

Statement of Need and Significance - The Drive Methodist Church, Lytham, Lancashire

Refurbishment of the Church Toilets

Statement of Need: The church would like to refurbish the Church Ladies and Gentlemen's Toilets to meet the current needs of the Church and to be fit for purpose.

The Mission of The Drive Methodist Church is to worship our Lord Jesus Christ, to proclaim his word and to bear witness to his love. To this end, we shall promote fellowship within the church, welcome and encourage visitors to the church and seize opportunities to be a focal point in the community and support the wider mission of the church in the world. In order to achieve this we need Toilet facilities that are fit for purpose.

The Drive Methodist Church enjoys traditional Methodist worship and delivers this well. The iconic building, which stands in the centre of the town of St Annes, is a grade II listed property. The worship style is appropriate for the architectural setting. The members of the congregation meet regularly for fellowship, hold regular Advent and Lent study groups, engage in serving their neighbourhood through frequent coffee mornings and make good use of other opportunities to engage with the local community.

A wide range of local community groups make use of the facilities, including Alcoholics Anonymous who have a regular letting. People of all ages come onto the premises. We are committed to a planned programme of refurbishment and repair consistent with our financial resources. It is essential that this project be undertaken in order to enhance the welcome to both Church Members and community groups. Especially that we use our facilities for outreach and encouragement for growth of our present groups.

Blackpool and South Fylde Circuit has adopted the Lancashire District's strategy "Transforming Lives and Communities" which can be found on the District web-site (www.lancashiremethodist.org.uk). Our Circuit is committed to offering good quality worship in a variety of styles and in welcoming buildings, exploring Fresh Expressions of Church, engaging in community outreach projects and developing our work with children, youth and young families. Rather than each of the nine Circuit Churches seeking to address all these challenges, each one is focusing on its strengths and its own key objectives which have been devised from a series of Circuit-led reviews and which link in with the overall District / Circuit strategy. Two of the nine Churches in the Circuit have recently undergone major refurbishments resulting in the provision of flexible worship areas. The Drive Church is planning a building project with the objective of helping to extend its mission among the community groups using the premises. This Church's current Toilet Refurbishment project will contribute to this Circuit mission.

One particular part of the building is a treasured part of Methodist heritage as it is the original "Chapel in The Dunes" which was the first place of worship for Methodists in the Town of St Annes On-the-Sea. We are a member of Churches Together in St Annes.

Statement of Significance



According to the List Description the church has been designated as a Grade II listed building because of the following:

- * The church is an accomplished example of Nonconformist church design that possesses good external massing and detailing together with a well-executed interior of interesting and unusual mixed character that contrasts with the architecturally plainer original school-chapel on the site
- * The juxtaposition of school chapel, reading room and church survive as the focal point of Methodist religious life in St Annes and exemplify well the development of Nonconformist religion in the town over the past 130 years and particularly in the late C19 and early C20
- * Along with the nearby Grade II listed St Thomas' Church and St Joseph's Church and the Grade II* United Reformed Church, The Drive Church makes a significant contribution both to the local street scene and the wider townscape by occupying a prominent and imposing location on the town's main thoroughfare.

Listed Building Description

LYTHAM ST ANNES CLIFTON DRIVE SOUTH (southwest side) Drive Methodist Church, Reading Room, former school-chapel, and wall, gateposts and railings 08-MAR-10 II A Methodist school-chapel, church and reading room situated on the corner of Clifton Road South and Eastbank Road and built between 1877-1901 with some later alterations. The chapel-school was designed by Maxwell and Tuke of Bury and the church was designed by Herbert Isitt.

MATERIALS: the church and reading room are constructed of coursed yellow sandstone beneath green pitched slate roofs, the school-chapel is built of red brick with stone dressings beneath a pitched slate roof.

PLAN: the group of buildings are irregular in plan.

EXTERIOR: the building's east elevation overlooks Clifton Drive South. The church has a tall central gable with a slightly lower projecting gabled porch containing the main entrance to the ground floor on the right and a tower with a spire to the left. The gable has a row of five lancet windows to the ground floor beneath a large arched window with geometrical tracery and a narrow lancet to the apex with a stone cross finial above. Continuous hoodmoulds rise above all the windows. A tall spire rises from a tower of four stages. The lowest stage has a three-light window with tracery on its east face, whilst the south face has an entrance porch of a similar design to that on the east facade. The tower's second stage has tall lancets to three faces and the third stage is plain apart from the termination of angle buttresses. The tower's fourth stage has traceried windows to all faces, above which is gable moulding. Spirelets rise from each corner of the tower and hide the rising point of a tall, slender octagonal spire. West of the tower the church's south facade has three bays separated by buttresses and two projecting gabled transepts, both with canted bay windows to the ground floor (part of the 1907

enlargement) with twin traceried windows in the gable above and behind and a central round window to each apex. At the church's south west corner is the vestry, also part of the 1907 enlargement. It is relatively plain and has a door and two pointed-arched windows in its south face and three rectangular windows in its west face. The church's large arched west window incorporates four lights with tracery above and a hoodmould. The north west corner of the church is plain and largely obscured by later additions. The north facade of the church is also largely obscured by later additions and the proximity of the original chapel. Only its east end is visible, where it consists of a projecting staircase gable with a central window and three bays separated by buttresses. The upper parts of gabled transepts matching those on the south side are visible, but the lower parts are largely obscured by adjoining buildings.

The east elevation of the reading room to the right of the church has two two-light pointed-arched windows above which is a centrally positioned circular window. Both left and right returns have four rectangular windows and there is an entrance with a later added porch on the left return. All windows have decorated tracery.

The former school chapel is partly masked by later buildings but its north elevation shows it to be of red brick on a stone plinth. There are five bays separated by brick pilasters; the slightly lower eastern bay has two narrow round-arched windows while the remaining bays have larger round-arched windows. There is a stone sill band carried along the full length of the elevation and a dentilled brick band at the springing point of the window arches between the pilasters along the western four bays. The window arches are picked out in alternating red and yellow bricks above which are dentilled and moulded bricks below the eaves. The east elevation gable is largely obscured by the reading room but the upper part of a large arch executed in alternating red and yellow bricks is visible.

The church's stone boundary wall, gateposts and railings running along Clifton Drive South and Eastbank Road are also included in the listing.

INTERIOR: The church's chancel has a pointed barrel-vaulted roof and a large stained glass west window. Timber wall panelling to sill height sits below and extends along part of the chancel's north and south walls. The north wall has a tall arched opening, which contains an organ made by F.F Walcker of Ludwigsburn, Wurtzburg, Germany, in 1894. The south wall contains a door to the vestry. The chancel has a low raised stage inserted in the 1990s, a repositioned iron chancel rail with wooden handrail, and choir stalls to either side. The pulpit is of pitched pine on a carved stone dais accessed by stone steps with iron balusters and a wooden handrail. There are two shallow transepts to each side of the church separated by an arch supported on its inner side by a column consisting of an octagonal base, polished granite shaft and crocket capital. The north transepts each have two windows with stained and leaded glass. The south transepts by contrast have inserted canted bay windows of seven-lights which have truncated the windows above matching those in the north transepts. All have stained glass. The church has a wide nave with three matching windows with stained glass to both north and south walls. Pews are of pitched pine with two main blocks flanking a central aisle at the widest part of the church and three blocks at the narrower eastern part of the church. The nave roof is a keel-like wagon ceiling supported on deep plaster coving in the style of a hammer-beam roof. At the east end of the church there is a raked timber gallery supported on thin columns. Modern plate glass with doors has been inserted beneath the gallery, thus separating the main body of the church from its east end and creating an entrance lobby. At each end of the lobby are doors: that to the south giving exit via the base of the tower, and that to the north giving exit through the east porch and access to the carved timber staircase that leads to the gallery. The five-light east window is above the gallery and incorporates tracery and stained glass. The lobby area is lit by five lancets.

The reading room has stained glass windows and timber wall panelling to approximately half height with a matching timber fire surround and mantles shelf. The hammer-beam roof is supported by braces set on stone corbels.

Panelled timber doors with stained glass glazing lead from the porch to a vestibule where half-glazed doors give access into the former school-chapel with an inserted stage at its west end. There is timber wall panelling to window sill height and two blocked round-arched windows at the east end. Visible roof timbers consist of tie

beams with angled struts strengthened by twisted metal braces. A slim decorated ceiling panel runs east-west between the central roof timbers.

HISTORY: the Drive Methodist Church has evolved over a 30 year period, creating a complex which reflects the congregation's growth. The original Wesleyan school-chapel was built in 1877 to a design by Maxwell and Tuke of Bury who later went on to design the Grade I listed Tower Buildings at Blackpool. This chapel soon proved to be too small and it was replaced by the present church built between 1890-93 to a design by the architect Herbert Isitt of Bradford. In 1901 a reading room was attached to the east face of the original chapel, architect unknown and in 1907 the church, which originally provided accommodation for 500 worshippers, was enlarged at its western end to cater for 720. The Ordnance Survey map of 1911 shows that by this time the chapel and reading room were described as a 'Lecture Hall' and that additional buildings including a caretaker's house had been added to the western side of the chapel and north west side of the church. During the late 1960s a porch and large single-storey meeting room was attached to the west side of the church and the south side of the additional buildings shown on the 1911 map. In about 1970 a porch was added to the chapel and reading room.

Internal alterations have included the insertion of a World War I memorial window, the insertion of a glass screen below the gallery in the 1970s, and the removal of some pews to facilitate the installation of chancel staging in the 1990s.

The area affected by the proposal



This is a site plan from a previous scheme. The building to the south is the new church of 1890-93. To the east is the reading rooms which are attached to the Wesleyan school-chapel of 1877. The Choir vestry is located in the earlier 1877 chapel. You can see the chapel behind the reading rooms on the image below.



The area currently used as a choir vestry will be converted to create Ladies Toilets. This will include 4 x cubicles and 3 x sink units. The main change will be the creation of a new doorway marked with a red circle on the plan below:



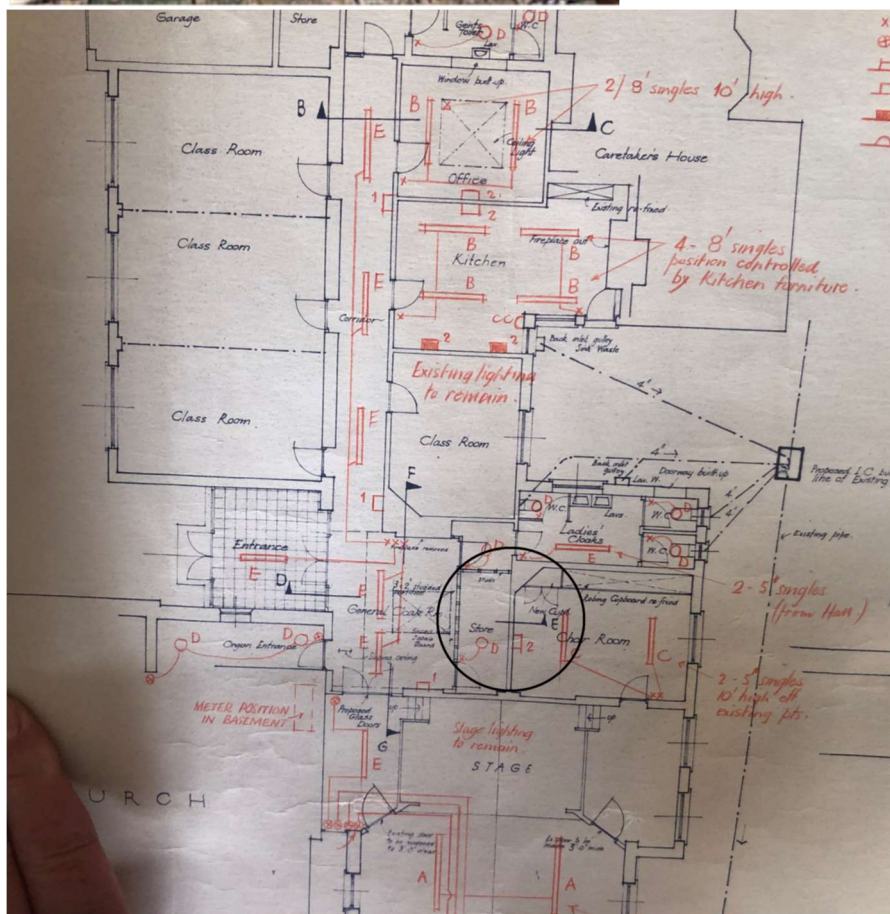
This will not impact on the adjacent fireplace and we believe, following consultation with plans dated 1960's prepared for the new extension, that there may be an existing opening here which was blocked up when the new hall was built. The existing ladies toilets will be converted to male toilets. The room size is 17ft 3inch by 12ft 6 inch. The Ladies toilets will take up 5ft by 2ft 6 inch, with the sinks being 2ft 6inch by 1ft 8 inch. The new baby change unit will be 2ft 6inch by 1ft 6inch.



The male toilet room size is 17ft 3inch x 6ft 6 inch. The 2 x toilet size is 6ft x 2ft 6 inch, the 3 x sink size will be 1ft 8inch x 1ft 6 inch and the 3 x toilet urinals will be vertical and will require a 6ft spread.



The image shows the area where we propose to create a new door opening. Currently there is a shelving unit which is not fixed to the building. The cupboard to the right and the one in front of the fireplace is also not fixed.



The plan to the left shows a plan from a previous lighting scheme. The area marked with a black circle is where the works are proposed within the original school/chapel. This is accessed through a store from the halls behind the church, and this arrangement will remain. There is currently a door leading through into the store from the hall.

We appreciate that the area affected is situated within the oldest part of the site, but this area has been much altered over the long period of time the Methodist's have occupied this suite of buildings. We understand that the new doorway, new pipework and units will be an intervention that may cause harm to the significance of the building, but we consider this to be beneficial to those who will continue to use this as a church. If we do not find an existing doorway then we will take great care during the taking down works, and we will ensure that we follow good practice when inserting any new lintels. We do not intend to impact on the fireplace, which we

appreciate is of higher significance as part of the historic narrative of the building, and we shall ensure any new fittings and finishes will be of a high standard and will be breathable, yet practical, where possible. Any ventilation details will be shared with the Connexional Conservation Officer for agreement before these works commence.