

St John's Chapel St John the Baptist: Schedule and Statements

Faculty Petition OFS Application Ref: 2025-117455

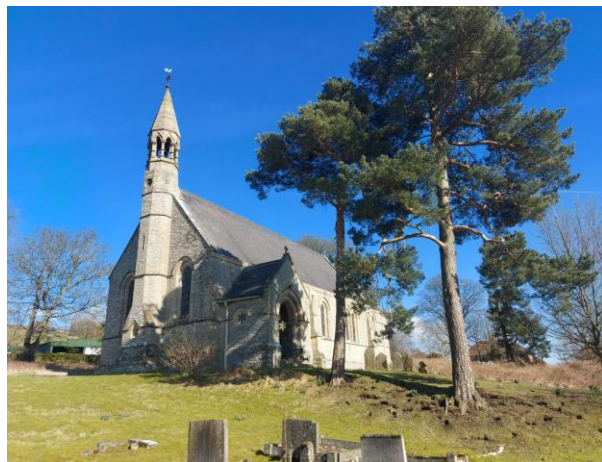
Receipt of church contents. (* Items already relocated for safe keeping.)

SCHEDULE OF WORKS OR PROPOSALS:

- i. Credence Table with small brass plaque dedicated to Hannah Parker.
- ii. Purple and red altar frontal (embroidered by Amy Emms MBE).
- iii. Small chalice (originally from Rookhope church).
- iv. St Andrew's Burial Register for continued use by Parish.

Statement of Significance and Needs

Contents from the closed church of St Andrew: The church closed for worship 5th February 2024 through a scheme made by the Church Commissioners under the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011. The Church Commissioners seek to publicise a draft scheme that proposes the closed church and parts of its consecrated churchyard burial ground be appropriated for residential use as a single family residential dwelling. Planning permission has been submitted for this proposed change of use with a sensitive development. The closed church of St Andrew's is **unlisted** but lies in a designated conservation area (Westgate Conservation Area) within the Northern Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. [[Photographs here.](#)]

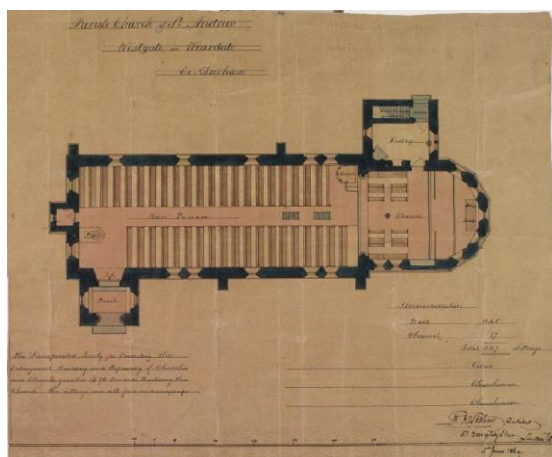


Church Description (CBC Report PM [2588](#)):

"Parish church, created c1869 from part of the parish of Stanhope, St Thomas. Aisleless nave with W bell turret and S porch, apsidal chancel and N vestry; by Robert Jewell Withers, 1869. Sandstone with slate roofs. A vigorous and assured design, scarcely altered since completed in 1869 as part of the campaign to plant new parish churches all the way along upper Weardale... of moderate significance overall..."

This petition seeks to ensure church contents which hold local or even regional significance have their future secured and are found an appropriate new home, prior to the disposal of the closed church. The items to be removed are described by the CBC report (PM 2588) as having low or low-to-moderate significance. Items marked with an asterisk* are already relocated for safe keeping under the Mission & Pastoral Measure 2011.

Plan signed by R J Withers, 5 June 1869; from Lambeth Palace ICBS Collection (ICBS06740):

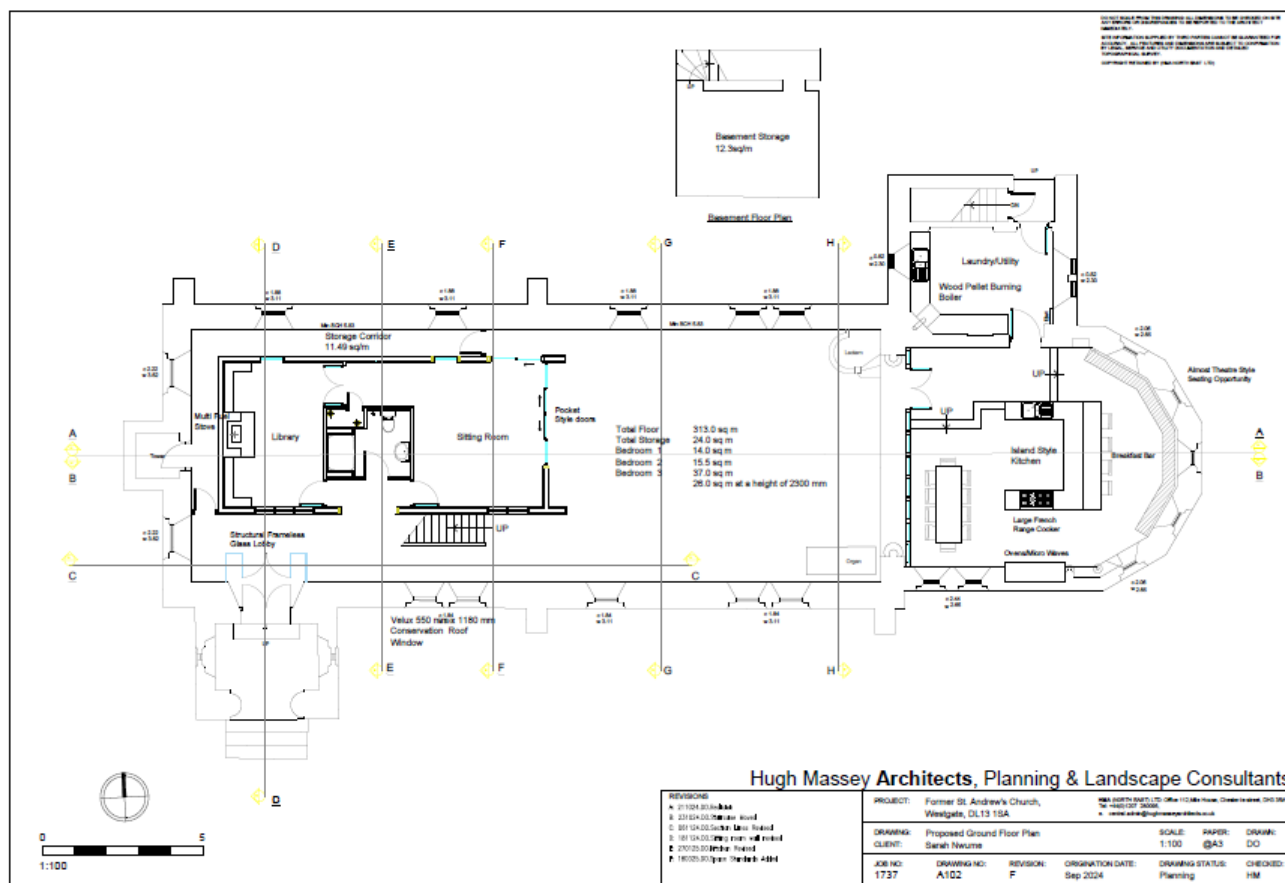


The Disposal Scheme for residential use:

The property is currently awaiting determination by Durham County Council LPA on a planning application for conversion to a single residential dwelling (DM/25/00719/FPA). Following this the Church Commissioners will undertake a public consultation on their draft disposal scheme.



Proposed ground floor plan courtesy of Hugh Massey Architects:



The Church of St John the Baptist:

The church is grade II listed and situated in the St John's Chapel Conservation Area. Uponn closure of St Andrew's church the parish was reformed to become the Parish of St John's Chapel and Westgate. It has since been reformed again, with Heatherycleugh St Thomas, to become the Parish of West Weardale.

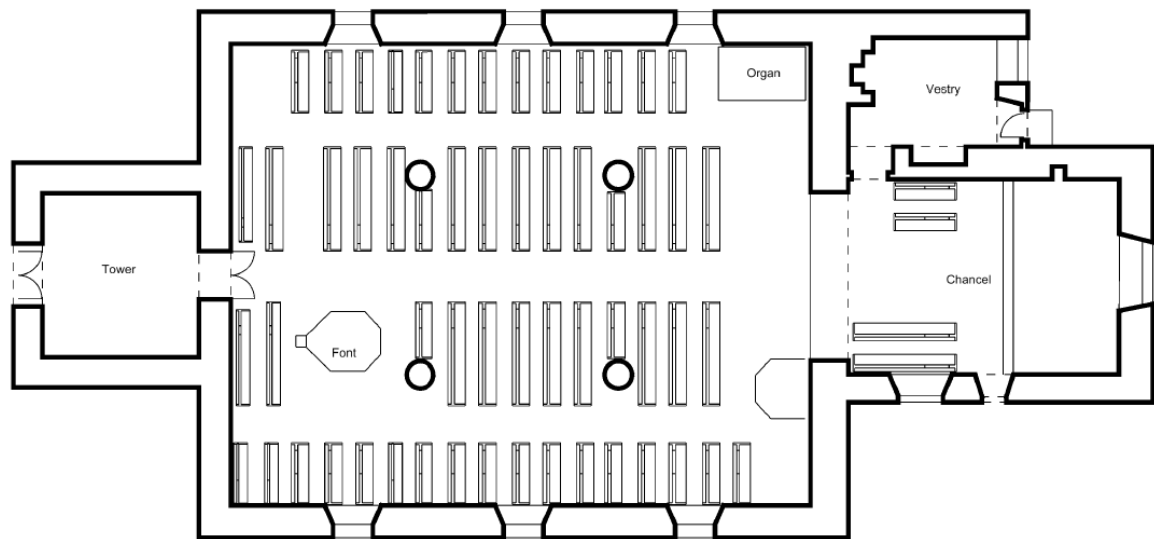
Architect Chloe Granger's 2023 QI Report describes the church as follows:

"Parish Church dated 1752 built on the site of a former medieval chapel. Church comprises of main Nave with western tower centrally positioned on the west gable, and chancel with north vestry off the chancel. Tower and west gable of Nave in dressed sandstone ashlar with protruding quoins to first two stages and corner pilasters to top third stage. Iron rich sandstone rubble to north, south and east walls of Nave and chancel with expressed sandstone quoins... Roof has recently been fully relaid with green Westmorland slates to a small variance of diminishing courses. Stone copings to gables to east and west of Nave and east of chancel. Pyramidal roof of the tower has slightly swept eaves, also reroofed recently.

Internally the church is plastered and painted with expressed dressed ashlar details to former west window, (now blocked up), west door, chancel arch and four large Tuscan columns in the centre of the Nave – two in the north aisle and two in the south aisle. Flat ceiling to Nave painted with barrel vaulted timber ceiling in chancel. Some figurative stained glass to the upper windows of the former gallery, with all ground floor windows being plain glazed Georgian sash.."



Church plan courtesy of Chloe Granger, Crosby Granger Architects:



i. Credence Table from St Andrew's church - with small brass plaque dedicated in memory to chorister Hannah Parker (d.1929).



The above photograph is of the credence table in the position where it will be kept in St John the Baptist's church (in the vestry). However the plan would be to utilise it at various services in the church -e.g. extra displays at weddings, funerals, tea lights at All Souls service. The credence table was also requested by SJC to ensure that it remained in the dale.

ii. Small chalice (originally from Rookhope church)

PCC Treasurer explains: "One reasoning for requesting the small chalice from Rookhope church is actually a 'personal' one for me. We don't find the large one which is regularly used at St. John's Chapel 'easy'. A smaller one might also possibly be a favourable option, and preferred, by some clergy leading a service, especially if numbers expected to be attending, are likely to be on the low side."



iii. Purple and red altar frontal (embroidered by Amy Emms MBE):

[Photograph unavailable. Terrier Description: "One frontal, Durham Quilted, Fish Design Red/Purple/Reversible silk."]

The reversible altar frontal, made by Durham quilter Amy Emms, M.B.E. is wanted to be retained within the parish and dale. The frontal is in storage and a photograph will be added to the petition or the Church Heritage Record for record purposes when available.

iv. St Andrew's Burial Register:

It is confirmed here that the register for the open churchyard at the closed church of St Andrew's, which is still in use, has been moved to St John's Chapel under provisions of the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011.

Dan Spraggon
Church Buildings Support Officer
Durham Diocese