



St Peter's Parish Church, Powick, Worcestershire, and survey of North Wall of the Chancel.

R.D.Sproat©April 2021.



Fig 1. Doorway in North Wall of Chancel.

Summary.

This is a buildings stonework survey of the north wall of the Chancel at Powick Church. It was originally conducted on behalf of The University of Birmingham as part of a programme of historical buildings recording studies.

Location. NGR SO 83444 51526. Easting 383444, Northing 251526



Powick Parish Church

Description of the Church structure.

The earliest known mention of the church at Powick is to be found in the Domesday Book, which records a resident priest in 1086. It must be assumed that the building at this time would have been a simple wooden structure. At about that date the last surviving Anglo-Saxon Bishop of Worcester, Wulfstan II (1008- 20th January 1095), requested that many owners of manors replace their church structures with more permanent stone buildings.

The oldest remaining parts of the building are Norman, from the 12th century, but there have been many alterations and additions, especially the windows, throughout the 13th and 14th centuries.

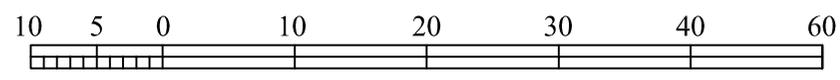
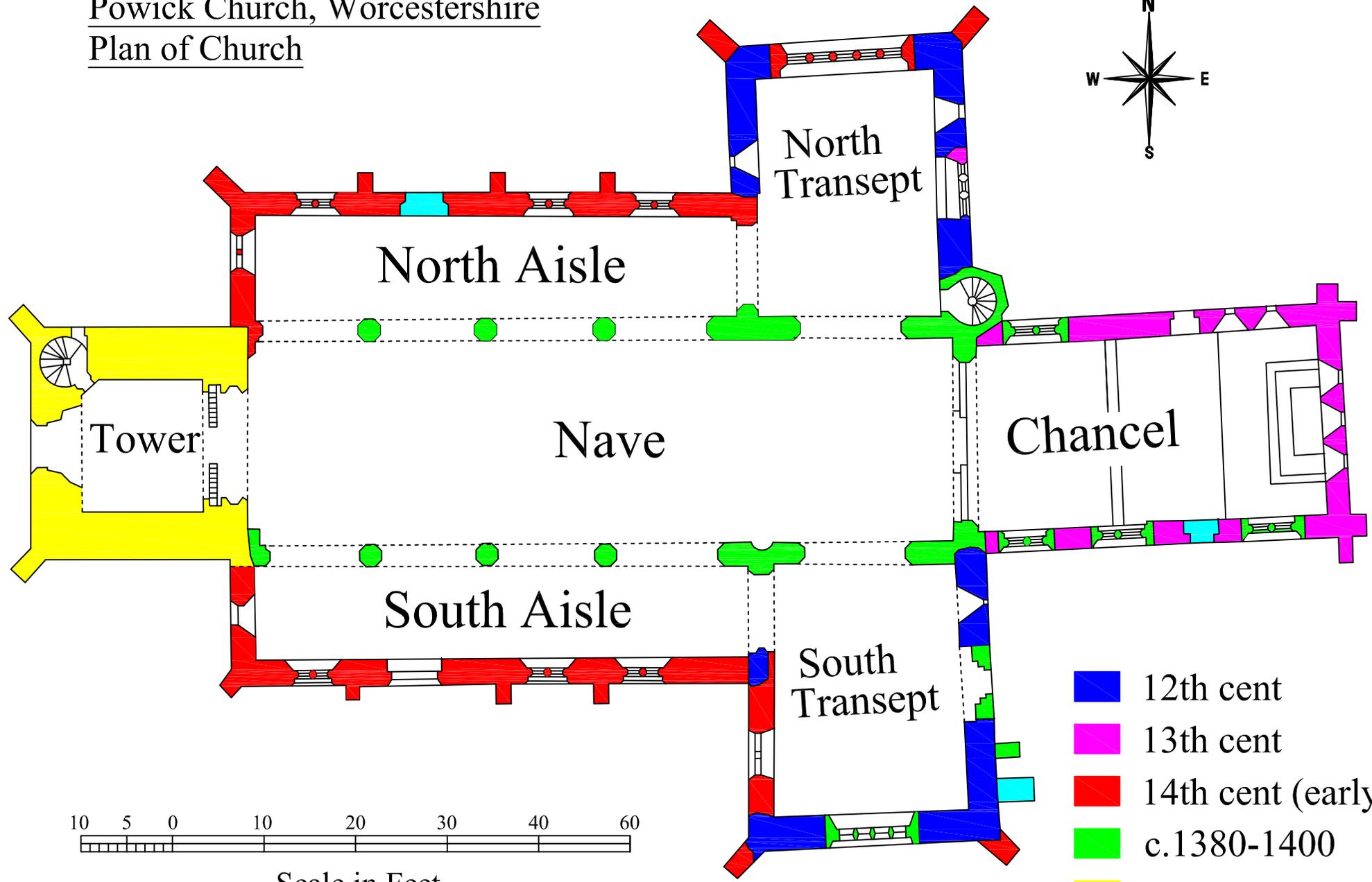
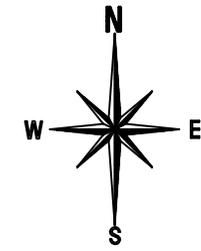


Fig 3. Aerial view of Powick Church (courtesy of Google Earth).



Fig 4. St Peter's Church, Powyke/Powick, looking north,
(postcard dated Jan. 1904).

Powick Church, Worcestershire
Plan of Church



Scale in Feet

- 12th cent
- 13th cent
- 14th cent (early)
- c.1380-1400
- 15th cent
- 16th-19th cent



Tower

The tower was not built until the 15th century. The present entrance under the tower was opened in the mid-19th century, when the previous in the South Wall was blocked up. Powick is close to the first Battle of Worcester in 1642, and second battle on 3rd September 1651, with evidence of musket ball fire on the south wall of the tower; 'target practice'?

Nave

The Aisles are in the Decorated Style with the Nave columns in Perpendicular Style. There was no major rebuilding but replacement of some parish stonework. The Chancel arch is 19th century.

The Nave itself was completely re-planned and re-furbished in the great restoration which took place in the mid-Victorian times, but some of the 15th century carved oak bench ends can still be seen at the ends of the pews. The 14th century font, just inside the West Door, is an octagonal stone basin, with panelled sides, standing on a panelled and moulded stone base.

Transept

The oldest parts of the building are the walls of the north and south transepts. These are dated to the 12th century by the round-headed lancet windows in both transepts and may have formed part of an earlier church, possibly with a central tower, which is now lost. It is illuminated, apart from the East Window, by four 14th century windows, three on the South and one on the North Wall. Finally In the 15th century the rood screen stairway turret was added, and windows with trefoil lights inserted in the transepts and aisle walls.

In the North Transept are two more Norman windows, in the East and West Walls, with a larger 13th century window in the East Wall. The window in the North Wall, with its five cinquefoil lights and perpendicular tracery are a restoration of a 15th century original. The doorway in the south-east corner led to a circular stone stairway to the Rood loft.

The Rood Screen, Pulpit, and Transept Screens are all Victorian.

Chancel

The Chancel was probably re-built and lengthened in the 13th century to replace an original smaller 12th century chancel. It is built in roughly coursed pink/red sandstone. Later in the 13th century the upper section of the chancel was rebuilt to include the two gothic lancet windows seen today. The roll mouldings probably went all round the chancel but were stopped on the north side by the insertion of the later window.

Roll moulding encompassing Chancel before re-building

Roll moulding sunk during re-building

Green Sandstone blocks

Later window insertion, and wall, (where roll moulding Stops)

Red Sandstone

Late 13th cent.

Green Sandstone 14th cent

12th cent. Norman lancet window

Red Sandstone

Early 13th cent.

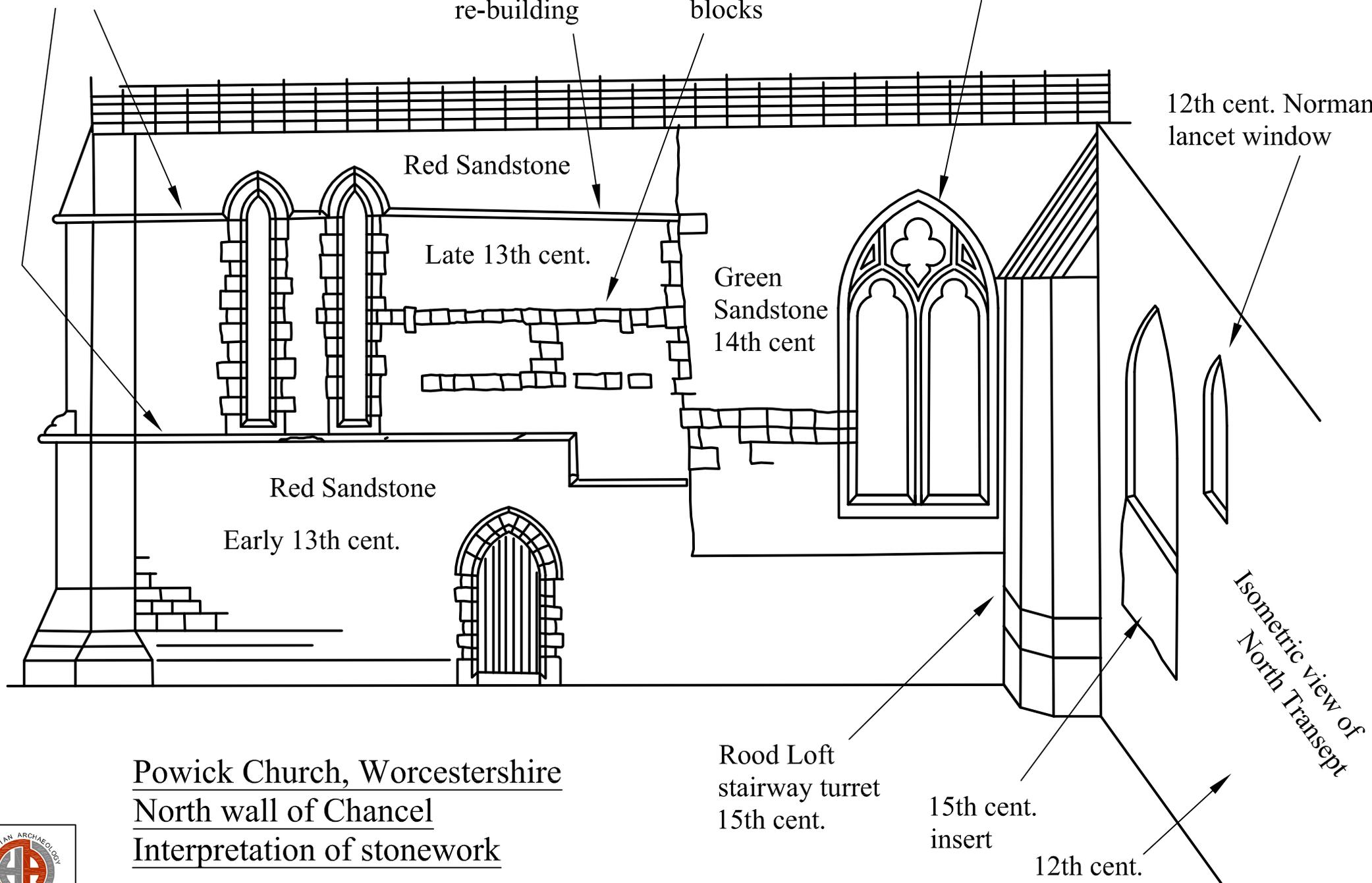
Isometric view of North Transept

Rood Loft stairway turret 15th cent.

15th cent. insert

12th cent.

Powick Church, Worcestershire
North wall of Chancel
Interpretation of stonework



In the 14th century a section of the north chancel wall was removed and a new part of the wall inserted, constructed of green sandstone together with a finely traced window insert. This may have been accompanied by some re-building of the adjacent wall as the roll moulding mentioned above appears to have sunk down over time.

Conclusion.

The early Powick Church, (as with Clains Church), was large for a parish church in Worcestershire. The floor plan of the original church indicates that it was of cruciform in shape, a design used going back to early Christianity. The thickness of the walls suggest that there was not an original central tower but rather a pyramid hipped cupola that was demolished in the late 1200s.

The North and South Transepts, (and most probably the earlier Chancel), are angled 3 degrees out of alignment to the Nave. Small lancet windows in the east and west walls of the 12th century Transepts certainly implies that they were inserted pre-Norman, and as such suggest that this part of the church dates back to at least to the time of the edict of the Anglo-Saxon Bishop of Worcester, Wulfstan II.