

Our Lady and St Peter, Bridlington

Victoria Road, Bridlington, East Yorkshire



Part 1: Core data

1.1 Listed grade: *Not listed*

1.2 Conservation area: *No*

1.3 Architect: *Smith, Brodrick & Lowther*

1.4 Date(s): *1893-4*

1.5 Date of visit: *10 October 2007*

1.6 Name of report author: *Nicholas Antram*

1.7 Name of parish priest and/or contact(s) made on site: *Very Rev David Grant*

1.8 Associated buildings: *Presbytery & church hall*

1.9 Bibliographic references:

Middlesbrough Diocesan Yearbook 2007

Carson, Robert: *The First 100 Years – A History of the Diocese of Middlesbrough 1878-1978*

Pevsner, N.: *The Buildings of England, Yorkshire: The North Riding*, Penguin Books 1966

Unpublished, unidentified and undated notes entitled *A Brief History of Catholicity at Bridlington*

Part 2: Analysis

2.1 Statement of Importance

A good example of a late Victorian Gothic Revival Catholic church. Smith, Brodrick & Lowther were a busy firm of architects in Hull with a varied practice.

2.2 Historical background

A mission was established in Bridlington around 1855 with the priest coming over from Beverley to say Mass in private houses. Bridlington's first priest, Rev Henry Green, arrived in 1867, renting a room in the Victoria Rooms on Garrison Street for use as a chapel which was dedicated to St William. In 1868 it was reported that there were thirty-five Catholics in the town. Rev John Murphy took over the mission in 1884 and built a cruciform iron church on Wellington Road (then called Prospect Row) in 1886. Father Murphy's successor, Rev James Clancy purchased the present site in Victoria Road and commissioned Smith, Brodrick & Lowther of Hull to design the church at a cost of £1,870. The foundation stone was laid on 19 August 1893 and almost exactly a year later, on 1 September 1894, the church was opened. Unusually all costs were paid for before the opening, largely through the generosity of Mrs Mousley, of the Boynton family. The Dominican Sisters ran a school in the parish from 1895.

2.3 Setting

The church is located on the fringe of the town centre in a residential road of later Victorian character with two-storey bay-fronted houses. The church is slightly set back on the south side, with the contemporary presbytery attached on the left and the church hall (1963) behind a car park on the right. The church is built up against other properties to the rear, occupying a fairly constricted site.

2.4 Description of the building and its principal fittings and furnishings

Our Lady & St Peter's church faces southeast but the church is described with reference to conventional liturgical orientation.

The church is in Early English Gothic style, faced in red brick with Hoptonwood stone dressings (largely confined to the west front). Steep Welsh slate roof. Continuous nave and sanctuary, lean-to aisles. Externally, all the show is confined to the west front, which has angle buttresses with stone gablets and pinnacles. Tripartite arrangement between the buttresses. Pointed arched doorway in the centre with a trefoiled arch within, flanked by two two-light windows with Geometrical tracery. Hoodmoulds with label stops and an unusual rectilinear arrangement of applied stone pinnacles and mouldings above. Between the three stepped windows above are stone niches with statues. Trefoil-headed single outer lights and a centre two-light window with a cusped circle in the tracery. The aisles to either side are of unequal height, as there is an upper room to the north aisle, and have a single lancet each. To the left a link building to the presbytery has an entrance serving both church and presbytery. The sides of the church are remarkably plain, with single and paired lancet windows. The east end has a canted apse with two-light windows with cusped Y-tracery set high up.

The interior is plastered and painted apart from the arcade piers, giving an effect of lightness. Four bay nave arcades with octagonal piers, moulded capitals and arches

with hoodmoulds and two orders of hollow mouldings. Lower arches at the west end as the organ/choir gallery fills the westernmost bay. Paired lancet windows to the clerestory. Canted boarded and painted roofs, the trusses carried down to the walls on corbels. The sanctuary arch rests on polished Hoptonwood shafts and foliate capitals. Stone main altar with a trefoiled arcade with inset panels of white Sicilian marbles. Gabled and pinnacled tabernacle and canted reredos. The tabernacle and reredos were brought from the earlier church; the altar dates from 1907. 2005 table altar standing in front of the old altar. Stone ambo of the same time. The font stands at the west end of the north aisle, small, the octagonal bowl with sunken panels, supported on a cluster of polished granite shafts. Chapel at the east end of the north aisle with a stone altar slab supported on polished stone columns, the reredos with a statue of Christ flanked by blind tracery with carved foliage. The window above has heavy tracery of reticulated character. Similar window at the east end of the south aisle. Original open-backed pews, running through both nave and aisle, with poppyheads and quatrefoil panels in the ends. Encaustic tiled floors mostly replaced with a Granolithic-type composite flooring. The sanctuary was carpeted when it was refurbished in 2005 (DKS Architects). Coloured glass in geometric patterns to most windows, stained glass in a few, especially the sanctuary windows (figures of saints). Stations of the Cross, plaster (?) reliefs set in quatrefoils.