



## Sacred Heart Church Mosaics and Cartoons Project

### Commissioned Work Brief - Mosaics

#### Overview

The Church of the Sacred Heart & St Catherine of Alexandria in Droitwich, Worcestershire is decorated internally with mosaics. These were installed 1921-1932 directly to the walls of the church and have suffered some degradation over subsequent years, due to some of the individual 'tesserae' falling out. This project is to clean the mosaic installation, secure loose tesserae and re-instate the missing tesserae.

#### Background Information

The remedial work is to be carried out in situ with minimal disruption to the normal activities within the church building. These include daily services at 9:00-10:00 Monday-Friday, 10:00-12:00 on Saturdays and all day on Sundays. There are also occasional ad hoc services e.g. funerals & weddings. During the week it will be possible to section off parts of the church leaving access equipment in place. The interior of the church contains traditional church pews in two aisles but these are not permanently fixed in place. Access to the church is restricted via a door 1.5m wide and 2m high, access equipment will need to be brought through this door. Powered access equipment should be electrically powered and the flooring adequately protected.

There are approximately 5 million individual tesserae of all sorts of shapes and colours. Typically, each piece is 10mm square. They are not grouted, simply having been pushed into the putty. It is believed that the current overall loss is less than 1%, up to 50,000 individual pieces. In some areas of the building however the loss is up to 5%. This is most evident on horizontal surfaces (ceilings), in the side chapels (which are segregated from the main body of the church) and particularly among the gold-coloured tesserae

The tesserae are made from Venetian smalti (enamel glass) and gold leaf tiles and were originally sourced, it is believed, from Orsoni Venezia 1888 SpA. There are stocks of tesserae stored in the church – estimated to be 100,000 pieces. These are a mixture of those collected over the years and surplus from the original installation. These stocks need to be considered first before others are sourced from the original manufacturer.

#### Outputs/ deliverables

Tenders must include reference sites and a proposed methodology, including timescales.

Devise a suitable process to clean the mosaics and demonstrate its effectiveness before proceeding to clean the entire mosaic installation, in stages, collecting dislodged tesserae. Digital records of each section will need to be taken prior to cleaning to enable dislodged tesserae to be reinstated correctly.

Devise a suitable process to reinstate missing tesserae, and demonstrate its effectiveness, before proceeding to reinstate tesserae dislodged during the cleaning process and those previously lost, utilising existing stocks. Digital records of each section will need to be taken afterwards.

Procure additional tesserae from the original manufacturer, as required.

Advise on most suitable ongoing HVAC system/ protocol to reduce further degradation/ loss of tesserae – potentially to include replacement of existing system.

#### Contract Management

For CDM (Construction Design Management Regulations) the parish shall take on the role of client. As client the parish will appoint the contractor as principle designer and principle contractor.



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Works to be carried out during 2025.

Budget cost, including materials, labour, access equipment and VAT is £150,000.

Stage payments are acceptable.

### **Award Criteria**

The contract will be awarded according to the following criteria, in order of priority:

- 1 Previous demonstrable experience, including reference sites
- 2 Delivery timescale and minimised disruption
- 3 Cost
- 4 Delivery leadtime

### **Timetable**

Tenders to be received by 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025

The contract will be awarded by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025

### **Contact Details**

The church is located at:  
Worcester Road,  
Droitwich  
Worcestershire  
WR9 8AZ

Visits to see both the mosaics and the stock of tesserae can be arranged by contacting:  
Jim Spink (jim.spink@gmx.com)