

## Assessment of Significance – Victorian Pews

Client: Mrs Shelagh Ashley, Churchwarden

Building: Parish Church of St Edmund or St James, Blunham, Bedfordshire

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> February 2025

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### Introduction

1. This Assessment of Significance (hereafter “the Assessment”) was commissioned by Mrs Shelagh Ashley, Churchwarden at the Parish Church of St Edmund or St James, Blunham. It has been prepared by Darcie Kerr BA (Hons) MA (Landscape History) and Esther Robinson Wild BA (Hons) PgDip MA (Archaeology of Buildings) MCifA FSA, Historic Environment Consultants at Robinson Wild.
2. It was commissioned to inform a faculty application for the removal of the Victorian pews in the south aisle, the front three rows of pews within the nave and the front three pews to the south within the north aisle (hereafter “the pews”) within the Parish Church of St Edmund or St James, Blunham, Bedfordshire (hereafter “the church”/“St Edmund or St James”). The church is statutorily listed at grade I (Historic England National Heritage List for England (hereafter “the NHLE”) List Entry Number: 1321759.
3. At the west end of the nave are two sets of pews (four in total) which are older than those which make up the rest of the nave seating and were the subject of a report by Charles Tracy in 2003. These pews are not the subject of the faculty application and will therefore only be mentioned within this Assessment in relation to understanding the significance of the pews within the main body of the nave and the north and south aisle.
4. The Assessment is based on a site visit undertaken on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025, archival (Bedfordshire Archives; Cambridgeshire Archives; Lambeth Palace Library), library (including online) and desk-based research.

### Summary

5. The research undertaken for this Assessment has not found any documentary evidence for the pews’ provenance though it is suspected, based on historic newspaper reports detailing the reopening of the church, that they were introduced to the church by 1862. Further to this, their form and design, and other available documentary evidence indicate that they are of Victorian date. Consequently, they relate in part to an element of the developmental history of the church, albeit in a limited way.
6. The Victorian pews within the church reflect the change in attitudes towards church seating within the mid to late nineteenth century and the desire for pews to conform to one design, ideally taking inspiration or being copies of their medieval predecessors. Their design conforms

to the Midland bench type and has many similarities with pews throughout Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire. Whilst they reflect the local design, they are not untypical and are relatively plain examples of their type. They are considered of low-medium evidential and historical value and of low aesthetic and communal value (see Assessment of Significance below). Overall, they are considered of low significance in terms of their contribution to the heritage values of the church, and thereby its high significance.

7. The removal of the Victorian pews will have a neutral impact on the high significance of the church. The assessment of impact uses an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) methodology which is geared to a range of effects that may or may not lead to significant impacts. It is the impact on the heritage significance of the asset, as the receptor, which is key. Here it is the church. The potential impact of the proposed removal of the pews has been considered in the context of the assessment of their weighting significance; an assessment of the magnitude of the impact; and significance of effect.
8. For the purposes of assessing direct impacts to assets the pre-eminent characteristic of the impact is the scale to which the impact alters the asset. This can be gauged by cross referencing the potential impact activities with each known asset. In addition, the type of impact is judged to arrive at a magnitude. The scale ranges from neutral, through minor and moderate to substantial and the type of impact can be beneficial or adverse. The magnitude of impact to individual assets is a matter of professional judgment and is based on a five-fold scale (substantial, moderate, minor, negligible, and neutral). The range of impact magnitude is explained in Table 2: Factors in the Assessment of Magnitude of Impact to Heritage Assets in Appendix 1.
9. 'Neutral' is explained as "No loss or alteration of asset, no discernible impact either adverse or beneficial, or Very slight loss or detrimental alteration to asset or Very slight benefit to condition/preservation of asset." The range indicates the extent of possibilities on a scale of measurement or quality.
10. The significance of the residual effect on an asset is a combination of the importance of the asset and the magnitude of the impact. The required combination for an identified heritage asset and its respective key features/elements has been undertaken with the aid of a matrix, as shown in Table 3 in Appendix 1, to assist professional judgements regarding importance and impact magnitude in order that a reasonable and balanced assessment of effect significance (either beneficial or adverse) can be reached. In summary, the significance of the residual effect assignment is based both on a matrix that assists judgements regarding the importance of the assets and the magnitude of the impact, and professional judgement.
11. It is considered that given the low significance of the Victorian pews (and the proposed retention of some of these) and the judgement on the level of contribution that they make to the significance of the church, their removal will equate to a 'Neutral' impact.

## The Church

12. As presently known, the earliest part of the church is the base of the west tower which is thought to date to 1100 and forms the earliest record of the church's existence. The Norman arch, which faces into the nave, is retained and two Norman windows are present on the inside of the tower (Blunham Church Architecture, Bedfordshire Archives). The chancel dates to the thirteenth century and retains its original Early English sedilia and piscina. Several features within the chancel date to the fourteenth century including a former window to the east of the north wall and two 2-light windows on the south wall (NHLE List Entry Description).
13. The church underwent several alterations and additions within the fifteenth century and much of the church as it is at present can be ascribed to this time of alteration. Works included the addition of two chapels to the north and south of the chancel (NHLE List Entry Description). The south chapel has an impressive stone screen and doorway leading to the former Lady Chapel which is now used as the vestry. The north chapel houses the organ. The nave dates to the fifteenth century and includes a three-bay arcade in the Perpendicular style, the clerestory is also in the Perpendicular style and dates to the late fifteenth century (Blunham Church Architecture, Bedfordshire Archive). The south porch was added in the later fifteenth century and abuts the churchyard boundary (NHLE List Entry Description). The west tower was largely rebuilt between 1583 and 1585 though still retains part of its original features (Blunham Church Architecture, Bedfordshire Archive).
14. St Edmund or St James underwent several phases of restoration and alteration within the nineteenth century including in 1807 when the tower was repaired by William Revitt and in 1813, when alterations were made to the gallery (Blunham Church Alterations and Additions, Bedfordshire Archives). The largest phase of restoration was undertaken in 1862 by the firm Rattee and Kett which, among several other works, included the reseating of the nave and chancel.
15. Part of the church's historical value, which contributes to its significance, is derived from an association with the seventeenth century poet John Donne who became rector of Blunham in 1621. Donne gifted a paten and chalice to the church and, whilst he did not live in Blunham, he is said to have visited several times a year, employing a curate to minister at the church in his absence (John Donne, Bedfordshire Archives).

## The Pews

16. The 2003 report by Charles Tracy states that the pews at the west end of the nave were made from fragments of the earlier medieval nave pews which were removed in 1862, with the new pews being a copy of their medieval predecessors (Tracy, 2003). The Victorian pews do share several design elements with those to the west, including two slim buttresses (of the same design) to the pew ends flanking a recessed centre. Slight variations in design are noticeable such as at the base of the buttresses, with the Victorian pews possessing a more exaggerated form with the base of the buttresses continuing to ground level, and in the recess which feature chamfered stops as opposed to a plain stop. A stepped plinth runs along the bottom of the Victorian pew front and ends, a design element which is absent on the older pews. It is clear, however, that the

Victorian pews mirror those to the west of the nave in some aspects of design and through this there is a demonstrable relationship between them.

17. As both the Victorian and older pews largely conform to the same style, it is relevant to understand the trends in pew design during the medieval period and prior to the Reformation to understand the design of the extant pews. *Pews, Benches & Chairs* edited by Trevor Cooper and Sarah Brown (2011) sets out the history of church seating and the various designs and forms they take with reference to works including Howard and Crossley's *English Church Woodwork* (1927). From these guides, it is ascertained that the pews at St Edmund or St James conform to, and are a relatively plain example of, the medieval Midland type of bench (Tracy, 2011). Howard and Crossley outline the typical forms of medieval bench end design including the rectangular bench ends that are seen at Blunham. They note that "carving of the Midland work is rarely elaborate" and that "framed-up ends are peculiar to the Midlands and the adjoining counties" (Howard, Crossley pp 302-305). It goes on to state that "one of the chief sources of ornament are the little buttresses applied to each upright" and that the "panels are sometimes left plain," design features that are evident on the extant pews (Howard, Crossley, pp305-306). A report about the church within the Northampton Mercury (22 May 1852) notes that in the nave "the sittings consist mostly of the old open benches; but some wretched square pews have been erected, apparently the pilfering of the rood screen" (British Newspaper Archive). This highlights the range of seating that was present within the church before 1862 and confirms that open benches, most likely medieval in date, were present at the church. Thus, whilst being Victorian in their date of construction, the extant pews draw on the design and characteristics of the medieval Midland type bench and reflect elements of the older pews to the west. It is likely, therefore, that prior to 1862 the church contained pre-Reformation Midland type benches like those at the west end of the nave and the Victorian pews were designed to largely mirror the pews that they were replacing.
18. The mid to late nineteenth century saw a widespread shift in views on church seating and the many guides that were produced at that time form what is considered today to be stereotypical church seating and internal ordering. It is therefore important to briefly note the key changes that were occurring at this time, as it can inform why the pews at Blunham were replaced in 1862 as well as the reasoning for their chosen design. The Incorporated Church Building Society ("ICBS") were responsible for providing grants for church accommodation and became an influential voice on church seating and design (Cooper, 2011). The ICBS produced several edicts and, after 1842, advertised drawings of medieval pews for architects to use when restoring churches (Cooper, 2011). These drawings were often based on churches within Oxfordshire, a county which was home to a large amount of Midland type pews. The pews at Great Haseley, for example, were used by the ICBS as examples of medieval pew design to be followed and, the working design of the pews published in 1843, highlights its similarities to the pews at Blunham (Cooper, 2011). At present, the pews continue to feature many design elements as seen at Blunham.
19. These medieval pews were promoted by the ICBS as models to be followed when restoring churches and, by 1863, it was clear that such advice was widely adopted (Cooper, 2011). Cooper emphasises that a large proportion of nineteenth century church seating would have been

influenced by the ICBS, and that Oxfordshire's medieval seating was "cloned by the thousands over much of England" (Cooper, p214).

20. The pews at St Edmund or St James conform to many of the edicts and promoted designs set out by the ICBS and mirror a type of accepted medieval design that was widely promoted and implemented. It is highly likely, therefore, that the pews of 1862 mirror the previous medieval pews as suggested by the ICBS and are an example of this ethos and the dominance of the Midland bench type. The pews are, therefore, not exclusive to the church but rather conform to a widely utilised design style and standard.
21. Church restoration and reordering within the mid to late nineteenth century was rooted in the belief that everyone should have equal access to church and seating should not be divided according to social standing. This as a result meant that galleries and box pews (often referred to as pews) were removed and bench seating (the pews that we are familiar with today) which conformed to the same design were encouraged. Restoration and reordering, however, did not mean the introduction of completely new designs and instead the ICBS and renowned architect Sir George Gilbert Scott encouraged the use of older designs adapted to fit the new ideals. Scott, for example, emphasised that if new benches were needed then "old benches from churches of a similar period or nearby be used as models, with consideration given to period styles and particularly to local patterns and craftsmanship" (Branfoot, 2011). Scott also recommended that "new seats which are required to be made after precisely the same fashion as the present ancient seats" and published his ethos on church restoration in his 1852 *A Plea for the Faithful Restoration of our Ancient Churches* (Branfoot, 2011).
22. The ethos for church restoration to draw upon historic elements and local design was, therefore, widespread and characterised much of the period. The result of such advice is evident at St Edmund or St James as the pews are like those in nearby churches including All Saints, Great Barford and St Mary Magdalene, Roxton both of which feature pews that are like those within the church. Other churches which have pews like those within the church are also seen in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. Thus, the pews conform to the recommendations of the time, reflecting the pews that are seen within the local area as well as the wider medieval Midland bench type.
23. As a result of the favour that was placed upon medieval pew design by architects such as Scott, and the guides produced by the ICBS which were heavily based on the pews within Oxfordshire, there came to be a common base style of pew which had varying levels of decorative detailing. As Geoff Brandwood notes in his article *Victorian church seating: variations upon a theme*, "by far the most common bench ends are those with a square or flat head" (Brandwood, p285). He goes on to state that the "top is usually moulded and there is typically a sunk panel taking up much of the surface area...small elongated buttresses are often positioned towards the edges" (Brandwood, p285). All these features are evident on the Victorian pews within the church which further demonstrates how the restoration at St Edmund or St James was typical of what many churches underwent within the Victorian period with furniture conforming to the recommended styles.



24. A report within the Bedfordshire Times and Independent (2nd December 1862) describes the extent of restoration in 1862 stating that, “there is no mutilation of original features, no substitution of modern trash, no perversion of ancient art”. Regarding the pews it notes the “removal of the extremely ugly and unseemly pews, which so grievously disfigured the interior” and the addition of “capacious uniform sittings...constructed of oak and display very good design and workmanship.” Regarding whom was responsible for the restoration, the report notes “none but the parishioners can fully estimate what has been done, or those by whom it was done” yet goes on later to note “the works were, we learn, carried out according to the designs of Messrs. Rattee and Kett, of Cambridge” (British Newspaper Archive).
25. Further reference to Rattee and Kett is found within the National Association of Decorative & Fine Arts Societies Record of Church Furnishings (NADFAS) for St Edmund or St James. It records, under the entry for the floor, that “during the church restoration in 1862 the floor was tiled as part of the work undertaken by Ratee and Kett”. It does not, however, attribute the pews to Rattee and Kett.
26. The Bedfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society records the restoration in its 1862 report though does not attribute an architect to the restoration. A mortgage of the church rates to the Public Works Loan Commissioners dated the 4th December 1862 details the requirement of the loan of £160 for “the purpose of repairing the roofs of the north and south aisles” though no mention is made of the wider restoration or those who were employed to carry it out (Bedfordshire Archives, P76/2/2/3). The April 1861 entry within the Vestry Minute Book notes that “the proposed alterations in Blunham Church and the right to the fire engine were discussed but no vote was agreed on” (Bedfordshire Archives, ref: P76/8/2). Later in the same year it notes “an open committee of Vestry was appointed to carry out the proposed alterations in the church, the Rector, Churchwardens...consenting to act upon it” (Bedfordshire Archives, ref: P76/8/2). The entry for April 1862 states “the Vestry and Church Committee agreed to leave the restoration of the church in the management of the Rector, be undertaking to become responsible for the Churchwardens and to the Parish against all and any claims whatever for the work to be done” (Bedfordshire Archives, ref: P76/8/2). Further to this, a small pamphlet which describes the history of the church, and the various furnishings produced in 1909, states that “the church was restored by private subscriptions in the year 1862” and does not note who was responsible.
27. Within the Rattee and Kett Ledger of Works held at the Cambridgeshire Archives, there are three entries relating to the church. . The first entry refers to works undertaken in 1862 which included to the south aisle roof, chancel seating and kneeling stools. The second entry refers to work carried out between 1862-1873 which lists several areas of the church including the “chancel restoration, alter floor, alter rail...repairs stonework generally, many repairs and replastering, nave & aisle oak seating” (ref: 2554/3/4). Further work was carried out in other areas of the church in 1876 and in 1903. It appears, therefore that Rattee and Kett were responsible for a complete restoration of the church which spanned over some years. What is interesting to note, however, is that for each of these entries “no architect” is noted.
28. In 1843 James Rattee established his woodcarving works on Station Road in Cambridge and first met George Kett (carpenter) when working on the new Palace of Westminster building. Rattee

was able to build a successful business, undertaking several pieces of work for Cambridge University which was steadily expanding within the first part of the nineteenth century (Mowlem Today, 1993). Further to this, the arrival of the railway at Cambridge in 1845 allowed Rattee to send items much further and more efficiently than he had done previously. Rattee formed a relationship with the Ecclesiological Society (previously known as the Cambridge Camden Society) and was appointed as their woodcarver. The society played a dominant role, like the ICBS, in promoting church restoration and design and thus created a demand for new fixtures and fittings which Rattee was able to fulfil (Mowlem Today, 1993).

29. In 1848 George Kett entered a partnership with Rattee and after working on Ely Cathedral, Rattee died in 1855. George Kett continued to run the business with Rattee's widow and after Kett's death in 1872, his son George Kett inherited the business. The firm were responsible for several notable works including at Wimpole Hall, Jesus College Chapel, and the Senior Combination Room at Peterhouse, Cambridge (The Furniture History Society). It was under George Kett (the second) that the firm undertook some of their most famous works including the new hall and library for Pembroke College (1870s) and Arundel Castle (Mowlem Today, 1993).
30. The firm, therefore, were synonymous with successful restoration schemes and were associated with the creation of church furniture which conformed with the style and advice of the time. At the time Rattee and Kett were involved at St Edmund or St James, Rattee had died, and the company was being run by Kett and Caroline Rattee.
31. In 2018 work began to convert the former Lady Chapel into a vestry and an inscribed joist was discovered from the time of the 1862 restoration. Upon the joist is written '8th Cambs Volunteer Rifle Corps, 1862, John Hodson Cambridge.' John Hodson was born in Liverpool in 1840 and by 1861, he is recorded as a carpenter living at Pembroke College in St Mary the Less, Cambridge with his aunt and uncle. His uncle worked as the College Butler and by 1871, Hodson became his assistant. After his uncle's death in 1884 Hodson inherited a large sum of money and several properties (Cambridge City Council). One of his lasting legacies is Hodson's Folly located on the Coe Fen built in 1887. His work at St Edmund or St James, therefore, is very early on in his career and little is known about his carpentry work. There are no surviving Rattee and Kett staff records from the nineteenth century and there is no reference within the Rattee and Kett collection held at the Cambridgeshire archives to the craftsmen who worked on the church designs, nor are there any references to a John Hodson. At this time, it is unclear the extent of John Hodson's involvement in works undertaken at the church, his relationship (if any) with Rattee and Kett and if he was responsible for the pews.
32. At the time of the restoration the rector for St Edmund or St James was Dr Mountain who is recorded as being in financial trouble during this time (The Bedfordshire Magazine, 1993). As previously stated, the Vestry Minute Book notes that the rector along with the churchwardens were responsible for arranging and overseeing the restoration works and that a loan was required to repair the roof. The restoration was largely reliant upon donations as noted within a report in the Bedfordshire Times and Independent (July 1862), which advertises a bazar held at the Bedford Rooms in aid of the fund for the restoration of Blunham Church (British Newspaper Archive). It is likely, therefore, due to financial constraints that no architect was used for the restoration to save on cost and that local craftsmen were used in conjunction with Rattee and Kett. This would

also explain why the pews are relatively simple in design, not featuring any tracery unlike others of their type. It is noted within *Bedfordshire Churches in the nineteenth century* (Bedfordshire History Record Society) that “the great Victorian architects, by and large, did little work in Bedfordshire” and “many restorations were entrusted to local men” (Bedfordshire History Record Society, 1994). It would be unsurprising, therefore, for an architect not to have been instructed and for local craftsman to have also worked at the church.

33. The pews within the church reflect the change in attitudes towards church seating within the mid to late nineteenth century and the desire for pews to conform to one design, ideally taking inspiration from, or being copies of, their medieval predecessors. Their design conforms to the Midland bench type and has many similarities with pews throughout Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire. Whilst they reflect the local design, they are not untypical and are relatively plain examples of their type.

### Assessment of Significance

34. In *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008) Historic England (formerly English Heritage) describe four heritage values which may be attached to places/features: Evidential (deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about human activity), Historical (deriving from the ways in which past people, events, and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present), Aesthetic (deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place, and Communal (deriving from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience and memory) which might be taken into account when assessing the significance of heritage assets, whether they are designated or not.
35. Assessing the significance of heritage assets is largely based on knowledge of the asset type, a comparison with what exists elsewhere, and the extent to which it may be distinctive or have special meaning for different groups of people. The incorporation of a values-based benchmark within the assessment helps to ensure a consistency of approach when determining significance in the context of managing change to historic buildings and/or places.
36. The principal heritage values, or interests can be weighted in terms of their relative importance for a heritage asset. The significance of heritage assets or their elements can be measured on various levels.

**Table 1**

Value / Criteria	Description
<b>Very High</b> Building/site/area of international significance	Sites, buildings, monuments, or landscapes of international significance and listed on the World Heritage Site List, or other sites, buildings, monuments, or landscapes of comparable quality
<b>High</b>	Listed Buildings Grade I, Grade II*, Conservation Areas (containing very important buildings) Scheduled Monuments, non-designated





Building/site/area of national significance	sites or assets of comparable quality, Registered battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens Grade I and Grade II*. An aspect (e.g., structure or feature) that strongly contributes to significance
<b>Medium</b> Building/site/area of national significance	Listed Buildings Grade II, Conservation Areas, Historic Townscapes, Registered Parks, and Gardens Grade II. An aspect (e.g., structure or feature) that makes a moderate contribution to significance
<b>Low</b> Buildings/sites/areas of regional/local significance	Buildings and areas of local interest, sites and archaeological remains which are not of national importance, historic landscapes of regional/county importance. An aspect (e.g., structure or feature) that makes a lesser contribution to significance
<b>Negligible</b> Buildings /Sites / Areas of little or no significance;	Buildings/sites/areas of little or no significance. An aspect (e.g., structure or feature) that has little or no value and therefore does not impact significance, either positively or negatively
<b>Negative</b>	An aspect (e.g., structure or feature) that detracts from the significance of a heritage asset

37. The church is grade I listed. Its listed status is a formal recognition of its heritage value and, when taken in the context of the weighting of significance as set out in the table above, it is deemed of high significance.
38. For proportionality, the Assessment does not provide a detailed assessment of the significance of the church but rather considers the significance of key elements and features of the building, specifically the Victorian pews, within the context of the heritage values. This is a standard approach as it is recognised that not all parts of a heritage asset will necessarily be of equal significance.
39. The NHLE list entry provides a description of the church. However, it does not set out the reason for designation, i.e. the principal reasons based on the heritage values or interests as noted above. Notwithstanding the absence of the reason for designation, it is taken from the list entry description that it was based on its evidential value (retention of Norman and medieval fabric evidencing early phases within the developmental history of the building); historical and aesthetic (good example of a medieval church displaying and evidencing various phases of alteration including a large amount of Early English/ Perpendicular architecture); retention of notable decorative tombs associated with significant local people, decorative chancel roof, the retention of fixtures and fittings which signify its developmental history and its association with Dr John Donne. The historic and current use of the church as a place of worship and as a gathering place for the local community also gives it communal value. It is also the only church with “or” in its title.

### **Evidential Value**

40. The pews are demonstrable of Victorian restoration schemes which sought to reseat churches with uniform benches which included and drew upon older medieval designs. They conform to the guidance set out by those such as the ICBS, the Ecclesiological Society and Sir Gilbert Scott and can serve as evidence as to how such advice was enacted. As a result, the pews contribute to

the evidence for a key phase in the developmental history of the church, and the understanding of such. They are also evidence of the wider changes that were occurring at the time.

41. St Edmund or St James is not unique, however, in undergoing reseating/restoration during the mid to late nineteenth century, as previously discussed, many churches across the country also underwent reseating in the Victorian period resulting in similar schemes. As Geoff Brandwood notes in his article, the most popular bench ends were those with square or flat edges, with a sunk panel and small elongated buttresses positioned towards the edges. All these features are evident on the Victorian pews at St Edmund or St James, demonstrating how they conform to the typical style of the time. The pews do hold a degree of evidential value as they draw on the design of the previous medieval benches and thus are able to provide evidence as to the pews that existed prior to the restoration. They also hold a degree of evidential significance as they are both an example of the Midland bench type as well as reflecting the dominant local pattern of design.
42. As previously discussed, the pews were part of a wider restoration scheme undertaken by Rattee and Kett and thus they derive a degree of evidential value by being part of this overall scheme of works. It is important to note, however, that much of Rattee and Kett's scheme for the church survives and that the pews are not the only example of the firms work within the church. Overall, the pews are of **low-medium evidential value**.

#### **Historical Value**

43. The pews hold historical value in the sense that they are evidence of a key phase of historical development within the church as well as representing the wider changes to church seating and restoration in the mid to late nineteenth century. Part of their significance can be derived from the fact they share design similarities with the previous medieval pews and therefore are able to serve as evidence as to the potential style of the previous pews. Their association with Rattee and Kett also positively contributes to their significance, being an example of the firms work. It should be noted, however, that Blunham is not the only church to contain work by Rattee and Kett and that, like many firms, they responded to the demand that was created by changes in church design. Overall, the pews are of **low-medium historical value**.

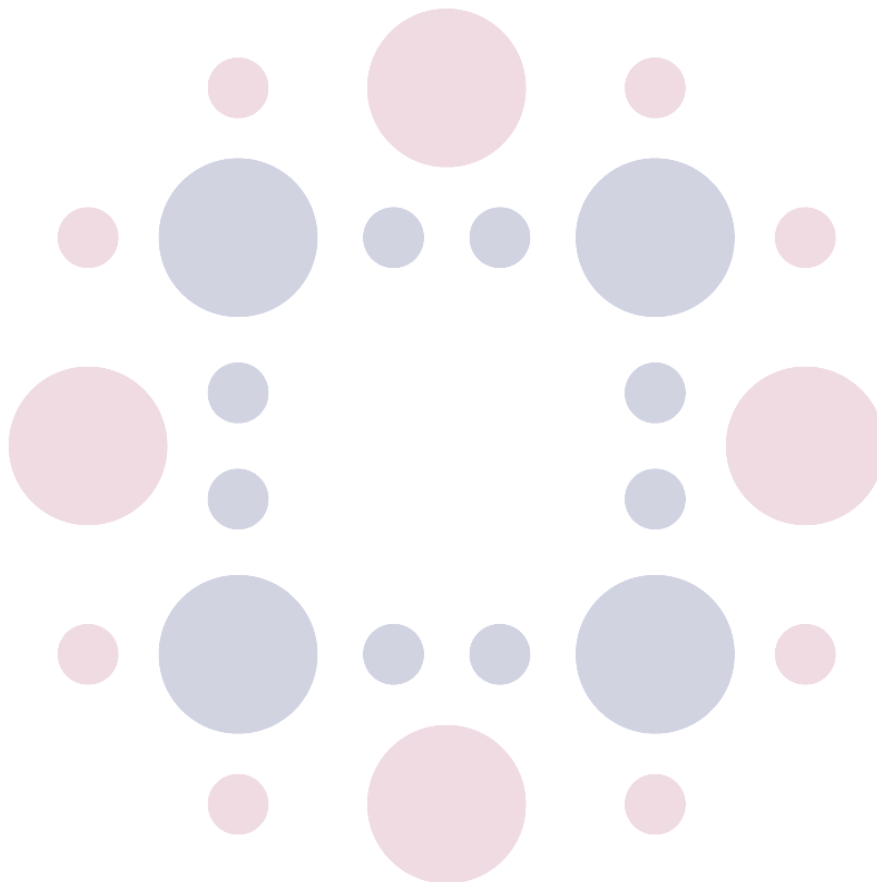
#### **Aesthetic Value**

44. The pews are all of one uniform design and visually, provide a sense of order and uniformity to the church interior. The buttresses on the bench ends and along the front of the front pews are also evident on the front of the choir stalls and the reredos (dating to 1904) and therefore a degree of design cohesion is carried through on other elements of the church interior. This, however, is strictly limited to the buttresses. The pews are of simple design though are well crafted and made of good quality oak. In comparison to the other works by Rattee and Kett within the church (most notably the choir stalls and the reredos), the pews are a limited display of the firm's craftsmanship which is better appreciated within other elements of the church. Overall, the pews are of **low aesthetic value**.

#### **Communal Value**

45. It is noted and discussed within the summary that the pews conform to a regional design and are like pews within several other churches both nearby and in the surrounding counties. Pews

provided a space for people to worship, and their style and purpose was the subject of much debate in the Victorian period, as it is now. The reseating in the mid to late nineteenth century reflected the changing beliefs in worship practice and the moving away from seating, which was organised by social class, with families occupying the same pew for generations. As a result of the modern changing practices in worship and the adaptation of churches as wider community spaces, resulting in the more general use of the space within a church, pews no longer hold the same communal value they once did. The pews are of **low communal value**.



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Cambridgeshire Archives

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Bedfordshire Archives, 'John Donne'

Bedfordshire Parish Churches, 'Blunham – St Edmund or St James'

British History Online

British Newspaper Archive

Capturing Cambridge, 'Hodson's Folly, Coe Fen'

Capturing Cambridge, 'Pembroke Street & Downing Street'

Capturing Cambridge, 'Rattee and Kett/ Kett House'

Historic England National Heritage List for England

Museum of Cambridge, 'The beginnings of some of Cambridge's most iconic businesses'

The Furniture History Society, British and Irish Furniture Markers Online, 'Rattee, James; Rattee & Kett (1809-1904)'

Riversmeet Benefice, 'St Edmund or St James Church, Blunham'





## Appendix 1

**Table 2: Factors in the Assessment of Magnitude of Impact to Heritage Assets**

Impact Magnitude	Description
Substantial Adverse	Total loss of asset
Substantial Beneficial	Comprehensive improvement to the asset through restoration or enhancement
Moderate Adverse	Partial loss of or detrimental modification to the asset, but integrity of majority of asset remains
Moderate Beneficial	Improvement to asset condition/preservation through enhancement or protection
Minor Adverse	Some measurable depreciation to the attributes and quality of asset
Minor Beneficial	Some measurable improvement to the attributes and quality of asset
Neutral	No loss or alteration of asset, no discernible impact either adverse or beneficial, or Very slight loss or detrimental alteration to asset or Very slight benefit to condition/preservation of asset

**Table 3: Effect Significance Matrix for Assets**

<b>Importance of Asset</b>	Very High	Neutral	Moderate	<b>Substantial</b>	<b>Substantial</b>
	High	Neutral	Moderate	<b>Substantial</b>	<b>Substantial</b>
	Medium	Neutral	Minor / Moderate	Moderate / Substantial	<b>Substantial</b>
	Low	Neutral	Minor	Minor / Moderate	Moderate
	Negligible	Neutral	Minor	Minor	Minor / Moderate
	Unknown	Neutral	Neutral	Minor	Moderate
		Neutral	Minor	Moderate	Substantial
	<b>MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT TO ASSET</b>				

## Appendix 2: Photographs

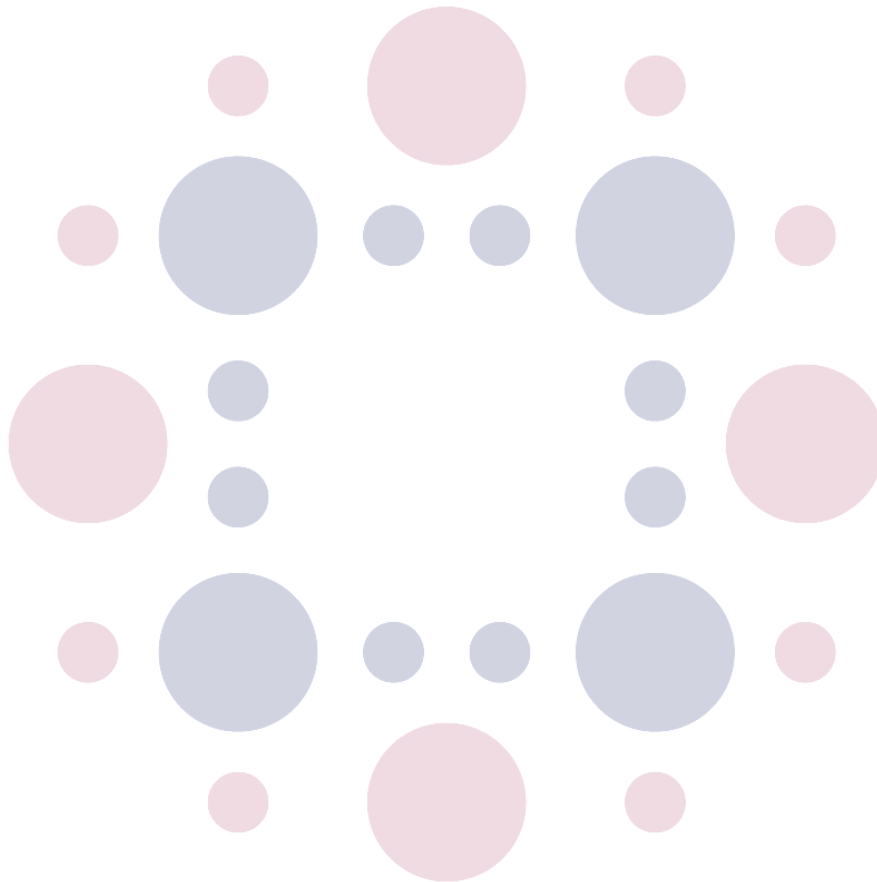




Figure 1: View of the south aisle from the southwest looking northeast. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)



Figure 2: View of the south aisle pews from the southwest looking northeast. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)





Figure 4: View of the south aisle pews from the east looking west. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)



Figure 3: Close-up view of the south aisle pews from the east looking west. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)





Figure 6: View of the back smaller pew on the south aisle from the east looking west. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)



Figure 5: View inside the front pew on the south aisle from the south looking north. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)





Figure 7: View of the front pew (south aisle and nave) from the southeast looking northwest. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)



Figure 8: View of the south aisle pew end. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)





Figure 10: Close-up view of the south aisle pew end. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)



Figure 9: View of the older pews at the west end of the nave from the southwest looking northwest. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)





Figure 12: View of the west older pew from the north looking south. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)

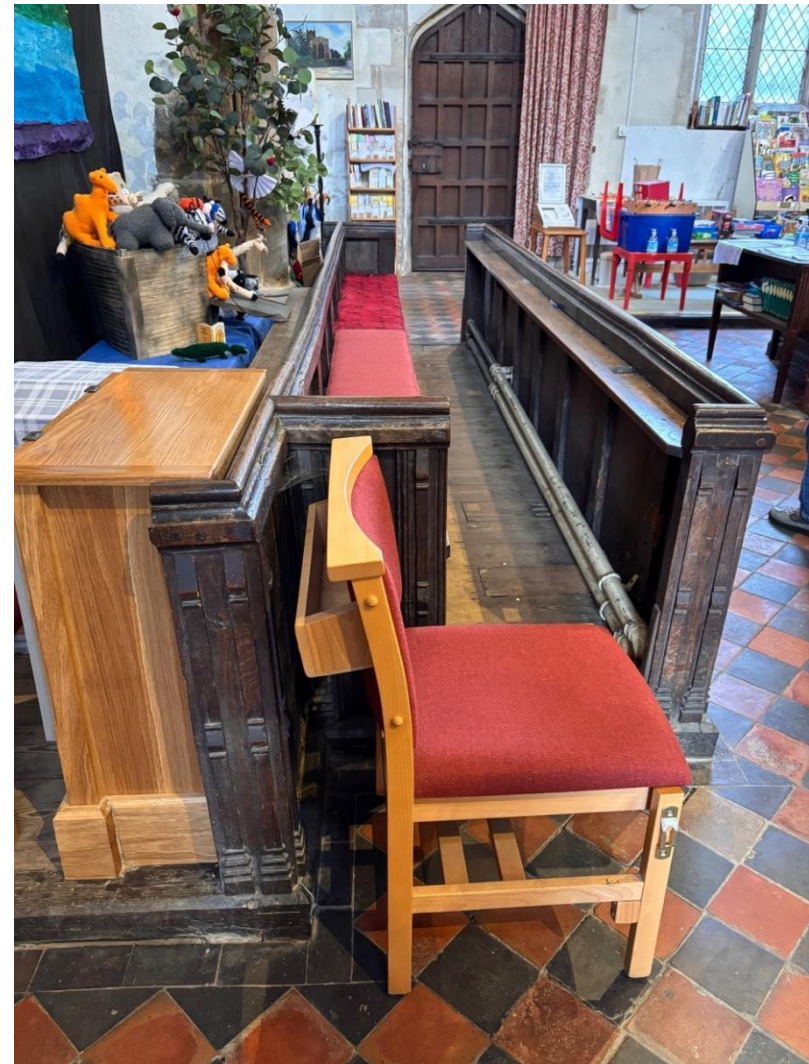


Figure 11: View of the west older pew from the south looking north. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)





Figure 13: View of the north pews in the nave from the east looking northwest. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)



Figure 14: View of the front pews from the north looking south. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)





Figure 16: View of the front pews and pew ends from the north looking south. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)



Figure 15: View of nave and Chancel from the west looking east. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)





Figure 18: View of the south aisle from the west looking southeast. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)

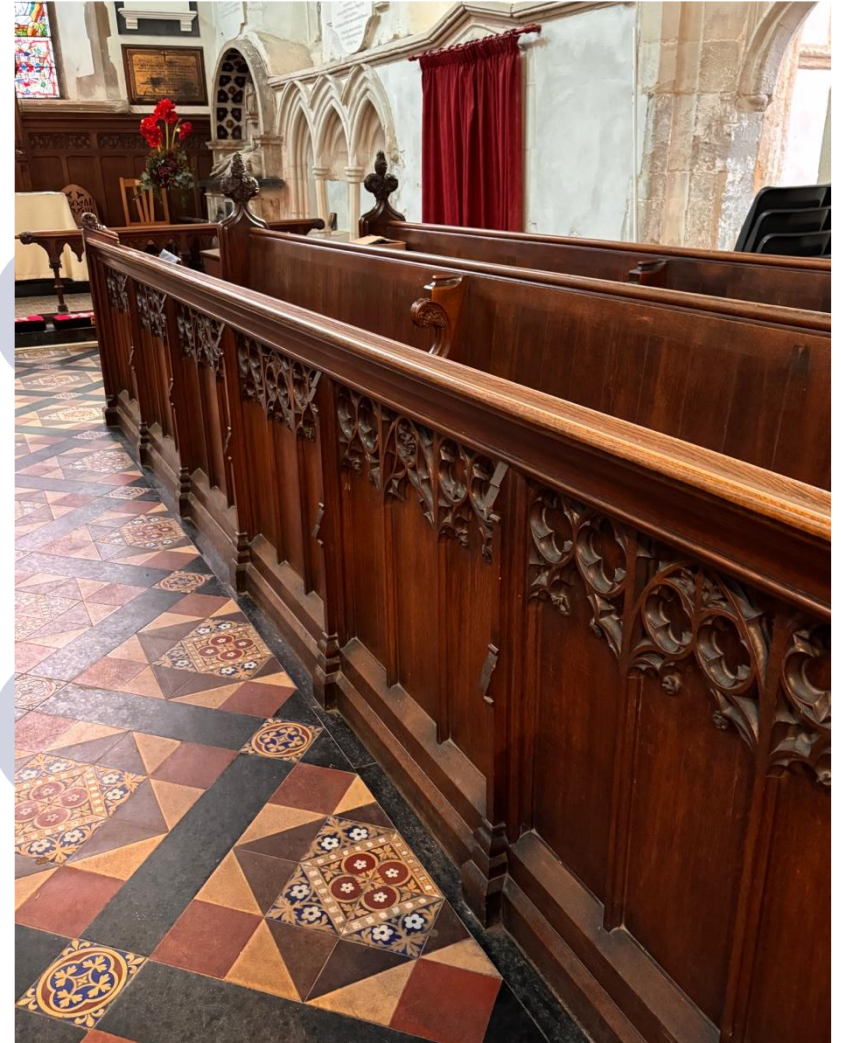


Figure 17: View of the buttress design on the choir stalls. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)



Figure 19: View of the buttress design on the reredos. (Credit: Darcie Kerr)

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