

## **Hall Gate United Reformed church, Doncaster**

### **Statement of Significance**

The Church situated on Hall Gate in Doncaster was opened for worship in October 1804 and is the oldest church building in Doncaster. The building has an arch braced roof and intricate stonework to the front elevation of the exterior of ashlar and coursed squared stone with ashlar and polished granite dressing, with a Welsh slate roof.

The main sanctuary was built in typically non-conformist style; rectangular with two aisles and carved galleries on three sides, with panelled front, on thin iron columns. There is a full-height segmented arch to a half-domed chancel bay, flanked either side at gallery level by moulded semi-circular headed doorways. The pews and pulpit are original panelled pine, although additions were made to the pulpit in the major alterations of 1896.

The church building was enlarged and considerably altered in 1874 by the alteration and the elevation of the frontage and the erection of a new gallery for the reception of a new two manual bellows pipe organ built by Messrs Meacock and Son of Doncaster. Other alterations took place from time to time, most notably in 1896 when two old classrooms were removed and the space thrown into the church. An elliptical arch now marks the old boundary wall and behind this arch were the subsequently enlarged pulpit, organ, communion rail and choir stalls, as well as several additional pews for members of the congregation. The plastered ceiling of the old building was replaced by the open timbered roof seen today.

The most recent major alterations were completed in 1973. These included the removal of the semi-circular, stepped choir pews and additional pews to give a flat platform area in front of the pulpit, and changing the windows to a more Georgian type. The communion rail had been removed at an earlier date. Rows of pews to the rear of the church were also removed, the vestibule was enlarged, and new toilets and a new vestry for the minister were created. The dividing wall between the vestibule and sanctuary was replaced by doors with glass panelling giving the public outside, sight of the interior of the church when the external doors are open.

Added to the front of the church and built to link with the main building yet with its own separate entrance on Hall Gate, a Coffee Lounge of hexagonal plan was opened in 1976. It has little historical or architectural significance.

A third manual with electric action was added to the organ sometime between 1980 and 1995, with a major renovation of the organ being completed in 1995 to provide a three manual pipe organ with full electrified action.

Throughout its existence the building has been continually altered and adapted, which underlines its primary significance, which is as a place of worship and mission for God's people, ever changing in line with our reformed tradition to meet the needs of the worshipping community of the day.

The lamppost at the front of the church is listed in its own right. The ancillary premises would not be regarded as significant in their own right, and are only listed by virtue of being within the curtilage of the listed building.