

Re Holy Trinity, Sittingbourne

Canterbury Commissary Court: Gasztowicz Dep Com Gen, 7 February 2018

[2018] ECC Can 1

Removal of pews – Victorian church – harm

The incumbent and churchwardens sought a faculty permitting the levelling of the floor and removal of all of the pews from the nave of this Grade II listed Victorian church. The pews were to be replaced with metal-framed upholstered stacking chairs. The Victorian Society raised objections, as did a local historian, although neither chose to become a party opponent. The nave pews were original to the church at the time of its construction in 1869, with much of the original Victorian numbering still evident. The court held that the removal of the pews would cause considerable harm to the significance of the building. Though simple, the pews were original Victorian pews in an original Victorian church and therefore of considerable significance to the church as a building of special historical interest. This was not a case where the removal of Victorian fittings from, for example, a medieval church was proposed. It had not been shown that the bulk of the needs identified by the petitioners could not be met by a reduced scheme which retained at least some of the pews, albeit possibly relocated. The proposed change would not be reversible and the proposed replacement chairs were not likely to be appropriate in the church. The petition was dismissed. [RA]

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Re Bingham Cemetery

Southwell and Nottingham Consistory Court: Ockleton Ch, 15 February 2018

[2018] ECC S&N 1

Exhumation

The petitioner sought a faculty for the exhumation of the remains of her husband and daughter from the cemetery at Bingham. The daughter had been buried there after dying at the age of six months in 1948 and the husband was buried in the same grave in 1989. Bingham was the usual cemetery to bury residents of Gamston, which was seven miles away and where the family had roots. The petitioner's other daughter and son-in-law had bought plots in Wilford Hill Cemetery, a mile from Gamston, with a view to their being buried there along with the petitioner in due course. Accordingly, the petition sought exhumation of the remains of the daughter and husband to establish a