

St ANDREW'S CHURCH HAMPTON, EVESHAM



THE PROPOSED RE-ORDERING OF THE INTERIOR

Are changes good or bad – well that depends upon the measure of control that you have and from which side of the ‘change’ you stand.

When you move house, one of the first things you do is to change to the decor and make it into ‘your home’. Sometimes that change may be larger and involve physical changes to the inside or the outside of the building and, on occasions, to both. If that change is a more of a partial rebuild than a minor cosmetic alteration, you have to ask the local authority for planning permission: this is where your changes impact upon others.

Often there is no conflict, permission for the change is given and soon the changes blend in and become part of the ‘norm’. Occasionally however, an objection is raised over the extent or the visual impact of your proposed change and this give rise to problems. Fortunately, through discussion and perhaps minor changes to your ideas, compromises are reached, all parties are satisfied and the alteration work undertaken.

Major problems begin when changes are proposed to a ‘land mark’ building and often those who object strongly are often under the impression that no changes have ever happened. This is rarely true: take a close look at any ancient building and soon the centuries of change become apparent. Sometimes the changes are fundamental, involve doubling or trebling the size of the structure, often adding bits on and sometimes rebuilding the majority of the structure. From the outside, the changes may not be visible but can be quite dramatic none the less. No doubt protests were made at the time but often the changes were considered as ‘good works’ and carried out come what may.

Looking at St Andrew’s church we can see where additions and alterations have happened over time but what we cannot see is the original church building. There will have been a place of worship on this spot for a thousand years or more and, in keeping the standards of those days, it was likely that it was built of wood and maybe even have had a thatched roof.

We know from the architectural records that the earliest parts of the building date back to around the fourteenth century. As a partial indication as to what has happened over time, single of pieces of dressed and carved stone, probably from Evesham Abbey, have been inset into the fabric. These could have been added as part of necessary repairs, as part of modification works or even as memorials of what had been – no one really knows as few records survive today.

It is obvious that modifications have happened during the last hundred years or so years by looking at the dates of the stained glass windows: the latest of which is the John Martin’s Charity window. We do not know if there were objections

to the changes from the original glass windows to the brightly coloured stained glass ones as few detailed records exist. To our eyes they look beautiful, adding to the splendour of the building and, as far as it is possible to determine, no objections were voiced over the addition of the modern John Martin window.

There are two old prints in church, dating from 1890, reproduced on pages 6 & 7, indicating the decoration within the church at that time and, under certain lighting conditions, it is still possible to see remnants of it on the bare stonework. To our eyes the decoration may appear more than a little excessive and the expression 'over the top' springs to mind, but in those days it was normal. Look at the pew ends – typical heavy ornate Victorian church furnishing style – not the smooth flat tops that are in existence today.

As styles and ideas changed in the early part of the 20th century a decision must have been made to clear away all of the decorations and exhortations from the walls, to re-model or even replace the pews, to clear away the clutter in and around the chancel area and basically strip the Victorian excesses back to the original building line. We know that the current organ was re-sited in 1966 and, if you look at the old prints, the earlier instrument can be seen to be well into the chancel proper. If you look at the outline of the organ in St Peter's church, Hinton on the Green, you get a fair idea of the appearance of our 19th century instrument.

We have no idea if objections were voiced when the interior was changed to the plain, simple lines of the early 20th century nor do we have any records about the reaction to the replacement of that early church organ with a house organ too quietly voiced for use in a church. There must have been dissenters to these drastic changes but it is more than probable that any objections were fairly firmly squashed; such was the authority of the church hierarchy then.

Today things are very different and even necessary small repairs require the Archdeacon's permission before they can be carried out, no matter how urgent they may be: no one wants to ruin an historic building by using inappropriate materials. This means that changes to any part of the structure and use of a church building requires a measure of consent from all of the parties concerned. Changes and repairs also require the raising of a faculty; the legal permit that allows work to be carried out on the fabric and major items pertaining to the church using approved materials and labour.

As many of you are aware, rumours about changes to the interior and, in some instances, to the whole of St Andrew's church, have been whispered abroad becoming more and more distorted with each telling. Yes some fairly grand ideas have been tabled at meetings, some have reached the costing stage despite

objections, but the one constant theme throughout has been to provide a plan that gives St Andrew's church affordable and modern facilities. You will have received the treasurer's mid-term report and may be thinking "How can we afford to carry out any work at this time?" The reply to that is - how can we afford not to carry out this work if St Andrew's church is to be given a chance to survive for many more years to come.

Despite the economic difficulties a plan has been formulated, approved by the PCC, given general clearance to proceed by the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) and ideas as to how we obtain the funding have been discussed: funding is still available to enable suitable projects to go forward.

It is now time for you, the congregation, to look at the changes being proposed and to have your say. Thus far, the only commitment made by your PCC is to engage the services of an historical buildings consultant and surveyor and, if the consensus of opinion of church members is against the plan the PCC will stop work on it, the project working fund will be collapsed and returned to a general running fund after all costs incurred to date have been abstracted.

To ensure that you have the knowledge on which to make your decision regarding the proposed changes they are indicated individually as follows: -

Organ

The existing instrument would be dismantled and removed. The PCC would prefer to sell it intact as a working instrument but it has little historical value, it is a common instrument with a mediocre housing and the second hand market contains better instruments. It may well be that some parts can be reclaimed for resale, the pipes can be offered for sale to the congregation and that the remainder be sold at scrap value.

It is proposed that a digital organ be purchased and installed on the left-hand side of the church, slightly forward of the tower base. It would be fitted with flexible cables so that it could be moved further into the body of the church or out of the tower base into the North Transept or other locations as the occasion may dictate. The loudspeakers and drive amplifiers would be fixed at high level along the beam adjacent to the west wall. A simple sound reproduction system would be provided, within the chancel,



The Westmoorland Village organ

for the benefit of the choir.

The instrument under consideration is manufactured by Makin Church Organ Builders (type Westmorland Village or similar as indicated on page 3) and for the technically minded amongst you it would be sized at a two manual and pedal unit with 20 speaking stops, five channels of sound and complete with four main speakers and a single bass subwoofer. To the layman – an English voiced instrument suitable for the size of our church and with a better tonal range than our existing instrument.

Sanctuary

It is proposed that the floor of the sanctuary be protected with a waterproof membrane, a layer of non-permeable material and then carpeted. This may be a temporary solution until funds become available at a later date to undertake a full restoration of the floor.

Chancel

It is proposed that all of the furniture, save for the pulpit, be removed, the parquet flooring repaired, cleaned/sanded down and sealed with the appropriate non-slip product. New chairs would be provided similar to those used in many cathedrals throughout England and approved by the DAC. This chair together with alternatives will be made available, on loan, so you can try them out before deciding which you prefer. Wooden music stands of suitable quality would be provided for use by the choir.

It is proposed that the Archway, between the vestry and the chancel (where the pipe organ is now) will be fitted with a toughened glass screen pierced by a single door to allow access.

Once modified the Chancel will become the focus area for smaller services with the seating rearranged to suit the numbers attending.

Vestry

It is proposed that, following the removal of the pipe organ, a new wall will be erected at the 'North Transept' end creating two discrete areas. The area to the east would be cleaned down, the floor repaired, boarded over and carpeted. The existing ceiling would be removed to expose the rafters and thermal insulation boards inserted between each rafter to increase the thermal efficiency. A small kitchenette would be created at the junction of the north and new west wall (North Transept end) and the whole area brought to a good order of decoration.

The area would be furnished with a wardrobe and a chest of drawers suitable for the secure storage of priest's vestments together with two 'general purpose' storage cupboards, two tables and sixteen chairs. The 'John Martin' boards

would be removed from their current location, cleaned as required and relocated on the north wall between the north window and the east wall. This room will then become the John Martin Room and will be available for meetings, as a group instruction space, a children's area and would also be suitable for small, private services. (The drawing on page 10 indicates the proposed floor plan).

North Transept

It is proposed that a lavatory unit be installed in this area: one side against the new east wall and the other against the north wall. This installation would be ordered to be suitable for able and disabled persons of either gender and sized in compliance with the latest building regulations. The remainder of the area would be brought to a good standard of order and used as a choir vestry.

It is proposed that a closure screen, complete with double doors, be installed slightly nearer the centre of the tower base than the current screen position so as to allow a measure of privacy and security for the choir.

As part of the re-ordering, an upper floor would be created over this area accessed by a staircase between the west door and north wall. Recovered screening from the existing choir stall fronts would be adapted and reworked to provide a safety balustrade to the south side. A translucent/transparent shield would be installed to protect the window from damage by people using the stairs. It is proposed that the upper area would be furnished with suitably sized cupboard units providing dry storage for general records. Additional power outlets will be available and consideration will be given at a later stage for housing the printer/copier unit currently located in the Parish Room.

Body of the Church

It is proposed that all of the pews are removed, the flooring repaired, cleaned/sanded down and sealed with the appropriate non-slip product. New chairs would be provided similar to those used in many cathedrals throughout England and approved by the DAC. This chair together with alternatives will be made available, on loan, so you can try them out before deciding which you prefer.

The two radiators, currently secured to the pew backs near the South and North doors, would be dismantled, cleaned, refurbished as necessary and mounted along the north and south walls nearest their current location.

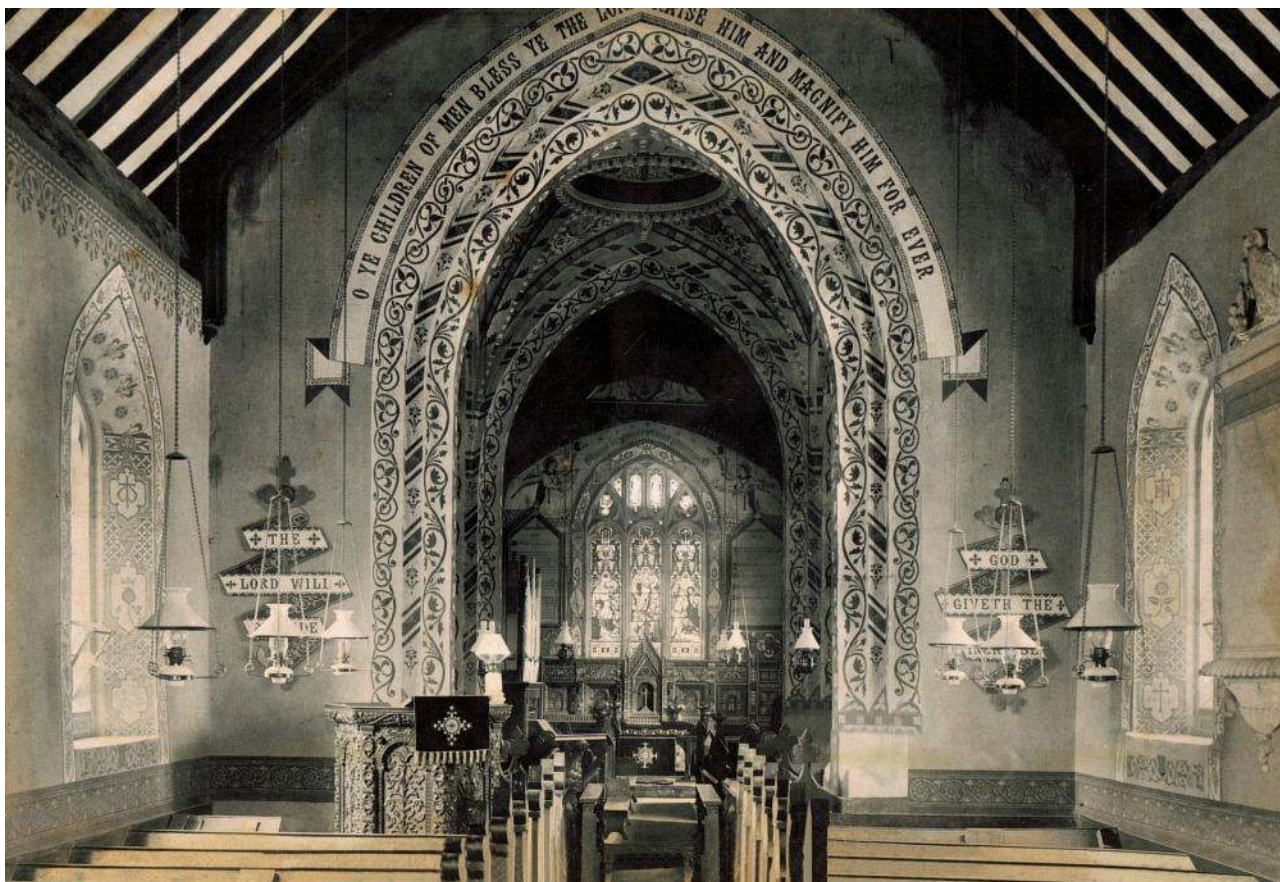
In the first instance it is proposed to offer the dismantled pews for purchase by members of the congregation with those remaining sold off to a specialist furnisher.

With the re-ordering of the interior of the church complete, the standard of decor would be reviewed and such repairs and repainting as may be required,

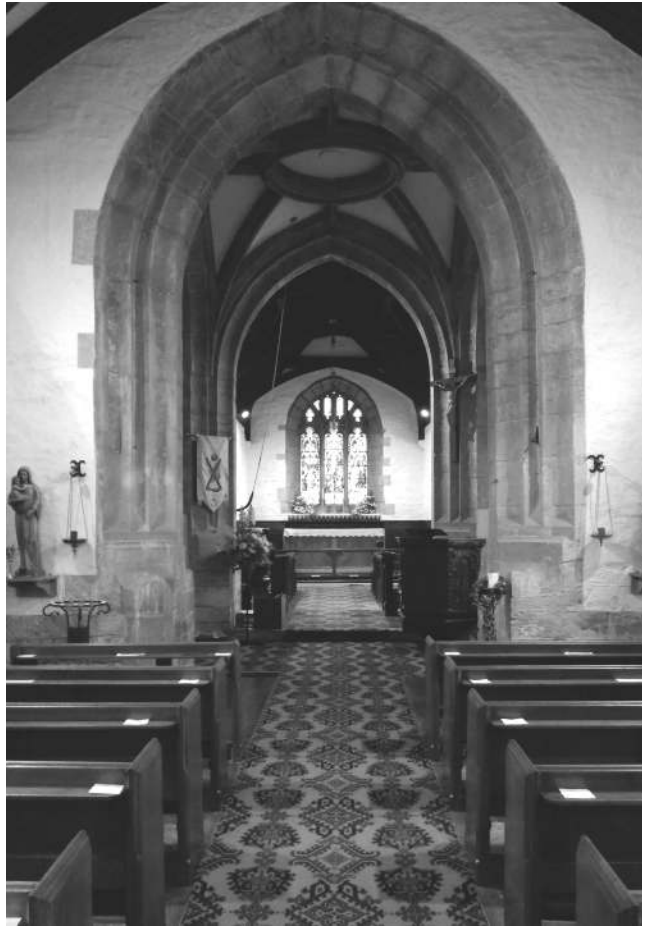
undertaken. On completion of this phase a team of volunteers would undertake a full and thorough cleaning of the whole of the interior.

Whilst the PCC acknowledges that some of these changes are substantial they are necessary to bring the church up to the standards now expected in the 21st century not only by our congregation but by those visiting the church for funerals and baptisms who may require refreshments and/or lavatory facilities of a reasonably acceptable standard. It will also help our church to better serve the community of Hampton by providing an adaptable space that can be used in many and varied ways restoring the ability of the St Andrews to serve its community.

The PCC does not believe that any of the proposed changes indicated in this booklet will have a deleterious effect on St Andrew's church. By adopting these proposals the physical well being of our church has a better chance of surviving well into the future and, as a unintentional bonus, two of the windows currently obscured will become fully visible, further enhancing the beauty of the interior.

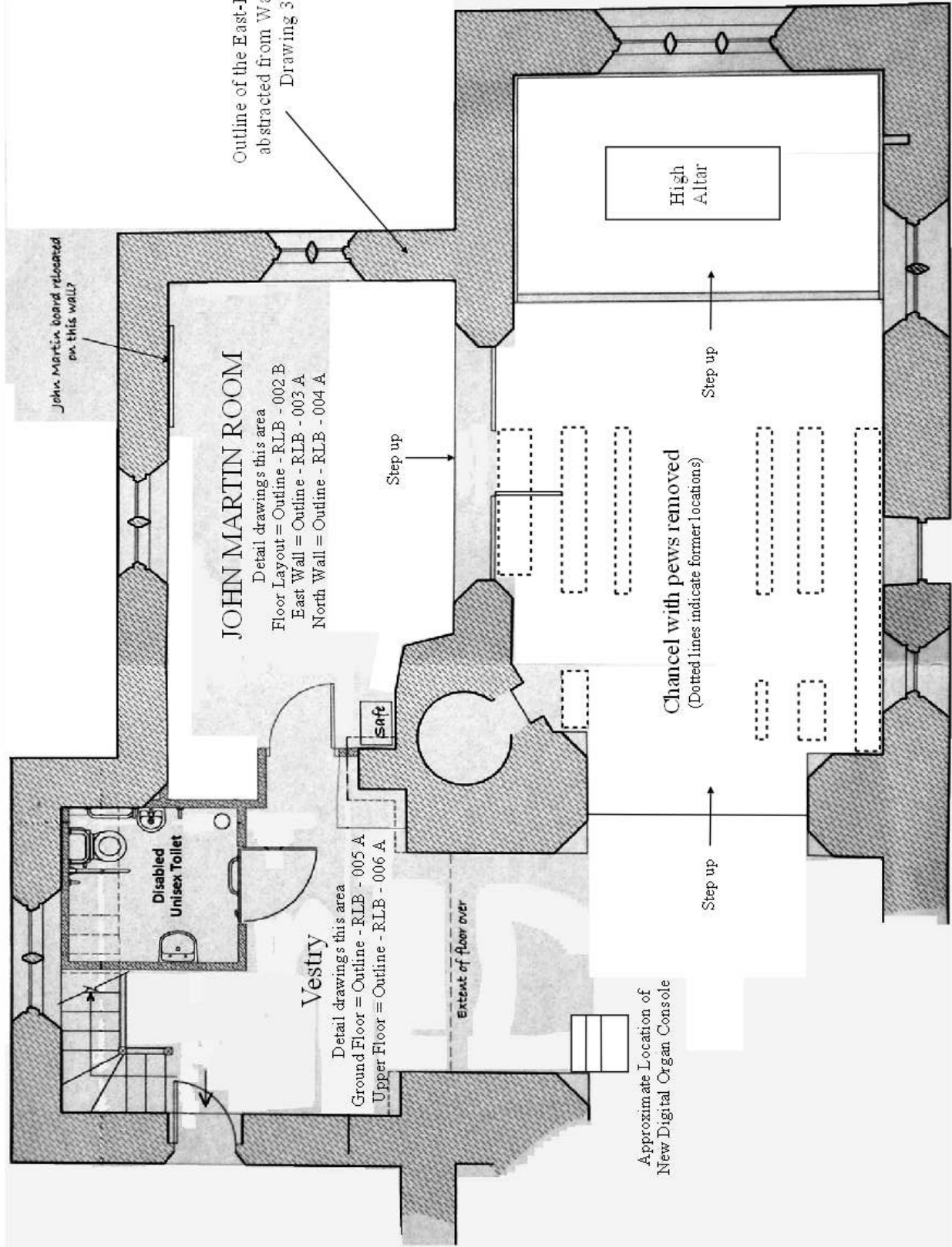


Above - how it looked in 1890
Right - how it looks today



As the church looked in 1890 (above left) and as it is now (above right)





Outline of the East-End of St Andrew's Church abstracted from Ward & Dean Smith Limited Drawing 3914 - SK G Rev A

St Andrew's Church, Pershore Road, Hampton, Evesham, Worcestershire	
W&DS v Outline RLB Drawing Series	
Drawing No.	Outline - RLB - 001 Rev A

John Martin Room

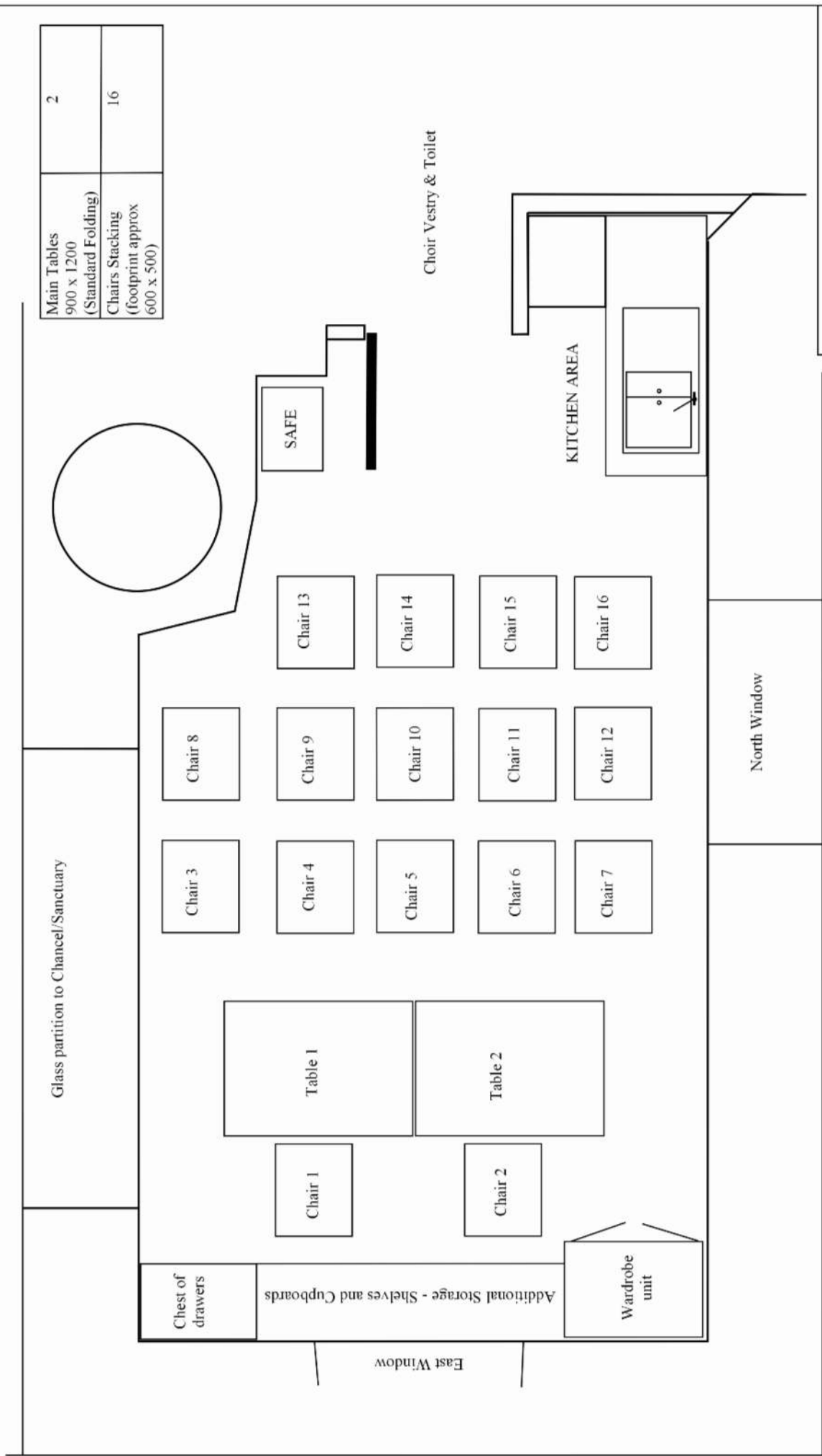
Possible area for
Printer/copier

Extent of upper Floor

Four General Storage Cupboards
Nominally 1.000m x 0.600m x
0.900m hg

Vestry Window

Main Tables 900 x 1200 (Standard Folding)	2
Chairs Stacking (footprint approx 600 x 500)	16



St Andrew's Church, Pershore Road,
Hampton, Evesham, Worcestershire

John Martin Room - Floor Plan

Drawing No. Outline - RLB - 002 Rev B