

## Architectural and Historical Report

# Church of St Mary on the Sea, Grimsby, Lincolnshire



**Architectural and Historical Report**

**Church of St Mary on the Sea, Heneage Road,  
Grimsby, Lincolnshire DN32 9DZ**

**Prepared for**

**The Roman Catholic Diocese of Nottingham**

**By**

**The Architectural History Practice Limited**

**September 2016**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This architectural and historical report on the Roman Catholic church of St Mary on the Sea, Grimsby has been commissioned from AHP by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Nottingham. The church is a Grade II listed building, and its closure is under consideration. The report has been prepared in order to meet the requirement in paragraph 46 of the *Directory on the Ecclesiastical Exemption from Listed Building Control* issued by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, that the diocese should commission an expert report on the building proposed for closure, describing in detail the architectural and historical interest of the of building and its contents.
- 1.2 The report has been written by Andrew Derrick, a Director of the Architectural History Practice. In that capacity the writer has led the production of seventeen architectural and historical reviews of Roman Catholic dioceses in England, a project known as *Taking Stock*, jointly funded by the dioceses and English Heritage (now Historic England). The church of St Mary on the Sea has not been visited in the course of preparation of this report, but was visited by the writer, along with the other churches in Grimsby Deanery, at the time of the *Taking Stock* review of the Diocese of Nottingham in 2010-11.
- 1.3 The report builds upon the 2011 *Taking Stock* report, and provides a heritage perspective to inform the current review of church provision in the Grimsby area. As well as setting out the architectural and historical interest of the church of St Mary on the Sea, it briefly considers the heritage interest of other churches in the Grimsby area, and sets out the particular considerations that should be addressed when closure of a listed historic church is proposed. It is hoped that the report will assist the Bishop of Nottingham, as advised by the diocesan Historic Churches Committee, to reach a balanced decision, taking proper account of heritage as well as related pastoral and financial considerations.

## 2.0 Location and setting

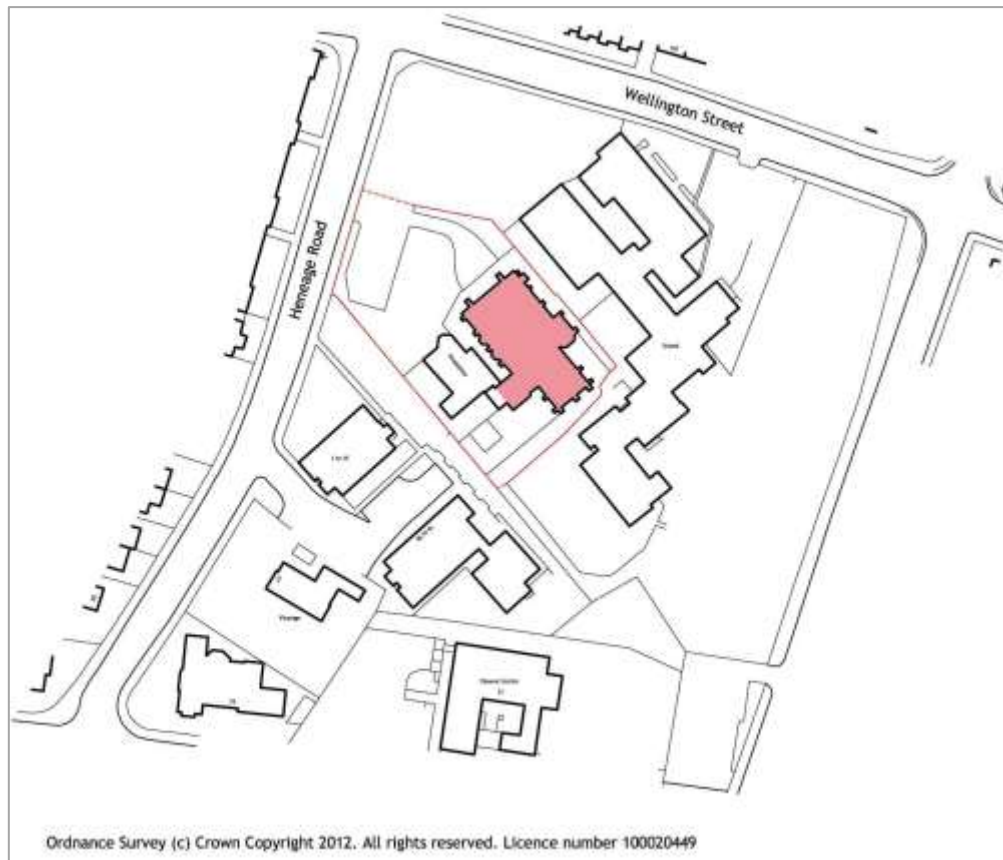


Figure 1: Location plan (Knox McConnell Architects)

- 2.1 The church (National Grid Reference TA278096) is set back from Heneage Road on a rising slope in a spacious landscaped churchyard. The presbytery lies adjacent to the south, and a modern school building to the north. The churchyard is bounded by high brick walls. The listed church, presbytery and boundary walls form part of a notable group of Victorian and Edwardian educational and religious buildings, built on land provided by the Heneage Estate. Others include the former Board School opposite, the Art College and Education Office in Eleanor Street and the Sir Moses Montefiore Synagogue, built soon after St Mary's church. These buildings are also all listed Grade II.

### **3.0 Historical background**

- 3.1 Grimsby's expansion as a fishing port took off in the 1840s after the arrival of the railway and the building of the docks, completed in 1852. These developments brought a large influx of Irish construction workers, to add to the small and scattered local Catholic population which had kept the faith during penal times. A mission was established in the town in 1848 and ten years later Sir John Sutton, a wealthy Catholic convert, purchased land on what is now Heneage Road for the building of a church. He died before this could be realised and it was another benefactor, Thomas Arthur Young KSG of Kingerby Manor (1805-91) who saw the site developed. The school and presbytery were built first, in 1874, and until the church was built part of the school was used for services (the school buildings were replaced by modern buildings in the 1970s).
- 3.2 The church was built in 1879-83 and financed in large measure by Young. He used his favourite architects, Hadfield & Son of Sheffield, as he has, most probably, for the presbytery. The ambitious original plan was for a church of almost double the size of the present building, but this did not prove financially possible, hence the somewhat truncated design as built.
- 3.3 The opening, by the Rt Rev Edward Bagshawe, third Bishop of Nottingham on 19 August 1883 was reported in *The Tablet* as follows:

The new Catholic church, erected by Mr. Thomas A. Young, lord of the manor of Kingerby, was opened last Sunday. At 10.30, the Bishop, in *cappa magna*, was received at the door of the church by Canon Johnson, with all the required ceremonies, and the solemn service began, the Bishop vesting at the throne, attended by Canon Johnson, as assistant priest, and the Revv. Gorman and Barry as deacon and sub-deacon. The Rev. Joseph Hawkins, of the Cathedral at Nottingham, acted as master of ceremonies. The "Kyrie" and "Gloria" were from the Rev. C. Murphy's Mass in B flat; the "Credo," Webbe's in F; the "Sanctus" from Mazinghi's Mass, and the "Agnus Dei," as well as the "Ave Maria" at the offertory, by Moorat. Miss Frances Austin presided most efficiently at the organ. The Very Rev. Father Clare, S.J., preached from the text, "For the Father Himself loveth you." The Right Rev. Dr. Vaughan, Bishop of Salford, was prevented at the very last moment from coming by the sudden death of his brother, the Archbishop of Sydney; and the Right Rev. Dr. Riddell, Bishop of Northampton, was also prevented by the critical state of Dr. Amherst, his predecessor, upon whom he was attending, and

whose lamented decease we chronicle elsewhere. The new presbytery and schools adjoining are the gifts respectively of Sir John Sutton and the Hon. Mrs. Fraser.<sup>1</sup>

3.4 The following edition of *The Tablet* described the new building and its furnishings in considerable detail:

The following are the architectural proportions and general style of the new church, whose solemn opening we chronicled last week :—The plan comprises a nave and aisles, a chancel of ample proportions, and convenient sacristies, with good access to the presbytery, erected some years ago on the south side. At the end of the north aisle is a small apsidal chantry chapel and altar, dedicated to the Sacred Heart, in front of which a vault has been prepared for the founder. The organ is placed in a tribune on the south side of the chancel over the choir sacristy, with a projecting balcony and lattice to screen the singers—a familiar feature in Italian churches. The following are the dimensions of the church as at present completed :— Chancel 40 feet long by 27 feet wide, and 50 feet high to the top of the panelled ceiling of the roof, and lighted by side windows the sills of which are twenty feet above the floor, the altar platform being raised nine steps, while the large east window of five lights is raised 25 feet above the nave level, with grand effect. This arrangement was devised to fit the altar and reredos, which are in accord with the surroundings, and call for special notice. The altar, a fine slab of Hopton Wood marble, is 10 feet long, supported on a surbase of delicately veined alabaster and Derbyshire fossil marble pillars. At the consecration ceremony, on the 22nd June last, the Bishop of Nottingham deposited within the slab the relics of St. James the Greater, St. Jucundus, and St. Gregory, martyrs. The tabernacle is of alabaster, with engraved, enamelled and gilded metal doors, which have been executed by Messrs. Richardson, Ellson, and Co., from the designs of Mr. J. F. Bentley. There is a marble pedestal behind for the crucifix, and to the rear a throne of alabaster and Irish marble for the monstrance during the rites of Benediction. Above is a lofty canopy, 21 feet high, with an open spirelet and statuettes of angels carved in Gloucester stone and richly gilded. It is approached by staircases immediately behind, and detached from the eastern wall as required by the rubric, the wall itself being panelled with a carefully designed arcade of stone work, carrying in the centre a retable or reredos of wood work, rising to the height of 25 feet, and above it the great east window forms an important finish to the whole composition, and is to be treated as a "Jesse" window. The reredos will be gilded and filled with an interesting series of paintings by Mr. N. H. J. Westlake, F.S.A., of Kilburn, as follows :—In the centre upper portion is to be depicted the Coronation of the Blessed Virgin; beneath are the seven archangels (who minister before the Throne, see Apocalypse), then the four evangelists bearing scrolls teaching

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<sup>1</sup> *The Tablet*, 25 August 1883, p. 34

the doctrine of the Real Presence, and on the lowest tier are panels with the figures of St. Hugh, builder and Bishop of Lincoln Cathedral, St. Thomas Aquinas, the angelic doctor with a scroll, "*Ecce panis angelorum*;" then St. Norbert, the founder of the Premonstratensian Order. At his feet is depicted the generous benefactor, Thomas Arthur Young, Esq., whose truly Catholic charity and humility have well deserved a special recognition from Pope Leo XIII., who has graciously conferred upon him the Order of Knighthood of St. Gregory. It is well-known that he brought back to Lincolnshire the Order of the Canons regular of St. Norbert, of Premontre, about thirteen years ago to Crowle, in the Isle of Axholme, and subsequently to Spalding, where, as also at Gainsborough, he erected churches. He wears the full dress, order, and sword of the Knighthood of St. Gregory. In the last panel is a figure of St. Gilbert, of Sempringham. The cost of the whole, including the window, will be about £950. The stone and marble work have been executed by Mr. Boulton, of Cheltenham, the woodwork by Messrs. J. Tomlinson and Sons, of Leeds, from the designs of Mr. Charles Hadfield, the paintings being by the well-known artist, Mr. Westlake. The nave of four bays is at present sixty-four feet long, and thirty-four feet wide, including the pillars, and fifty feet high, the aisles being the same length and eight feet wide. The design, as laid out by the architects, embraces a further extension of three bays, including a massive spire and slate tower, 200 feet high, with entrance, porch, and baptistry, and south porch, forming an effective west front, facing to Heneage-street and the Board schools. It has been the aim of the architects to express the idea of size and solidity, as in the great North German mediaeval churches, and the material of which the fabric is constructed is a local brick of warm red tone, with a sparing use of Yorkshire stone. The nave and aisles are under one roof, and the junction with the chancel is marked externally by a lofty fleche or spirelet, covered with lead and Westmoreland slates, rising fifty feet above the ridge, in which hangs a bell of about one ton weight, by Taylor, of Loughborough, bearing an old Lincolnshire legend, "*Quod audisti in aure O Maria praedicabo super tecta*." It was solemnly blessed before being hung by the Lord Bishop of Nottingham. At the south-east corner an incised stone records the foundation and erection of the church in the following elegant inscription:

Anno Domini MDCCCLXXX

Pontificatus SSmi Dni nostril Leonis P.P.XIII feliciter regnantis

Anno tertio.

Epicopatus illmi. Revi D. D. Eduardi Nottinghamiensis tertii

Anno sexto.

Aedificari coepit apud Great Grimsby.

Ecclesiae Beatae Virginis Mariae, stellae maris.

Ex Dono.



Illmi Dmi. Thomae Arthuris Young, S. Gregorii Magni Equitis.

Manorii de Kingerby in comitatu Lincolniensis Domini.

Curantibus.

R. adm. N. Georgis Canonico Johnson Rectori ecclesiae Missionario

Et Dno. Mattheo Hadfield Armigero Ichnographo

Aedificatio persolvebatur

Anno Domini MDCCCLXXXIII

The constant care and anxious solicitude for many years of the Very Rev. Canon Johnson, missionary rector, have contributed no little to the successful carrying out of this great work, and its successful completion must be exceedingly gratifying to that gentleman. We observed an effective water colour drawing of the church, showing the complete west front and spire prepared by the architects, which hung on the wall on the opening day, and received universal commendation. The general effect, internally, from the careful planning of the windows, is lightsome and cheerful, but we venture to regret the absence of the stained glass in the east window, for at present the grand design of the reredos, of which it forms a part, has an appearance of incompleteness, being somewhat interfered with by the overpowering mass of bright light above it. Without detracting from the noble and generous work of the founder, it is right to remark that many fittings and accessories have been provided by the congregation and friends, *i.e.*, the font, sanctuary lamp, and handsome professional cross by Councillor Southworth, the altar rails by J. Carlton, Esq., and the benches, heating apparatus, and the altar cross and candlesticks, &c., by E. Ross, Esq., and other friends.

The design and superintendence of the church was entrusted to Messrs. Hadfield and Son, architects, of Sheffield, the contractors for the church being Messrs. Riggall and Hewins, and for the sacristy, &c., Mr. J. G. Smith, both of Great Grimsby. Messrs. Haden and Son, of Trowbridge, supplied the heating apparatus, and the chancel floors are by Godwin, of Hereford.

The general effect and grouping of the church, presbytery, and schools, built as they are in the beautiful and extensive grounds (upwards of two acres in extent), is very imposing. The latter were the gift respectively of the late Sir John Sutton, Bart., and the Honourable Mrs. Fraser.<sup>2</sup>

- 3.5 The east window was given by Young soon after the opening, rectifying the incompleteness noted by *The Tablet*. In 1887 the Hon. Mrs Georgina Fraser, sister of Lord Heneage, donated the Sacred Heart altar, made by Boulton of

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<sup>2</sup> *The Tablet*, 1 September 1883, p. 35

Cheltenham from designs by Pugin & Pugin and installed in the Young chantry chapel (figure 2). It was described in *The Tablet*:

A beautiful altar, the munificent gift of the Hon. Mrs. Fraser, in memory of her deceased husband, Colonel the Hon. Alexander Fraser, has just been completed in the Young chantry of the above church. The reredos is most ornate, and contains five almost life-size figures. The statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in the centre, is flanked on the Gospel side by St. John the Apostle and St. George, and on the Epistle side by St. Mary Magdalene and St. Hugh of Lincoln. The Saints are represented with their traditional emblems, and stand in niches with richly-carved canopies and pinnacles. The altar was erected by Boulton, of Cheltenham, in Bath and Caen stone, with Devonshire marble shafts and panels, from the designs of Messrs. Pugin and Pugin, and for fineness of execution and beauty of design far excels anything in the neighbourhood. <sup>3</sup>



Figure 2: Pugin and Pugin's Sacred Heart Altar, 1887 (from parish website)

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<sup>3</sup> *The Tablet*, 26 November 1887

- 3.6 The church was further enriched over time, most notably during the incumbency of Fr (Canon) J. P. Hawkins, who was missionary rector and parish priest from 1884 until his death in 1913. A popular local figure, he was buried at Cleethorpes Cemetery but in 1914 his remains were exhumed and reinterred in a vault under the Sacred Heart Chapel. The stained glass in the great west window is in his memory. Canon Hawkins oversaw the enrichment of the sanctuary with wall paintings for the church's Silver Jubilee in 1908 (figure 3), the Charlton family being the principal donors. In 1963 these were painted over, but in 2002-3 they were partially uncovered and conserved by Nigel Leaney.



Figure 3: Early (post-1908) photograph of the sanctuary

- 3.7 Further enrichment took place for the Golden Jubilee in 1933, when a dado frieze depicting fishes was painted by members of the congregation, under the direction of the Grimsby artist (and parishioner) William Richard Bunting.

3.8 The church has undergone relatively little alteration in recent decades. The main changes have been the reordering of the sanctuary in 1979, when a forward altar and lectern were introduced, and (possibly) changes made to the high altar and reredos. In 1983 a small narthex or lobby was formed by the enclosure of the underside of the western gallery.

## 4.0 Architectural description

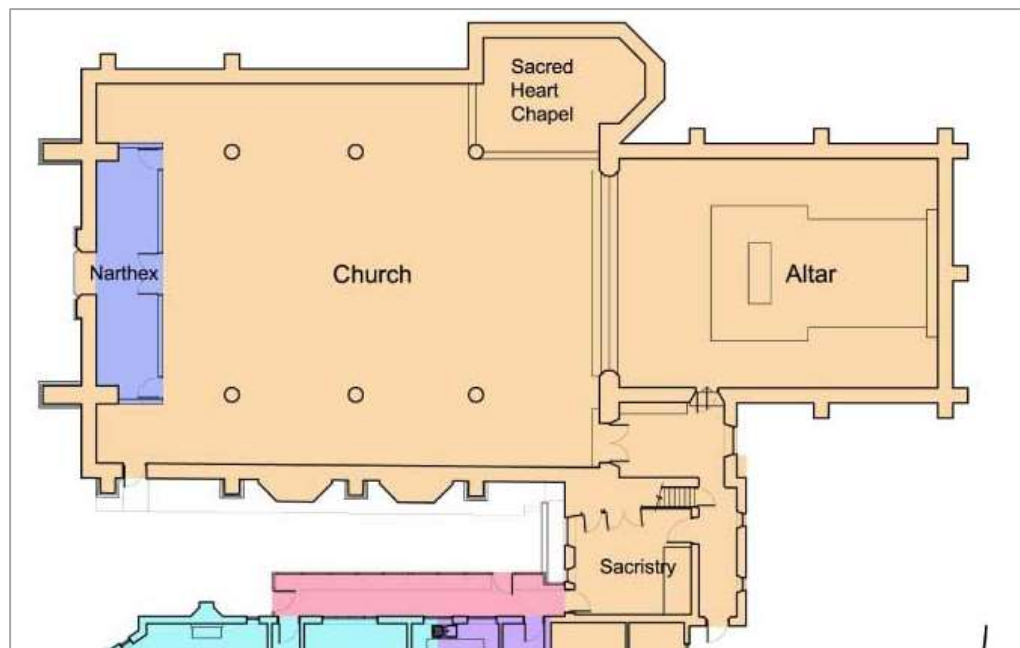


Figure 4: Church plan (Knox McConnell Architects)

### 4.1 *Plan*

4.1.1 The plan (figure 4) consists of a four-bay aisled nave and a three-bay sanctuary, with a chapel at the east end of the north aisle (dedicated to the Sacred Heart) and a sacristy giving off the south side of the sanctuary, connecting to the earlier presbytery. The original intention was for a further three nave bays, with a 200 ft western tower and spire and entrance porch and baptistery, ambitions never realised.

### 4.2 *Exterior*

4.2.1 The church is designed in Hadfield & Son's favoured fourteenth century Gothic style. It is externally faced in local red brick laid in English garden wall bond, with ashlar dressings, under a Welsh slate roof.

4.2.2 The west front (figure 5) faces towards Heneage Road, and has a projecting gabled entrance with boarded timber doors with strap hinges. In the gable is a niche containing a statue of the Virgin and Child and above this is the large five-light west window, with Geometric tracery.



Figure 5: The west front

4.2.3 At the sides, the aisles are lit by three-light trefoiled windows; there is no clerestory. On the south side two low canted projections below the windows house confessionals. The north chapel has a canted east side with a central two-light traceried window flanked by trefoiled lancets and a trefoiled three-light north window. The external wall of the chancel has angle buttresses and is dominated by the five-light east window. The foundation stone is set into the wall on its south side, with the Latin inscription quoted in full at 2.3 above. The sacristy has trefoiled two-light windows and an ovolo-moulded eaves cornice. A two-storey gabled projection to the south side of the chancel originally housed the organ and choir gallery, and has a pair of lancets windows. Beside it, a stepped coped gable rises to a chimney with a pair of octagonal shafts.

4.2.4 There is no change in the ridge height between nave and chancel. Instead, the transition is marked by an octagonal fleche (figure 6). This houses one bell, cast by Taylor of Loughborough for the opening of the church in 1883 and bearing an old Lincolnshire legend, *Quad audisti in aure O Maria praedicabo super tecta* ('What you have heard, O Mary, I will proclaim from the rooftops').



Figure 6: View towards chancel from south

#### 4.3 *Interior*



Figure 7: Interior looking east

4.3.1 The stately interior (figure 7) has qualities reminiscent of a continental hall church, with the aisles reaching almost the same height as the nave, and no

clerestory. The four bays of the nave arcade have tall double-chamfered arches springing alternately from cylindrical and octagonal piers with moulded capitals and bases on tall octagonal plinths. At the west end of the nave, an organ gallery with an ornate front is carried on octagonal wooden columns with tall stone bases. At the junction of the nave and sanctuary, a wide chancel arch springs from octagonal responds. Within the chancel, a south doorway with blocked arch and projecting balcony above is the original organ and choir tribune. It was originally provided with a lattice screen for the singers.

- 4.3.2 The nave and aisle floors are paved with modern square 'granolithic' tiles, while the walls are plastered and painted. The nave and chancel have arch-braced roofs, that of the nave boarded and resembling an upturned hull, the chancel with painted trusses and blue and red panels incorporating monograms of Christ and Mary. In the sanctuary, the floor is carpeted; the account in *The Tablet* refers to the floor being by Godwin of Hereford (presumably the celebrated firm of William Godwin & Son of Lugwardine and Withington, near Hereford), whose work may survive beneath the carpet.



## 5.0 Furnishings

### 5.1 Sanctuary



Figure 8: High altar and reredos

5.1.1 The chief furnishing of the sanctuary, and the original visual focus of the interior, is the **high altar and reredos** (figure 8). The £950 cost of this ensemble (including the stained glass window above) was met by Thomas Arthur Young, and they were – except for the window – installed for the opening in 1883. However the ensemble is no longer as shown in the early photograph at figure 3. Boulton’s carved marble altar and the tabernacle with

J. F. Bentley's enamelled door have been replaced with plainer substitutes in a twentieth century reordering. However, the original stone arcade survives on either side, with blind cusped arches, brattishing and recessed piscina and aumbry. Above the altar, the original central marble and alabaster monstrance throne with Gothic canopy and carved and gilded stone angels has been removed, but the painted panels of the reredos survive within their gilded framework. The reredos was made by Messrs. J. Tomlinson and Sons, of Leeds, from designs by Charles Hadfield, while the paintings were executed by Westlake. They depict:

- In the raised central upper panel: Coronation of the Virgin
- In the tier beneath: seven archangels
- In the central tier: four Evangelists bearing scrolls
- In the lower tier: figures of St Hugh of Lincoln, St Thomas Aquinas, St Norbert (founder of the Premonstratensian Order with, at his feet, Thomas Arthur Young, benefactor of the church, who brought the Norbertine Order back to Lincolnshire; Young is shown in his regalia as a Knight of St Gregory), and St Gilbert of Sempringham.
- The panels previously concealed by the monstrance throne have gilded arabesque decoration and incorporate the prayer *Ave Regina Caelorum*.



Figure 9: Communion rails, ambo and sanctuary panelling

- 5.1.2 The **side walls of the sanctuary** are panelled in oak up to head height, with blind trefoils to the upper panels and a carved floral frieze at the top. In front of these, the ornately carved oak **choir stalls** are original furnishings, given by Young.
- 5.1.3 The marble **forward altar** with carved Agnus Dei on the frontal, and the marble and wrought-iron **ambo** and **communion rails** belong to twentieth century schemes of reordering (figure 9).



Figure 10: Nativity painted panel in sanctuary

- 5.1.4 The rich scheme of **painted decoration** carried out in the sanctuary in 1908 (shown in figure 3) was overpainted in the 1960s, but some elements have now been restored. These include large square panels depicting the Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi on either side of the reredos. The original donors were the children of Thomas Charlton, shipbuilder and Mayor of Grimsby in 1875-6; he is included in the Nativity scene dressed in his mayoral robes (figure 10).

The artist is not known; the *Taking Stock* report suggested an attribution to Nathaniel Westlake, although the painted figures as they now appear are not of the same quality as in Westlake's reredos. Other exposed elements of this painted scheme are the large angels on either side of the east window, bearing scrolls with words from the *Magnificat*. Also belonging to this scheme are some painted saints under canopies on the side walls of the sanctuary and the stencil decoration of the sanctuary arch.

## 5.2 *Sacred Heart Chapel*



Figure 11: Thomas Arthur Young memorial, Sacred Heart Chapel

- 5.2.1 The chief furnishing here is Pugin & Pugin's elaborately carved **altar and reredos** (figure 2), given in 1887 by the Hon. Mrs Georgina Fraser in memory of her husband, Col. Alexander Fraser. Like the original high altar, this was made by Boulton of Cheltenham, and is of Bath and Caen stone, with Devonshire marble shafts and panels. The reredos has marble columns and carved figures in canopied niches: a central figure of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is flanked on one side by St John the Apostle and St George, and on the other by St Mary Magdalene and St Hugh of Lincoln.

5.2.2 The 1887 account in *The Tablet* calls the chapel the Young Chantry. There are two **wall monuments** here, one recording the installation of the altar by Georgina Heneage and its dedication in 1887, the other an ornate marble and alabaster memorial to Thomas Arthur Young (figure 11), recording his benefaction both here and elsewhere in the county (he paid for churches at Gainsborough, Crowle, Luddington, Spalding and Market Rasen). Buried beneath the chapel are the remains of Canon Joseph Hawkins, missionary rector and parish priest from 1884 to 1913.

### 5.3 *Nave and aisles*



Figure 12: The pulpit, given in 1892

5.3.1 The timber **pulpit** (figure 12) on the south side of the nave is of German provenance, and was given in 1892 by Mrs Bedelia Dunn, in memory of her husband Thomas, a Grimsby 'boot dealer'. It has a tester, balustraded staircase carved figures of the four Evangelists. It cost £100 and was praised as 'a model of cheapness, and yet truly solid ... worthy of any church'.<sup>4</sup> Mrs Dunn herself died before it could be installed.

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<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Chapels Society notes



Figure 13: St Joseph

- 5.3.2 The fine carved **polychrome wooden statues** of Our Lady and St Joseph (figure 13) on panelled Gothic timber pedestals and placed on either side of the chancel arch are also of German provenance, possibly by Stuflesser of Ortisei. They were blessed at Christmas Midnight Mass, 1891.
- 5.3.3 The fourteen **Stations of the Cross** (one of which, the thirteenth, is illustrated at figure 14) are placed below the windows of the aisles, with two on the western gallery front. They are cast, high-relief *tableaux*, of uncertain (probably Continental) provenance.



Figure 14: One of the Stations of the Cross



Figure 15: Detail from painted dado (parish website)

- 5.3.4 Under the stair to the western gallery (figure 15) is all that visibly remains of a **dado frieze**, which previously ran around the outer walls. This was painted by the Grimsby artist and parishioner William Richard Bunting, assisted by Rudolph Bunting and George Canty, for the parish's Golden Jubilee in 1933.

5.3.5 The **organ** was installed in the western gallery in the 1920s, in thanksgiving for the end of the First World War. It was made in 1920 by the Positive Organ Company, London.<sup>5</sup> It was renovated in 2007.



Figure 16: Font

5.3.6 Hadfield's unrealised design for west end of the church allowed for a baptistery. A small lead-lined octagonal timber **font**, its faces carved with quatrefoils, was located at the west end of the church, within the enclosed narthex/lobby, at the time of the writer's visit in 2011 (figure 16).

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.npor.org.uk/NPORView.html?RI=Do4727>



5.3.7 **Confessionals** are placed in the second and third bays of the south aisle, their elaborate timber and leaded glass doors flush with the aisle walls.

5.3.8 The **pews** are of relatively recent date, possibly contemporary with the 1979 reordering, and are not of special interest.

#### 5.4 *Stained glass*

5.4.1 The five-light **east window** (mostly visible in figure 8) was given by Young, although it was not ready for the opening of the church, as observed by the writer in *The Tablet*. It depicts Our Lady, Queen of the Rosary. The design of this and the **side windows of the chancel**, each with a medallion with the symbol of the Virgin Mary, has been attributed to Herbert Gandy (d.1934), and their manufacture to John Jennings (1848-1919) of Lambeth Art Glass Works.<sup>6</sup>



Figure 17: West window

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<sup>6</sup> Chapels Society notes, 2015

5.4.2 The five-light **west window** (figure 17), a Crucifixion scene with figures, was installed in memory of Canon Hawkins (d. 1913). Stylistically, it is attributable to the Hardman firm of Birmingham. **Other windows** which also appear to be by Hardman are those to Alice Tierney (d.1889), Patrick and Mary Tierney (1897), Thomas Rice (d.1914). The window over the last of the Stations of the Cross was installed in 1909, to commemorate Canon Hawkins' priestly silver jubilee. The window to Emily Hyldon (d. 1945) was also given in thanksgiving for the end of hostilities in 1945, and depicts the Miraculous Draught of Fishes. This is a signed work by John Hardman Studios, with Grimsby Dock depicted in the lower panels (figure 18).



Figure 18: Detail from the Peace Window, 1945

## **6.0 Significance**

6.1 The church is listed Grade II (see list entry at appendix 1). It is of high architectural, historical, artistic and communal significance as:

- The ‘mother church’ of Great Grimsby
- The most notable act of architectural patronage by Thomas Arthur Young KSG, who financed much Roman Catholic church building in Lincolnshire
- A good and relatively little-altered design by Hadfield & Son of Sheffield, prominent Catholic architects of the mid-to-late nineteenth century, many of whose churches are listed. Matthew Ellison Hadfield was in partnership with his son Charles from 1864, and St Mary’s is one of the last fruits of their partnership (M. E. Hadfield died in 1885)
- Housing a fine collection of furnishings by important church artists, including Nathaniel Westlake, Boulton of Cheltenham, Pugin & Pugin and Hardman of Birmingham
- Recording pious donors, important individuals and the town’s fishing industry, the communal importance and religious symbolism of which is reflected in wall paintings and stained glass
- With the adjacent presbytery and boundary walls (both separately listed Grade II), forming part of a notable group of Victorian and Edwardian civic, educational and religious buildings, built on land provided by the Heneage estate.

## 7.0 Other churches in Grimsby Deanery

7.1 As well as St Mary on the Sea, the recent (July-September 2016) *Review of the Needs of the Roman Catholic Community in North East Lincolnshire* has looked at four other churches in the Grimsby area. The following is a brief summary of the architectural and historic interest of these buildings.

7.2 **St John Fisher, Waltham Road, Scartho** (figure 19) is a chapel-of-ease to St Mary on the Sea. It is a modern (c. 1965, with later additions) prefabricated structure of parish hall character. It is not listed and is not a candidate for listing.



Figure 19: St John Fisher

7.3 **St Pius X, Chelmsford Avenue, Grimsby** (figure 20) is a handsome brick church in modern Romanesque style, built in 1955-7 to serve a post-war housing estate. The broad west tower is a local landmark. It is one of a large number of churches built in the diocese and elsewhere in the post-war years by the prolific firm of Reynolds & Scott. The vaulted interior was radically and successfully reordered by Peter Langtry-Langton in the 1990s. It is not listed, and although a design of quality is not considered to possess such special interest as to be a candidate for listing.



Figure 20: St Pius X

- 7.4 **Corpus Christi, Grimsby Road, Cleethorpes** (figure 21) was built in 1995 from designs by Peter Langtry-Langton, and is a polygonal building of pleasing design, with a central octagonal cupola. It incorporates a number of features from the predecessor church (1930). The church is not listed, and is too recent in date to be normally considered eligible for listing.



Figure 21: Corpus Christi, Cleethorpes

7.5 **Our Lady Star of the Sea, Allerton Drive, Immingham** (figure 22) is a modern, utilitarian structure which appears to have been designed as a parish hall. It is not listed, and is not a candidate for listing.



Figure 22: Our Lady Star of the Sea, Immingham

## **8.0 Discussion**

- 8.1 The context of the *Review of the Needs of the Roman Catholic Community in North East Lincolnshire* is one in which there may soon be just one priest available to serve the five churches. This is not viewed as a sustainable proposition, and various options are presented. One of these, Option 1, proposes a single new church on a new site, and the disposal of all of the existing church sites. The following comments consider the implications of this option as they affect St Mary's and will, it is hoped, be helpful to the HCC in making any final recommendations to the Bishop of Nottingham.
- 8.2 St Mary's is alone among the five churches in being listed Grade II; none of the others is listed or a candidate for listing. The presbytery and boundary walls are also listed, and the site is a focal point within a designated Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is identified as 'at risk' by Historic England, although the trend is 'improving'.<sup>7</sup>
- 8.3 St Mary's is a large building, nearly 150 years old, and as such needs regular maintenance and repair. It has recently been in receipt of a grant offer of £82,000 from the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund for repairs to the slate roof, and associated stonework repairs. This would cover 41% of the estimated repair costs, and is the whole of the sum requested; the balance would be met from the parish's reserves and an interest-free loan from the diocese. The grant represents a significant public investment and vote of confidence in the future of the building as a place of worship.
- 8.4 As the *Review* acknowledges (6.3.1), 'Listing restricts potential disposal and, even if possible, it is considered likely that the buildings would require significant improvement prior to disposal'. If the church were to close, the grant would no longer be available. Nevertheless, the repairs would still need to be carried out, and the building insured, maintained and made secure while a new use was sought. Income from the Sunday collection, fundraising, concerts etc. would cease.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/list-entry/1416476>

8.5 The *Review* states at 6.3.1 that options to explore would include de-listing. This is ‘considered difficult, and suspected to be unlikely to find favour within North-East Lincolnshire Council, but should still be looked at...’ A decision to de-list would be made by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, as advised by Historic England. The local authority would be consulted. The sole consideration would be whether the building still possessed the special architectural and historic interest identified at the time of listing.<sup>8</sup> The condition of the building, or possible plans for development, would not be taken into account. It is clear that the church does retain its special architectural and historical interest; if anything the list entry insufficiently recognises the significance of the building and its furnishings - for example, it was written before the sanctuary wall paintings were uncovered. De-listing is simply not an option worth pursuing.

8.6 Paragraph 47 of the Directory on the Ecclesiastical Exemption states that if, following receipt of a report such as this, it is decided to proceed with the closure of a listed church, the HCC should make recommendations to the bishop about the future use of the church:

Such a recommendation may be that the church should be preserved intact by handing over to a trust or similar; that it should be retained for some secular but not unbecoming purpose; or that it may be demolished. Recommendations may also be made on the disposal of objects from the church.

8.7 The first option, that the building should be preserved intact by handing over to a trust or similar, has been successfully achieved in many cases, most particularly with redundant Anglican churches (through the Churches Conservation Trust). There is however only one national building preservation trust which takes on redundant Roman Catholic churches, the Historic Chapels Trust (HCT). Its resources are very limited, and it can only consider buildings listed Grade I or Grade II\*. As a Grade II listed building, St Mary’s would not be eligible for vesting with the HCT.

8.8 The *Review* suggests (1.1, p.5) the option of vesting ‘may be achievable by successfully bequeathing the property to an organisation such as Heritage

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<sup>8</sup> <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/guidance-de-listing-building/removing-building-from-list-nov15.pdf/>



England (*sic*), the Church Commissioners, or even better to North-East Lincolnshire Council to be a heritage and arts centre. In this way St Mary's would be preserved as a legacy from the Catholic community, albeit no longer as a working church'. 'Bequeathing' historic buildings, especially those with significant repair needs, to third parties is not a straightforward matter. As a newly-established charity, English Heritage's energies are being directed towards meeting the backlog of repairs to its existing collection, rather than taking on new properties. In any event, it would not take a nineteenth century parish church into guardianship unless it was part of a wider estate, and probably only then with a significant endowment. The Church Commissioners manage the estate of the Church of England, and would have no interest in taking on a Catholic church. The third suggestion (that the local authority might take on the building as a heritage and arts centre) may appear attractive but is probably not a realistic option in these times of financial stringency for local authorities. It is not clear whether this option has been discussed with North-East Lincolnshire Council.

- 8.9 The second Directory recommendation is that the building might be converted to a 'secular but not unbecoming use'. The difficulty with any use other than continued use as a church (or vesting for preservation) concerns the fate of the interior and furnishings. Many of the latter are of high quality, their significance bound up with the worship and history of this particular place; divorced from their historic context and function, their resonance and significance would be much reduced. The internal volumes of the building are also an important aspect of the building's significance. Any secular use which involved major subdivision of the interior, or the removal or covering of historic furnishings, is likely to be problematic in terms of listed building and planning approval.
- 8.10 The Grade II listing and the prominent location of the church in a Conservation Area effectively rules out the third possible recommendation, that of demolition, as a practical option. Such a proposal would encounter strong resistance from the local authority, Historic England and local people, both Catholic parishioners and the wider community. Demolition would not fall within the ecclesiastical exemption, and would require listed building consent. There is no reason to believe that such consent would be forthcoming.

8.11 In conclusion, it is considered that the church of St Mary on the Sea is a building of considerable architectural, historical, artistic and communal significance. In the words of the Review, it is ‘the mother church of the Grimsby area, and regarded in the community as such’. It makes a prominent and important contribution to the local Conservation Area. A substantial grant has been offered for its repair, which would help to ensure its continued use as a place of worship, as well as serving as a catalyst for the regeneration of the Conservation Area. This is a substantial public investment and vote of confidence in the future of the building as a place of worship. Closing the building would close down this source of funding, and would send out a damaging message to the Catholic community, and the world beyond. No other organisation is going to take on the building purely for purposes of preservation, conversion to secular use would be highly uncertain and problematic, and demolition or de-listing should not be regarded as serious options. Central to any discussion on the future allocation of resources in Grimsby should be a presumption that St Mary’s, repaired and revived, will continue in its historic mission.

\* \* \*

## Sources not mentioned in footnotes

Architectural History Practice, *Taking Stock* report, 2010

Historical notes provided in 2010 by Michael Ducey, parishioner

Nottingham *Diocesan Yearbook*, 2005

Chapels Society, notes for visit to Cleethorpes and Grimsby, 12 September 2015

Lynch, R., and Mitchell, R., *Review of the Needs of the Roman Catholic Community in North East Lincolnshire*, 2016

Parish website, <http://www.stmarysrcchurchgrimsby.org.uk/>



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## Appendix 1: List entries for church, presbytery and boundary walls

### *Church*

**Building Name:** CHURCH OF ST MARY BY THE SEA

**Parish:** GRIMSBY

**District:** NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

**County:** LINCOLNSHIRE

**Postcode:** DN32 9DZ

**LBS Number:** 479283

**Grade:** II

**Date Listed:** 30/06/1999

**NGR:** TA2786209644

GRIMSBY

TA2709NE HENEAGE ROAD

699-1/18/37 (East side)

Church of St Mary by the Sea

GV II

Roman Catholic church. 1879-83 by ME and C Hadfield of Sheffield; altar of the Sacred Heart by Pugin and Pugin. Red brick in English garden wall bond with ashlar dressings. Welsh slate roof.

**STYLE:** Gothic Revival.

**PLAN:** 4-bay aisled nave with west entrance and north chapel; 3-bay chancel with vestry to south.

**EXTERIOR:** plinth, buttresses with offsets to angles and between bays; sill string course; moulded, stepped and dentilled brick eaves cornice throughout. Nave: 3-light pointed trefoiled north and south windows. South side has a pair of stone-coped ground-floor canted bays for confession boxes. West end has central section flanked by buttresses, gabled surround to entrance with pointed moulded arch dying into jambs, niche above containing statue of Virgin and Child, string course stepped above entrance, pointed 5-light window with Geometric tracery. Coped nave gable with flush ashlar bands and slit-light. Nave north chapel has chamfered ashlar plinth, canted east side with central 2-light pointed traceried window flanked by trefoiled lancets beneath hoodmould, pointed trefoiled 3-light north window beneath hoodmould. Chancel: moulded ashlar plinth, pairs of trefoiled lancets to north and south sides with continuous hoodmould and flush ashlar bands; east end with angle buttresses and central buttress beneath 5-light window with hoodmould and flush ashlar bands; coped gable with finial. South side of chancel has foundation stone with Latin inscription dated 1880 and 1883, recording architect. South vestry, adjoining Presbytery (qv) has trefoiled 2-light windows, ovolo-moulded eaves cornice. Projecting 2-storey single-bay gabled organ chamber to south of chancel has a pair of lancets and, beside it, a stepped coped gable rising to a roof-chimney with a pair of octagonal shafts. Octagonal spirelet between nave and chancel with banded slates.

**INTERIOR:** nave arcades of tall pointed double-chamfered arches on alternating cylindrical and octagonal piers with moulded capitals and bases on tall octagonal

plinths. Pointed moulded chancel arch with octagonal responds. Chancel has pointed arched south doorway with blocked arch and balcony above; marble and wrought-iron sanctuary rails, marble altar and reredos flanked by blind arcaded panels containing piscina and aumbry; wooden wall panelling and carved floral frieze; pointed arched south doorway with blocked arch and balcony above; ornately-carved choir stalls. Nave has gallery with ornate front carried on octagonal wooden columns with tall stone bases; columned west organ gallery. Marble and wrought-iron pulpit with tester and balustraded staircase. Arch-braced nave and chancel roofs, the latter with painted panels. North chapel has elaborately sculpted stone altar and reredos with marble columns, demi-figures of Christ and saints in canopied niches, traceried panels with marble insets, stained glass windows above. 2 inscribed tablets in chapel, one recording the raising of the altar by Georgina Heneage and its dedication in 1887, the other an ornate memorial to Thomas Young of Kingerby, Lincs, benefactor of this church and of "many churches throughout the Shire". One of the last churches by the partnership of Hadfield and Son. Together with the neighbouring Presbytery and its associated garden walls (qv), forms part of a notable group of Victorian and Edwardian educational and religious buildings built on land provided by the Heneage Estate.

(The Buildings of England: Pevsner N, Harris J, and Antram N: Lincolnshire: London: 1989-: 339; Grimsby - Action for Conservation: Grimsby Borough Planning Department: List of buildings of local architectural or historical interest: Grimsby Borough Council: 1972-: NO.103; Ambler RW: Great Grimsby Fishing Heritage: a brief for a trail: Grimsby Borough Council: 1990-: 48).

Listing NGR: TA2786209644

*Presbytery*

**Building Name:** ST MARYS PRESBYTERY  
**Parish:** GRIMSBY  
**District:** NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE  
**County:** LINCOLNSHIRE  
**Postcode:** DN32 9DZ

**LBS Number:** 479284  
**Grade:** II  
**Date Listed:** 30/06/1999  
**NGR:** TA2785509633

GRIMSBY

TA2709NE HENEAGE ROAD  
699-1/18/38 (East side)

St Mary's Presbytery

GV II

Presbytery. c1880, probably by Hadfield and Son of Sheffield, architects of the adjoining St Mary's church (qv); early C20 addition to rear. Red brick in stretcher bond with black brick and painted stone dressings. Welsh slate roof. Original range rectangular on plan, with later wing to rear adjoining St Mary's church.

**EXTERIOR:** balanced asymmetrical design. 2 storeys with attic, irregular

fenestration. Plinth with 2 black brick bands above. Entrance front to south has door and windows in a continuous quoined ashlar surround with chamfered reveals with label stops. Board door with rounded brackets to lintel and mullioned overlight with 2 quatrefoiled lights. Single-light window to left, and 3 similar lights to right, all with single transoms, quatrefoiled top lights, and leaded panes. 2 black brick bands at lintel level. Recessed carved stone panel above entrance with "SM" cypher on a shield below bishop's mitre. 3-light first-floor mullioned window in moulded reveal; narrow single-light window to right. Above this, a gable with brick bands and a small quatrefoiled attic window in a quoined surround. To the left, an elaborate projecting stack with a carved bishop's head corbel at ground-floor level, ribbed chimney-shafts and corbelled brick cap. Ovolo-moulded brick eaves cornice. Hipped and gabled roof with ornate wrought-iron finials. Left return forms front to Heneage Road: twin-gabled, the section to the right with a 3-light window to each floor and a quatrefoiled attic window, the section to the left with a full-height canted brick bay with 2-light and single-light windows, sill bands and hipped roof. North front facing church has lateral stack similar to south front but with a different head corbel; C20 replacement glazing to enclosed entrance passage. 2-storey rear addition has leaded casements, corbelled eaves, hipped roof, lateral stack with diagonal shafts.

INTERIOR: not inspected.

Along with the associated garden walls and St Mary's Church (qv), forms part of a notable group of Victorian and Edwardian educational and religious buildings built on land provided by the Heneage Estate.

Listing NGR: TA2785509633

*Boundary walls and gates*

**Building Name:** GARDEN WALL, GATES AND ADJOINING WALLS TO ST MARY'S PRESBYTERY

**Parish:** GRIMSBY

**District:** NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

**County:** LINCOLNSHIRE

**Postcode:** DN32 9DZ

**LBS Number:** 479285

**Grade:** II

**Date Listed:** 30/06/1999

**NGR:** TA2783409633

GRIMSBY

TA2709NE HENEAGE ROAD

699-1/18/39 (East side)

Garden wall, gates and adjoining walls to St Mary's Presbytery

GV II

Gateways and walls enclosing St Mary's Presbytery front garden, and adjoining walls on south side of St Mary's churchyard and St Mary's School grounds. 1880s, probably by Hadfield and Son of Sheffield, architects of St Mary's church and Presbytery (qv). Presbytery garden wall and gate-piers in orange and yellow brick with ashlar dressings, cast-iron railings and wrought-iron gates; adjoining walls in orange and yellow brick. South gateway to Presbytery has piers each with a tall brick base,

chamfered ashlar shaft, and upper section with moulded ashlar band, frieze with bands of contrasting brick, and low pyramidal ashlar cap. Wrought-iron gate with alternating plain and wavy dog bars and scrollwork panels above. Dwarf wall to each side with banded brickwork and ashlar coping; arcaded railings with barley-twist columns and finials above a single top rail. C20 wooden fence adjoining to right, with similar original wrought-iron gate. 2 sections of taller coped wall stepped downhill to each side, enclosing churchyard to the west, and the rear garden of Presbytery and St Mary's School grounds to the east, with bands of contrasting orange and yellow brickwork and buttresses with single offsets. Included for group value as part of a notable group of Victorian and Edwardian educational and religious buildings built on land provided by the Heneage Estate.

Listing NGR: TA2783409633