

St Alphonsus, North Ormesby

Westbourne Grove, North Ormesby, Middlesbrough TS3 6EW



Part 1: Core data

1.1 Listed grade: *Not listed*

1.2 Conservation area: *No*

1.3 Architect: *Thomas A. Crawford LRIBA*

1.4 Date(s): *1959-60*

1.5 Date of visit: *7 November 2007*

1.6 Name of report author: *Geoff Brandwood*

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

1.8 Associated buildings: *Presbytery and parish hall*

1.9 Bibliographic references:

Middlesbrough Diocesan Yearbook 2007

Part 2: Analysis

2.1 Statement of Importance

The church dates from the late 1950s, before the changed design ideas that flowed from Vatican II – hence the longitudinal planning and aisles. The treatment of the arcades to the latter is the most distinctive feature of the church, with simple square piers supporting a lintel. The design shows a need for economy and to obtain as much accommodation as possible with limited means. Architecturally it is a building of only modest interest although the two windows either side of the sanctuary are of high quality.

2.2 Historical background

The present church was built in 1959-60 (foundation stone laid 6 October 1959; consecrated 1 December 1960) and replaced one on the same site, said to have been built in 1921.

2.3 Setting

An area of mixed development and little visual appeal with housing (ranging from Victorian to modern), a police station, a medical practice and a working men's club in the immediate vicinity.

2.4 Description of the building and its principal fittings and furnishings

The church is oriented west so the directions given here are liturgical.

The church is built of stretcher bond brickwork - red for the western entrance bay and buff for the remainder - with artificial cast stone dressings. It consists of a four-bay nave and sanctuary in one, and north and south aisles. The nave lies under a pitched, red-tiled roof whereas the aisles have flat roofs behind brick parapets. The west façade has a quasi-tower for a narthex partially embraced by the west ends of the aisles. An artificial stone cross projects up from the gable and its shaft is flanked by pairs of elongated windows. The fenestration in the sides of the aisles consists of four four-light and one two-light windows forming a more or less continuous strip. There is no clerestory to the nave.

The arcades consist of four wide bays with square piers with rounded edges. They support a high lintel between the nave and the aisles, thus creating a sense of light spaciousness. The nave ceiling rises in two coved tiers and the bottom of each tier has a continuous strip of lighting behind (probably) plastic coverings. The aisle ceilings are of flattened segmental section. All the ceilings are covered in insulating tiles. At the west end there is an organ gallery running across both nave and aisles.

The two stained glass windows are notable works in rich colours, signed by Jean Lesquile of Anglet, Basses Pyrenees (undated) and depict the Risen Christ and the Nativity.