



ARCHITECTS

Design & Access Statement & Heritage Statement

External Lighting, Balustrading to Boiler House and
Balustrading and Walkway to provide additional egress

All Saints Church, Silkstone

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To be read in conjunction with drawings.

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Report Control

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared in support of the full planning application for the proposed installation of external lighting, new wrought iron railings to the boiler house steps and reinstatement of an existing doorway to form a new fire escape including new railings and access.
- 1.2 The proposal seeks to improve safety of the existing access and egress to the church and boiler house.

2.0 Application Site

- 2.1 The application site address is All Saints Church, High Street, Silkstone, Barnsley, S75



Figure 1: Location Plan

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- 2.2 The site houses All Saints Church which is Grade I listed and its surrounding graveyard.
- 2.3 The church has been on this site since the 11th century and remaining elements of Norman architecture can be found within the present grade 1 listed building. The church was re-built in the late 12th century to a Norman cruciform layout having a central tower over the nave and chancel crossing with north and south transepts. This Grade I listed church has been known as the 'Minster of the Moors' since the 12th century. The current church is built in the Perpendicular (1350-1550) style of architecture, which is quite common to this Pennine area of Yorkshire.

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3.0 Location

- 3.1 The Church of All Saints is located on the High Street in Silkstone, within the Metropolitan Borough of Barnsley.
- 3.2 The site is accessed via the B6096 (High Street), with connections to the A635 and wider local road network.
- 3.3 The site is not in a Conservation Area.
- 3.4 The Church of All Saints is a Grade I listed building, designated on 18 March 1968 (List Entry No. 1151740)
- 3.5 The church's main entrance is accessed by a well-established Yorkshire stone paved public footpath accessed from High Street. Dropped kerbs along High Street support accessible access to the main entrances.



Figure 2: Church of All Saints, as viewed from High Street.

4.0 Proposal

- 4.1 The proposed works are necessary to improve the safety and usability of existing external access points serving the church.
- 4.2 The proposals include the following:
 - 4.2.1 The installation of external PIR lighting to illuminate the exit from the South chapel and the newly reopened door to the north elevation. This lighting is intended to enhance visibility and ensure safer access for users during hours of low natural light.
 - 4.2.2 The installation of wrought iron railings to the existing boiler house steps (shown in figure 3) to improve safe access and egress maintenance and to prevent a hazard.

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- 4.2.3 Wrought iron railings to either side of a reopened North Elevation door (figure 4), and a walkway over the drainage ditch to provide an additional egress route as requested by the buildings last Fire Risk Assessment.



Figure 3: As existing, current unguarded stone steps used as access and egress to the boiler house presenting a significant safety hazard.



Figure 4: Unused and blocked existing north door

- 4.3 All works have been designed to be respectful to the historic character of the Grade I listed church, with high quality materials and design.

5.0 Design

5.1 Use

- 5.1.1 The Church of All Saints continues to serve as a place of worship and a valued community space, hosting regular services, events, and activities.
- 5.1.2 The proposed works support the ongoing functional use of the building by improving the safety of existing external circulation routes. In particular, the addition of railings to the boiler house steps addresses a current hazard, where an unguarded change in level poses a potential risk to church users and visitors and the lighting to the south elevation will also improve safety around the building.
- 5.1.3 The reinstatement of the north door allows for an additional egress route. The existing door will be reused and the new walkway has been designed to allow the drainage channel to continue to keep water away from the stonework.

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5.2 Layout & Amount

- 5.2.1 The proposed works are contained entirely within the existing church site and relate to specific access points at ground floor level.
- 5.2.2 The additions, including safety railings, gate, and landing, are modest in scale and carefully proportioned to suit the dimensions and layout of the building.

5.3 Access

- 5.3.1 The proposed railings are necessary to address a current safety concern, as there are no existing guarding measures along the steps leading down to the boiler house. At present, the change in level is unprotected within a pedestrian route, presenting a potential fall hazard. The introduction of railings will mitigate this risk and provide a safe and clearly defined edge to the steps.
- 5.3.2 The opening of the north elevation door meets the recommendations suggested in the latest fire risk assessment by providing an additional egress route.
- 5.3.3 External lighting will be installed to safely illuminate the staircases leading to the boiler house and fire escape. This will assist all users in poor light conditions and has been carefully designed to minimise disruption to the church's historic setting.
- 5.3.4 The proposal is designed to make existing access safer.

5.4 Privacy

- 5.4.1 The proposed works will have no impact on the privacy of surrounding

5.5 Landscaping

- 5.5.1 A permeable paved path will join the north elevation door to existing hardstanding to form an accessible route. Any yorkstone slabs will be relaid within the path, many of these are former grave markers. All digging will be supervised by an archaeologist due to the graveyard.

5.6 Appearance

- 5.6.1 The materials proposed are complementary to the existing building and of high quality.

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5.6.2 The design of the railings echoes the shape of the windows of the church.
Precedent images showing similar wrought iron railing design:



Figure 6: Black wrought iron exterior railing with pointed arch design on stone flag surface



Figure 7: Black wrought iron exterior railing with pointed arch design running up pitch of stone flag steps

5.6.3 The examples below illustrate the use of black wrought iron used on the exterior of other properties on the High Street. This demonstrates that wrought iron fencing is a characteristic feature within the local streetscape, and therefore, our proposal is in keeping with the traditional materials and aesthetic of the surrounding area:



Figure 8: The frontage of 7 High Street, a neighbouring property to All Saints Church, features black fencing situated close to the All Saints Church (visible in the background of the image).



Figure 9: The frontages of 22 and 24 High Street are enclosed by black railings, located on the same street as All Saints Church.

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6.0 Heritage Statement

6.1 Setting of the Church

The stone walled churchyard of All Saints Church is set at the high point of the village High Street (west boundary) at its corner with Church Hill (north boundary).

This road to the north side was part of an ancient saltway, or saltergate, from the Cheshire salt 'wiches', being the most important local Trans-Pennine highway, passing through Silkstone onto Doncaster.

The elevated and sloping site overlooks a well wooded valley with Silkstone Beck flowing down to Cawthorne basin, which is set within a rural environment of agricultural land.

6.2 The Living Churchyard

The original churchyard was extended eastwards in 1867, southwards in 1890 with a further extension southwards in 1928. It is home to a variety of trees, flora and fauna. The original churchyard has been used for new burials since 1958. There are also 3 Gardens of Rest for the interment of ashes.

The churchyard contains many listed grave slabs, some table top, the earliest being late 17th C. The largest monument is dedicated to the memory of the 26 children who drowned in the Huskar Pit Disaster of 4th July 1838.

There are numerous visits by relatives to tend to family graves and memorial stones and the external water tap is well used for their flowers and plants.

A footpath leads from the High Street down through the churchyard to the south porch and continues downwards in a north-east direction to meet Church Hill near to the Beck. This footpath is well used by the public, thus negating the difficult route by using the main road footpaths.

The churchyard is therefore very much a communal area well used by the local populace and numerous benches provide quiet and reflective breaks with natural views as a backdrop.

6.3 Social History

Silkstone has a rich history associated with coal mining. Coal was first reported to have been mined locally since the 9th C and most of the local families in the 19th C worked in the numerous coal mines in the area, controlled by the local coal mine owners.

The pay was poor and the work was hard, with children as young as 7 years old having to work down the mine to help the family pay their rent for the cottages owned by the coal mine owners. The miners even had to buy their tools and food from the Tommy Shop, also owned by the coal mine owners.

The 1842 Mines Act, brought about after the Huskar Disaster (see Point 1.6), prohibited women and children under 10 from working down the mines, so many women had to find employment elsewhere, even away from the local area.

Mainly due to the decline and ultimate closure of the coal mining industry, the area became quite depressed and so the local people then had to find employment further afield.

In the late 20th C regeneration and development of the village led to new private housing and people willing to commute, with good road and rail communications. Local schools flourished and with a more widespread ministry and interest in church activities which brought about Sunday Schools and families more supportive and interested in the Church.

6.4 The church building in general

There has been a church on this site since at least the 11th C and remaining elements of Norman architecture can be found within the present Grade 1 listed building.

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A Saxon church was in existence here before the Conquest under the rule of the Saxon Thane Ailric, whose son Swein gifted the church in 1090 to the Cluniac monks at Pontefract Priory, which was founded the same year. Most, if not all of the ancient Staincross wapentake once lay within the parish of Silkstone. The church was largely remodelled in the 15th C.

6.5 The church building in detail

The Normans rebuilt the church to the cruciform plan, having a nave, sanctuary, central crossing lantern tower with 2 transepts. The tower became quite ruinous in 1479 so it was taken down and rebuilt as a 2- stage tower at the west end of the church and was completed in 1495. The tower belfry contains the peal of 6 bells.

The present Perpendicular ashlar sandstone church has a south porch, 5-bay nave arcade with re-worked late 12th C cylindrical pillars and 2-light clerestory windows, north and south aisles being enhanced externally by low buttresses crowned by detached crocketed square pinnacles connected with the wall by tiny flying buttresses in the form of grotesque figures. A 4-bay chancel, with north and south chapels and a sunken vestry to the south west corner.

The nave oak roof is a late 15th C arch braced tie-beam with splendid carved timber roof bosses. The east end of the chancel was rebuilt in the 1857/58 renovations by the architect Anthony Salvin, removing the flat roof, reducing the height of the walls and incorporating a high pitched open timber hammer beam roof and by so doing removed walls and windows of Norman architecture.

The chancel 'drop' arch springs from 2 semi-circular re-worked Norman responds and capitals, as does the semi-circular re-worked Norman arch between St. James's Chapel and the chancel.

The north transept, St. James's Chapel, also known as the Lady Chapel dedicated to St Mary, was a chantry chapel whilst the south transept, Bretton Chapel, being a private chapel passed down from the de Bretton family in the mid 13th C, through connected marriages, to the Wentworth family of Bretton, which has left the most significant family influence within the chapel.

An open first floor gallery within the tower was provided in 2012 as a resource centre for the local history group, Heritage Silkstone, formed in 2009. This followed on from the installation in the tower of a new ground floor community room/kitchen/toilet facility in 2001 with later upgraded kitchen and additional toilet improvements completed in 2018.

6.6 St. James's Chapel

It was during the 1857/58 renovations that the 2 doorways on the north side were blocked-up, one within St. James's Chapel and the other being the main north door opposite the main entrance south porch doorway. The Faculty of 21st May 1857 provided no reason why these doorways were to be closed and blocked-up.

The remains of a corner gargoyle stone from the tower parapet, which was removed in the 1934 restoration, is now set in the north wall blank doorway on a moulded stone plinth from the base of the 19th C pulpit. The gargoyle stone was previously uneasily seated on the floor behind the curtain to the blocked-up north doorway within the north aisle, but was later moved to its more stable present position on a plinth when the mining display cabinet was installed in front of that north doorway in 2010. The gargoyle is heavily disfigured and has lost its head, so it's architectural and artistic merit is somewhat muted.

6.7 Identify the parts of the church and/or churchyard which will be directly or indirectly affected by your proposal.

The part of the church directly affected by the proposal will be within St. James's Chapel. The outline of the original north doorway, although blocked-up, is clearly visible from the inside, having a plastered finish, set back from the face of the stone wall. This doorway would have allowed direct external access into the chantry chapel for the endowed patron's private use.

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The proposal will re-open this doorway and uncover the design of existing moulded stone jambs and bring the oak door back into use.

Externally, the existing moulded doorway and door will visually remain as they are at present. The new element will be the walkway and balustrade across the drainage ditch to connect with the existing ground level of the churchyard.

There will also be new railings externally to the boilerhouse which is subterranean. Currently there is no protection from falling and this is extremely dangerous especially at night.

Lighting to the south elevation will allow for safe egress in the event of a fire or other emergency. Currently there is no lighting provision here and egress is dangerous

6.8 Set out the significance of these particular parts.

St. James's Chapel is utilised for a number of uses:

A chapel set aside for personal space and quiet reflection, containing chairs and an altar with the east window, as noted in Point 6.6, depicting the Huskar disaster with all the names and ages of the children who perished. It is not used for any form of service but is used for meetings, both one-to-one and group meetings.

It also serves as the hub for both after-service refreshments, where the chairs provide a relaxed atmosphere for convivial discussions between the service attendees which includes those who are new members to the church services.

This hub is expanded for the monthly Cutler Cafe open event, as well as an area occupied by stalls for the November craft fair, both as noted in Point 1.7.

Boiler house access is required for general maintenance. The railings would have a gate to remain locked to prevent public access.

6.9 Assessment of the impact of the proposals

Describe and assess the impact of your proposal on these parts, and on the whole.

The proposal will not impact the chapel to any great extent. The use of the chapel will mostly remain unaffected by the re-opening of the doorway, except that the area in front of the doorway will need to be kept clear to allow unrestricted escape in case of an emergency evacuation of the building. This proposal will have no negative impact on the church as a whole, and it will allow the church to be used with increased capacity for larger gatherings.

The external lighting and railings will ensure the site is safe for egress not only for emergency but also for the public.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The proposed external railings and associated works have been carefully designed to improve the safety and accessibility of the All Saints Church site, addressing existing hazards without compromising the historic fabric or significance of this Grade I listed building. The use of traditional high-quality materials and sympathetic design ensures the interventions are visually appropriate and in keeping with the character of the church and surrounding area.