

Context

St Columba's United Reform Church, St Columba's Close, Coventry



Figure 1. Primary elevation as viewed from St Columba's Close



Figure(s) 2. St Columba's Church Interior



Assessment – Discussion

Submitted for consideration of inclusion on the local list, St Columba's Church was opened in October 1931, following fundraising to establish a base for Presbyterian worship in the city.

The building was designed by Spalding and Myre's Architects of London, who it is understood specialised in the delivery of non-conformist chapels and Baptist churches. The church is of dark red brickwork façade with a tiled roof over, incorporating architectural features which include arched stepped recession elements, dormer windows and an unusual, steeply pitched roof form derived in part from the use of an angular footprint arrangement.

Sited on St Columba's Close, the church is neighboured by high-rise post-war development to the south, and a two-storey sheltered housing scheme to the north. To the east and west the site fronts onto public highway, where approaching St Nicholas Street a later flat roofed extension is seen set beyond a small area of landscape and associated hardstanding.

Assessment – Criteria

Assessing St Columba's Church against the established criteria for inclusion on the local list of heritage assets, the following observations and comment is made:

Historic: Inter-War place of worship development example, with notable association to population growth in support of local industry.

Artistic: Of restrained architectural design, notable points of interest include recession arched brickwork formations and use of former windows delivering additional levels of natural lighting into the large open void

worship space within. The restrained architectural narrative continues to the interior with clearly understandable structural forms available to view.

Community: Further to growing engineering, textile and mining industries in the city, the Church is associated to the population increase of the city to support manufacturing expansion, notably related to those arriving from Scotland, and serving as a base for Presbyterian worship.

Age: Opened October 1931.

Rarity: Understood to be designed uniquely for the site, the church is unusual in form and architectural design, with no known equivalent present in the city.

Integrity: Intact, however some elements of degradation noted. Unsympathetic 1960's flat roofed rear extension detracts for overall architectural integrity seen today.

Coventry's Identity: St Columba's Church contributes to the narrative of Coventry's identity through enriching the story of community and population growth in the city in the inter-war period of the 20th century. Architecturally it is a notable example in the city of development of this type in the inter-war period.

Conclusion

The application for local listing is valid and therefore the proposal may be promoted for public consultation. Further to the findings of the public consultation, CCC conservation officer will finalise recommendation for a future Cabinet Member Meeting.

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