



Area : Banff and Buchan

Parish : Pitsligo

Kirkyard : Peathill old Kirk.

N.G.R. : NJ 935 663

S.A.M. : Scheduled Monument.

Listing Category : Kirk Cat. A,

Yard Cat. B.

Conservation Digest : Urgent.

The old kirk is in need of a considerable amount of structural work to ensure that its fabric is preserved: all of the major problems being listed above. Of extreme urgency is the belfry. All of the recumbent stones need to be carefully brushed to remove layers of moss and grass cuttings.

Interpretative Potential : Very high.

The old kirk is very interesting from an architectural and historical viewpoint, with its decorated loft housed in the A. Marshall MacKenzie-designed church adjacent. The design of the bellcote is one of the most outstanding in Aberdeenshire and many of the recumbent stones exhibit excellent decoration.

Access Issues : The old kirk is located at the side of a relatively broad road though there is no actual provision for parking cars at the old graveyard.

Date of Visit : 21/08/98.

Boundary wall and gate piers : All in good condition throughout.

The old Kirk : The old kirk, built in 1632 with the S. aisle added in 1634, (this being commemorated by a well-carved plaque bearing the initials A. L. P.), is of a T-plan composed of rubble walls with dressed red sandstone margins. The entire kirk is in dire need of being re-pointed and possibly re-harled throughout. The thin layer of debris above the Forbes of Pitsligo mausoleum must be removed and the fine arch above cleaned of all weeds and its top surface consolidated, though the mausoleum beneath appears to be in good order. The ivy on the S. wall of the main aisle needs to be checked soon and a very serious crack on the W. wall also requires remedial work.

The bellcote and gable wall need the most urgent attention, though the bellcote still exhibits a very high calibre design, with strap-work pyramidal finials rising above clustered columns and terminating in a shaped ball finial. The finial is now shattered badly with the entire structure leaning visibly to the north.

Tombstones : There are approximately 145 recumbent tombstones, 23 of which are significantly decorated, with many hundreds of upright tombstones dating from the 17th - century.

