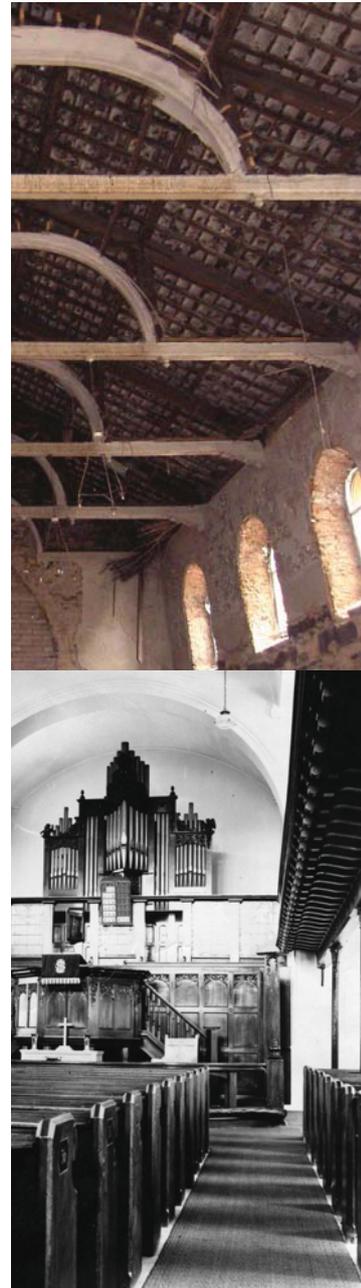


# FORMER METHODIST CHURCH, QUEEN STREET, MILLOM, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Building Recording



Client: Mark Tohill  
Planning Ap. Ref.: 4/06/2352  
NGR: SD 17593 80057

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## Non-Technical Summary

A proposal was made to convert a derelict former Methodist church on Queen Street, Millom, in Cumbria into dwellings. After a recommendation by Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service, Copeland Borough Council placed a condition on planning consent requiring a programme of building recording. This was to comprise a Level 2-type recording and a rapid desk-based assessment. The recording was carried out in August 2006.

The former church was built in 1872 in part of the rapidly expanding town of Millom to the designs of James W. Grundy of Ulverston. It was soon enlarged, with the addition of a gallery (although this was included in the original plans) and extensions to the west end. By the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, it was in a poor condition and in 1958 extensive repairs were made to the south wall. The church remained in use until 1993 when it was closed. All the interior fittings were removed following this, and it was used as a builder's store.

The building recording revealed five main phases of building and alteration, the earliest of which comprises the construction of the original, slightly smaller church. There was minimal evidence within the fabric of the building for some of the earlier extensions, which had evidently closely matched the original, while the 20<sup>th</sup> century repairs and subsequent stripping of the interior were evident throughout.

## Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank Mark Tothill for commissioning and supporting the project and for supplying information about the site and for providing copies of the architect's drawings. Further thanks are also due to the staff of the Cumbria Record Office in Barrow-in-Furness, Amanda Penellum at Millom Tourist Information Centre, Jack Giles the Senior Steward at the present Methodist Church adjacent to the site, and the staff at the library in Millom, for their help and additional information.

The desk-based assessment was carried out by Kelsang Malaya, and the building recording was carried out by Daniel Elsworth, who also wrote the report and produced the illustrations, with assistance from Sam Whitehead. The project was managed by Jo Dawson, who also edited the report.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 An application (4/06/2352) was made by Mark Tohill to convert a former Methodist Church on Queen Street, Millom, Cumbria (SD 17593 80057) into three dwellings. After a recommendation by Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service, Copeland Borough Council placed a condition on planning consent requiring a programme of building recording. After consultation with the County Archaeologist at Cumbria County Council the specific requirements of the building recording were confirmed as a Level-2 type investigation (English Heritage 2006). A project design was produced by Greenlane Archaeology (see *accompanying CD*), and following the acceptance of this the recording was undertaken on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2006.

## 1.2 Location, Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The former Methodist Church is situated on the east side of the centre of Millom town centre (Fig 1). It lies between approximately 10m and 6m above sea level (Ordnance Survey 2002). Millom is situated on the edge of the West Cumbria Coastal Plain, the landscape of which is typically pastoral and comprises an '*undulating or gently rolling topography*' dominated by pasture but scarred by repeated episodes of industrial activity, in this case principally iron mining (Countryside Commission 1998, 26). The solid geology of the general area is complex, and Millom is largely situated on a small patch of Silurian Coniston Limestone, with Carboniferous Limestone to the south and Bannisdale slates to the north (Moseley (ed) 1978, plate 1). The overlying drift geology is composed of thick glacially-derived tills (Countryside Commission 1998, 27).

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The building investigation comprised three separate elements intended to provide a suitable record of the structure, in line with English Heritage standards (English Heritage 2006). In addition a rapid desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with the project design (see *accompanying CD*), and a suitable archive was compiled to provide a permanent paper record of the project and its results in accordance with English Heritage and IFA guidelines (English Heritage 1991; Ferguson and Murray n.d.).

### 2.2 Desk-Based Assessment

2.2.1 A rapid desk-based assessment was carried out. This principally comprised an examination of early maps of the site, which could demonstrate the basic phasing and development of the building. In addition, photographs and drawings showing the building before it was gutted were also examined. A number of sources of information were used during the desk-based assessment:

- **The Cumbria Record Office in Barrow-in-Furness (CRO(B))**: this was visited in order to examine early plans of the site, other primary sources, and local and regional histories and directories;
- **Millom TIC and Folk Museum, and Methodist Church, Millom**: information about the site, principally photographs showing the church before it was gutted, was provided by Jack Giles via Amanda Penellum at the Millom TIC and Folk Museum;
- **Millom Local Library**: a small number of secondary sources were also examined in the library in Millom;
- **Greenlane Archaeology**: additional secondary sources held in Greenlane Archaeology's library, used to provide information for the site background, were also examined.

### 2.3 Building Recording

2.3.1 The building recording was carried out to English Heritage Level-2 type standards (English Heritage 2006). This is a largely descriptive investigation, with only a limited level of interpretation of the phasing and use of the buildings, which incorporates evidence compiled during the rapid desk-based assessment. The recording comprised several parts:

- **Written record**: descriptive records of all parts of the building were made using Greenlane Archaeology *pro forma* record sheets;
- **Photographs**: photographs in both 35mm black and white print and colour digital format were taken of the main features of the building, its general surroundings, and any features of architectural or archaeological interest. A selection of the colour digital photographs is included in this report, and the remaining photographs are presented on the accompanying CD;
- **Drawings**: drawings were produced by hand-annotating proposed illustrations of the building drawn by the client's architect and provided in hard copy by the client. These comprised:
  - i. plans of all of the main floors, at 1:100;

- ii. a cross-section, at 1:100;
- iii. one long external elevation, at 1:100;

## 2.4 Archive

2.4.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design (see *accompanying CD*), and current IFA and English Heritage guidelines (Ferguson and Murray n.d.; English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive and a copy of this report will be deposited in the Cumbria Record Office in Barrow-in-Furness or Whitehaven on completion of the project. Three copies of this report will be deposited with the Cumbria Historic Environment Record, one with the client and one with the client's architect, and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition, a digital copy will be offered to the NMR and a record of the project will be made on the OASIS scheme.

### 3. Desk-Based Assessment

#### 3.1 Queen Street Methodist Church

3.1.2 Because of the late date of the building, and because it is a church, there are several detailed records of its construction, use and later alterations. Secondary but near contemporary sources state that the church was built in 1872 at a cost of £1500 (Mannex and Co 1882, 479). The original drawings for the building work were produced by James W. Grundy (CRO (B) Z1099 1872), an architect from Ulverston who built a number of important civil and commercial buildings in that town including the original market hall, at least part of the police station, and even a warehouse (Elsworth 2006, 16). The drawings show that it was originally envisaged with a first floor gallery, that it would be shorter (only five bays long, with five windows in each side elevation), have a large organ in a separate room at the west end on the first floor with the vestry rooms beneath, a porch on the north-west side (two different options for which appear to have been presented), a raised dias for the pulpit at the west end, and dressed stonework detailing on the exterior (Plates 1-6). A contemporary illustration, presumably of the proposed building was also produced, showing many of the same features (Plate 7).

3.1.2 It seems that the original proposals were too ambitious for the available funds as a later source states that not only did the church cost £2031 to build, but the gallery was not added until 1876, along with a further extension that cost £623, and at the same time an infants' school was also built in the grounds (Bulmer 1901, 586). Confusingly, it has also been stated, more recently, that the church cost £2865 to build (Myers 1991, 57). Initially it was said that the building could hold 450 people (Mannex and Co 1882, 479), and later 750 (Bulmer 1901, 586) and even 800 (Kelly 1938, 240; Myers 1991, 57) suggesting it was either regularly enlarged or that some of the figures are misleading. An additional large building was added to the north, however (see *Section 3.2.1* below and Plate 8), which may have accounted for the extra accommodation, although this was probably a Sunday School. Late 19<sup>th</sup> century photographs of the interior show a relatively simple decorative scheme, with some wall painting, timber pews and a timber fascia attached to the front of the gallery (Plates 9-10).

3.1.3 By the late 1950s the church was evidently in poor condition, and it was considered necessary to carry out some major repairs (CRO (B) BDF C/M/M/7/3/1-3 1958-1960). An inspection carried out on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1958 recorded that '*The church built about 80 years ago, with walls of stone 2'3" in thickness, is in quite good condition except for cross wall at the Chancel end which shows cracks in places; it has moved outwards back towards Wellington Street causing a bulge outwards at the corner and extending along the side wall for about 9'0 or so*' (*ibid*). The movement within the building was considered to be as a result of the damaged wall having been built on the line of a ditch, an area of filled ground, or area affected by water (*ibid*). The condition of the side wall was considered to be so poor that it was proposed that the building be demolished and a new church built in its place, but ultimately money was raised to carry out substantial rebuilding of the affected parts of the church (Plates 11-14). At this time some of the pews and the area around the pulpit were re-organised (Jack Giles pers comm.). The church remained in use for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century after the renovation work (Plate 15), but was finally abandoned in 1993 (Jack Giles pers comm.), all the original fittings were removed and it was turned into a builder's store (Mark Tothill pers comm.), and the hall to the north was demolished (Jack Giles pers comm.).

## 3.2 Map Regression

3.2.1 A number of early maps of the site were examined, but as the church was not built until 1872 and the area around the church did not develop until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, nothing earlier than 1899 was of any use in elucidating the history of the building. The maps were able to reveal a number of pieces of information:

- **Ordnance Survey 1899:** the building forms a single rectangular block by this date, although the south-west corner is shown as a separate structure within it (Plate 16). There is a large building to the north, presumably the school room and extra buildings;
- **Ordnance Survey 1924:** the church has evidently been further extended by this date, with a small addition to the north side of the west end, and an even smaller addition to the south side of the west end (Plate 17).

3.2.2 **Conclusion:** the documentary and cartographic sources demonstrate that the building as originally envisaged was actually slightly shorter than the present structure, and although it is not clear whether the proposed plans were completely adhered to, it is recorded that the building had been extended by 1899. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the building was enlarged in 1883 and/or 1908 (Jack Giles pers comm.) - both dates that potentially fit the documentary sources. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the building was extensively renovated, which has left a detailed documentary record of the building, but it retained much of its general form, until it fell into disuse in the early 1990s and all of its internal fittings removed.

## 4. Building Recording

### 4.1 Setting

4.1.1 Queen Street is situated on the east side of the centre of Millom, in an area of terraced housing that undoubtedly formed during the town's rapid development during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is surrounded by housing on the north, east, and south sides, with small-scale industrial buildings to the west (Plate 18). A large open area comprising gardens and parking is situated immediately to the north of the building, on the west side of which the present Methodist church (Fig 2).

### 4.2 Arrangement and Fabric

4.2.1 The former church is orientated east/west, with the main access onto Queen Street at the east end, and additional access on the north-west and south-west sides. The majority of the building is constructed from courses of slate, with the details around the windows and doorways finished in red sandstone. The roof is finished with grey Lakeland slate, and the entire building is two storeys tall. The west end of the building is butted by a recently renovated dwelling, which is also two storeys high but lower than the church. This was not included in the building recording.

### 4.3 External Detail

4.3.1 **Church:** the church forms a single large building, the west end of which is largely obscured by later extensions.

4.3.2 **East elevation:** this is the front of the building (Plates 19-20). It is entirely finished with a roughcast render, although the original string course and chamfered plinth are visible. The main entrance is situated within a square porch that projects from the centre of the elevation, and contains a large doorway with a double door constructed from tongue and groove planks with iron studs and elaborate strap hinges. The doorway has a recessed and round-headed arch (with a single key stone, attached to which is the remains of a light fitting) surround, and the projecting porch has a flat roof. There is a single flat-headed window with recessed lintels either side of the porch, both of which are boarded up, but with the remains of what is probably a six-light window surviving in one. Above these are two further round-headed windows, and in the centre there is a four-part group of narrow round-headed windows with moulded round-headed arches springing from a moulded cornice or entablature continuing the line of the string course. Above this group of windows is a small circular aperture filled with timber slats. The gable is finished with a slightly raised coping, with squat square finials at each end.

4.3.3 **North elevation:** the original courses of slate are visible across the majority of this elevation, the exception being a small part of the east end, which is finished with the same roughcast render as the east elevation (Fig 3; Plate 20). There is a chamfered sandstone plinth running along the entire elevation, with a rusticated central panel, and a square sandstone sill course below the ground floor windows. There are six ground floor windows, all with ashlar sandstone quoins (alternating between those that are finely finished and those that have a rusticated central panel) and flat recessed heads, also in finely dressed sandstone. All of these windows are boarded up, and above each one there is a further rusticated lintel beneath the sills of the first floor windows. There are also six windows on the first floor, each of which has a round-headed arch with a single key stone and the same alternating rusticated and finely-dressed quoins as the ground floor. The majority of the windows have elements of timber casements forming four-light frames with side-lights and quarter-

circle lights within the arched top. There is evidence for re-pointing or rebuilding above all of these windows, and beneath the eaves there is a finely-dressed square sandstone string course. The guttering and downpipe on the west side are cast iron, and there is a plastic downpipe at the east end and the scar for a further downpipe between the two. Several vents have been inserted through the plinth, and there are other blocked holes (probably also resulting from inserted vents) higher up. Where the west end of the building has been extended some of the original quoins remain (Plate 21), although most of these have been removed and the gaps filled, leaving an evident line. A ground floor doorway has been added along the join between the original church and the extension, which utilises some of the quoins in its east jamb. Two of the quoins within the jambs have been inscribed with the initials 'E, J, B' and 'A, R, H'.

**4.3.4 West elevation:** this is largely obscured by the later extension and therefore could not be examined in detail (Plate 22). The elements that are visible have been covered by render and timber panelling and painted as part of the recent renovation of the west extension (Plate 21). A small square chimney is present, however, which has a flat coping around the top.

**4.3.5 South elevation:** this is entirely covered by roughcast render (Plate 19). There are six windows per floor, those on the first floor having round-headed arches while those on the ground floor have flat heads. All of them appear to have concrete sills (coloured to imitate red sandstone) and are boarded up. There is a chamfered plinth along the base of the wall, and some small areas of this are exposed beneath the render revealing it to be brick built. There is a cast iron gutter beneath the roof and two cast iron downpipes attached on the west side, with the scar of a third to the east. The top of the east end is finished with a flat coping and a squat square finial. The west end is butted by a short section of brick wall, which continues the line of the plinth, forming a small yard on the west end of the building.

## 4.4 Internal Detail

**4.4.1** The interior comprises a single large room, originally on two floors but now open to the ceiling (Figs 4-6; Plate 23). The floor is covered in rubble but no original surface survives – six low stone walls, presumably forming the bases of a timber floor, orientated east/west are present, although these end at a north/south wall at the west end with large amounts of concrete dumped on top. A small brick section is present on the north side of the centre, towards the west end. The roof is supported by five trusses, each sat on scrolled brackets set into the north and south walls (Fig 6; Plate 24). Each truss comprises a pair of queen posts supporting a collar, which in turn supports king-posts, which are notched and splayed to fit the principal rafters and have squared heads supporting the ridge purlin (Campbell 2000, 47). A three-way strap (*op cit*, 50) attaches the queen post to the collar and principal rafter and attached to the inside edges of the queen posts and the underside of the collar is a curved bracket. This is chamfered and originally supported the vaulted lathe and plaster ceiling, part of which survives at the east end and had an iron 'rose' boss set into it supporting the light fitting. There are three purlins per pitch, and the principal rafter is trenched to fit them, plus a ridge purlin, and there are two small finials on the underside of the tie beam. The walls in general comprise rough courses of slate, although the round arches over the windows are brick – some brick lying loose in the building is marked 'Whitehaven', although it is not known where in the building this originated, if at all. Some areas of the wall are finished with plasterboard.

**4.4.2 East elevation:** this is finished with plaster and paint. On the ground floor there is a large double door with splayed jambs, the southern of which is boxed in with a timber stud wall around an upright cast iron I-beam (Plate 25). The windows

flanking the doorway have the remains of plain six-light casements, while the windows above these have very little of the frames remaining. The central window comprises four separate openings, formed by three apertures, the central of which comprises a large round-headed window divided into two small round-headed windows by a central mullion. All of the windows have brick arches and sloping sills.

4.4.3 **North elevation:** this has six windows on the ground and first floors. The ground floor windows have machine-cut timber lintels, each jointed together and forming a single piece running the length of the wall (Plate 26). The windows all have six-lights with side-lights and night-vent opening upper section, and a sloping stone sill. The first floor windows have round-headed brick-built arches with four square lights and two quarter-circle lights plus side-lights and a night-vent opening top section. The remains of a moulded plaster cornice are present in places and the joist holes for a former gallery are present across the elevation. These appear to have been inserted as the holes are rebuilt in brick with a cement bond. Electrical ducting is attached to the lintels on the ground floor at the west end, and there is brick filling a probable scar at the west end, presumably where a staircase was attached. Three blocked vent holes are visible, and the two westernmost windows have brick rebuilding around them and in the jambs.

4.4.4 **West elevation:** this of the same general build as the rest, with lots of areas of patching in brick and concrete. The scars of the end of a gallery are visible on either side, there is a further truss against the wall and the upper part of the wall is rebuilt in brick on the south side. The centre is dominated by a large round-headed arch, which fills most of the elevation and has been filled with concrete blocks. Either side of this, on the ground floor, is a single doorway. The north doorway has a machine-cut timber lintel, is blocked with brick and has brick jambs, so may be inserted. The southern doorway has the same form of lintel and is certainly rebuilt or inserted.

4.4.5 **South elevation:** this is essentially the same as the north elevation. However, the west end has been rebuilt in modern brick (Plate 27). Like the north elevation three vents have been inserted through the wall, and the joist holes for a gallery, with added brick, are present above the ground floor level.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Despite its relatively recent date the former Methodist Church has undergone a number of major alterations. These can be divided into two types: those relating to improvements carried out while the building was in use as a church, and those carried out after it went out of use.

### 5.2 Phasing

5.2.1 **Phase 1:** the earliest part of the building appears to be the easternmost five bays of the church. These correspond to the original specifications drawn up in 1872, and there is some evidence, in the form of the wall scars on the west side of the north internal elevation, for a return at this approximate position. This would correspond to the position of a dividing wall with a central aperture separating the two rooms of the vestry from the rest of the church, as shown in the plans of 1872 (Plate 5).

5.2.2 **Phase 2:** the documentary sources suggest that the gallery was added in 1876, although one is shown on the proposed plans. The evidence from the building suggests that it was added after the initial phase of building, but cannot identify at what date. Anecdotal evidence suggests that alterations were also carried out in 1883, although it is not clear what these were. Photographs of the interior of the church, thought to date to 1883, appear to show the present form of the building, and so are perhaps more likely to post-date 1900 (see *Section 5.2.3* below).

5.2.3 **Phase 3a:** the cartographic sources suggest that the church was extended again between 1900 and 1924, and anecdotal sources suggest that this may have been in 1908. This evidently comprised an extension to the west of the building, which removed the vestry rooms and the porch (assuming this was even built), and included the insertion of a large arch accessing a room containing the organ, which was positioned behind the pulpit on the first floor. There is very little evidence for this within the actual building, although it is noticeable that the stonework around the easternmost window in the north elevation is fresher than around the other windows. In addition, the area in the south-west corner that was repaired during Phase 4 (see *Section 5.2.5* below) does seem to correspond to the sections added to the building at this time and may, therefore, have been poorly bonded to the original fabric or have destabilised it in some way.

5.2.4 **Phase 3b:** an additional structure, probably a new vestry, was added to the north side of the organ room following the earlier extension, as shown by a rebuild line between these two sections where the quoins of the original have been removed (Fig 3). The cartographic sources suggest that this was also carried out between 1900 and 1924.

5.2.5 **Phase 4:** between 1958 and 1960 a number of repairs were carried out to the church. These seem to have concentrated in the south-west corner of the building, and are visible within the remains of the structure as a large area of brick-work in the south-west corner. The repairs do not, however, seem to have been as extensive as it was originally suggested they needed to be, although the render added to the south and east elevations has hidden the extent of the repairs in these areas.

5.2.6 **Phase 5:** after the church went out of use in 1993 all of the interior fittings were removed and the building was left as a shell.

5.2.7 **Conclusion:** for a relatively modern building the former church has undergone a relatively large number of alterations. Many of these related to extensions made to the church throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> and possibly early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but there were also substantial alterations made as a result of repairs during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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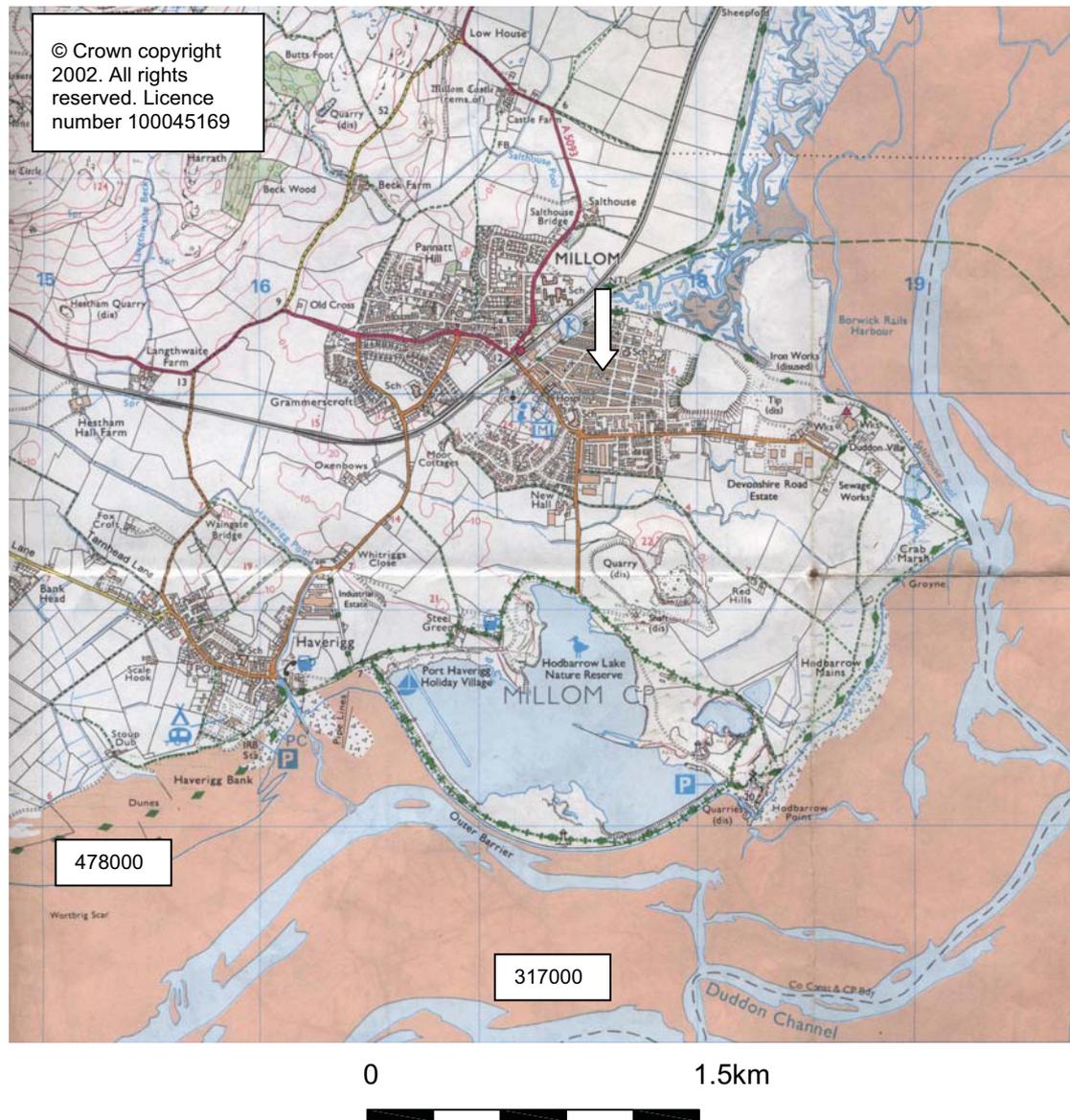
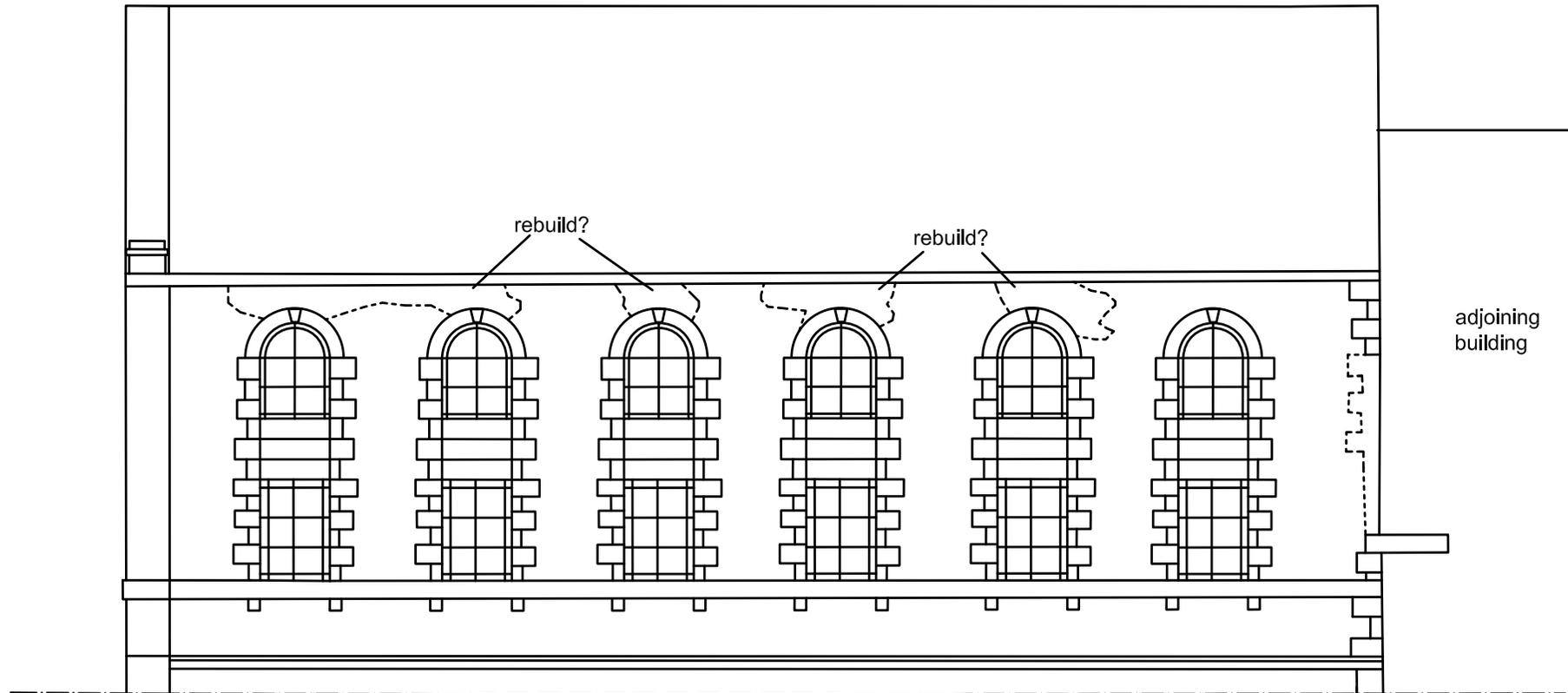


Figure 1: Site location

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Figure 2: Site plan



Project:  
 Former Methodist Church,  
 Millom, Cumbria:  
 Archaeological Building  
 Recording

Key:  
 ——— ground line  
 - - - - - projected line

Project Code: G1034  
 Site Code: MC06  
 Date: October 2006



Figure 3: North-facing elevation

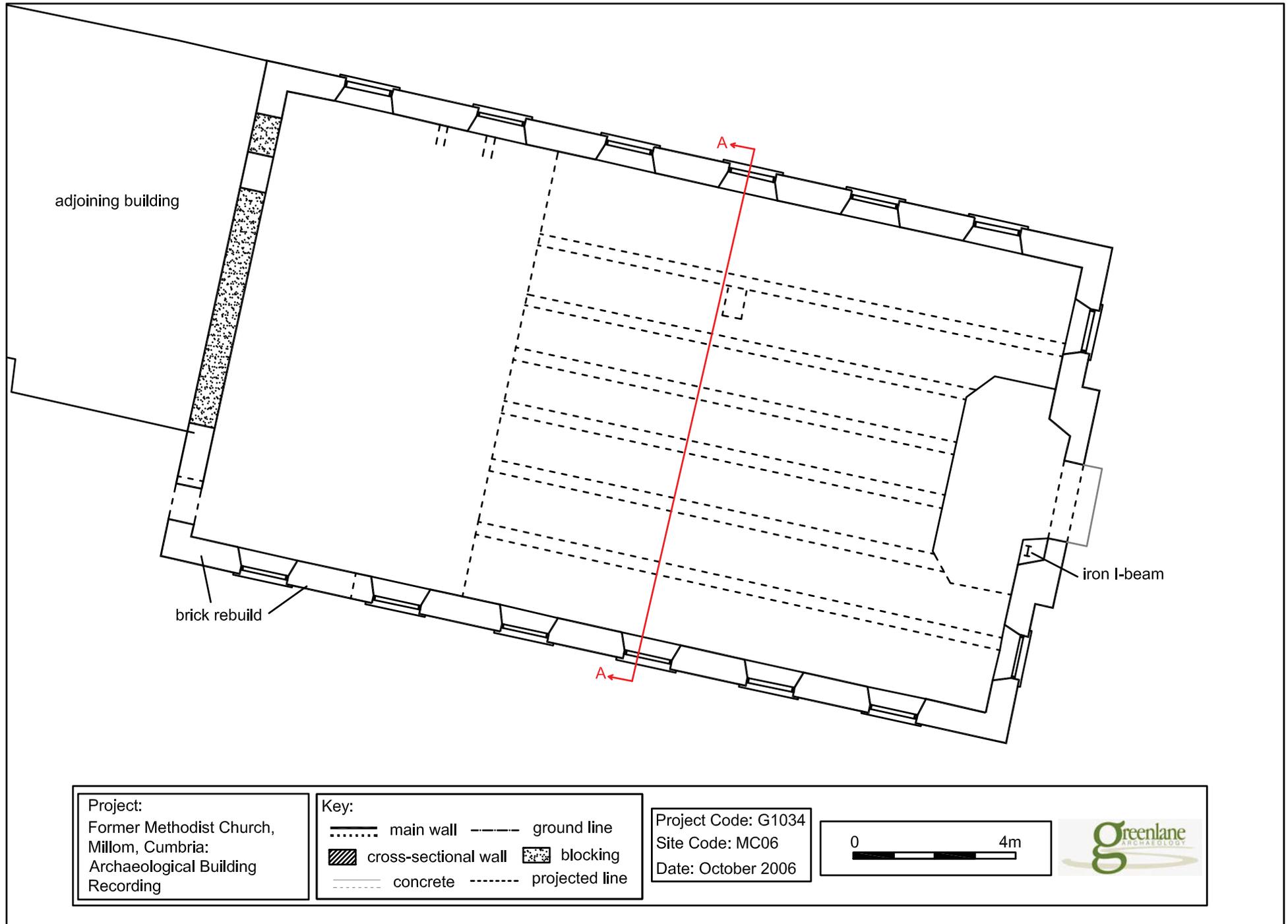


Figure 4: Ground floor plan

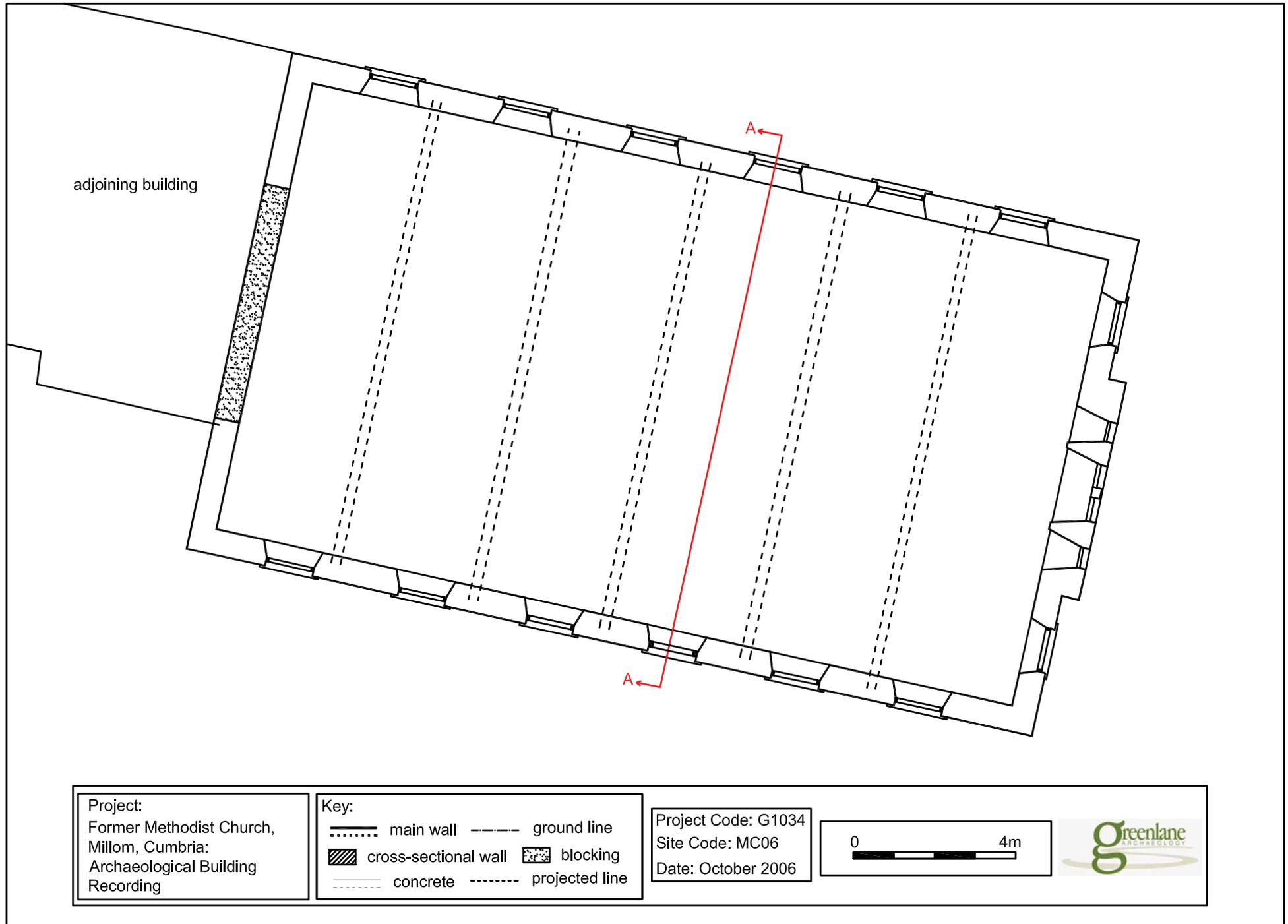
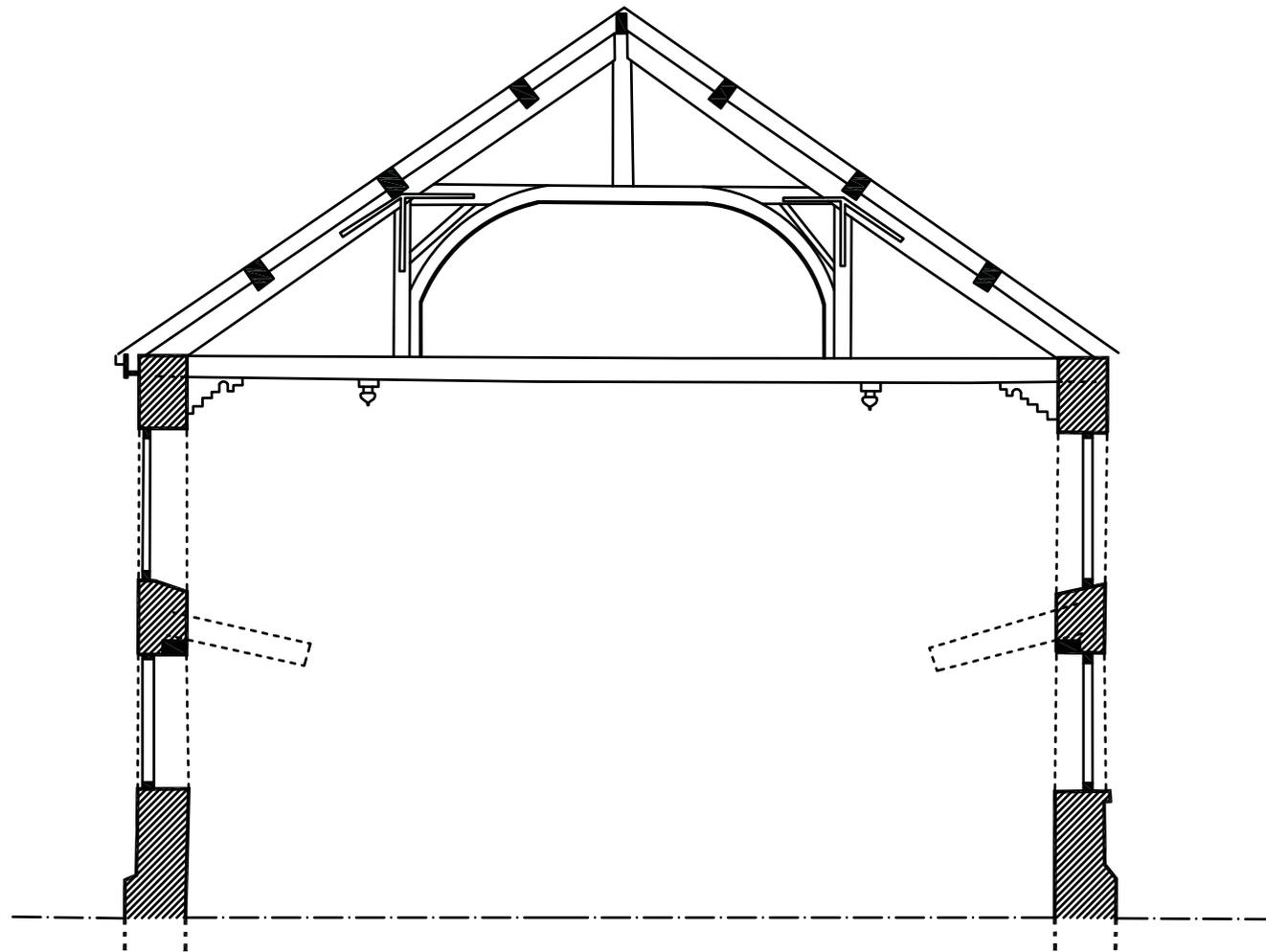


Figure 5: First floor plan



Project:  
Former Methodist Church,  
Millom, Cumbria:  
Archaeological Building  
Recording

Key: main wall concrete  
 ground line projected line  
 cross-sectional wall  
 cross-sectional timber

Project Code: G1034  
Site Code: MC06  
Date: October 2006

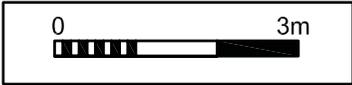


Figure 6: East-facing cross-section A-A

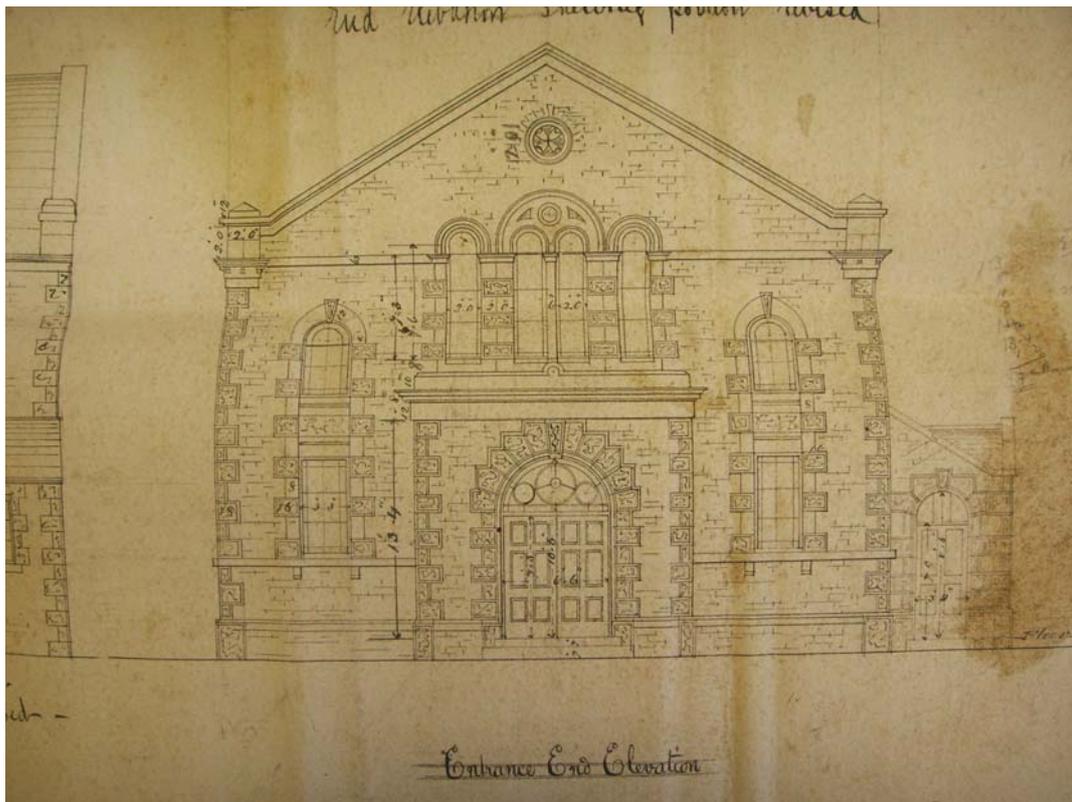


Plate 1: East external elevation as proposed in original drawings of 1872 (CRO (B) Z1099 1872)

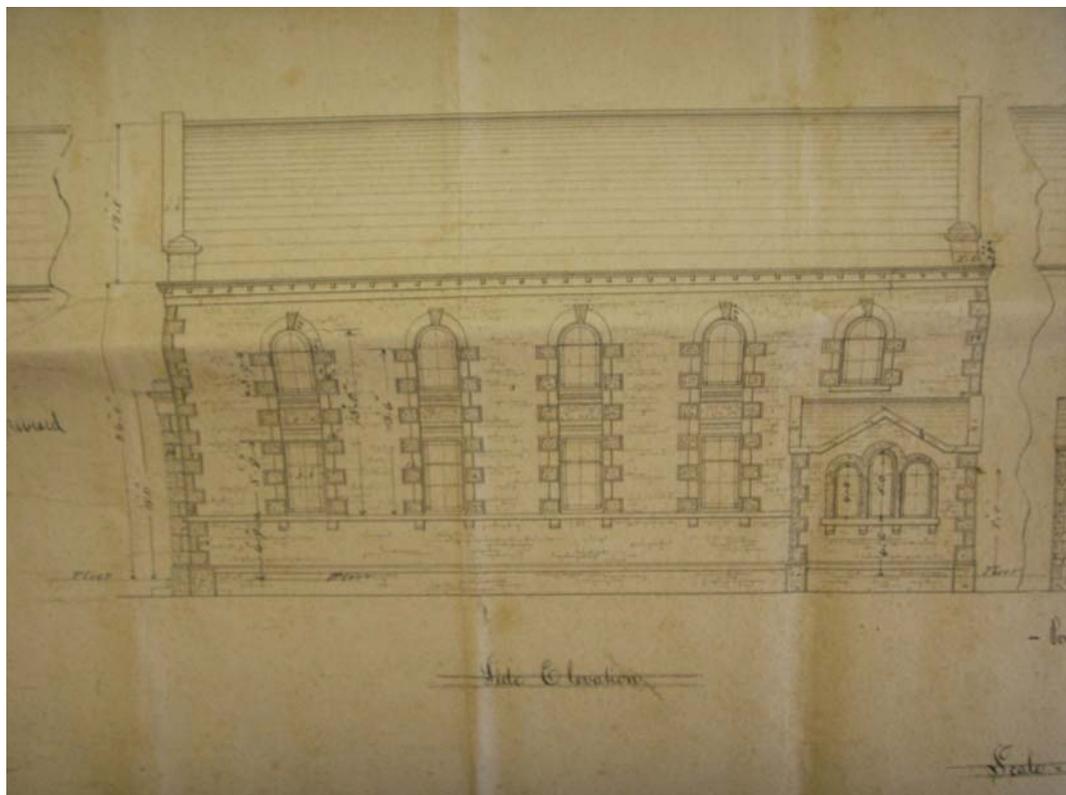


Plate 2: North external elevation as proposed in original drawings of 1872 (CRO(B) Z1099 1872)

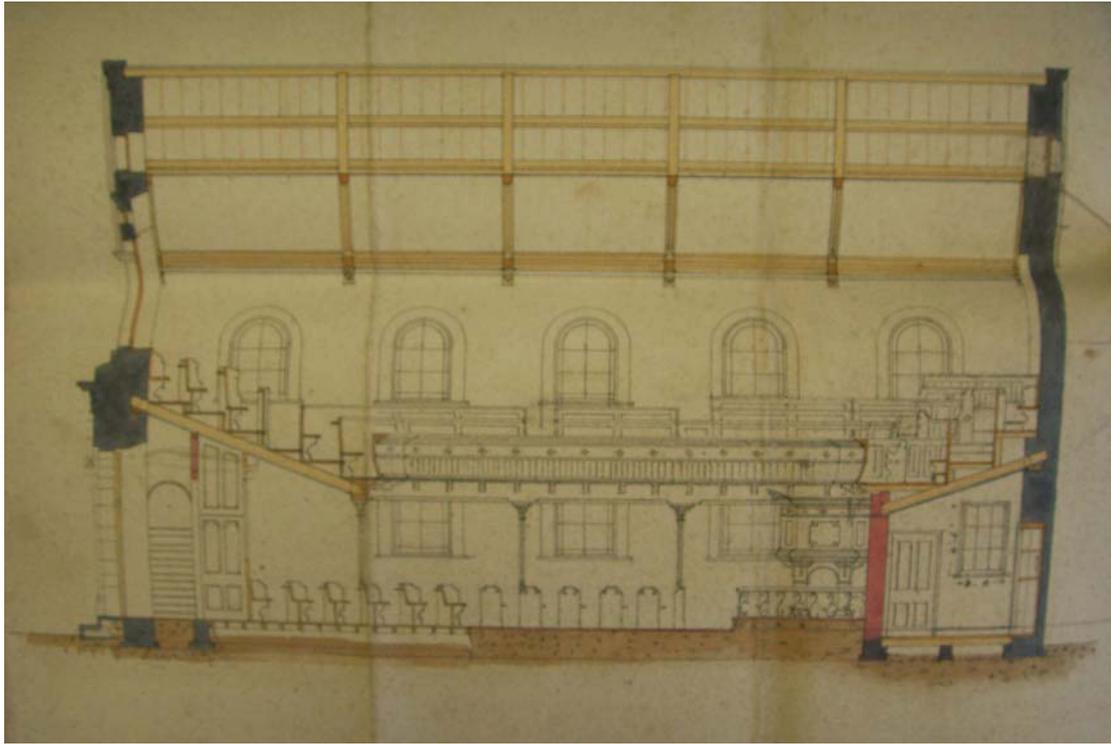


Plate 3: Long cross-section as proposed in original drawings of 1872 (CRO(B) Z1099 1872)

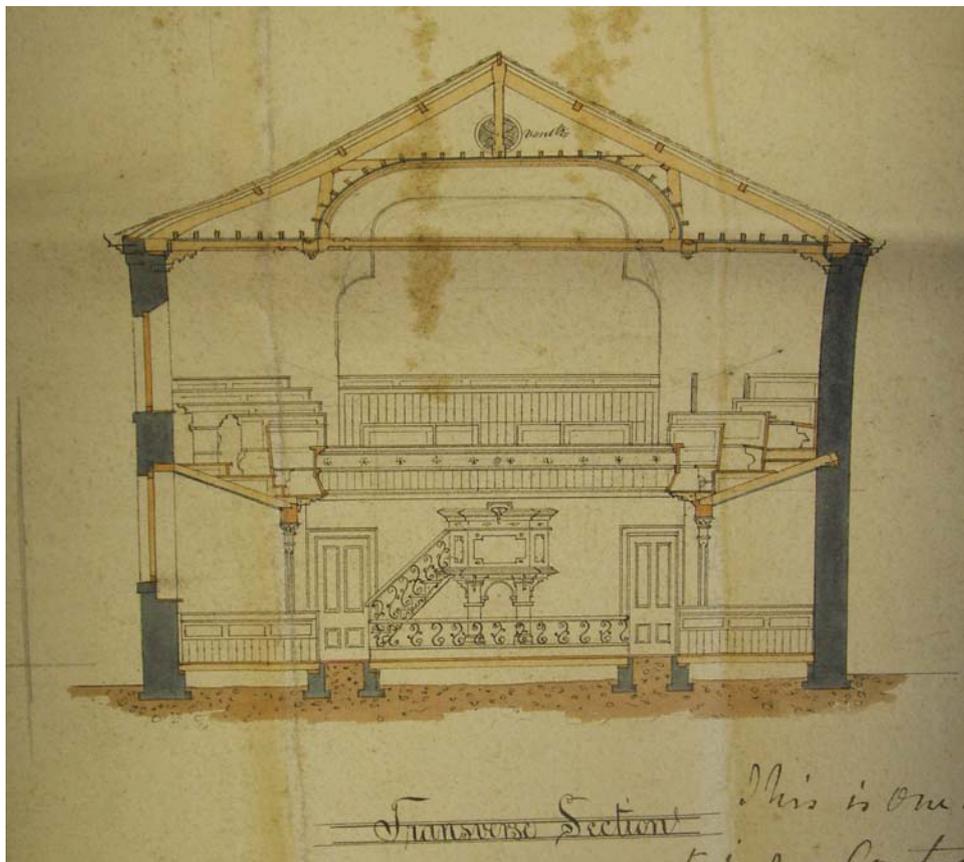


Plate 4: Cross-section as proposed in original drawings of 1872 (CRO(B) Z1099 1872)

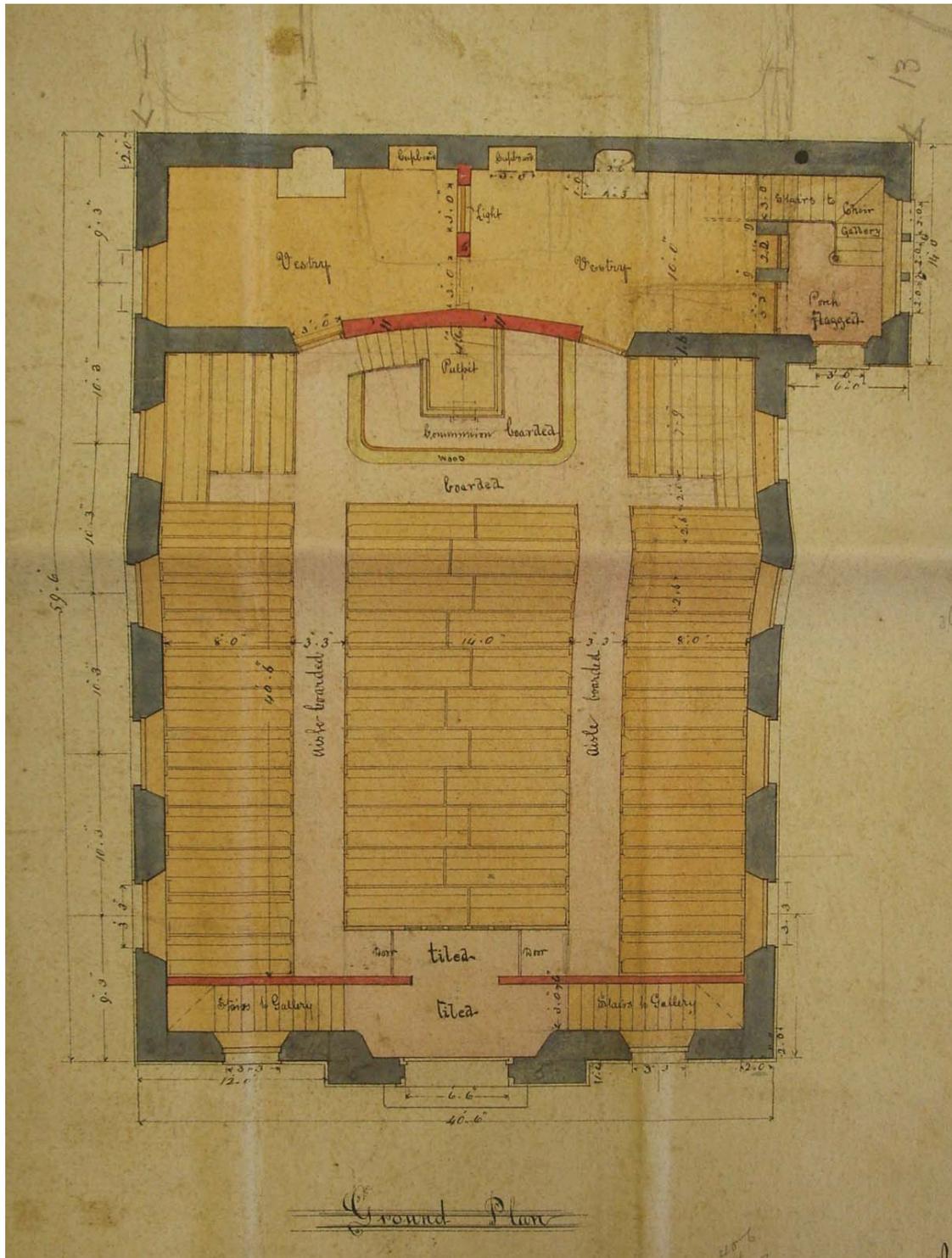


Plate 5: Ground floor plan as proposed in original drawings of 1872 (CRO(B) Z1099 1872)

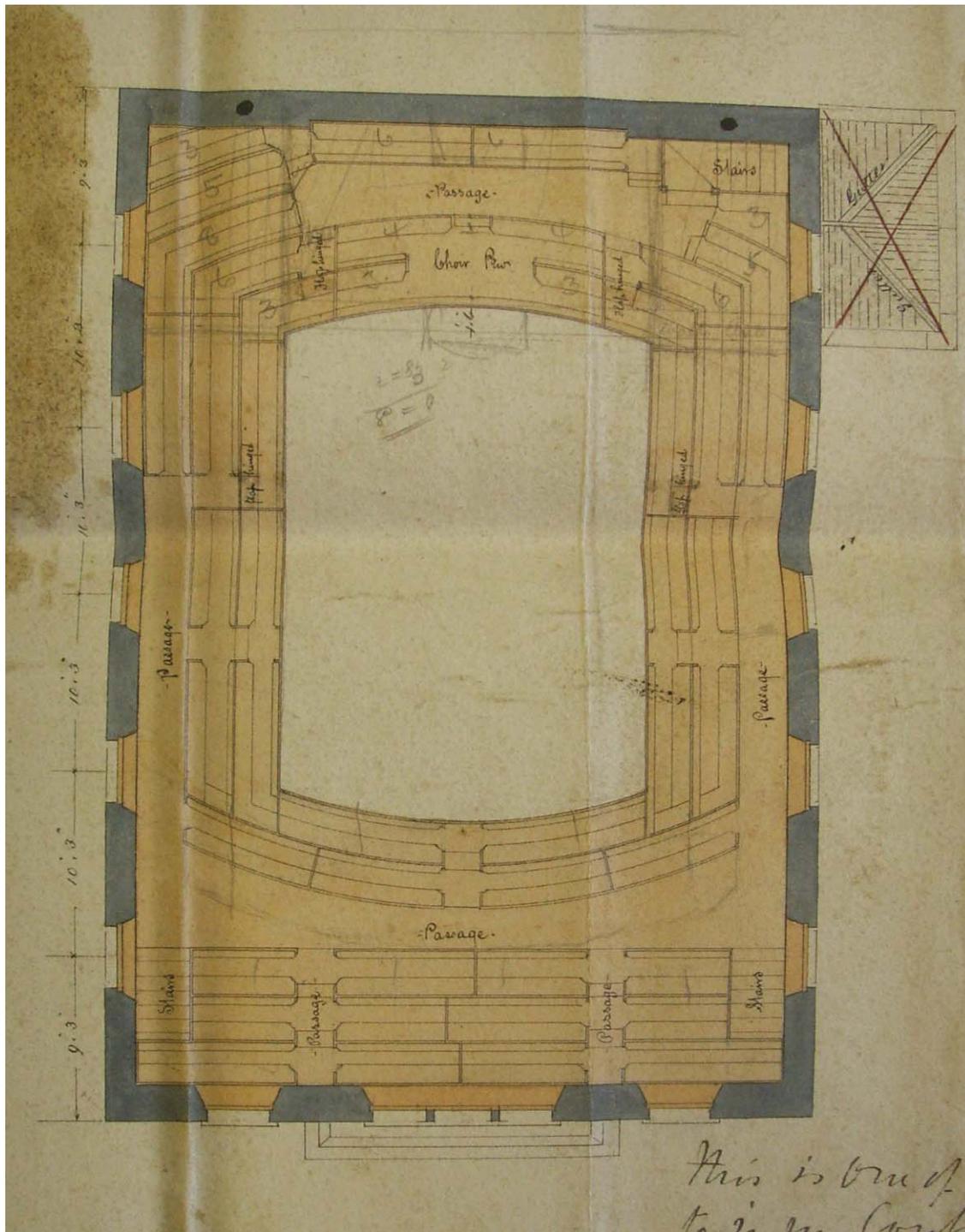


Plate 6: First floor plan as proposed in original drawings of 1872 (CRO(B) Z1099 1872)



Plate 7: Undated view of the church as originally built or as proposed (provided by Jack Giles)



Plate 8: View of the church in 1902, showing the additional building to the north (from Myers 1991, 57)



Plate 9: View of the interior of the church, thought to date to 1883 but more likely following enlargements between 1899 and 1924 (provided by Jack Giles)



Plate 10: View of the interior of the church, thought to date to 1883 but more likely following enlargements between 1899 and 1924 (provided by Jack Giles)

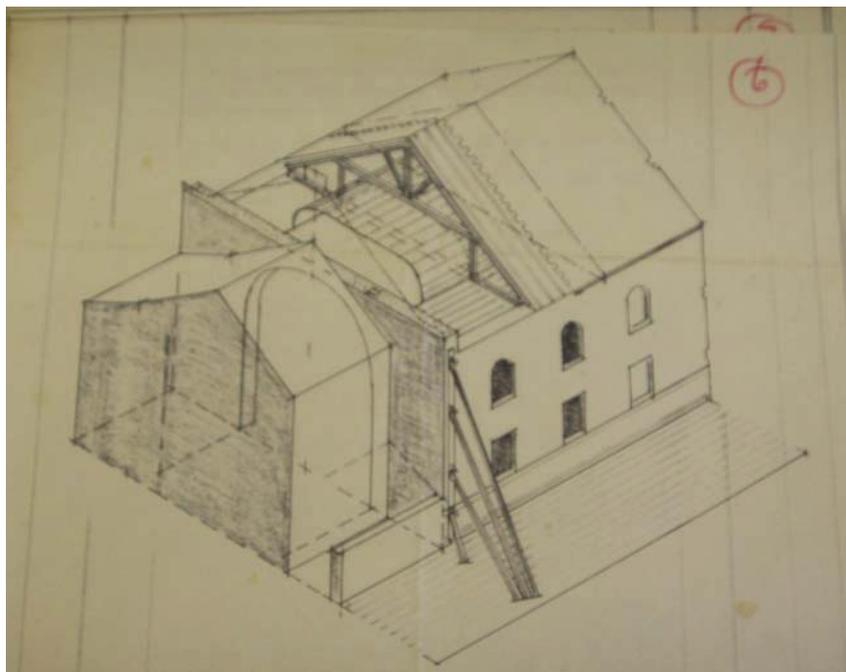


Plate 11: Isometric view of the church and supports to south-west corner in 1958 (CRO (B) BDF C/M/M/7/3/1-3 1958-1960)

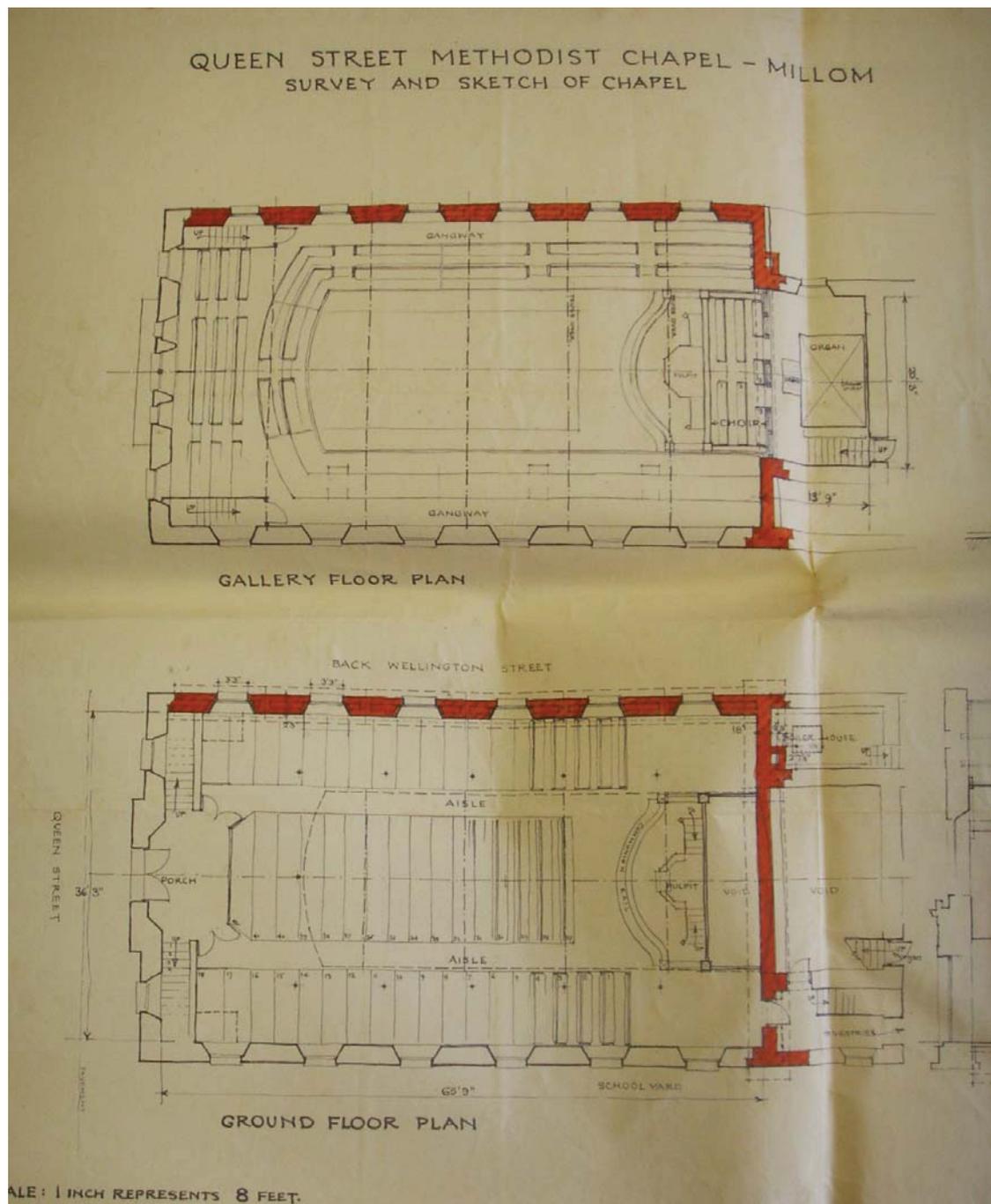


Plate 12: Plans of the church showing areas needing repair in red (CRO (B) BDF C/M/M/7/3/1-3 1958-1960)

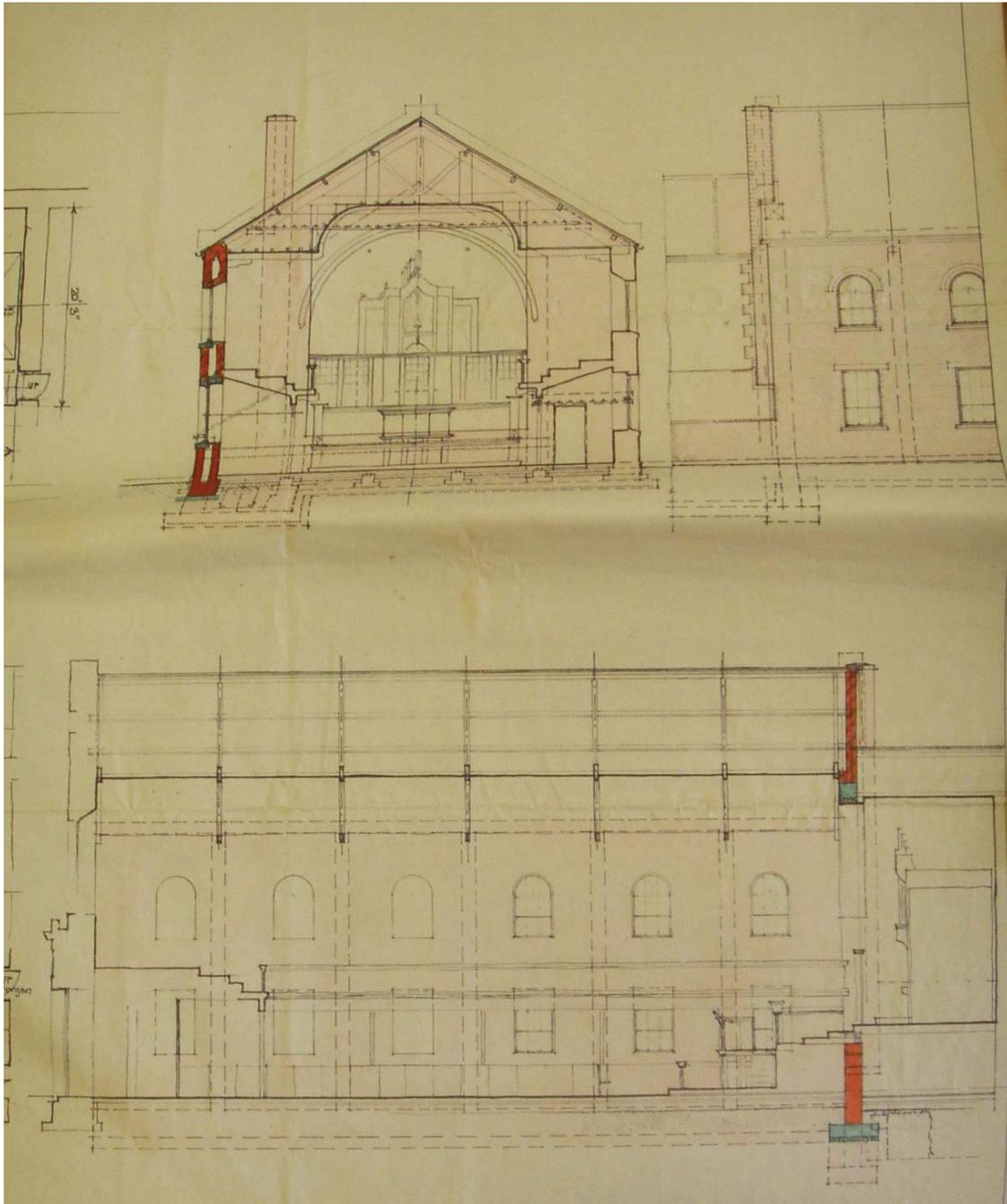


Plate 13: Cross-section and long-section of the church showing areas needing repair in red (CRO (B) BDF C/M/M/7/3/1-3 1958-1960)

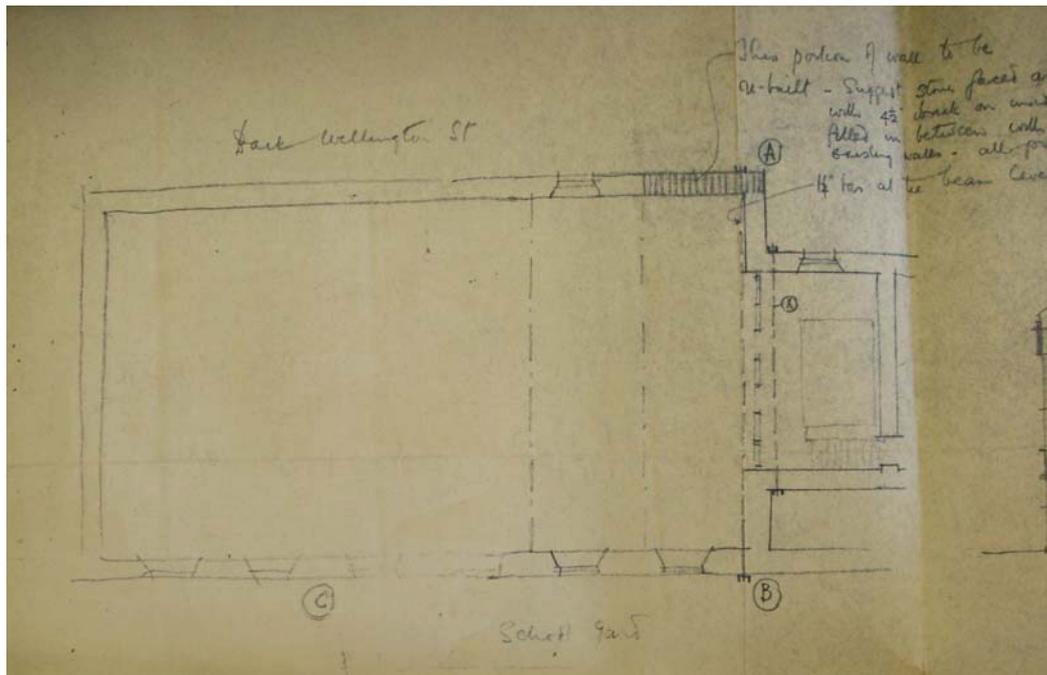


Plate 14: Sketch plan of church showing section of the south-west corner to be rebuilt as a hatched area (CRO (B) BDF C/M/M/7/3/1-3 1958-1960)



Plate 15: View of the interior in 1959, taken after the rebuilding work (provided by Jack Giles)

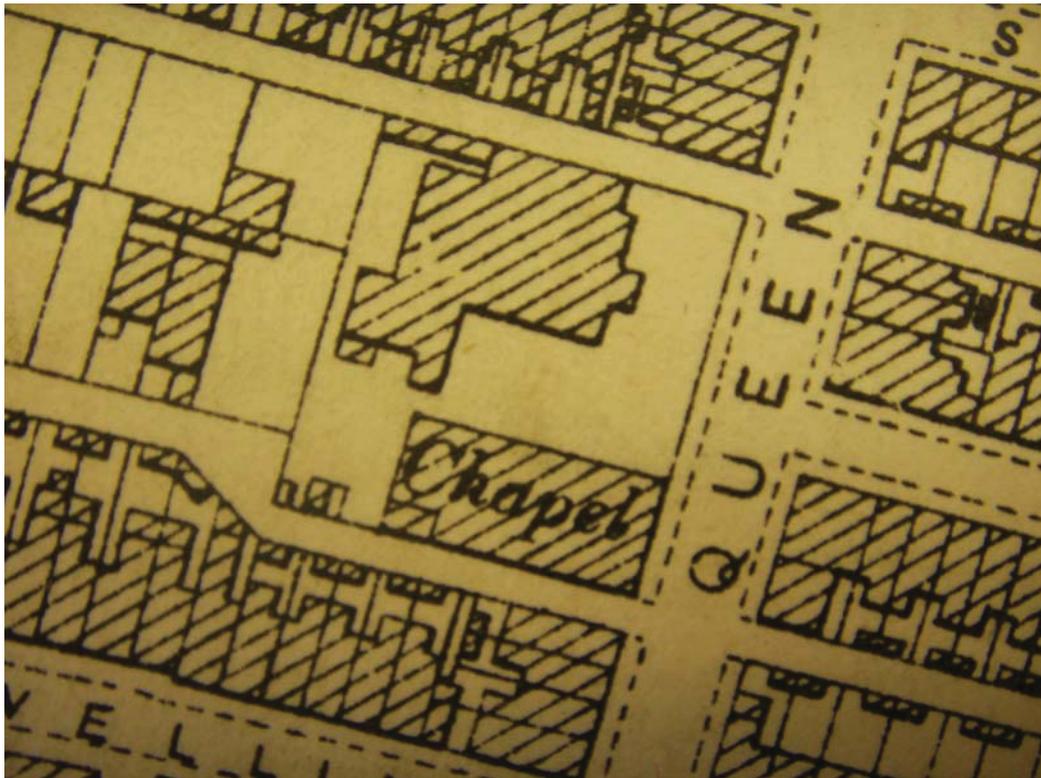


Plate 16: Part of the Ordnance Survey map of 1899 showing the church (marked 'Chapel') and additional building to the north

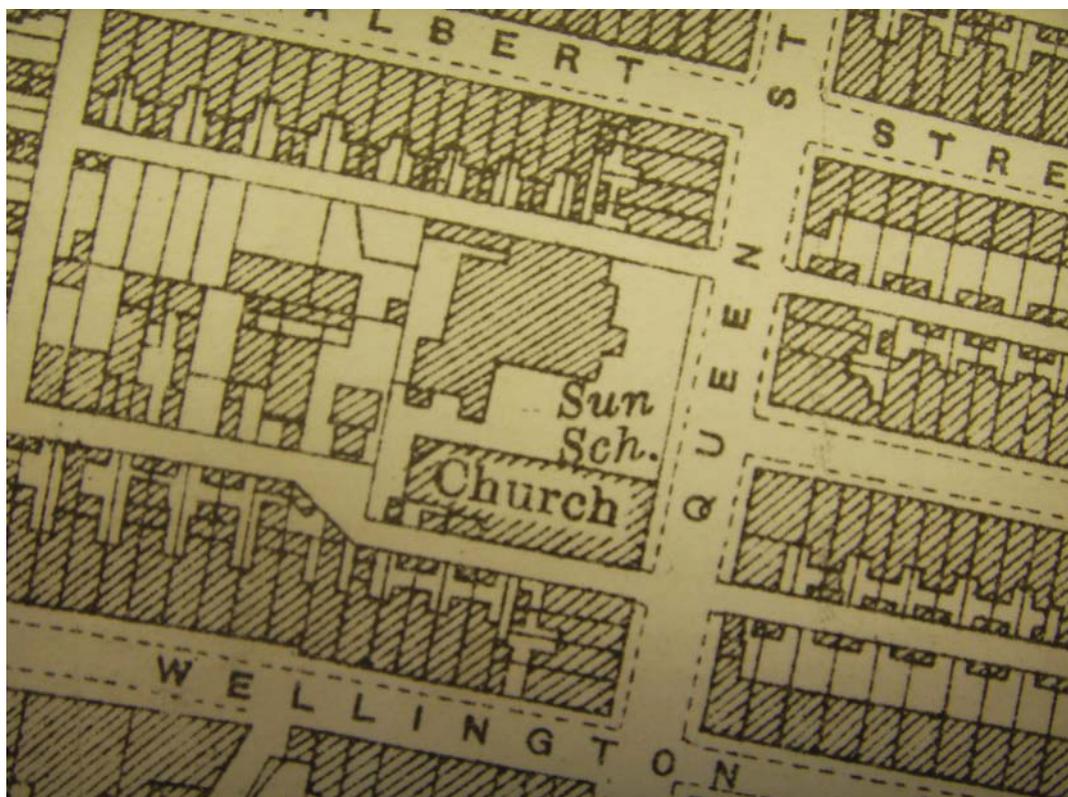


Plate 17: Part of the Ordnance Survey map of 1924 showing the church and Sunday School



Plate 18: General view of church and environs, looking south-west



Plate 19: East and south external elevations, looking north-west



Plate 20: East and north external elevations, looking south-west



Plate 21: Extension to the west end of the church, and surviving church



Plate 22: West elevation of church and adjoining extension



Plate 23: General view of interior, looking west



Plate 24: General view of roof trusses, looking west



Plate 25: General view of east internal elevation, looking east



Plate 26: General view of the north internal elevation, looking north-west



Plate 27: Rebuilding in the south-west corner, looking south-west