

ENGLISH HERITAGE REVIEW OF DIOCESAN CHURCHES 2005 (EXTRACT)

St Mary of the Angels, Worthing

Richmond Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 4BJ



HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF CHURCH

ARCHITECT(S) & DATE(S): Henry Clutton 1864 & 1873, Frederick Walters 1897-1907

LISTED STATUS: Grade 2

IN CONSERVATION AREA: Yes

LIST DESCRIPTION:

1864. Attributed to Henry Clutton. Interior and additions to exterior circa 1939. Plum-red brick, as the adjacent convent which is part of the composition. Steep tiled roof. Plate tracery. Rose windows in east and (ritual west) and north transept. 3 lancets in choir end. North side fronts Richmond Road, east end Crescent Road and south side abuts the Convent. North aisle and clerestory have lancet windows. Projecting porch with double arches and

colonnets and belfry with miniature spire on north side, together with modern single-storey extension. Interior very plain.

St Mary's Roman Catholic Church and No 39 form a group with Our Lady of Sion Convent, and the wall extending south, Crescent Road.

Our Lady of Sion Convent

2. Built as one composition with the abutting church, which is attributed to H Clutton and dates from 1864. 2 storeys. Plum-red brick with 2 pairs of bands of dark brick. Fast range, extending extending south along street from ritual west end of church, has 5 sash windows, semicircular staircase projection, and 2 farther sash windows south of this. There is a cross-range at the south end, the east front of which projects towards the street and has a round-arch opening (of banded brick with faintly pointed drip-mould above), giving access to internal porch with geometric tile decoration. Left of the porch is a partly external chimney corbelled out over a narrow buttress. Red tile roofs, over brick eaves nogging, which is also applied to the gable end. Further ranges of the convent extend towards Our Lady of Sion School, which adjoins to the west.

POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS/ADDITIONS TO LIST DESCRIPTION AND/OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

All but the east end of the church is by Henry Clutton (1819-1893). Clutton was an expert in French medieval architecture. Jointly with William Burges he won the abortive competition for Lille cathedral in 1853. In 1856 he converted to Roman Catholicism and in 1875 he was selected as architect for the intended Westminster cathedral (not built until 25 years later by J F Bentley who had worked in Clutton's office from 1857-1860). The *Building News* in 1863 reported 'a new Roman Catholic church is about to be erected at Worthing...The building will be constructed of Bath and Pulborough stone, and flint, and will be designed in such a manner as to permit of the easy addition, at a subsequent date, of chancel and transepts.' In 1873 the same journal reported 'A new chancel and transept which have been added to the (Roman) Catholic church ...were opened on the 12th inst at Worthing. A spacious schoolroom and classroom, sacristy, and bell-tower 76ft in height, complete the cluster of picturesque buildings, which, together with the presbytery and the adjoining convent...forms a substantial pile of red brick, faced with Portland stone, the architecture bearing features of the Early French school of the C13....Mr H Clutton is the architect and Mr R C Blake, of Worthing, the builder.' *The Architect* of the same year reported 'The contract has been taken for the additions to this church, and the works will be commenced without delay. The nave is to be lengthened, and a transept and sacristy extending to the present presbytery will be erected on the north side of the new nave. At the junction of the transepts and nave there will be a lofty bell-tower, and on the western side a spacious schoolroom is to be erected. Mr Henry Clutton is the architect, and Mr R C Blaker the contractor.' Further additions and improvements were carried out between 1897-1907. These

included an aisle, baptistery and the enlargement of porch and sacristy. The architect was Frederick Walters.

The church stands on a large corner site and, together with the adjoining convent and presbytery, forms a picturesque grouping. Bright red brick with bands of stone (to the church) and bands of yellow and blue brick (to the other buildings). The 'modern single-storey addition' mentioned in the list description is misleading. It is no doubt an addition but the materials match and it has clearly been in existence for many years. The interior is 'very plain' owing to alterations carried out probably in the late 1960s or early 1970s. The plan is now centralised, with the altar beneath a crown on parabolic arches. A shallow-pitched panelled ceiling has been inserted, with crude boxed out supports, all very much at variance with Clutton's Gothic. The carved stone reredos floats on the east wall. The only area where something of the original spirit can be glimpsed is in Walters' south aisle chapel with stone and marble altar and reredos with two tiers of figures in arcading.

HISTORY AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CHURCH IF NOT LISTED: N/A

SOURCES

D R Elleray *Sussex Places of Worship* 2004

Building News 6th March 1863, p187

Building News 28th November 1873, p607

The Architect 19th April 1873, p212

The Tablet 22nd November 1873

Board's Guide to Worthing 1863

A new and complete Guide to Worthing and Neighbourhood by G H French, 1868

Worthing Intelligencer 2nd June 1900

STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

An exterior that has the 'wow' factor in its wider composition and because of its clear derivation from medieval France. Correctly listed and graded at 2.

