

EXETER CONSISTORY COURT

CLYST ST GEORGE

DECISION

1. On 14 October 2001 the Rector and churchwardens of St George, Clyst St George, petitioned this court for authority to do various things:
 - (i) to install a WC and associated facilities at the west end of the north aisle;
 - (ii) in order to accommodate those facilities, to remove and dispose of the existing pipe organ, and to install an electronic organ in its place;
 - (iii) to re-site pews in the adjacent area; and
 - (iv) to re-arrange some of the windows in the church.
2. On 13 November 2001 a written objection was received from the British Institute of Organ Studies to the proposed removal of the pipe organ and consequential installation of an electronic organ. Inquiry from the Registry has not given rise to any further representation by or on behalf of the British Institute of Organ Studies, and accordingly I propose to take the objection into account in reaching my decision.
3. It is not disputed that the church presently lacks a WC facility, and that this should, if possible, be remedied. Nor is it in issue that the north-west corner of

the church is the most appropriate place for those facilities to be installed. Further, it is not in issue that, if the proposed changes are to be made, there will have to be some re-arrangement of the pews. Finally, no point arises on the proposed changes to the windows.

4. The one area of contention is whether it is appropriate, in order to accommodate the WC facilities, to remove the pipe organ and to replace it by an electronic organ. This, in itself, gives rise to two issues: will the proposed change provide the requisite additional space? Is it right to dispense with this pipe organ, and to replace it with an electronic instrument?
5. The church of Clyst St George has had an eventful history. Although of medieval origin, the church was all-but rebuilt in the 19th century. The church was also seriously damaged in World War II. The single-manual pipe organ, which it is now proposed to remove from the church, was introduced in the 1950s. Its provenance is doubtful. The installation was carried out by Osmonds of Taunton. The organ probably incorporated earlier work by Dicker of Exeter. The organ was comparatively recently refurbished, and is presently in excellent working order.
6. The proposals are recommended by the Diocesan Advisory Committee. The Organ Consultant to the DAC (Mr Paul Morgan), though not commending the proposals, does not object to them either: "The pipe organ is not an historic or outstanding instrument, and I cannot make any special case for it."

7. My attention has been drawn to a comparison between the tonal qualities of the two organs, and to the comparative length of working life of each instrument.
8. In my view it is reasonable for the new WC facilities to be sited at the west end of the north aisle; and, if this is done, then I take the view, on the material which is available to me, that there would be sufficient space to accommodate the electronic organ, but insufficient space to continue to accommodate the pipe organ.
9. The PCC have carefully considered all of these matters, and have attempted to weigh them up as best they can. They have reached the conclusion that they would wish to make the changes which have been proposed; and, in the circumstances, I can see no good reason why they should^{not} be allowed to do so, if that is what they wish.
10. Accordingly, I propose to grant the Faculty sought.

Dr. Calcutt

1 February 2002

SIR DAVID CALCUTT Q.C.

Chancellor