

Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire

Historic Building Record and Archaeological Watching Brief

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SUMMARY

- Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Allan Joyce Architects to undertake a Level 2 building record of an unlisted place of worship, Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire (OS Grid Ref. SK 70375 39913) prior to its proposed demolition (Planning Approval Nos 05/01367/FUL and 05/01409/CON) as part of a scheme to build a new church and community facilities. A further archaeological watching brief was also carried out during the demolition of the structure and the removal of its foundations
- At the core of Bingham Methodist Church is a late Georgian chapel probably dating to between 1800 and 1820. In the following decades a two storey extension was added to the north of the building for a choir, later becoming the organ loft. During the last decade of the nineteenth century the building was extended with the addition of a Sunday School to the west which was in turn extended south during the early twentieth century. The south elevation was altered, probably in the 1960's, with the construction of a lobby and porch. The late twentieth century witnessed further additions to the north of the building.
- The Georgian chapel retains much of its original interior, including original pews in the gallery, and as such may warrant further recording which could be undertaken during, or immediately prior to, demolition.
- During the watching brief, a previously unknown coal cellar was located to the north of the building, and was likely a contemporary structure relating to the late Georgian Chapel. No human remains were identified within the development area.

Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire

Historic Building Record

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The building recording was directed by Matt Hurford and the watching brief undertaken by Mark Dodd. Dr David Strange-Walker and Matt Hurford managed the project. Thanks are extended to Allan Joyce Architects for commissioning the work. The project was monitored by Dr Chris Robinson, Archaeological Officer for Nottinghamshire County Council.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Allan Joyce Architects to undertake a Level 2 building record and an archaeological watching brief, prior to and during the demolition of Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire (Figure 1). (OS Grid Ref. SK 70375 39913). The work took place as part of a scheme to build a new church and community facilities (Planning Approval No's 05/01367/FUL and 05/01409/CON).

1.1.2 The Methodist Church is located to the west of the former market place within Bingham, a town with medieval origins. The property is bounded to the north by the Eaton Place shopping area and to the south by Union Street which comprises office, retail and residential accommodation. Needham Street encloses the site to the west which has a Grade II listed property, No. 19 Brompton House, fronting it dating to 1819.

1.2 Building Recording

1.2.1 Where specific briefs are supplied by relevant planning authorities with regard to buildings they may require a survey based on classifications as outlined in English Heritage's guide *Understanding Historic Buildings* (2006). In this instance a Level 2 survey of the building was required by Dr C. Robinson, Archaeological Officer for Nottinghamshire County Council in a letter dated 21 May 2014. The methodology employed also follows advice from the Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures* (2001).

1.2.2 Where an existing building / structure is not protected by listing and permission is sought or granted for demolition or major alteration, the local authority may require that a full archival record be made first, in order to 'preserve by record'.

1.3 Archaeological Watching Brief

1.3.1 The objective of the **archaeological watching brief** can be stated as:

To identify the presence of any archaeological remains to be affected by any intrusive aspects of the development and to achieve an appropriate level of preservation by record. Where practical (within the constraints of the watching brief and development), this will include an assessment of the overall extent, date and state of preservation of archaeological remains. Any features of geoarchaeological significance within window samples/boreholes will also be recorded and where there is the potential for palaeoenvironmental data, an appropriate level of sampling will be undertaken.

1.3.2 All work that took place as part of the watching brief was carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the IfA Institute for Archaeologists (*Standard and Guidance: for an archaeological watching brief* published October 1994, revised September 2001 and October 2008).

1.3.3 The watching brief was undertaken in two phases. The first phase involved a site visit following the initial 'soft strip' and provides additional photographic records to supplement the original level 2 building record. This visit was undertaken on the 12th May 2015. The digital images are archived as part of the primary archive on the attached CD. The photographic viewpoints are located on Figure 6.

1.3.4 The second phase of the watching brief was undertaken on the 28th May 2015 and 1st June 2015. These visits monitored the final phase of fieldwork removing the remains of the Methodist Chapel and ancillary structures. Over a period of two days the extant foundations were removed using a 30 tonne, 360^o mechanical excavator with a toothed bucket. Archaeologically, the objective was to identify any additional phases of activity that had not been evidenced within the elevations of the Methodist Church. The results of the watching brief are discussed below in Section 5.

1.3 The Report

1.3.1 The building recording has involved a limited examination of the Methodist Church both externally and internally. This has allowed for a brief written description of the building and its background with 6 figures and 16 plates as illustrations. A second part of the report (Section 8: Archival Record) comprises a list of illustrations to support the archival record. The latter consists primarily of 212 digital images. The report includes copies of the digital images together with plans showing their viewpoints. All 212 digital images are included in a separate CD affixed to the back of the report. A description of the observations made during the archaeological watching brief forms Section 5.

2. SITE BACKGROUND

2.1.1 It was proposed as part of Planning Application Approval Nos 05/01367/FUL and 05/01409/CON to demolish Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire as part of a scheme to build a new church and community facilities.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1.1 The Methodist Church is located close to the centre of Bingham, immediately west of the former market place. The architectural style of the primary phase of the building suggests that it was constructed during the late Georgian period between 1800 and 1820. A choir was added to the north, probably in the Victorian period. The chapel had certainly been built by 1885 as it is present on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. During the last decade of the nineteenth century the building was extended with the addition of a Sunday School to the west which was in turn extended south during the early twentieth century. The south elevation was altered, probably in the 1960's, with the construction of a lobby and porch. The late twentieth century witnessed further additions to the north of the building.

4. BUILDING DESCRIPTION

The Exterior (Figure 2 Plates 1-5)

4.1.1 At the core of Bingham Methodist Church is a rectangular two storey high chapel which is orientated north to south dating to the late Georgian period between 1800 and 1820. It is brick built in Flemish Stretcher Bond under a slate roof which is gabled to the south and hipped to the north. The walls are rendered with the exception of the north wall. The south gable has stone coping and brick kneelers. There is dentil ornamentation beneath the cornice. Sash windows, likely to be original, are present on the ground and first floors of the west and east wall with later replacement upper floor windows in the south wall. Metal ties extend through the building of likely early twentieth century date. A large arched window, now almost entirely hidden behind a later extension, was originally present in the north wall.

4.1.2 Abutting the north wall of the Georgian chapel is a square extension built in the same style as the earlier build discussed above. It is brick built in English Bond under a slate roof which is gabled. It also has dentil ornamentation below the eaves. An arched window, since blocked up, is located in the east wall.

4.1.3 To the west of the chapel is the Sunday School, a building of two storey height orientated north to south. Inscribed bricks in the east wall suggest a date of 1898 for its construction. It is brick built in English Bond beneath a tiled gabled roof. Raised brickwork has been used decoratively beneath the eaves. In the north gable wall is an arched window with two, likely replacement, sash windows in the west wall. The building was extended to the south in the same style, probably during the early twentieth century, with the addition of a porch with double doorway and stone lintel fronting Needham Street. The roof is hipped at the south. Further alterations dating to the late twentieth comprise a sympathetic narrow single storey brick extension which extends around the northern part of the building.

4.1.4 The Methodist Church complex was further extended during the latter half of the twentieth century, initially in the late 1960's with the addition of a single storey porch and lobby extending across the entire south frontage of the Georgian chapel. Further alterations dating to the late twentieth century were made around the northern part of the chapel obscuring the original fabric of the building.

The Interior (Figure 3 Plates 6-12)

4.2.1 The Methodist Church complex is entered via the central doorway in the porch at the buildings south gable end. Four symmetrically placed doorways lead into the chapel, two providing access to the ground floor and two for the gallery. The chapel conforms to the 'auditory plan' in which its interior has been planned in order to enable the community to hear and see the preachers. Being a relatively large chapel its gallery extends along three sides of the building. The rostrum is devoid of a timber frontal or communion rail which is typical of chapels from this period, having being replaced, probably in the late twentieth century, with the current pine lectern, table used for the Communion and chairs. The later organ loft, forming a formal backdrop or frame to the rostrum area, would originally have been used for the choir with the current organ inserted in the twentieth century. The ground floor of the building has been re-seated in the Victorian period with simple pitch-pine pews. The panelled gallery is supported on seven cast-iron columns. Original pews in the gallery have survived previous refurbishments. As with many Methodist and Nonconformist chapels painting and graining has been used to pick out distinctive architectural features, including the cornice, organ loft and fine ceiling rose.

4.2.2 The Sunday School can be entered either via the southern extension or through the porch fronting Needham Street. It is a single room of five bays with four roof trusses resting on stone corbels. The roof structure is partially exposed, typical of buildings of late Victorian date. The original cornice and dado rail survive and a number of the original doors and fittings are present. The floor is a modern laminate replacement. Three of the windows on the east wall have been blocked presumably when the kitchen was constructed. The southern extension to the Sunday School has been refurbished recently with a new false ceiling and laminate floor. The doors and windows are however likely to be original to the building.

4.2.3 The late twentieth extensions to the northern part of the chapel are of large block and brick construction and are mostly associated with the shop.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

5.1.1 Whilst monitoring the removal of the foundations it was possible to observe the construction method for the various phases of building present upon the site. The earlier, Georgian core of the church was constructed on brick foundations using Flemish bond, and was present to approximately seven courses below ground level. This was identical to the bond type within the elevations, using the same unfrogged, red bricks measuring approximately 230x110x60mm. All later 20th century phases of construction were built on concrete foundations.

5.1.2 Although no phases of construction were observed that pre-dated the Georgian chapel, a small coal cellar was encountered that had previously not been visible (Figure 6). It was located in the area, immediately to the north of the square extension, which abutted the northern end of the church. The internal area measured approximately 3.7m x 2.3m with red brick walls built using a changing bond type to at least 1.7m below ground level. There was a bricked up entrance within the eastern wall, measuring 0.7m wide which presumably provided an external access to the cellar (Plates 13 and 15). The exact relationship between the cellar and the church structure was not observable, although there was evidence of a narrow, brick-lined channel extending to the south, linking the SW corner of the cellar to the interior of the square extension at the north of the church. The brick-lined channel measured 4m in length, with internal dimensions of 0.5m wide and 0.85m deep. The brick lining used identical bricks to those seen elsewhere within the earliest phase of the building, and has been laid as

stretchers, just a single width thick. It appears that this channel had been filled with concrete during the 20th century alterations (Plate 14).

Within the remainder of the site, the development work demonstrated that the foundations had been cut into a thick deposit of mixed soil, including possible deposits of night soils. It had been indicated that the area to the west of the church, formerly identified as the 'Garden Well' (Figure 6) may contain the remains of a child burial. However examination of this area during demolition demonstrated that the ground had been heavily disturbed through the installation of various service trenches. Consequently, no human remains were identified within the development area.

6. DISCUSSION

5.1.1 At the core of Bingham Methodist Church is a late Georgian chapel probably dating to between 1800 and 1820. In the following decades a two storey extension was added to the north of the building for a choir, later becoming the organ loft. It is likely that the coal cellar was also constructed at this point. The Georgian chapel retained much of its original interior, including original pews in the gallery.

5.1.2 The observations made during the removal of the foundations produced no evidence to suggest that the development area had been occupied prior to the construction of the late Georgian chapel.

5.1.2 The addition of a Sunday School during the late nineteenth century is a typical development that can be found happening throughout the country during this time (Lake 2013 12). The late twentieth century witnessed additions to the south and north of the property obscuring the architecture of the original chapel.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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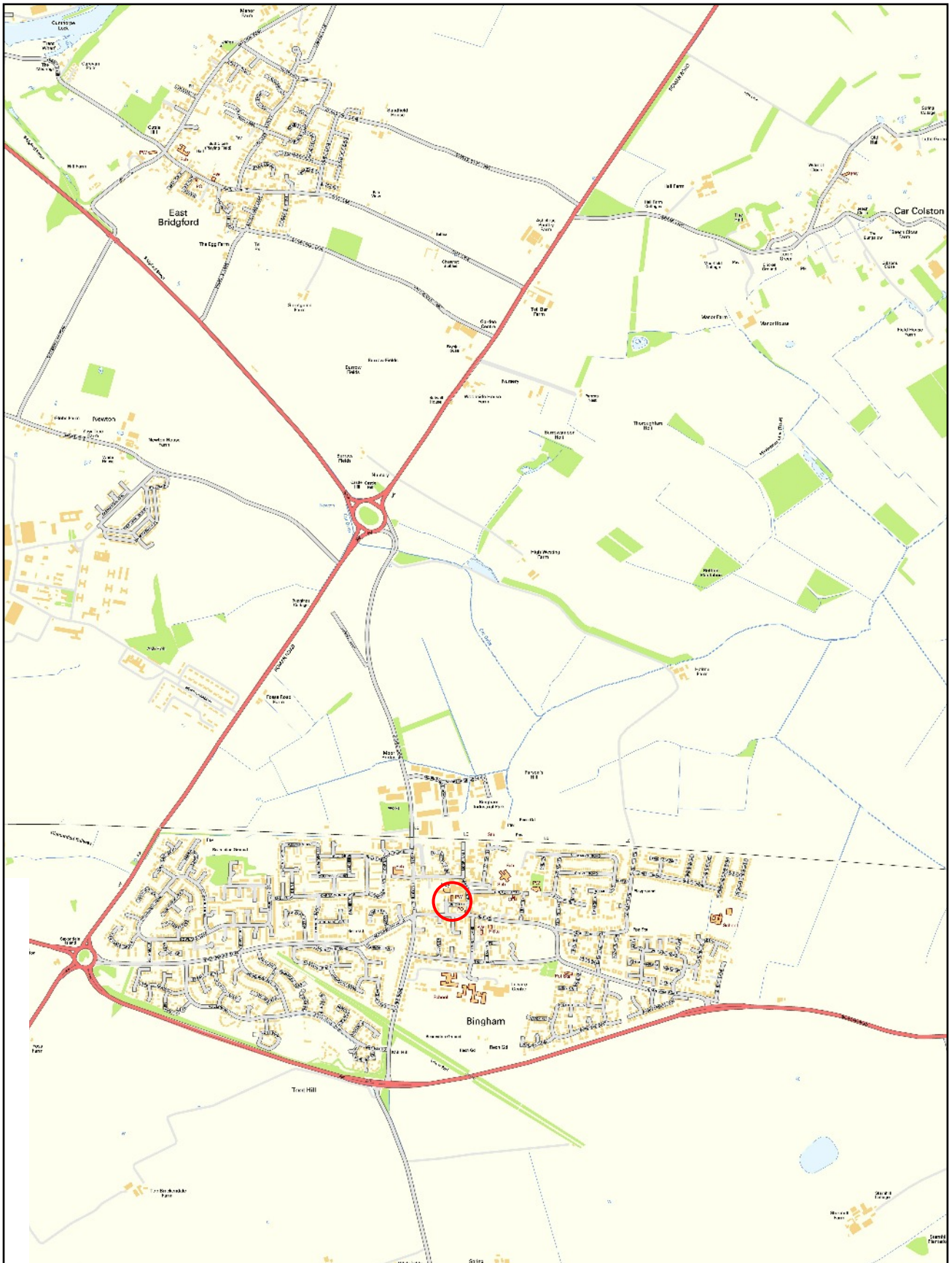


Figure 1: Location of the Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire. Scale 1:2500.
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2014

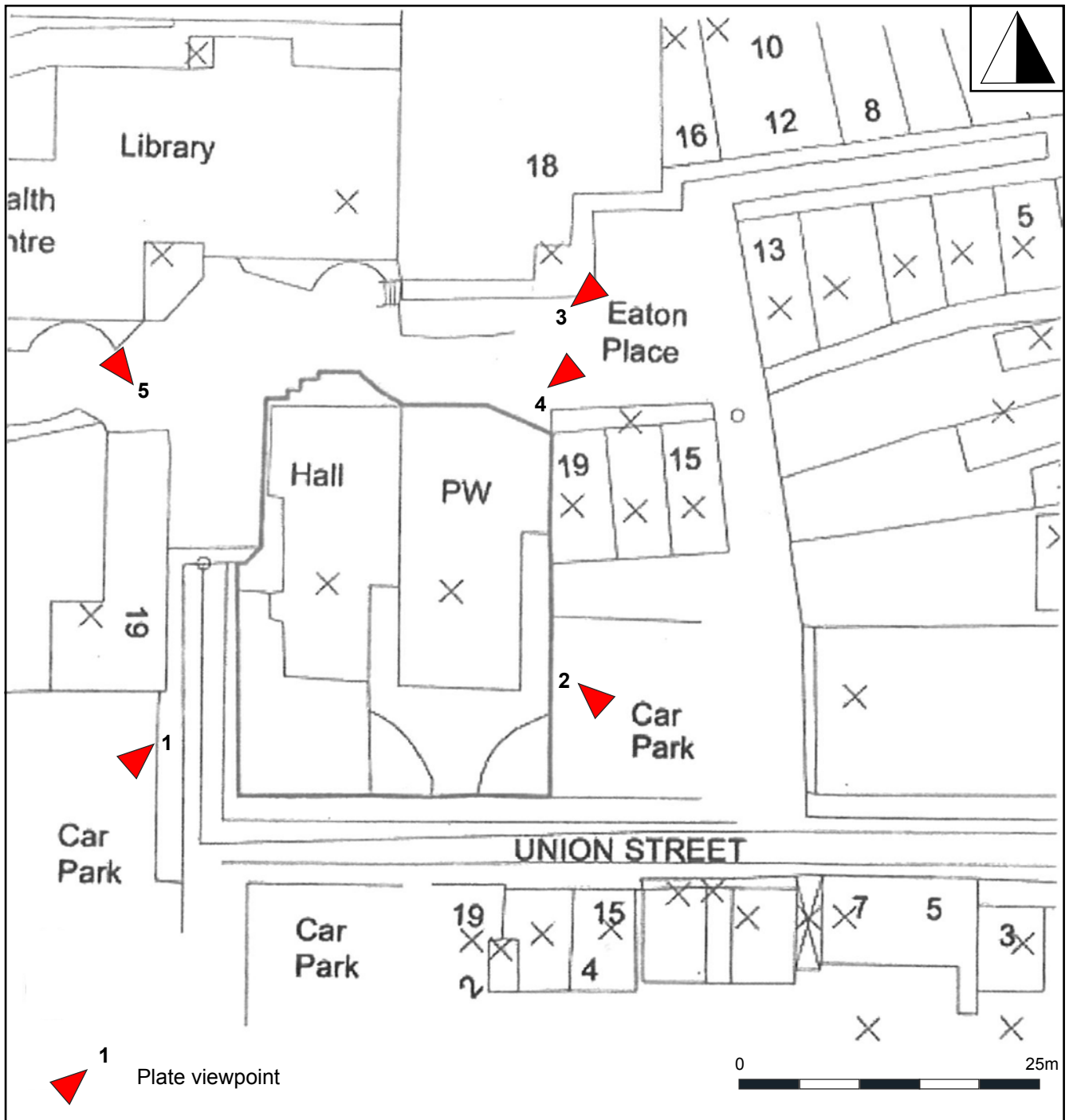


Figure 2: Plan of Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire and the external viewpoints of the plates shown in the report. (Scale 1:500 at A4).

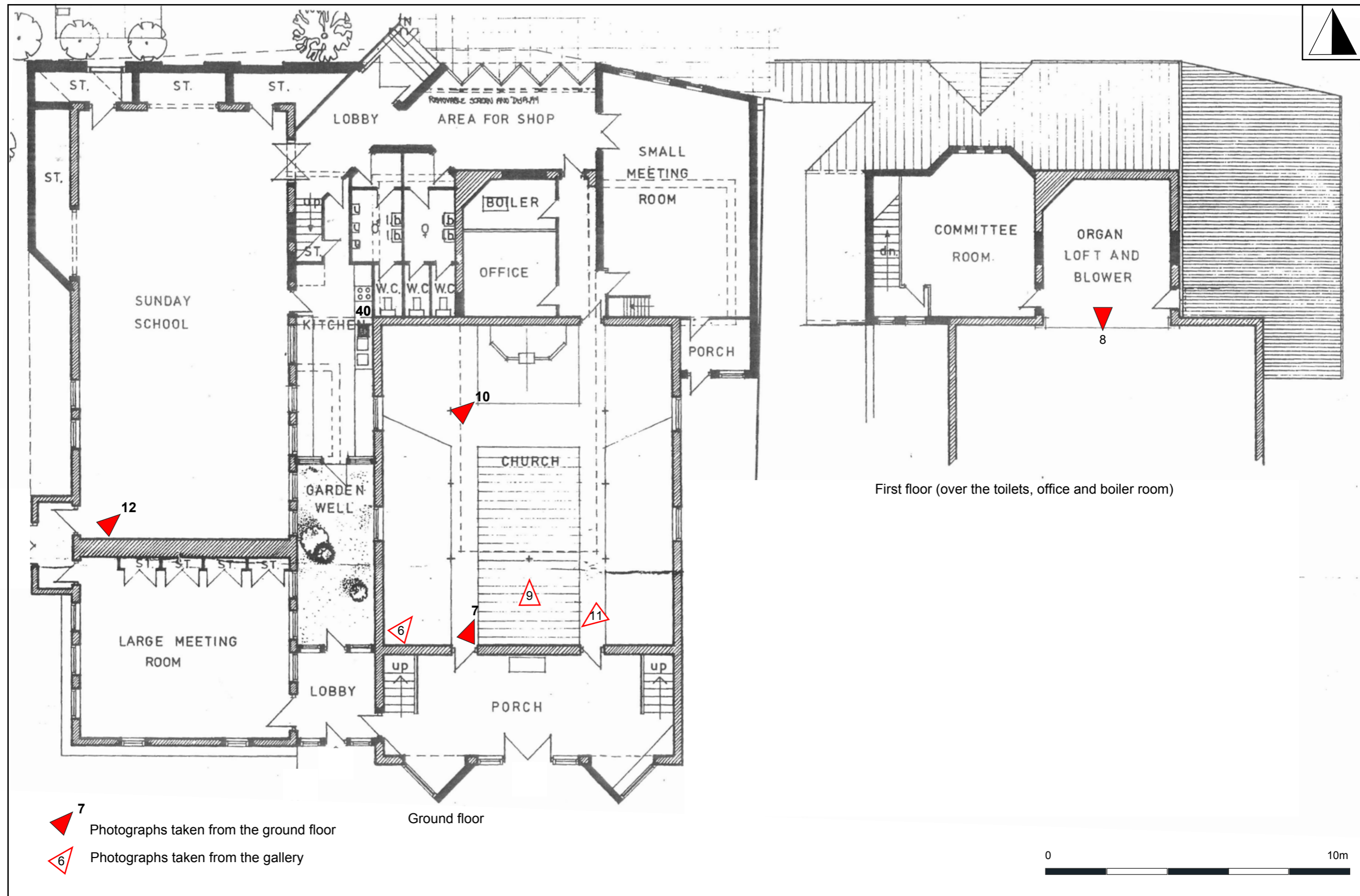


Figure 3: Plan of Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire and the internal viewpoints of the plates shown in the report. (Scale 1:250 at A3)

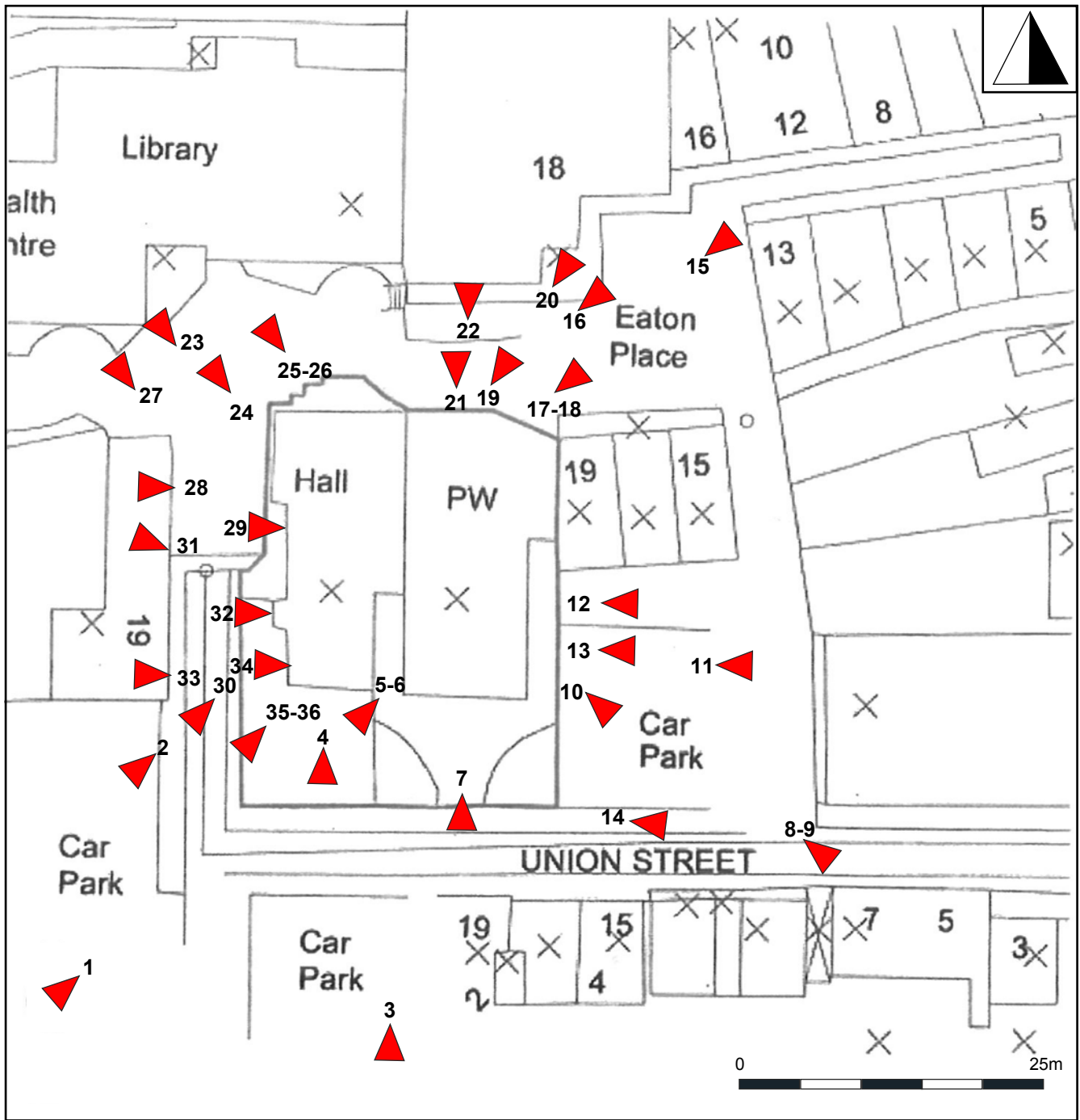


Figure 4: Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire. Exterior photographic viewpoints (Scale 1:500 at A4)

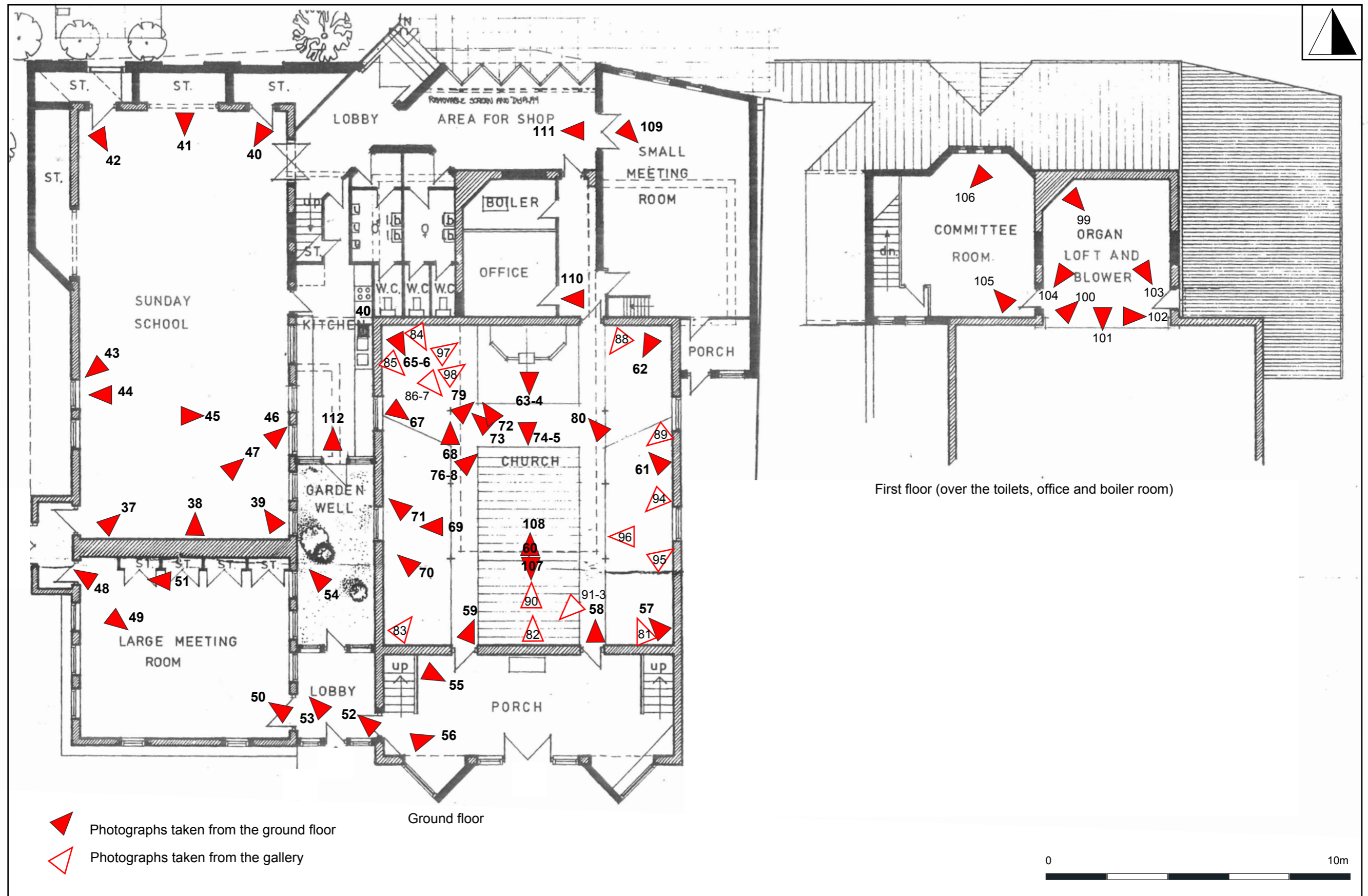


Figure 5: Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire. Ground and first floor photographic viewpoints. (Scale 1:250 at A3)



Plate 1. General view of the Methodist Church complex with Sunday School and Methodist chapel viewed looking, north east.



Plate 2. The Methodist chapel viewed looking north west.



Plate 3. The north elevation of the Methodist Church complex, viewed looking south west.



Plate 4. Detail of the northern end of the two earliest phases of the building which are painted white. Note the blocked arch windows on both the north and east elevations, viewed looking, north east.



Plate 5. The Sunday School, viewed looking south east.



Plate 6. The organ loft set above the rostrum with the fine ceiling rose. Note the original pews in the gallery. Viewed looking north east.



Plate 7. The ground floor of the chapel viewed looking north east.



Plate 8. The interior of the chapel viewed looking south from the organ loft.



Plate 9. The organ loft, viewed looking north.



Plate 10. The rostrum with modern furniture, viewed looking north east.



Plate 11. An original Georgian pew in the gallery.



Plate 12. The interior of the earliest phase of the Sunday School viewed looking north east.

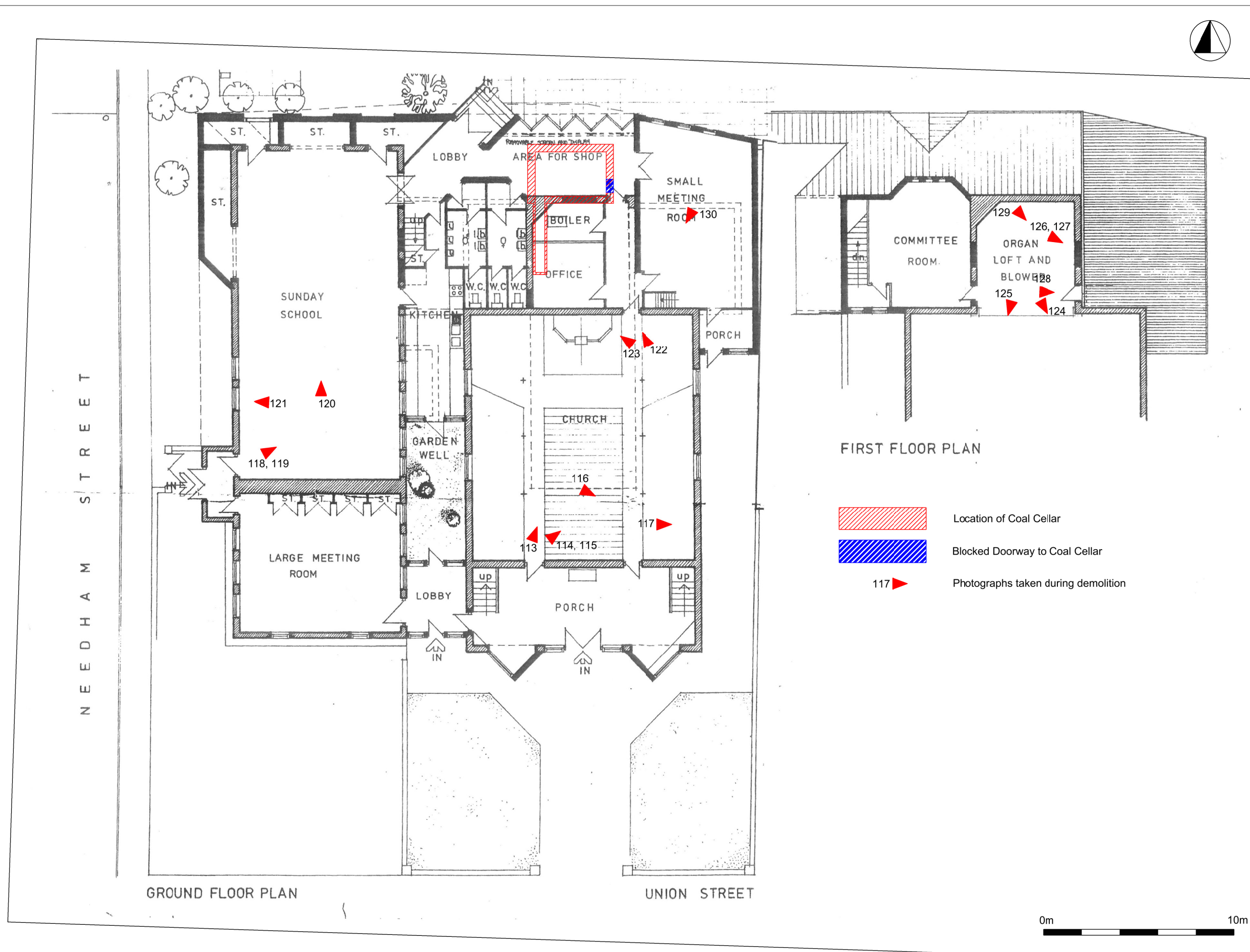


Figure 6: Bingham Methodist Church, Bingham, Nottinghamshire. Location of coal cellar and photographic viewpoints of the interior during demolition. (Scale 1:200 at A3)



Plate 13. Eastern wall of coal cellar, with bricked-up entrance, viewed looking south east.



Plate 14. Concrete filled, brick lined corridor that once adjoined the cellar.



Plate 15. Close-up detail of bricked-up entrance within eastern wall of coal cellar viewed looking east.



Plate 16. General view of the site following removal of the foundations, viewed looking NNE.