

# ENGLISH HERITAGE REVIEW OF DIOCESAN CHURCHES 2005 (EXTRACT)

## **The Divine Motherhood & St Francis of Assisi, Midhurst**

St Mary's Presbytery, Bepton Road, Midhurst, West Sussex GU29 9HD



### **HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF CHURCH**

ARCHITECT(S) & DATE(S): Guy Morgan & Partners 1957-63

LISTED STATUS: not listed

IN CONSERVATION AREA: No

LIST DESCRIPTION:

POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS/ADDITIONS TO LIST DESCRIPTION AND/OR  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: N/A

HISTORY AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CHURCH IF NOT LISTED:

A fan-shaped building, of random Sussex sandstone backed with stock bricks, prominently sited on a bend in Bepton Road. The outer face of the fan faces the road and is almost entirely glazed. It is tall with a central entrance bay

with a large sculpture of Madonna and child filling the area of wall above the porch. To either side are three bays of glazing above low walls and divided by deep buttress sections of walling or fins. This façade is continued with a short open colonnade linking to a soaring campanile. The rest of the church externally is unadorned, with windows only to the lower projecting element. The flat roof is steel-framed with stepped plywood suspended ceiling. The effect is to create an interior bathed in light coming from behind the congregation. A circular skylight pierces the roof above the altar. The porch internally becomes a gallery with sweeping stairs on either side. Along the side walls a continuous stone band carved with the stations of the cross. Christ on the cross (behind the altar) by Michael Clark. The church (excluding the belfry) was to cost £35,000 (letter dated 18/3/57 in diocesan archives). Earlier church still stands in Rumbolds Hill, 1868-9 by C A Buckler. Guy Morgan (1902-1987) worked in Edwin Lutyens' office. He set up his own practice, Guy Morgan & Partners, specialising in the commercial sector, buildings such as Bowater House and The royal Thames Yacht Club, both in Knightsbridge.

#### SOURCES

Pevsner *Sussex* 1965

*Architectural Review* January 1958, p26

#### STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

A highly original post war church making best use of its site. High quality materials and design. Possibly listable at Grade 2

