

FORM 10 (Rule 7)
Section 9 of Care of Cathedrals Measure 2011
Notice of Decision of Cathedrals Fabric Commission

TAKE NOTICE that the Chapter of the Cathedral and Metropolitan Church of St Peter in York applied on 8th September 2021 for the approval of the following proposal:

Approval for the conservation of two polychrome sculptures currently displayed in the Eastern Crypt, of St Anne and the Virgin (YORDC.2015.727) and the Virgin and Child (YORDC.2015.726).

Summary of the proposals

The significant polychrome sculptures of ‘St Anne and the Virgin’ and ‘The Virgin and Child’ are displayed in the Eastern Crypt, affixed to the eastern wall. Both are identified as of ‘outstanding’ importance on the Cathedral Inventory. ‘The Virgin and Child’ was discovered in the eastern wall of the Lady Chapel following renovations after the 1827 fire: it had been defaced, presumably at the Reformation. ‘St Anne and the Virgin’ was purchased by Dean Milner White in 1953, and donated with support from the Friends of York Minster.

Both sculptures have suffered damage and losses, especially to the important remnants of polychrome paintwork, exacerbated by unsuitable conditions in the Crypt, particularly high relative humidity and fluctuations in RH levels. Salt efflorescence from the eastern Crypt wall, to which the sculptures are attached, is also accumulating on these important works. Conservation and consolidation is required to stabilise them and prevent further damage. Conservation reports have been obtained, and a conservator and methodology selected. Following conservation, they will not be returned to their current location, in which they were placed in the 1970s, as the environmental conditions there are unsuitable for the preservation and care of these important objects. In the short to medium term, the intention is to display them in controlled environmental conditions in the Undercroft Museum, where these magnificent sculptures will be interpreted with reference to research and conservation work. In the longer term, they will be displayed in the Minster with reference to the Liturgical Plan and to their continued care and conservation.

Representations

- Historic England, letter dated 15 September 2021: no comment.

Decision

The above proposal and representations were circulated to the members of the Cathedrals Fabric Commission and discussed at their meeting on Thursday 28th October 2021, when the application was **approved** with the following conditions:

1. That the conservation works are fully documented in post-conservation reports for each of the sculptures.
2. That final details of the consolidation and mounting of the sculptures shall be approved by the FAC. This will not require a new application under the Measure.
3. That final details of the environmental conditions to be provided by the display cases shall be approved the FAC. This will not require a new application under the Measure.
4. That the condition of the statues in their new location is closely monitored, with monthly reports provided by the cathedral to the FAC for the first 6

months after their installation in the Undercroft. After the first 6 months, the FAC shall review the reporting period, with reporting continuing until such a time at the FAC is content that the sculptures are stable in the Undercroft display cases.

The reasons for these conditions are:

1. To ensure the conservation works are fully documented, for future reference by the cathedral.
2. And 3. Because these details are not yet available.
4. To ensure the sculptures are stable in their new location.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Clark", with a horizontal line underneath.

Becky Clark, Secretary of the Cathedrals Fabric Commission

Dated: 18 November 2021

NOTES:

Within 7 days of receipt of this Notice the administrator of the Cathedral Church is to display a copy of it inside and outside the cathedral where it will be readily visible to the public for a period of not less than 28 days.