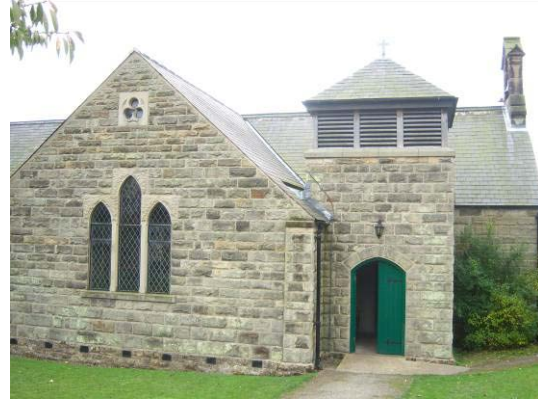


Our Lady & St Benedict, Ampleforth

East End, Ampleforth, North Yorkshire



Part 1: Core data

1.1 Listed grade: *Not listed*

1.2 Conservation area: *Yes*

1.3 Architect: *Not established. Extensions by Martin Stancliffe*

1.4 Date(s): *1905-06, 1988*

1.5 Date of visit: *16 October 2007*

1.6 Name of report author: *Andrew Derrick*

1.7 Name of parish priest and/or contact(s) made on site: *Unaccompanied*

1.8 Associated buildings: *School and parish centre on main street*

1.9 Bibliographic references:

Middlesbrough Diocesan Yearbook 2007

Part 2: Analysis

2.1 Statement of Importance

Early 20th century stone built church, built by and served from Ampleforth Abbey. It contains a number of internal furnishings of note, particularly the painting over the reredos on the east wall. The building was considerably enlarged in the late 1980s, but this was done in a seamless and contextual manner and did not compromise its character.

2.2 Historical background

The church and adjacent school were built by Ampleforth Abbey to serve Ampleforth village. The church was dedicated on 17 May 1907.

2.3 Setting

The church is set within a spacious churchyard, in land falling away to the south from the street. The main burial area is to the south. The narrow vehicular entrance to the churchyard and church is framed by the contemporary school building, its gable end facing towards the street, and the parish centre/presbytery, part of an earlier terraced range.

2.4 Description of the building and its principal fittings and furnishings

The church is built in a simple lancet Gothic style, of local stone under a slate roof. As originally built it appears to have consisted of a long nave with continuous chancel and sacristy beyond. There is a triple lancet window and a raised bellcote at the west end and paired lancet windows lighting the sides of the chancel. In 1988 the church was substantially but seamlessly enlarged, with transepts and low squat towers added on the north and south sides, in matching materials and style. The towers each have a louvred top stage and pyramidal roof; the main entrance to the church is through a porch in the north tower. The church is entered via a panelled oak door in memory of Fr Paul Neville, priest of Ampleforth 1914-24.

Inside, the transept additions create what is effectively a Greek cross plan. The seating consists of free standing oak benches arranged around a forward stone altar, the latter installed as part of the 1988 reordering and extension. However, the dominant feature of the interior is the painting over the former high altar (the original oak reredos survives and incorporates a shelf for the tabernacle, with a canopy over). The painting depicts Christ enthroned and adored by figures of Our Lady and St Joseph and Benedictine saints. It was painted in 1916 by Brother Jarvis, an Ampleforth novice. Other original or early sanctuary furnishings include oak doors to the sacristy on either side of the reredos, an oak lectern carved by Robert Thompson of Kilburn (with his trademark mouse signature) and two pairs of stained glass windows in memory of Dom Oswald Swarbrick OSB and Dom Anselm Turner OSB, both signed MMW and dated 1933. The stone font, with hexagonal bowl, stem and steps and an oak cover, is presumably of c1907; it is now located in the north transept.

The roof consists of arched braces rising from corbels with collars and double purlins, with boarding above. The 'crossing' is marked by quadripartite arched bracing, presumably dating from 1988.

An oak screen at the west end of the nave serves to create a gathering space and narthex area. This is of recent introduction and remains incomplete in some details. Store rooms and a reconciliation room have also been created at the west end.