurring causing distress to the brickwork which again is cumulative in effect. Although a design defect, it would be possible to replace or treat the lintels and re-build the window surrounds in a planned programme of repair, although the cost would be substantial.

ii) Water Penetration around Windows

Water penetration through the large and exposed lancet windows, due to natural degradation of the lead comes and ferrous saddles, falls really within the context of routine end-of-life replacements. Water, however, is entering, particularly on the weather side of the Church, due to the method of detailing the main structure to the stone window surrounds. The cause is the inadequacy of detailing the vertical dpc's to window surrounds as a consequence of the adopted wall construction. It would be possible to re-detail the embrasures to preclude water penetration, although again, this would be a particularly expensive operation, requiring partial re-construction.

iii) Brickwork Erosion

Differential degradation of the facing brickwork is occurring, particularly on the weather side of the building. Although partly a consequence of degree of exposure and local and general atmospheric conditions, the main cause is probably due to the use of underburnt or differentially fired bricks, thus making brickwork more vulnerable to frost or chemical attack. This is a correctable problem by simply replacing severely eroded brickwork, however the cost is exacerbated by the height and extent of the Church which is effectively fully brick faced.

iv) Erosion of Mortars

There is differential mortar erosion, particularly on the weather side and higher regions of the main walls. This has been caused by the action of driving rain, wind, frost and chemical attack. The method of detailing, particularly at high level in the region of the sculptured parapet, is vulnerable as there is a higher propensity to water retention and actual water erosion.

Severely eroded mortars can conceal structural cracking. Although the design has contributed to this defect, it would be a practical operation to re-point the brickwork generally, although again the sheer size and height of the building substantially adds to the cost of the operation.

v) High Level Water Penetration

The roof is set within a sculptured parapet. This upper section becomes super saturated and water penetrates to the internal wall face, principally within the roof void area and then enters the nave itself.

The traying or damp proof coursing is inadequate and it is significant to note that on the south side a copper tray has been retrospectively installed to ameliorate the problem, although dampness is still evident. Currently water penetration occurs principally on the north side where the structure is as originally detailed.

There is a further complication in that some of the main roof steel is built into this section of the parapet wall and is therefore vulnerable to corrosion which itself will cause further distress to the masonry structure.

We believe that the only long term solution would be to reconstruct the upper and parapet sections of the main wall to include proper traying and damp proofing arrangements. This would be an extremely expensive operation due to the working height, but might have been practicable if other more significant latent defects had not existed.

vi) Degraded Internal Surface Finishes

The nave is finished using an acoustic (slightly soft) plaster. This has degraded due to the presence of dampness. The causes of dampness are various ie condensation, vapour permeation and water penetration. The effected plasters are likely to be hygroscopic ie able to absorb dampness from the atmosphere and thus degradation of the plaster is progressive. It would therefore be necessary to remove if not all, full sections of plaster, de-contaminate and re-plaster. Due to the difficulties of effective de-contamination, an alternative wall finish may be more practicable. Again this would be an expensive operation.

Non-Correctable Design Faults

As mentioned earlier, although the design drawings indicated a conventional cavity brick construction, it was obviously not possible in engineering terms to justify the structure, thus an alternative construction was selected.

What ultimately was chosen was a combination of brickwork and concrete comprising an inner skin of brickwork, a central core of poured concrete and an outer skin of facing brickwork. To damp-proof the wall, two layers of slates were included between the central concrete core and the outer brick skin.

These three layers were tied together, as they had to act structurally in unison, using metal rods. Although documented as non-ferrous, investigation has revealed that all the ties exposed are ferrous metal. As the facing brick skin is porous, these ties are vulnerable to corrosion.

Furthermore the vertical slate damp proof course between the central concrete core and external brick skin was formed in two layers of slates butt jointed and not overlapped and laid in normal mortar which is water porous. It is doubtful, therefore, that this vertical damp proof course is effective and apart from being penetrated by the ties is now further vulnerable due to corrosion expansion of the ferrous ties themselves.

The long term effect of this construction is two fold. Firstly that damp/moisture/vapour can pass through and remain within the wall construction. Secondly, due to corrosion the ties can rust to a point where they are not mechanically connecting together the three layers of the wall. This will lead ultimately to structural instability, as each layer of the wall is not in itself stable in its own right.

As to remedial repairs, even if the ties could be cored out and replaced, such work would so damage the vertical damp proof course as to make it ineffective.

It would appear therefore that there is no cost effective way of correcting this fundamental latent defect.

At this time the main walls exhibit no significant signs of distress associated with accelerating degradation of the wall ties, however, as the erosion of mortars could conceal cracking and as any manifestations of distress is likely to be evident in the external skin of the wall, our recommendations would be that the vulnerable structure should be monitored on a regular basis.

APPENDIX 4

HERITAGE STATEMENTS

The following are extracts from the official Listed Building Schedules (the complete Schedules are shown in Appendix 5).

Church of St Elisabeth

Ribbed ceiling and unusual polygonal-shaped lights suspended from brackets... around the sanctuary is a sequence of fixed painted panels depicting scenes such as the Annunciation and the Baptism of Christ, in a pure Italian quattrocento style. They are signed EW Tristram, 1938 (Tristram was the leading authority on English Medieval wall paintings and their conservation). In a basement room there survives an important painted mural sequence, depicting the Pilgrim's Progress in a free expression style by Hans Feibusch, 1944. These murals are of special historic significance.

Church Hall to Church of St Elisabeth

Neo-Georgian style.. two storeys: 7 windows to front elevation... designed as a group with Church of St Elisabeth and Vicarage.

Vicarage to the Church of St Elisabeth

Neo-Georgian style... two storeys: 7 windows... designed as a group with Church of St Elisabeth's and church hall.

APPENDIX 5

LISTED BUILDING SCHEDULES

APPENDIX 6

PLANNING POLICIES

Structure Plan

EN 23 Listed buildings... protected from inappropriate change an development

LT 18 Provision for the visual, creative and performing arts will be encouraged and supported, particularly:

- In the coastal towns
- Proposals which involve the renovation and refurbishment of existing buildings of historic character
- The provision of studio and workshop space for arts practitioners and the clustering of like activities
- Multi-purpose facilities capable of accommodating Arts events along with other, including outdoor, activities

Local Plan

Development proposals will need to take account of the following policies in the Eastbourne Borough Plan (Revised Deposit Draft 2001-2011):

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

NE 3 Conserving Water Resources

- NE 4 Sustainable Drainage Systems
- NE 5 Minimisation of Construction Industry Waste
- NE 6 Recycling Facilities
- NE 7 Waste Minimisation Measures in Residential Development
- NE 11 Energy Efficiency
- NE 17 Noise
- NE 27 Environmental Amenity

Urban Heritage and Townscape

UHT 1 Design of New Development

- UHT 2 Height of Buildings
- UHT 4 Visual Amenity
- UHT 5 Protecting Walls/Landscape Features
- UHT 7 Trees
- UHT 8 Landscaping
- UHT 11 Design of Public Areas
- UHT 13 Advertisements
- UHT 14 External Floodlighting
- UHT 15 Public Art
- UHT 18 Protection of Listed Buildings
- UHT 20 Retention of Historic Buildings

Housing

- HO 6 Infill Development
- HO 7 Redevelopment
- HO 10 Conversions and Change of Use
- HO 12 Residential Densities
- HO 14 Affordable Housing ^[3]

- HO 17 Sheltered Housing
- HO 18 Supported and Special Needs Housing
- HO 20 Residential Amenity
- HO 19 Wheelchair Housing
- HO 20 Residential Amenity

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

- BI 6 Business and Industry in Residential and Tourist Areas
- BI 7 Design Criteria

Transport

- TR 2 Travel Demands
- TR 3 Travel Plan
- TR 6 Facilities for Cyclists
- TR 7 Provision for Pedestrians
- TR 11 Car Parking
- TR 12 Car Parking for those with Mobility Problems

LEISURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- LCF 20 Retention of Community Facilities

UTILITIES AND SERVICES

- US 2 Water Resource Adequacy
- US 2A Foul Drainage and Sewerage
- US 8 Masts within the Built-up Area

Implementation and Resources

- IR 1 Provision of Capital Works for Development
- IR 2 Infrastructure Requirements

APPENDIX 7

TITLE PLAN

[1] Modifications to a restrictive covenant would need to be sought from the Estate Surveyor, The Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement, Compton Estate Office, Compton Place Rd, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 1EB.

[2] The Travel Plan should be in accordance with advice in Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport (PPG 13, 2001).

[3] Ensure that current Local Plan advice is referred to.