Our ref. 17030p-180323

HERITAGE STATEMENT
ST PAUL'S CHURCH, PERTH

The general approach and consideration of St Paul's has been discussed within the associated Planning and Listed Building Statement.

This Heritage Statement seeks to identify the background to design decisions throughout the design process. It will focus on the current status/condition to the vast array of present day, historical and remnant artefacts and features relevant to the unique character of St Paul's, their current significance and the impact of the proposed development. The design team, as part of feasibility costings, undertook comprehensive external surveys identifying features and providing objective advice on repair/reinstatement works. CFA Archaeology were instructed by Perth and Kinross Council to undertake a Historic Building Survey, a copy of which is included within this application.

The design team and our client, Perth and Kinross Council have been flexible in the approach to seeking to secure a long term future for this neglected former landmark, striving to re-engage it as a focal point to the High Street rather than a safety concern and eyesore as it has been viewed for too many years.

The evidence laid out within the Planning and Listed Building Statement clearly demonstrates that a major change of approach is required to ensure a feasible secure future for the church. As the design has developed, the undernoted features have been assessed and addressed to ensure the changes are of a positive nature and can provide an element of permanency to the security of the structure and its place within the community.

Research has been undertaken through the use of old photographs, surveys and visual inspection to ascertain an accurate history of the buildings attributes and this has been used to formulate a response that is appropriate and achievable.

A great deal of decorative stonework has been removed from the site and due to the time lapse involved their current locations are unknown. It is intended to bring back the delight to the exterior through considered reinstatement and repairs. The building has lost its special decoration and when combined with the obstructions and safety concerns it has caused the building to fall out of favour. Returning the delight to the exterior should encourage interest from street level to across town vistas.

Spire

The Spire has suffered the least from deterioration associated with bird ingress and structural issues namely due to the minimal internal finishing. The intention is to retain the tower in an enclosed state maintaining the prominent focal point to the High Street. The top of the spire has been temporarily strapped in recent times as it became apparent the top stone courses were no longer anchored together. The Engineers report proposes this be re-instated with a weathervane installed to the tip of the spire, replicating the historic appearance and securing the structure. The four corner turrets no longer feature their full height pinnacles which are proposed for reinstatement. Each Turret has its own alcove however no evidence can be found to suggest these ever housed additional ornament. The belfry windows are divided into louvres and an upper leaded glass portion. It is noted the leaded glass does not resemble the remainder of the glazed openings throughout the building, something which is discussed in more detail in the windows section. The louvres are in a poor state of repair however their functionality is still visible, it is therefore intended to repair and

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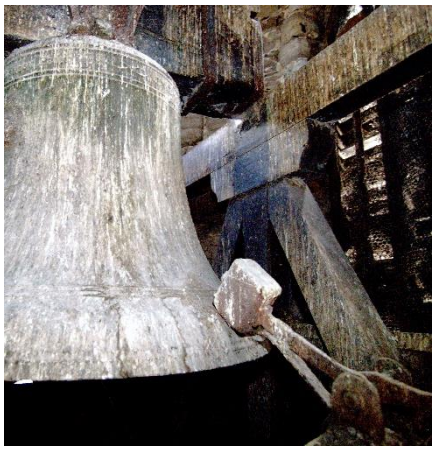
replace louvres as required back to a functional state. Additional bird ingress prevention will be installed internally.

Bell

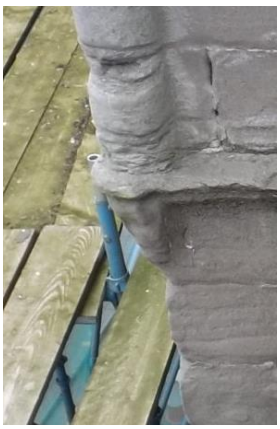


The bell is located above clock level behind the louvered openings. Although originally installed as a full circle ringing bell, an electronic hammer is currently located adjacent to the bell and is the most recent method of ringing. The bell frame is in a deteriorating condition with the head stock in a cracked state. Proposals are to retain the bell in its current location securing it in a fixed position using a new head stock piece. The lack of a sounding bell has further exacerbated the situation of the building being ignored and overlooked. The reintroduction of an audible beacon on the High Street will reattract attention to the building with the added potential to be used to announce events where previously it would have summoned worshippers.

Clock

Three clock faces remain in place facing North, West and East. The exterior of the clock faces are iron with leaded white glazing. Behind this the clock mechanism has not functioned for some time however the internal workings appear to still be in place including pendulum and weights. On account of maintenance and capital costs it has been decided a full refurbishment to historically accurate mechanics is not practical or historically necessary. The existing mechanism will be retained on site for accuracy purposes however new electronic controls will be adopted to provide time keeping whilst minimising maintenance and setting requirements.
It is unclear, but assumed that a mock face filled the 4th side of the tower. No mechanical evidence is provided to this façade internally. Externally a rough circular shape is missing from the external face of dressed stone revealing the rubble stone infill. It is proposed to provide a fourth clock for this newly visible location as it will be a major focal point from within the new space..

Grotesques, roll-moulded corners and window architraves



There are two known grotesques at St Paul's both of which face North above the first level window height. It is unclear from their current condition if they were highly carved and severely eroded or if they were subtle faces that have suffered an element of erosion. On account of the lack of present day detail at first glance they appear as corner corbels forming part of the corner detail rather than anything more decorative. The lack of any repetition elsewhere on the building further adds to this visual uncertainty. The roll moulded corners, as with elsewhere on the building have suffered varied levels of deterioration and the proposals seek to replace where absolutely required but remove any cementitious material that may be causing accelerated deterioration. This approach, which includes cleaning, will leave visible signs of repair efforts but in an overall managed treatment manner.

Bartizans and Castellated Parapets

Historic images and on site evidence highlight the height and general geometry the original bartizans and parapet had. Loose sections of parapet have been removed and lost across the main octagon as well as the tower. Each bartizan has been reduced to circa one third its original height. The resulting effect has led to the bartizan remains leaning outward mostly due to the lack of weight above and keying-in effect of coursing with the parapet. The reinstatement of the parapet is the crucial element in reversing the derelict, neglected outlook from which the building has suffered for many years and has formed the key basis throughout all design development. The buttress bartizans that flank the tower on the North Elevation served a double purpose based on site visit and historic images. These bartizans acted as chimney stacks, to the East presumably for the boilers below and to the west for the vestry stove and an unknown additional flue. Where still in evidence these will be retained for interest purposes.

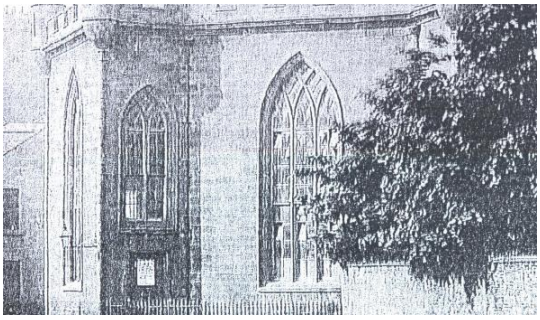
Tower internals

The tower currently has external access via a door to the North. Access from this point is via internal stairs up to the clock mechanism level where a ladder access takes over. The interior of the tower was not as highly finished as the rest of the church. The initial stair case features a barrel vault ceiling, above which lies a small room with a stove, a possible former vestry, although access to this area from the church would have been somewhat contorted. The small room features a leaded glass window to the North in the same style as all other windows. The intention is to repair stair treads and timbers as required however no major intervention is required or intended as access to this area will be controlled and for maintenance purposes only. This approach will ensure the tower is retained in as honest a state as possible for future interpretation.

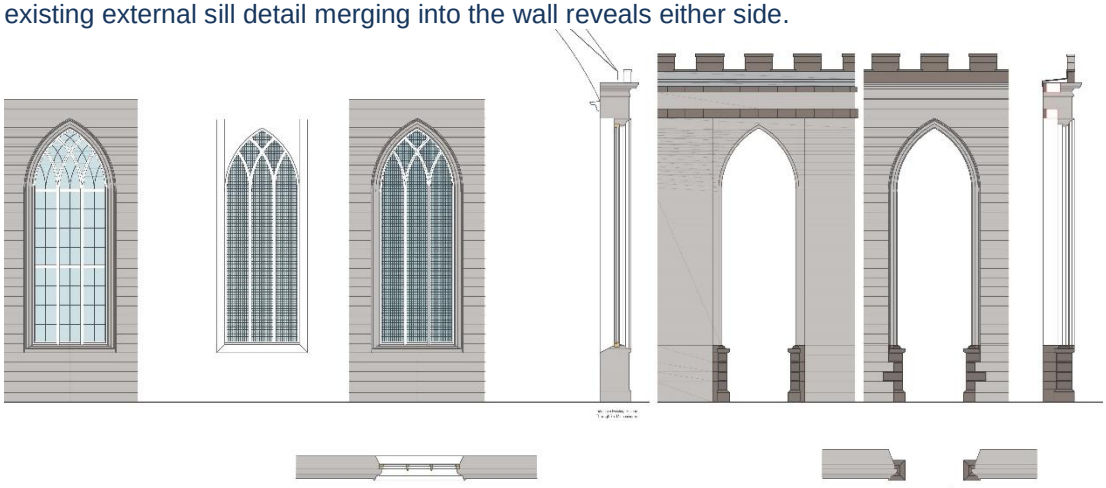
Below the main eves level the tower is flanked to the East and West by buttress type abutments, mirroring those to the other three sides. This buttress provided the street level access for the minister to access the Church historically from the West, the ceiling to the entrance porch in this location has been totally lost, resulting in the loss of the floor to the first floor of this abutment. Rather than reinstate a floor and ceiling in this location it is proposed to leave the double height space with protective barrier to the stair landing preventing falls during maintenance. The door to the exterior on the West of the tower will

be locked shut with maintenance access only and the doorway leading into the main church space will be built up with stone to match the internal finish surrounding to separate the new external space from the enclosed tower. There is also a set of slim double doors to the East of the tower at street level which provides access into the boiler house, the only basement area within the church. This area has recently seen the removal of asbestos contaminated material and it is intended to leave the area enclosed for maintenance and monitoring only. The first floor of the buttress on the East housed a stair leading to the balcony. The existing doorway from stair to balcony will be built up with stone to match the internal finish surrounding allowing a clear elevation internally expressing the base of the tower and providing an ideal focus for the application of temporary art installations which will be reflected around the enclosing elevations.

Windows



Existing windows are in a mixture of conditions with in some cases entire casements having fallen inwards. Large areas of leaded glass have been broken and sagging is an issue across most windows. Focusing on the larger buttress windows as main examples it is clear upon close inspection the windows have been altered and adapted from sash and case at some point.
Historic images show large rectangular panes rather than the small square leaded glass currently in place, the heads of each section featured attractive curved glazing bars echoing the stone arches in lightweight timber.
In the smallest windows to the sides of the buttresses, the proposals seek to replace the existing leaded glass windows with built up, lime rendered finish infill. The three large windows set back into the buttresses when viewed internally will be stripped of remaining glazing and the surface applied architraves removed to leave the former sash and case frames outlining the curves of the surrounding arches. The timberwork will be repaired with new sills installed and painted to ensure a lasting finish. New internal stone sills are proposed to replace the existing skewed plaster sills. The profile of the new sills will be to match the existing external sill detail merging into the wall reveals either side.



The remaining four windows are of similar style and proportion to the buttress windows however the treatment of these differs in that the proposals seek to reduce their sills to street level providing this as the main source of access and egress for the new space. The grandeur of these openings will be further highlighted via their reduction to base forms. The glazing and timber will all be removed leaving the stone surrounds. Careful consideration has been given to the treatment of the existing sills where windows are being extended to street level. Reversibility is crucial in this element as it is at eye level, therefore, through extensive design option assessment evolved to feature the existing detail transition between architrave and sill returning perpendicular into the window opening and a further ninety degrees to the internal face diminishing into the angled window reveal creating a pier to either side.

Doors

Existing doors are located at the sides of each buttress in all cases, except the tower buttress, formerly providing access for worshippers into the church with one of each buttress providing access to the balcony stair and main church, the other access to the church only. Access was narrow but plentiful dispersing people to all sides rapidly at the end of services. The proposed use is much more ad hoc and active engagement is more likely via the large openings proposed allowing a clear view of internal activity. The existing buttress door openings are part responsible for the structural defects to the buttress and as part of the structural strategy will be infilled with brick visible internally and lime render externally.

Structural Buttress Repair

Conservation Structural Engineers David Narro Associates highlighted the strain the existing buttress openings are placing on their structural integrity. Design approaches were investigated as part of design evolution seeking to incorporate the strengthening into the design via the use of steel box reinforcement which could act as bracing but also potential shelter. However, an alternative option of infilling the openings developed as a more appropriate solution as it allows for clear reading internally of the brick infill panels and externally a lime render finish to be applied within the existing stone window and door surrounds. The decision to opt for infilling the buttress side panels is also relevant to any future reinstatement plans as it leaves the large windows clear to provide light and does not provide any structural obstruction within the space. Brick infill panels have been used historically within the building to allow repairs, namely above the North West window at wall head level.

Roof

The existing roof is comprised of eight trapezoidal slate covered faces with small pitched area bridging the valley to the tower and three hipped gables to the buttresses. A flat roof joins the trapezoids together with a central octagonal cupola, the flat roof leadwork has been in a poor state of repair for a number of years including entire sheets detaching from the timber sarking boards beneath. The buttress which abuts the tower has hipped slate gable roofs visible only from parapet level, the Western roof has collapsed.

High winds and lack of maintenance has led to the deterioration of the slate roof covering with a large number of non-water tight areas allowing considerable rainwater and daylight into the main space. Extensive investigation has determined that the roof is capable of repair, however, this would result in a large percentage of new structure and would require the complete stripping of the interior lath and plaster finish for guano clearing and general safety. The difficult decision has been taken to propose the removal of the entire roof structure creating an external entertainment space for events and general day to day use, a use which will engage people with the building once again and potentially spark investment interest to later reinstate the roof and create a building once again. The removal of the roof over the main space and three buttresses will create an entirely open external space, the fourth buttress requires an alternative treatment as it abuts the tower over spaces intended to remain internal. Flat roof infills are proposed providing greater definition to the tower as it emerges from the main structure and respecting the lack of visibility these areas of roof have always received.

From a structural perspective, the removal of the roof requires a counter approach to hold the wall heads in place and prevent collapse. A ring beam has therefore been proposed and incorporated within the new wall head detail. Internally a new face of dressed stone to match existing will replace areas of damaged stone and conceal the new concrete ring beam. The new stone will be read as a clear alteration defining the intervention. Existing timber safe lintels require to be replaced above each window opening with proposed concrete lintels. The decision has been made to expose the underside of these lintels finishing them with dark grey paint. A concealed bracket will be fixed to the face of the lintels allowing the installation of a stone veneer to match the existing finish. The new lintel and ring beam will be announced visibly via the use of new stone and has been designed to allow full future reversibility of the roof structure whilst remaining in situ.

Rain water goods

Lead hoppers have been salvaged from the site and are in storage however have suffered greatly from mal treatment and are not in a suitable condition to be reinstated. The removal of the roof removes their need, along with the existing downpipes and it is not proposed to reinstate these as a folly.

Stonework and Mortar

The existing sandstone has suffered from erosion, organic growth and poor mortar choices. Large quantities of cementitious mortar have been used across the building resulting in dramatic damage to decorative and coursed stonework. It is proposed to investigate the existing lime mortar build up and seek advice on existing and suggested proposed mortar specification via the Scottish Lime Centre.

As part of a building wide stone survey all lintels, architraves and stone lintel and door surrounds were assessed for integrity and visual deterioration. Where possible items are not proposed for major intervention with many only requiring revised mortar and cleaning. There are examples of cracked door lintels which could be pinned to an engineering satisfaction however from an aesthetic perspective and honesty to purpose it was felt new lintels in these instances would be more in keeping.

The weathering and cement damage effect to the stone has eroded the drove work finish and despite still having clear coursing has created a more rustic effect to the building. Internally it is not proposed to replicate the droved finish on any new stone with the exception of the piers at the new entrances. Externally it was decided that to try and replicate the droving across the building would be inappropriate

All stone and timber produced from the down takings will be assessed carefully for use as salvage within the repairs and reinstatement works. Insufficient stone quantities will be generated by the salvage, therefore new stone will be required, chosen based on information provided within a report on Building Stone Assessment prepared by the British Geological Survey in April 2017. The report highlights suggested quarries which may be able to provide geologically similar stone. The report analyses colour, stone fabric, granular sizing permeability, etc. Permeability will be a crucial consideration in such exposed locations to allow the lime mortars to perform effectively.

Stone paving for the newly created space have been selected from a range of potentially suitable options, seeking to compliment the colouring of the exiting stone and the wider paving context in the surroundings.

The overall approach has been to reinstate and highlight features of interest in favour of a complete restoration. The building has endured a varied history with lack of community affection and attention for many years and this is felt to be the most effective way to reintroduce the building as a key landmark, enjoyed by the community.

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