

Our Lady and St Edward, Driffield

Westgate, Driffield, East Yorkshire



Part 1: Core data

1.1 Listed grade: *Not listed*

1.2 Conservation area: *No*

1.3 Architect: *Edward Simpson*

1.4 Date(s): *1886*

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: *Rev David Hynes/Professor Alan McClelland*

1.8 Associated buildings: *Presbytery*

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. & Neave, D.: *The Buildings of England, Yorkshire: York and the East Riding*, Penguin Books 1995

Part 2: Analysis

2.1 Statement of Importance

A fairly unusual church in its combined use of red brick and terracotta and neo-Norman design. Modest but nicely and consistently detailed and with striking internal arches. The architect Edward Simpson designed a number of Catholic churches in the north of England.

2.2 Historical background

In the early 1880s there were about 100 Catholics in Great Driffield. Mass was first said in a private house and subsequently in the Corn Exchange. Bishop Lacy visited the town in 1883, a visit which generated interest in building a church, an ambition realised three years later. The church was paid for by Lady Herries of Everingham Hall.

2.3 Setting

The church is located on the northwest edge of the town centre, within view of the medieval parish church in the next street. The character of Westgate is mixed, with modest later Victorian two-storey terraces to the north but opposite and further south the townscape has been destroyed by the ugly scar of a motor vehicle dealership. The church and contemporary presbytery are linked and set back from the road behind a low brick wall and neatly clipped hedge, with small trees between. The garden of the presbytery wraps around its front and side. The buildings are just slightly raised above pavement level but as the buildings are not tall and the area is flat their townscape contribution is not significant.

2.4 Description of the building and its principal fittings and furnishings

Norman-style church, built of bright red brick with terracotta dressings (yellow brick dressings to the presbytery), with clay tile roofs. The church comprises a gabled nave with a broadening or transept like projections and a narrower apsed sanctuary towards the road. Tall gabled bellcote on the west gable. Simple round-headed windows throughout. At the west end, two much taller windows, with a smaller one in the gable between. Continuous sill band and impost band linking the windows. The northwest porch projects only enough to give the entrance a stepped surround of three orders. Chevron, nailhead and other Norman-type decoration.

The interior surprises with its two great Norman-style arches of great breadth. The effect is of a crossing but there is no tower and only rather insignificant transept-like projections (deeper on the north side). The arches have three orders of columns with trumpet-like capitals, the arches with chevron, ballflower and billet moulding. Similar decoration around the window heads throughout, all done in yellow terracotta. Continuous billet frieze below the windows. The interior brickwork is painted, cream in the nave and a rather lurid turquoise in the sanctuary. Open altar on Norman-style arcades to three sides. This has been brought forward from the low stone wall behind. Communion rail, again designed as a Norman arcade, set between the arch from the nave to the 'crossing'. Plain but substantial roof with scissor-bracing to the nave and with stop chamfer detailing to the sanctuary tie beam and diagonal beams. The church is largely carpeted over wooden floors. Plain open-backed pine pews. Large framed painted canvas of the Virgin and Child hanging on the west wall, probably a copy of a 16th century Italian painting. Stations of the Cross, round-arched wooden framed painted panels.