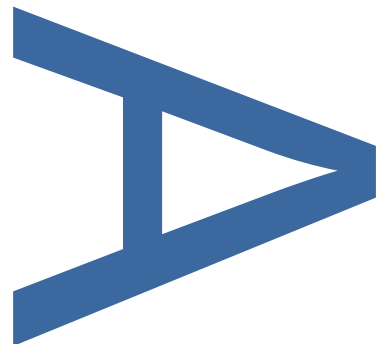
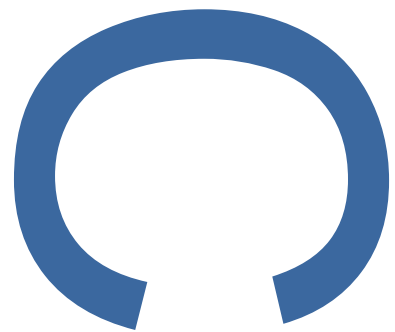


**HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING
OF ST GEORGE'S HALL,
ST GEORGE'S ROAD,
READING,
BERKSHIRE,
RG30 2RG**



PCA REPORT NO: R13034

OCTOBER 2017

PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

**Historic Building Recording of St George's Hall, St George's Road, Reading,
Berkshire RG30 2RG**

Site Code: BSGR17

Central NGR: SU 69034 73648

Local Planning Authority: Reading Borough Council

Planning Reference: 152301

Commissioning Client: Archaeology Collective on behalf of Stonewater Ltd

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October 2017

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DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

Site Name

St George's Hall,
St George's Road,
Reading,
Berkshire
RG30 2RG

Type of project

Historic Building Recording

Quality Control

Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Project Code		K5161	
Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited Report Number		R13034	
	Name & Title	Signature	Date
Text Prepared by:	Kari Bower		03/10/2017
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Revision No.	Date	Checked	Approved
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Figure 1 Site Location

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Figure 5 First Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1881

Figure 6 Site drainage plan, 1884

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Figure 10 Ordnance Survey map, 1959-61

Figure 11 St George's Church and external plate locations

Figure 12 St George's Hall internal plate locations

1 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Archaeology Collective to undertake an Historic England Level 1 building recording of St George's Hall, St George's Road, Reading, Berkshire, centred on OS NGR SU 69034 73648. Archaeology Collective was instructed by Francis Construction, on behalf of Stonewater Ltd. The church and hall do not lie in a Conservation Area although the church is a Grade II Listed Building.
- 1.1.2 The documentary research and historic building recording has shown that although St George's Hall has the appearance of a 1960s community hall, it was built in 1880 as a 'tin tabernacle' or pre-fabricated corrugated iron building. The Iron Church was erected at a cost of £748. From the beginning it was intended to be a temporary church until the permanent church was built. The Iron Church was originally used for regular church services and served a 'poor' community of small tradesmen, labourers and soldiers' families. It was built close to Brock Barracks, which were built 1877 to 1881 to house the Royal Berkshire Regiment.
- 1.1.3 St George's Church was consecrated in 1886 and was erected at a cost of £3038 to designs by Sidney Gambier Parry (1859-1948). It was built both to serve the western expansion of Reading and as a Garrison Church to meet the needs of the troops. The Church was built in stages with parts added in 1893 and 1936. Once the permanent church was in use, the Iron Church was used as a Sunday School. A photograph taken c.1899 shows part of its north elevation. The building is shown as a 'Sunday School' on the 1899 to 1932 Ordnance Survey maps and as 'Hall (Church of England)' on the 1959-61 and later maps.
- 1.1.4 The historic building recording found evidence that parts of the original Iron Church are still extant within St George's Hall. Externally, these include the scalloped shaped barge boards, the rectangular window openings and the remains of corrugated iron sheet nailed to timber studwork and the east iron rose window. The building originally had six tall rectangular south windows and five north windows with a north doorway at the east end. Internally, tongue and groove boards covering the east wall would have extended around the other walls. Decorative iron roof trusses and the rose window show that the Iron Church was originally open to the roof.
- 1.1.5 The building recording showed that huge changes took place in the late 1950s/early 1960s when the building was converted from a Sunday School into a Community Hall. Externally, these included the addition of the west extension, the cement rendering of the walls, the insertion of a central north doorway, the addition of several extensions for toilets and storage, and the altering of windows to accommodate a south extension. Internally, the stage was added, the walls were covered with lightweight timber panelling. These changes altered the appearance of the building from a 'tin tabernacle' to a modern community hall.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

2.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Archaeology Collective to carry out historic building recording of St George's Hall, St George's Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG30 2RG. The site is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SU 69034 73648 (**Figures 1** and **2**). St George's Hall is the community hall of St George's Church. The church and hall do not lie in a Conservation Area. St George's Church is a Grade II Listed Building and its citation is described in full in **Appendix 1**. The summary of the listing description states:

'The Church of St George, Tilehurst, Reading designed by Sidney Gambier Parry in 1884 and built in 1885-6; the church was both parish church and garrison church for the nearby Brock Barracks...

St George's was built both to serve the western expansion of Reading, and to meet the needs of the troops; the new building replaced a temporary iron church erected in 1880...

The community hall, to the S of the church, is thought to have its origins in the 1880 iron church, though it has been very much altered and extended. It was, at least until 1911, known as the Sunday School. This building is not of special interest and is therefore excluded from the listing'.

2.1.2 St George's Hall is not a Listed Building. The Listing description of the Church makes it clear that St George's Hall is not included in the Listing (see above).

2.1.3 Planning permission (App. No. 152301) has been granted by Reading Borough Council for 'Church extension of 88sqm with dedicated parking area, core access road and construction of 12 affordable housing units with associated parking and amenity space' (**Figure 3**). This will involve the demolition of St George's Hall. An historic building recording condition (15) attached to the planning permission states:

'15. A scheme of works, produced in accordance with Level 1 as defined by Historic England in 'Understanding Historic Buildings - A Guide to Good Recording Practice', shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval. Recording of the hall shall then be carried out in accordance with an approved scheme of works before demolition works commence on the church hall.

Reason: to ensure that such material and evidence of significance should be examined during this development and in the interests of protecting the heritage of the borough in accordance with Policy CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)'.

2.1.4 The building recording was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Matthews, 2017). It was undertaken broadly in accordance with a Level 1 survey as set out in Historic England 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*.

The survey was carried out on 4th September 2017.

2.2 Site Location

- 2.2.1 The site is roughly rectangular in shape, covering an area of 0.2ha and is bounded to the west by St George's Road, to the north and south by residential properties which front onto St George's Road and the east by residential properties which front onto Beecham Road. The Church Hall lies to the south of St George's Church within the southern half of site (**Figure 2**).

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 National Guidelines

- 3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was adopted on March 27, 2012. The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications.
- 3.1.2 Chapter 12 of the NPPF concerns the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. In considering any planning application for development, the local planning authority will be guided by the policy framework set by the NPPF.

3.2 Local Policy

- 3.2.1 Reading Borough Council is currently undergoing a review of its local policies, as such the site is subject to the previous Core Strategy Plan adopted in 2008 and altered in 2015, which states:

Policy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. This will include:

- Listed Buildings;
- Conservation Areas;
- Other features with local or national designation, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and historic parks and gardens.

Planning permission will only be granted where development has no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings. All proposals will be expected to protect and where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Aims and Objectives

4.1.1 The aim of the building recording as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation was to provide a record of St George's Hall prior to its demolition. This record was to be broadly in accordance with that defined by Historic England's Level 1. The aim was to provide a better understanding of the building, to compile a lasting record, to analyse the results and to disseminate the results.

4.2 Documentary Research

4.2.1 A search of relevant primary sources was carried out at Berkshire Record Office in Reading. This information was used to supplement the historical background information gathered from secondary sources. The results of historic research are provided in Section 5 of this report.

4.3 On-Site Recording

4.3.1 The historic building recording was carried out on 4th September 2017 by an historic buildings archaeologist (Kari Bower). A photographic survey using high quality digital images was completed recording the building. A selection of the photographs has been included in this report (**Plates 1 to 57**) and **Figures 11 and 12** shows the location and direction of the plates.

4.3.2 The historic building recording was undertaken in accordance with a Level 1 survey as set out in Historic England 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*.

4.4 Project Archive

4.4.1 A full and ordered archive including any written, drawn, survey and photographic records will be completed in accordance with guidelines for the preparation of archaeological archives for long term storage. The archive will be provisionally stored in Pre-Construct Archaeology's Office in Brockley, London before being transferred to a local archive. This report will be submitted to the Archaeology Collective for onward submission to the Client and Reading Borough Council.

4.5 Guidance

4.5.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with standards set out in:

- Cifa (2014) *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*
- English Heritage (now Historic England) (2005) *The Presentation of Historic Building Survey in CAD*
- Historic England 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*

5 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

5.1 Tin Tabernacles

- 5.1.1 The following background on 'tin tabernacles' is taken directly from Liz Induni's article at <http://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/tin-tabernacles/tin-tabernacles.html> (accessed 30 September 2017).
- 5.1.2 A 'tin tabernacle' is a temporary church of galvanised iron erected by any denomination. They were erected before permanent building could be provided. In the 19th and early 20th centuries many churches were designed and made in kit form to be bought from catalogues. The most common type was timber framed, externally clad with galvanised corrugated iron and lined with high quality tongue-and-groove boarding.
- 5.1.3 The principle of folding or corrugating sheets of iron to add stiffness and rigidity had been known long before corrugated iron began to be produced on a large scale in Britain. In the early 19th century three developments made this possible. First was the 1820s development by Henry Palmer, a civil engineer in London, of a new method of corrugating iron; second, Richard Walker's realisation that Palmer's process enabled the production of a cheap, light-weight cladding system that was ideal for iron framed buildings with a large span, such as warehouses; and third, the invention of hot dip galvanising in 1837.
- 5.1.4 Galvanising, the process of coating the surface of the iron with a layer of zinc, which was patented in 1837 by a French engineer Stanislaus Sorel, dramatically increases the, resistance of the iron to corrosion, transforming it into a long lasting material.
- 5.1.5 The new construction system was ideally suited to prefabrication. It was light, strong, compact and able to be cut into sheets of a manageable size.
- 5.1.6 The very rapid growth in urban population during the Victorian era caused a new wave of church building. The advocacy of traditional materials by the Ecclesiological Society and architects such as Pugin, Street and Scott was irrelevant to the church needs of the poor or those at the margins of society. Corrugated iron buildings started to be mass-produced by engineers and builders. They were made available for sale through catalogues. Each building type – cottage, railway station, church or house – was illustrated with a drawing and a price. Size could be altered according to need.
- 5.1.7 Prefabricated iron churches were relatively cheap to buy, costing anything from £150 for a chapel seating 150 to £500 for a chapel seating 350. Conventional building materials for the same would be considerably more expensive. By 1875 hundreds of corrugated iron churches were erected in the United Kingdom, many with extensive gothic style embellishments.

5.2 The Iron Church

- 5.2.1 A letter dated December 1880 (BRO: D/P132D/6/5/2) in the Berkshire Record Office reads:

'12, Bishop's Villas,

My Friends,

You will have noticed that the New Iron Church is nearly finished. We hope to open it on Monday, December 20th, at 3.15pm, when the Bishop of Oxford will Preach. There will also be an Evening Service at 7pm, at which the Archdeacon of Berks will Preach. I hope you will make an effort to attend these Services. The offertory collections on both occasions will be for the Iron Church Building and Furnishing Fund.

The regular Services will begin on Christmas Day, and be carried on every Sunday. The Services on Christmas Day will be at 11am, followed by Holy Communion at 3pm (for children) and at 6.30pm. On Sundays the Services will be as follows: Morning at 11am; Afternoon at 3pm. Children's Service and Catechising, followed by Baptism and Churching of Women; Evening at 6.30pm. Holy Communion will, for the present, be administered on the first Sunday in the month, after morning service, and on the third Sunday in the month at 8am. I shall hope to announce a regular week day service later on. The hymn books that we propose to use at the Church may be purchased at the Vestry, or at my house, or at 14, Bishop's Villas. Price 4d, 6d and 1s.

I propose to open Sunday School in the church on the first Sunday in the New Year. The hours will be 9.45am and 2.15pm. In a short time I hope also to open the Church for Religious instruction for children on Saturday mornings at 10am. Of this I will give due notice when the time comes.

Though we have to begin in an Iron Church, I hope the time is not too far distant when we shall be able to build a permanent Church. We already have £475 promised for that purpose. When the new Church is built, the present Iron Church will remain for use as a Sunday School, and for general parochial purposes. I will have Collecting Cards prepared and shall ask those of you who attend the Church to raise a little money among your friends by this means.

I hope that before many months are over, this part of the Parish will be constituted a separate Ecclesiastical District, under the title of St George, Tylehurst. The business of separation is being actively pressed on.

The seats in the Church will be entirely free. It will be necessary for us to have Offertory collections every Sunday, to meet the expenses of Services, Choir, Schools etc, and to provide assistance to the sick and poor. I hope you will make a practice of laying by what you can afford for this purpose. We ought to try all we can to support our own machinery, without depending upon our neighbours, upon whom we make great demands for our Church Buildings.

I am making arrangements for a Weekly Mother's Meeting to be held in the afternoon before the children come home from school. Bible classes and other useful agencies will, I hope, soon follow.

It will, I fear, be some time before I can get to know you all personally, but I shall try to accomplish this as soon as possible by house-to-house visiting. Meanwhile I shall be glad if those who would like me to visit them would leave their names and addresses at my house, or with the Caretaker of the Church at the Vestry. I shall always be willing to visit, with as little delay as possible, any cases of sickness. Please regard me as wishing to become your friend, and as your servant in Jesus Christ. I shall look to you to tell me of cases of sickness, and to send for me whenever you want to see me. This will greatly help me in my work. You can help me by coming to the Services and Classes, and by taking care that your children attend Sunday School regularly and punctually. The life of a Parish depends much on the hearty help of the people in the ways I have mentioned.

Lastly, I ask for your constant prayers for God's blessing on our work. I am sure that if we all "put our shoulders to the wheel," God will cause our new district and organisation to be a means of making St George's, Tylehurst, a better and a happier place to live in. God helps those who help themselves. Therefore "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might".

I am,

Yours faithfully

H.N. CUNNINGHAM'

5.2.2 The Iron Church is not shown on the 1881 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (**Figure 5**), which was surveyed before it was constructed. The map does show the Forty First Brigade Depot less than 100m to the east. The Depot occupies a large rectangular area with barrack buildings to the north and grounds (later labelled 'Drill Ground') to the south. The barracks were named 'Brock Barracks' after Major-General Sir Isaac Brock and were built in 1877 to 1881. Their creation took place as part of the Cardwell Reforms, which encouraged the localisation of British military forces. This reflects a change in military thinking at that time, introduced by the Liberal Secretary of State for War Edward Cardwell, whose thoroughgoing modernisation of the army between 1870 and 1881 became known as the 'Cardwell reforms'. Having observed chronic under-recruitment in the army, Cardwell, in 1872, initiated the Military Localisation Bill which provided for a redistribution of regiments in Britain and Ireland to depots situated in areas populous enough to sustain a brigade, encouraging the establishment of local connections and assisting recruitment. Thus it was that Brock Barracks was constructed in 1877-81 to house the 1st and 2nd Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment. The Parliamentary and Municipal Boundary (Reading) is shown to the east of the Depot. The map shows that rectangular plots for straight rows of terraced houses were being laid out to the north of the site of the St George's Church.

5.2.3 A letter dated September 1881 (BRO: D/P132D/6/5/3) in the Berkshire Record Office reads:
'St George's,

Tilehurst,

Reading

Sir,

The Iron Church, which was contemplated last year, has been erected, at a cost of £748 2s 4d, on the site granted by the Berkshire Estate Company; and a new Ecclesiastical District is being formed, which at present contains a population of 1400 souls, and is daily increasing. The district is composed entirely of small tradesmen, labourers and soldiers' families, for whose spiritual wants the Church has only lately been able to make any provision.

It is of the utmost importance that a Parsonage and a Permanent Church capable of holding about 500 persons, should be built as soon as possible.

Suitable sites for both Church and Parsonage have been granted.

It is earnestly hoped that an appeal on behalf of these two objects will not be made in vain to those who are able, even by small contributions, to bring to its completion a work which has been so satisfactorily begun, and which already gives such excellent promise'.

Subscriptions towards (1) the Church and (2) the Parsonage will be gratefully received by the Rural Dean, the Rev. C.H. Travers, Englefield Rectory, Reading; and by the Clergyman in charge, the Rev. R.E. Lee, St George's, Oxford Road, Reading; or Subscriptions may be paid to the St George's (Tilehurst) Church account, at Messrs Stephens, Blandy and Co.'s Bank, Reading.

We are, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

C.H. TRAVERS,

J.W. ROUTH,

T. BUTLER,

F. WILDER,

R. ELTON LEE,

(Acting Committee)

I desire again to commend the interest and want of St George's with its increasing population, to the benevolence of all who have it in their power to promote the good work which has been begun there'

J.F. OXON.'

5.2.4 An undated (presumably 1884) document (BRO: D/P132D/6/5/4) in the Berkshire Record

Office reads:

'St George's, Tilehurst

Third and Last Appeal for our Permanent Church

The Building Committee tender their most sincere thanks to those who have so generously contributed to this much needed work. About £1,800 has now been given or promised, including herein liberal Benefactions from the various Church Societies.

We hope to be able to lay our Foundation Stone early in January, 1885, and it is most necessary that we should do so, by June 1885, we run a gave risk of forfeiting a grant of £200 made to us conditionally by Marshall's Charity.

We still require about £400, as far as we can judge, for the builder's estimate has not yet been received, and we do earnestly appeal to the wealthy and benevolent to help us raise this sum. Possibly some who have already aided us, may not be unwilling, as they see the work progressing, to aid us again. Our grounds for this appeal ad set forth on former occasions, are as follows:

1. That our population, numbering about 1,400, consists almost entirely of poor.
2. That we have no Parsonage House – and no prospect of getting one till our Church is built and Consecrated
3. That we are unable at present to Solemnise marriages, or bury in our Parish.
4. That our present Iron Building is wholly inadequate to fulfil the three-fold duties of Church, Sunday School and Parochial Hall.
5. That the Bishop warmly approves of our undertaking.

We ask those who enjoy the full benefit of a Parish Church, to try and realise the needs of those like ourselves, who do not as yet possess this privilege.

C.W.H. KENRICK, Vicar of St George's, Tilehurst

A. WARRINGTON, Church Warden

C. LONG, Church Warden

C.H. TRAVERS, Rural Dean, Rector of Englefield

J.W. ROUTH, Rector of Tilehurst

T. BUTLER, Rector of Theale

F.C.C. BARNETT

Donations may be sent to, and will be gratefully acknowledged by the Rev. C.W.H. KENRICK, Ingleside, Reading, or the Rev. C.H. TRAVERS, Englefield Rectory, Reading.

- 5.2.5 The above printed document (BRO: D/P132D/6/5/4) has been annotated in pen with the following:

'Special Appeal for a Garrison Church'

...About '£2,300' (£1,800 deleted) has now been given or promised....

- 5.2.6 The paragraph starting 'We hope to be able to lay our Foundation Stone early in January, 1885' and the phrase 'for the builder's estimate has not yet been received' has been deleted. The name 'J. E. Smith-Masters, Vicar of St George's' has been added. 'C.W.H. KENRICK, Vicar' remains and 'St George's, Tilehurst' next to his name has been deleted. Other changes have been made including 'Donations may be sent to, and will be gratefully acknowledged by the Rev J. E. Smith-Masters, St Giles' Clergy House, Reading'.

5.3 The Permanent Church and the Sunday School

- 5.3.1 A series of plans in the Berkshire Record Office dated March 1884 and signed by Sidney Gambier Parry (Architect) include a plan titled 'St George, Tilehurst, Reading Block Plan of Site Drainage' (**Figure 6**) shows the 'Existing Iron Church Building' and the proposed (in pink) Permanent Church to the north. The latter is shown to include the north porch and the nave. The Chancel is shown uncoloured and with a dashed outline as a future addition. Another plan (not illustrated here) in this series shows the proposed (in pink) ground floor plan of the Permanent Church. The plan labels the north porch, the north aisle and the nave. The Chancel, South Aisle and South Porch are shown uncoloured and with a dashed outline as future additions. The latter two are labelled 'Proposed Future South Aisle and Porch'. Other plans in the series include a 'Longitudinal Section' facing north and 'South Elevation' (not illustrated here). The latter labels the 'Temporary Wall under Nave Arcade etc'.
- 5.3.2 Sidney Gambier Parry (1859-1948) was the son of Thomas Gambier Parry, an artist and inventor, and the half-brother of the composer Sir Hubert Parry. During his career he undertook both ecclesiastical and domestic work, frequently in his native Gloucestershire: his ecclesiastical works include the Church of All Saints, Winthorpe, Nottinghamshire (1886-8, Grade II), and the Church of St Peter, Badgeworth, Gloucestershire (1888, Grade II), whilst notable church restorations include the Church of St Michael, Churcham, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire (1886, Grade I). He collaborated in rebuilding work at St John the Evangelist, Coleford, Gloucestershire, (restored 1885, Grade II) and St Mary, Cowbit, Lincolnshire (restored 1882, Grade I). He designed the altar frontal for Salisbury Cathedral and the alabaster work in the sanctuary of St Mary's Bathwick, Bath. Parry was also commissioned for designs for the roof decoration in the chancel at the Church of St Mary, Bayford, Hertfordshire (1890, Grade II*), and in 1913 built an organ case and loft for St Mary's, Bourne Street, London. His domestic work included Iveson Manor, Ampney St Peter, Gloucestershire (1908, Grade II) and the extension and remodelling of the late 18th or early 19th century Pytte House 1-6, Clyst St George, Devon (Grade II).

5.3.3 A letter dated April 1886 (BRO: D/P132D/6/J/8) in the Berkshire Record Office reads:

'St George's, Tylehurst

Reading,

April, 1886

THE NEW CHURCH OF ST GEORGE, TYLEHURST will (God willing) be Consecrated by the LORD BISHOP OF THE DICESE, on Friday, April 30th, at 11am.

The Alms will be devoted to the Building Fund; upwards of £200 being still needed for the work already completed.

The Clergy are requested to bring Surplice and Hood, and assemble in the Temporary Church by 10.40.

After the Service, the BISHOP will preside at a Public Luncheon, in the adjoining BOARD SCHOOLS....

J.E. SMITH-MASTERS, Vicar

5.3.4 A letter dated May 1892 (BRO: D/P132D/6/J/10) in the Berkshire Record Office reads:

'St George's Vicarage,

Reading,

May, 1892

Dear Sir (or Madam),

The present portion of St George's Church (Nave and North Aisle) was erected at a cost of £3038 15s 2d and consecrated on April 30th, 1886.

Since then the population of the Parish has increased from 1,500 to over 2,000 and the church has been made the Garrison Church for the Troops at Reading – The Royal Berkshire Regiment.

The present building is intended to seat 304 persons, but by introducing extra chairs wherever possible, some 360 sittings are provided; notwithstanding this addition, Parishioners have constantly to be turned away from Divine Service on Sunday Mornings owing to want of room. A Special Service has also to be provided in the School every Sunday Morning for over 250 Sunday School Children. The Committee are desirous of removing the present excessive crowding; at the same time being unable to predict to what extent the Parish may grow in the future, they contemplate undertaking only a partial enlargement of the Church, by the erection of Chancel, Organ Chamber and Vestries.

....

The Committee trust that, considering the rapidity with which the population of St George's is

increasing, the great inconvenience arising from the present overcrowding, and the real poverty of the Parish, the Parishioners consisting solely of labouring classes, this Appeal may meet with your generous sympathy and support.

Yours faithfully,

John Stewart

5.3.5 It is clear from the documentary evidence that St George's Church was built both to serve the western expansion of Reading, and to meet the needs of the troops. The Church was also clearly built in stages with the nave, north aisle and north porch consecrated in 1886 and the chancel, vestries and organ chamber in 1893. The 1899 Second Edition Ordnance Survey map (**Figure 7**) shows both the Iron Church (labelled 'Sunday School') and the Permanent Church (labelled 'St George's Church'). Brock Barracks are labelled 'Barracks (49th Regimental District)' to the east. Straight rows of terraced houses have been built mostly to the north of the barracks but also to the west around St George's Church with some to the east and south. A photograph taken c.1899 shows the east and north elevations of St George's Church after it had been extended to the east with the Chancel (**Historic Plate 1**). The photograph also shows part of the north elevation of the Sunday School (Iron Church) (**Historic Plate 2**).

5.3.6 The 1911 Third Edition Ordnance Survey map (**Figure 8**) shows both the Sunday School and St George's Church. Brock Barracks are labelled 'Barracks (49th Regimental District)' to the east. Straight rows of terraced houses have been built mostly to the north of the barracks but also to the west around St George's Church with some to the east and south.

5.3.7 The 1932 Ordnance Survey map (**Figure 9**) again shows the Sunday School and the St George's Church. Small buildings have been added to the north and east of the Sunday School. Brock Barracks are labelled 'Barracks (Depot The Royal Berkshire Regiment)' to the east. More straight rows of terraced houses have been built to the north, east, west and south of the barracks.

5.3.8 In 1936, a south chapel, partial south aisle and south porch, added by George Ridley Phillips, were consecrated. The south aisle of the church was never completed. Major repairs and maintenance work were carried out between 1955 and 1958 by George William Judd.

5.4 St George's Church and St George's Hall

5.4.1 The 1959-61 Ordnance Survey map (**Figure 10**) shows St George's Church with the south chapel, partial south aisle and south porch added mainly at the east end of the south elevation. The former Sunday School building is now labelled 'Hall (Church of England)'.

5.4.2 The current footprint of St George's Church is the same as in 1959-61, however the Community Hall has been extended to the west and south and at the south end of the east elevation (**Figures 2 and 10**). The following planning applications were made from 1958 to 1975:

Reference: 0000005579 HEADQUARTERS OF SCOUT GROUP

UNCONDITIONAL CONSENT on 31 Jan 1958

*The above planning application applies to: ST GEORGES HALL ST GEORGES ROAD
READING RG30 2RG*

Reference: 0000006866 ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS

UNCONDITIONAL CONSENT on 31 Jul 1959

*The above planning application applies to: ST GEORGES HALL ST GEORGES ROAD
READING RG30 2RG*

Reference: 0000012179 EXTENSION TO HALL

UNCONDITIONAL CONSENT on 27 Nov 1964

*The above planning application applies to: ST GEORGES HALL ST GEORGES ROAD
READING RG30 2RG*

Reference: 0000012733 HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

REFUSED on 14 May 1965

*The above planning application applies to: ST GEORGES HALL ST GEORGES ROAD
READING RG30 2RG*

Reference: 0000012800 SCOUTS HUT

UNCONDITIONAL CONSENT on 18 Jun 1965

*The above planning application applies to: ST GEORGES HALL ST GEORGES ROAD
READING RG30 2RG*

Reference: 0000017597 TOILETS

UNCONDITIONAL CONSENT on 26 Jun 1970

*The above planning application applies to: ST GEORGES HALL ST GEORGES ROAD
READING RG30 2RG*

Reference: 0000024551 EXTENSION TO EXISTING HQ, INCLUDING DEMOLITION OF
SUNDRY OUTBUILDINGS

CONDITIONAL CONSENT GRANTED BEF AUG 1977 on 27 Jun 1975

*The above planning application applies to: ST GEORGES HALL ST GEORGES ROAD
READING RG30 2RG*

6 BUILDING DESCRIPTION

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 The building recording was completed prior to demolition of St George's Hall and the redevelopment of the site. The descriptions and interpretations are based on information gathered during the site visit and from primary and secondary archive sources. To facilitate the descriptions in this report, site north (actually north-east) was used rather than true north, rooms or spaces in the hall were referred to by use (i.e. Kitchen, Stage, Toilet etc.).

6.2 External descriptions of St George's Hall

6.2.1 On first impressions, St George's Hall has the appearance of a 1960s building (**Plates 1 and 2**). It is a single-storeyed, rectangular building with a pitched, corrugated asbestos roof and various later extensions to the front (west), sides and rear (**Figure 2; Plates 1 and 2**). The hall is set further back from the street than the adjacent Church (**Plate 1**), with a small parking/open area to the west (**Plate 2**), a large garden area to the south and two large concrete (building) platforms to the east (**Plates 3 and 4**).

6.2.2 The footprint of the east concrete (building) platform is labelled on some 1970s and 1980s Ordnance Survey maps (not illustrated here) as a 'Scout Hut' and as a 'Hall' on the 1993 Ordnance Survey map (not illustrated here). This building was built between 1911 and 1932 (**Figures 8 and 9**). The building on the adjacent (west) concrete platform was built between 1974 and 1986 (Ordnance Survey maps not illustrated here). Both buildings were presumably demolished in the last few years.

6.2.3 The areas to the south and east of St George's Hall were heavily overgrown at the time of the site visit (**Plates 9 to 12**). An access road covered with tarmac was located between the church and the hall (**Plates 5 and 6**). The west, north and south elevations of St George's Hall are covered with cement render presumably added when the front west extension (**Plate 2**) was built between 1962 and 1968 (Ordnance Survey maps not illustrated here). The less visible east wall is covered with corrugated iron sheets (**Plate 12**).

6.2.4 Access into the hall is via a modern double door located in the building's west elevation (front gable end), which is set within the 1960s brick porch extension (**Plate 7**). The extension appeared to be constructed from modern brickwork, which is not rendered at the north and south corners and is set at a decorative angle (**Plate 8**). The main entrance doorway is set back from the main face of the elevation echoing the brick corners (**Plate 7**). The gable of the extension is covered with a black painted timber board. The decorative scalloped 1880 timber barge-board is visible on the east gable of the higher set back original building.

6.2.5 The rear (south) elevation has also been cement rendered, but unlike the front elevation is not painted white (**Plates 9 to 11**). At the west end of the elevation is a modern red brick extension with a gently sloping pitched roof, which houses the new female toilets and baby changing facilities of the hall. The upper parts of three original window openings are visible

above a low roofed extension to the east (**Plate 10**). This extension is used as a storage area for the Hall. The easternmost of the three windows has been infilled while the other two light the hall.

- 6.2.6 The east rear gable elevation differs from the other elevations in that it is covered with panels of corrugated iron sheets, the lower part of which has been painted white on the north side (**Plate 12**). The original scalloped barge-board, which is the same as on the front (west) elevation, is still extant (**Plates 11 and 12**). A low extension with cement rendered walls and a gently sloping mono-pitched roof for the men's toilets has been added to the southern part of the elevation. The elevation was partially obscured by dense vegetation at the time of the site visit.
- 6.2.7 The north elevation (front side) comprises from east to west: the north-east corner brick extension (**Plates 16 to 18**), the white painted cement rendered main hall (**Plates 13 to 15**) and the front 1960s porch extension (**Plate 14**).
- 6.2.8 The hall has a centrally located single doorway, which is flanked on each side by two windows each containing modern metal frames (**Plate 24**). The c.1899 photograph of this elevation (**Historic Plate 2**) shows three windows in this elevation showing that the central doorway was a later insertion. The window light above the central doorway marks the position of the original window before the doorway was inserted. The original main doorway into the Iron Church was presumably in the west elevation porch shown on historic maps and plans (**Figures 6 to 10**) before it was replaced by the 1960s west extension (**Figure 2**).
- 6.2.9 A small north-east corner extension appears to have been added to the Iron Church between 1884 and 1899 (**Figures 6 and 7**). This small corrugated iron extension is partially shown in the c.1899 photograph (**Historic Plate 2**). This extension was re-constructed in brick and extended to the east and north between 1911 and 1932 (**Figures 8 and 9**). This north-east corner brick extension now houses a small entrance into the main hall and storage rooms (not accessible at the time of the site visit).
- 6.2.10 The timber bargeboards on this extension match those on the gable ends of the hall (**Plates 16 and 17**). The brick extension was constructed in Flemish Garden Wall Bond (Sussex Bond) with three stretchers to one header in each row. Queen closers are present around the window openings. The doorway and two windows in the west elevation have segmental arches formed of two courses of bricks-on-edge.

6.3 Internal descriptions of St George's Hall

- 6.3.1 Internally the hall comprises two main rooms: the main hall, which covers almost the entire floor space with a raised stage at the east end. The later extensions, which were noted above externally, all have specific functions. The front west extension comprises the kitchen (south), main entrance hallway (centre) and an office (north). The two south side extensions are used as a small female toilet and baby changing room (west) and a larger storage area (east;

inaccessible at the time of recording). The rear east extension houses the male toilet. The north-east corner brick extension houses a small entrance doorway into the hall and storage areas, which were mainly inaccessible at the time of recording.

- 6.3.2 The north-east corner brick extension acts as a smaller secondary entrance into the hall and is used as the 'everyday' access, with the larger main western entrance used for functions. Only the west end of the north-east corner brick extension was accessed at the time of the site visit. Internally, the west, north and south walls of this end of the extension are clad in tongue and groove timber boards. The east wall of this end of the extension was constructed of concrete block and was a late 20th century insertion. The west end of this extension has a timber floor and timber ceiling boards (**Plates 19 to 22**).
- 6.3.3 Within the main building, a narrow corridor leads west to the hall (**Plate 23**) and east to a small worn timber flight of stairs up to the stage (**Plate 28**). The north and east walls of this corridor are covered in tongue and groove timber boards, presumably the original wall covering before the corridor was created. The floor is covered with east-west timber boards. The doorway in the north wall has a heavily moulded architrave and was presumably an original doorway into the building at the east end of the north wall before the corrugated iron extension was built (**Figure 6**).
- 6.3.4 The main hall comprises a large open plan room that can be accessed by the various later extensions located on its north, east, south and west sides (**Plates 24 to 27**). The stage at the east end is thought to be a later insertion (**Plate 25**). The walls of the main hall are covered by modern, perhaps 1960s, timber panels. The ceiling is a mid-late 20th century insertion and the floor is covered with varnished timber floorboards (**Plates 24 to 27**).
- 6.3.5 The hall is lit by five tall fixed metal casement rectangular windows, four in the north wall (**Plate 26**) and one in the south wall (**Plate 27**), although two further windows at the east end of the south wall and a window above the central doorway in the north wall have been partially blocked leaving only the upper quarter as a window. The window openings appear to be original when compared with those shown on the c.1899 photograph (**Historic Plate 2**), although the windows have been replaced. The original building appears to have been well lit with six tall rectangular windows in its south elevation and five in its north elevation with a doorway at the east end of the north elevation.
- 6.3.6 The raised stage is accessed by two narrow corridors and small flight of stairs; one on the north and the other on the south side (**Plates 28 and 34**). The walls around the stage are covered with modern, perhaps 1960s, wooden panels (**Plates 29 and 30**), while the rear (east) wall is covered with original tongue and groove boards (**Plate 33**). The front of the stage has inserted white wooden shutters, which were added in the 1960s (**Plate 31**). Only one side of the shutters could be opened, which indicated that the stage was no longer used for performances and was primarily used for equipment storage (**Plates 32**).

- 6.3.7 The east wall of the south corridor, which leads from the main hall to the men's toilets in the rear east extension, is covered with tongue and groove timber boards (**Plate 34**). A thin timber panelled wall separates the stairs from the corridor to the men's toilets and was presumably inserted when the toilet extension was added perhaps in the 1960s (**Plate 34**).
- 6.3.8 The rear men toilets consist of three distinct areas; one open area, which houses two wash basins (**Plate 35**) and two toilet stalls (**Plate 36**). The main walls of the larger wash area are covered with white painted render. Two windows are located in the north wall. The walls of the toilet stalls are painted brickwork. The west wall of the larger wash area of the toilet was the original external east wall of the building that had been covered with the toilet extension. A small area of corrugated iron sheet attached to the timber studwork wall was visible over the toilet entrance door (**Plates 37 and 38**).
- 6.3.9 The ladies toilet and baby changing room is in a relatively new extension (**Plate 39**).
- 6.3.10 The main west 1960s entrance extension consists of three rooms. The central hallway has the main entrance double doorways in its west wall (**Plate 40**) and the double doorways into the hall in its east wall (**Plate 24**) with doorways in its north and south walls, which give access to an office (inaccessible at the time of the site visit) and kitchen, respectively. The kitchen has a window in its south wall and a small serving hatch in its east wall (**Plate 41**).
- 6.3.11 The roof space over the main building is accessed via a small ceiling hatch located centrally above the stage by the east wall (**Plate 42**). Directly above the roof hatch in the east gable is an iron rose window in a circular timber frame (**Plates 42 to 44**). The window is no longer visible externally because it has been covered with a galvanised corrugated iron sheet. The rest of the east gable wall is covered internally with yellow painted tongue and groove timber boards (**Plate 46**). The tongue and groove boards continued below covering the rear (east) wall of the stage. The roof space is divided by six evenly spaced, green painted, metal trusses, each of which were bolted to a pair of timber rafters (**Plate 45**). The rafters support five timber purlins, which in turn support original vertical roof (match) boards. The rose window, decorated trusses, vertical roof boards and raised collars were designed to be seen and the roof was original open above interior of the church. When the attic floor was inserted the trusses were reinforced with a number of upright timbers added in various places (**Plate 45**).

6.4 External descriptions of the south elevation of St George's Church

- 6.4.1 The west end of the South Aisle of St George's Church was never completed. The original church was built in 1886 to the designs of Sidney Gambier Parry and his 1884 plans and south elevation drawings (not illustrated here) are annotated 'Proposed Future South Aisle and Porch' and 'Temporary Wall under Nave Arcade etc', respectively. The 'Temporary Wall' under the Nave Arcade is still clearly visible externally (**Plates 48 to 51**) and internally (**Plates 53 and 54**). The church was further extended in 1892 with a chancel at the east end. In 1936, a south chapel, partial south aisle and south porch, added by George Ridley Phillips, were

consecrated.

- 6.4.2 The proposal is to add a Parish Room, Parish Office, Kitchen and Toilets in the space to the south of the unfinished 1886 south elevation (**Figure 3, 4A and 4B; Plates 47 to 51**) in the angle with the c.1936 east wall of the partial south aisle (**Plate 52**). The latter (**Plates 54 to 56**) will be opened up to create a large Parish Room (**Figure 3**). The south wall of the c.1936 partial south aisle extension (**Plate 57**) will become the eastern half of the south wall of the new parish Room.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 The documentary research and historic building recording has shown that although St George's Hall has the appearance of a 1960s community hall, it was originally built in 1880 as a 'tin tabernacle' or pre-fabricated corrugated iron building.
- 7.1.2 Documentary research has shown that the New Iron Church was nearly finished in December 1880 and the intention was for it to be opened on 20th December 1880. It was erected at a cost of £748 2s 4d, on a site granted by the Berkshire Estate Company. From the beginning it was intended to be a temporary church until the permanent church was built, which was funded by donations. The Iron Church was used for regular church services, Holy Communion, Children's Services and Catechising, Baptism, Churching of Women (blessing given to mothers after childbirth), Sunday School and Mother's Meetings. The church served a 'poor' community of small tradesmen, labourers and soldiers' families. It was built less than 100m to the west of Brock Barracks, which were built 1877 to 1877 to house the 1st and 2nd Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment.
- 7.1.3 The permanent church of St George's Church was consecrated in April 1886. It was erected at a cost of £3038 15s 2d to designs by Sidney Gambier Parry (1859-1948). St George's Church was built both to serve the western expansion of Reading, and as a Garrison Church to meet the needs of the troops. The Church was funded by donations and therefore built in stages with the nave, north aisle and north porch consecrated in 1886, the chancel, organ chamber and vestry in 1893 and the south chapel, partial south aisle and south porch added in 1936. The south aisle of the church was never completed.
- 7.1.4 Once the permanent church was in use in 1886, the Iron Church was used as a Sunday School. A photograph taken c.1899 shows St George's Church and part of the north elevation of the Sunday School (Iron Church). The building is shown as a 'Sunday School' on the 1899 to 1932 Ordnance Survey maps and as 'Hall (Church of England)' on the 1959-61 Ordnance Survey and later maps.
- 7.1.5 The historic building recording found evidence that parts of the original Iron Church are still extant within St George's Hall. Externally, these include the scalloped shaped bargeboards on the east and west gables, the rectangular window openings (that are also visible in the c.1899 photograph). The remains of corrugated iron sheet nailed to timber studwork were found in the east wall above the doorway in the men's toilet extension. An iron rose window was found in the east wall visible internally only in the roof space. The building appears to have had six tall rectangular south windows and five north windows with a north doorway at the east end. This doorway is still extant with a moulded architrave. Internally, tongue and groove boards covering the east wall would have extended around the other three main walls of the building. Decorative iron roof trusses and the rose window show that these were intended to be seen and the Iron Church was originally open to the roof. The trusses supported timber rafters,

which in turn support timber purlins, which in turn support vertical timber roof (match) boards. The yellow painted tongue and groove boards and green painted roof trusses may have been an original or early colour scheme now trapped within the roof space.

- 7.1.6 A corrugated iron north-east corner extension appears to have been added to the Iron Church between 1884 and 1899, which is partially shown in the c.1899 photograph. This was rebuilt and extended to the north and east between 1911 and 1932. Only the west end of this extension was accessed at the time of the site visit. Tongue and groove boarding lines the walls at this end of the extension.
- 7.1.7 The building recording showed that huge changes took place in the late 1950s/early 1960s when the building was converted from a Sunday School into a Community Hall. The west extension was added possibly in 1964 (planning application for an extension) creating a modern double door entrance with a hallway and two rooms on each side (now a kitchen and office). This replaced the original smaller west entrance porch. It was at this time that the external walls were rendered. A central door replaced a window in the north wall. Several tall rectangular windows were shortened to accommodate an external south extension. The walls were covered with lightweight timber panelling, the stage and stage doors were added. The toilet extensions were added. The changes altered the appearance of the building from a 'tin tabernacle' to a modern community hall.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 8.1.1 Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited would like to thank Archaeology Collective for commissioning the project. The building recording and documentary research was carried out by Kari Bower.
- 8.1.2 The building recording was managed for Pre-Construct Archaeology by Charlotte Matthews. This report was written by Kari Bower and Charlotte Matthews. Ray Murphy compiled the illustrations.

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Ordnance Survey Map, 1977-86

APPENDIX 1: LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTION FOR CHURCH OF ST GEORGE, TILEHURST, READING

Summary of Building

The Church of St George, Tilehurst, Reading designed by Sidney Gambier Parry in 1884 and built in 1885-6; the church was both parish church and garrison church for the nearby Brock Barracks. The community hall to the S of the church is excluded from the listing.

Reasons for Designation

The Church of St George, Tilehurst, Reading, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * Architectural interest: for its external massing and austere but effective detailing;
- * Historical interest: as garrison church for the Royal Berkshire Regiment, the building has strong links with the nearby Brock Barracks, the best surviving example of a localisation depot built as a result of Cardwell reforms; St George's is thought to be a rare example of a church associated with the reforms;
- * Internal fittings: the church retains a set of good late-C19 and early-C20 fittings, reflecting its development over that time, including the wrought-iron chancel screen, oak choir stalls, vestry screen and stained glass;
- * Commemorative interest: for the memorials of the Royal Berkshire Regiment which attest to the impact of world events on the community;
- * Group value: with the buildings at Brock Barracks, listed at Grade II.

History

The Church of St George was designed by Sidney Gambier Parry in 1884 and built in 1885-6. The funds came in part from the Royal Berkshire Regiment, whose garrison church it became for a number of years; the church still has links with the Royal Berkshire Regiment's successor, 7 Rifles. The Royal Berkshire Regiment's Depot, Brock Barracks, built in 1877-81, is some 200m to the E of the church.

Contemporary maps illustrate an urban expansion in the region of the barracks from the late C19. This reflects a change in military thinking at that time, introduced by the Liberal Secretary of State for War Edward Cardwell, whose thoroughgoing modernisation of the army between 1870 and 1881 became known as the 'Cardwell reforms'. Having observed chronic under-recruitment in the army, Cardwell, in 1872, initiated the Military Localisation Bill which provided for a redistribution of regiments in Britain and Ireland to depots situated in areas populous enough to sustain a brigade, encouraging the establishment of local connections and assisting recruitment. Thus it was that Brock Barracks was constructed in 1877-81 to house the 1st and 2nd Battalion of the Royal Berkshire Regiment.

St George's was built both to serve the western expansion of Reading, and to meet the needs of the troops; the new building replaced a temporary iron church erected in 1880. The new church was consecrated in stages, reflecting its gradual expansion: the nave, N aisle, N porch and vestries were consecrated in 1886; the chancel in 1893. In 1936, a S chapel, partial S aisle and S porch, added by George Ridley Phillips, were consecrated. The S aisle of the church was never completed, but major

repairs and maintenance work were carried out between 1955 and 1958 by George William Judd. Sidney Gambier Parry (1859-1948), was the son of Thomas Gambier Parry, an artist and inventor, and the half-brother of the composer Sir Hubert Parry. During his career he undertook both ecclesiastical and domestic work, frequently in his native Gloucestershire: his ecclesiastical works include the Church of All Saints, Winthorpe, Nottinghamshire (1886-8, Grade II), and the Church of St Peter, Badgeworth, Gloucestershire (1888, Grade II), whilst notable church restorations include the Church of St Michael, Churcham, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire (1886, Grade I). He collaborated in rebuilding work at St John the Evangelist, Coleford, Gloucestershire, (restored 1885, Grade II) and St Mary, Cowbit, Lincolnshire (restored 1882, Grade I). He designed the altar frontal for Salisbury Cathedral and the alabaster work in the sanctuary of St Mary's Bathwick, Bath. Parry was also commissioned for designs for the roof decoration in the chancel at the Church of St Mary, Bayford, Hertfordshire (1890, Grade II*), and in 1913 built an organ case and loft for St Mary's, Bourne Street, London. His domestic work included Iveson Manor, Ampney St Peter, Gloucestershire (1908, Grade II) and the extension and remodelling of the late C18 or early C19 Pytte House 1-6, Clyst St George, Devon (Grade II).

The community hall, to the S of the church, is thought to have its origins in the 1880 iron church, though it has been very much altered and extended. It was, at least until 1911, known as the Sunday School. This building is not of special interest and is therefore excluded from the listing.

Details

Garrison and parish church designed by Sidney Gambier Parry in 1884 and built in 1885-6. The community hall to the S of the church is not included in the listing.

MATERIALS: local red brick with narrow banding in grey brick, with some stone dressings, and tiled roofs.

PLAN: the church has a nave with a chancel and polygonal apse, a N aisle with vestries, and a N porch to the W. The later southern additions comprise the eastern section of the incomplete S aisle, a S Lady Chapel to the E with a polygonal apse, and a small porch.

EXTERIOR: the S elevation, currently used as the main entrance, is the least satisfactory angle from which to view the church, owing to the fact that the S aisle was never completed. The bays are defined by offset buttresses and the arcade of the incomplete S aisle is expressed within the external brick wall by red and grey brick headers. In the western bay is a plain pointed-arched entrance, whilst the central two bays have graduated triple lancets. The 1936 eastern bay of the S aisle, together with the S chapel and porch, form a distinct composition; the aisle has triple lancets of equal height, with graduated triple lancets to the gabled chapel, and the porch has a flat roof. The W wall of the partial aisle is blind. The remaining area of the intended S aisle is defined by a low brick wall* with ironwork, thought to date from the mid-to-late C20; this is not of special interest. The brickwork to this section has grey banding, and there is grey brick to the window heads; these bays are also defined by offset buttresses. The gabled N porch has a pointed-arched doorway beneath a stone hoodmould, with a recessed vesica above; there is a stone cross to the apex of the gable. The N elevation has pilasters separating the groups of windows; the lancet windows to this elevation are arranged in pairs, with a

triplet below a gable to the E. There is an unbroken string course of moulded brick at cill level, and a roll moulding following the window arches. Grey brick banding to this elevation continues around the chancel apse, the apsidal end of the Lady Chapel, and the W elevation. The apse has tall single lancets to each face, here defined by a stone string course and roll moulding. The W end has a group of four stepped lancets with a crowning oculus, beneath three stone hood moulds. The W elevation is further enlivened by stone dressings marking the eaves and apex of the roof. Rising over the E end of the nave is a gabled bellcote, banded with stone. To the N of the apse are the stairs to the cellar, which contains the boiler.

INTERIOR: the four-bay nave has an aisle to the N, the arcade having wide pointed red and grey brick arches which spring from square stone capitals on plain circular shafts of red sandstone. A corresponding arcade to the S frames the windows and doorway in place of the incomplete aisle. The windows of the N aisle have deeply splayed jambs. The lofty nave roof is of hammerbeam construction. The walls of the church are of bare red brick, though this was largely painted white in the 1970s. The church floor is of timber parquet, with encaustic tiles in the chancel and sanctuary. The chancel is demarcated by a tall chancel arch and low stone walls with a Gothic wrought-iron screen, given in 1889; the sanctuary is protected by a timber rail with open trefoil-headed panels. There is a cinquefoil arch to the sedilia, and a trefoil to the piscine. The tall lancets in the apse have deeply splayed jambs, and are linked by a roll moulding. The fine stained glass was erected by members of the congregation in 1896. The carved timber reredos is gilded, with a Crucifixion and saints in niches, and crosses of St George above. The organ, to the N of the chancel, is circa 1890 by Gray and Davison. The vestries are divided from the N aisle by sliding timber doors with Gothic panelling, given circa 1903. The vestries have barrel ceilings, and original timber cupboards together with other furnishings. The W windows depict 'Faith', 'Hope', 'Charity' and 'Purity', with Christ above in the oculus. Grouped at the W end of the church is a collection of war memorials of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, including those commemorating the South African Campaign of 1899-1902, the Crimean War with Russia of 1854-1856, plaques commemorating individuals, and the Regimental colours. A First World War dedication to those who lost their lives is amongst other memorials on the N wall. Stained glass memorial windows to the N wall depict characters including St Alban, St George, and King Alfred (by A L Moore). The hexagonal Jacobean pulpit, brought from the Church of St Andrew, Sonning, stands on a Victorian base. The oak choir stalls have trefoil tracery to the fronts, and poppyhead finials. The nave originally had chairs rather than pews; these were replaced post 2010. The octagonal sandstone font, carved with Celtic cross medallions, has been moved from its original position at the NW corner of the church, to the centre of the W end.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURE

The community hall* standing to the S of the church is not of special interest.

*Pursuant to s.1(5A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('The Act') it is declared that these aforementioned features are not of special architectural or historical interest.

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National Grid Reference: SU6904073671

APPENDIX 2: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-297329

Project details

Project name	St George's Hall, Reading Historic Building Recording
Short description of the project	Pre-Construct Archaeology was commissioned by Archaeology Collective to undertake building recording of St George's Hall, St George's Road, Reading, Berkshire, centred on OS NGR SU 69034 73648. Archaeology Collective was instructed by Francis Construction, on behalf of Stonewater Ltd. The church and hall do not lie in a Conservation Area although the church is a Grade II Listed Building. The documentary research and building recording has shown that although St George's Hall has the appearance of a 1960s community hall, it was built in 1880 as a 'tin tabernacle' or pre-fabricated corrugated iron building. From 1880 to 1886 the Iron Church was used as a temporary church until the permanent church was built. Once the permanent church was in use, the Iron Church was used as a Sunday School. The building recording found evidence that parts of the original Iron Church are still extant within St George's Hall. These include scalloped bargeboards, rectangular window openings, corrugated iron sheet nailed to timber studwork, the east iron rose window and internal timber tongue and groove wall covering. Decorative iron roof trusses show that the Iron Church was originally open to the roof. Changes that took place in the 1950s/1960s when the building was converted into a Community Hall included the addition of the west entrance extension, cement rendering of the walls, the addition of several extensions and the addition of a stage. These changes altered the appearance of the building from a 'tin tabernacle' to a modern community hall.
Project dates	Start: 04-09-2017 End: 04-09-2017
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	BSGR17 - Sitecode
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	CHURCH Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None

Project location

Country	England
Site location	BERKSHIRE READING READING St George's Hall, St George's Road, Reading, Berkshire
Postcode	RG30 2RG
Site coordinates	SU 69034 73648 51.457106550713 -1.00628221424 51 27 25 N 001 00 22 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Project brief originator	Conservation Officer

Project design originator	Charlotte Matthews
Project director/manager	Charlotte Matthews
Project supervisor	Kari Bower
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Stonewater Ltd

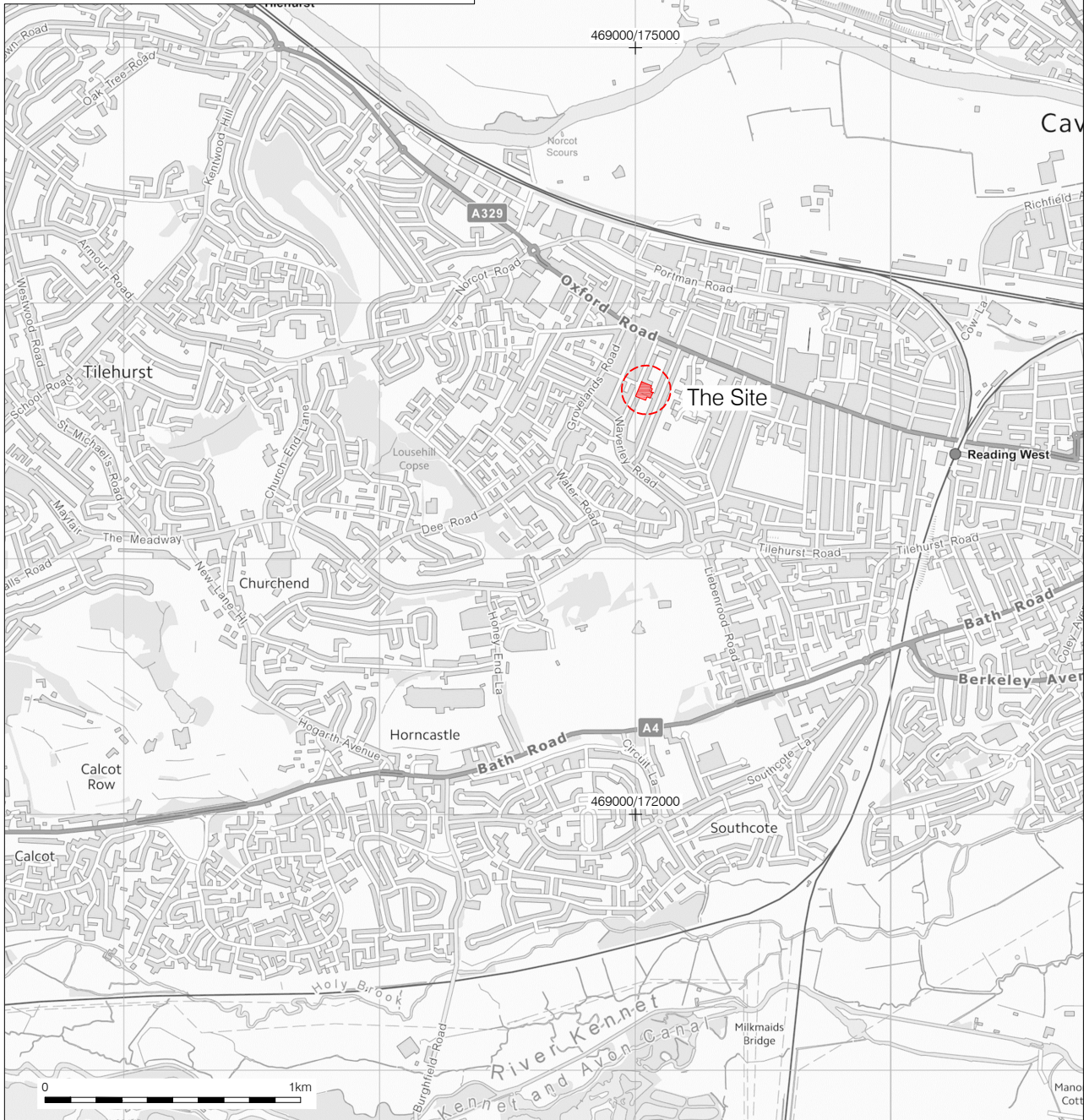
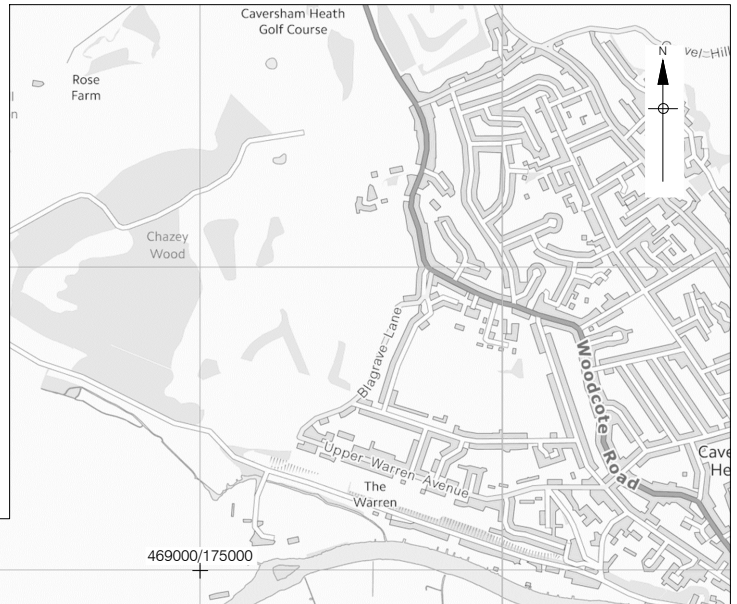
Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Berkshire Records Office
Digital Archive ID	BSGR17
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Berkshire Records Office
Paper Archive ID	BSGR17
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Plan","Report"

Project bibliography 1

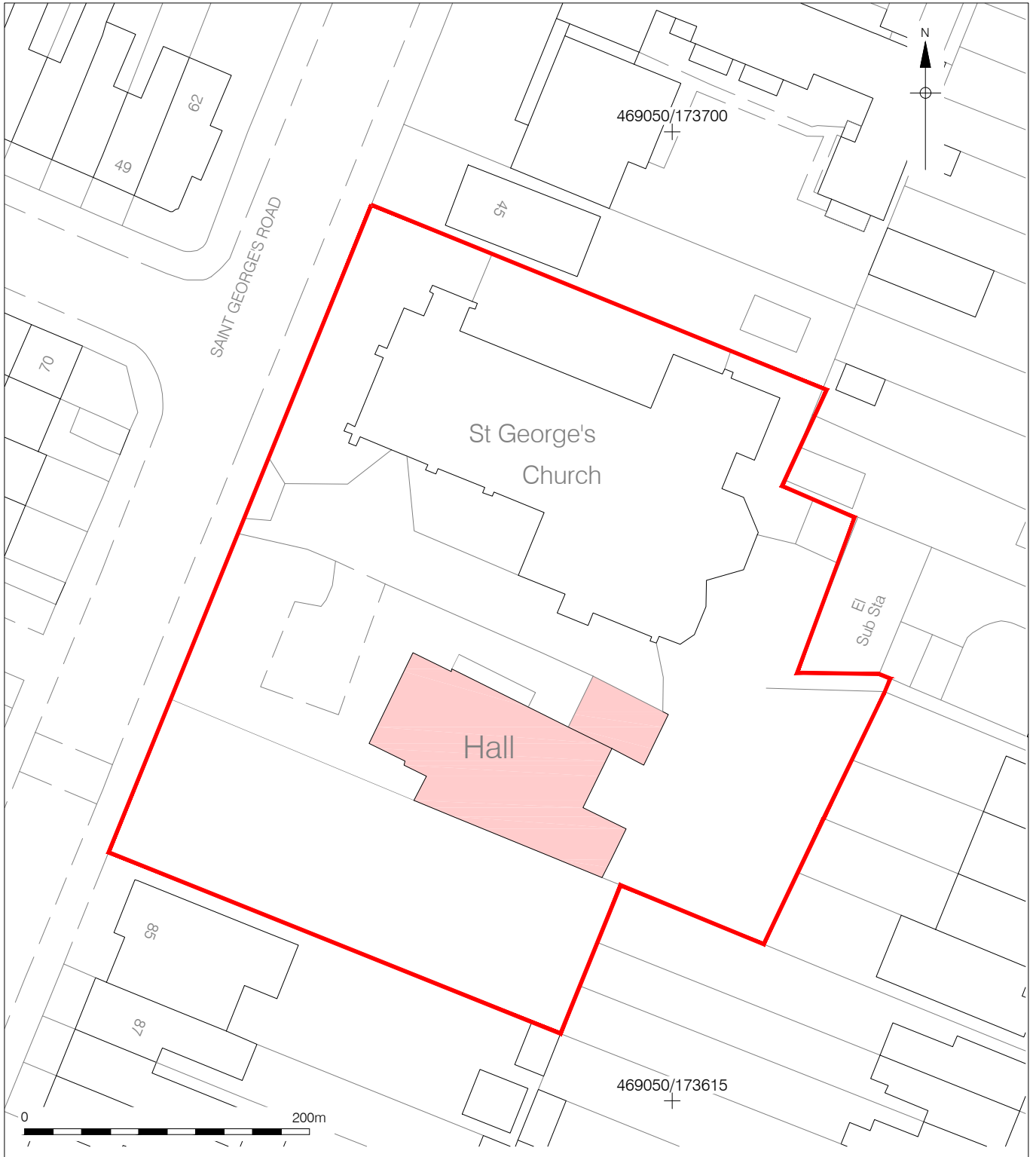
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Historic Building Recording of St George's Hall, St George's Road, Reading, Berkshire RG30 2RG
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Bower, K. and Matthews, C.
Other bibliographic details	PCA Report No. R13034
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited
Description	A4 PDF

Entered by	Charlotte Matthews (cmatthews@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	3 October 2017



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Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:2,000,000 and 1:25,000 at A4





Based on drawing 11981-0120C, supplied by The Harris Partnership
Drawing supplied by client
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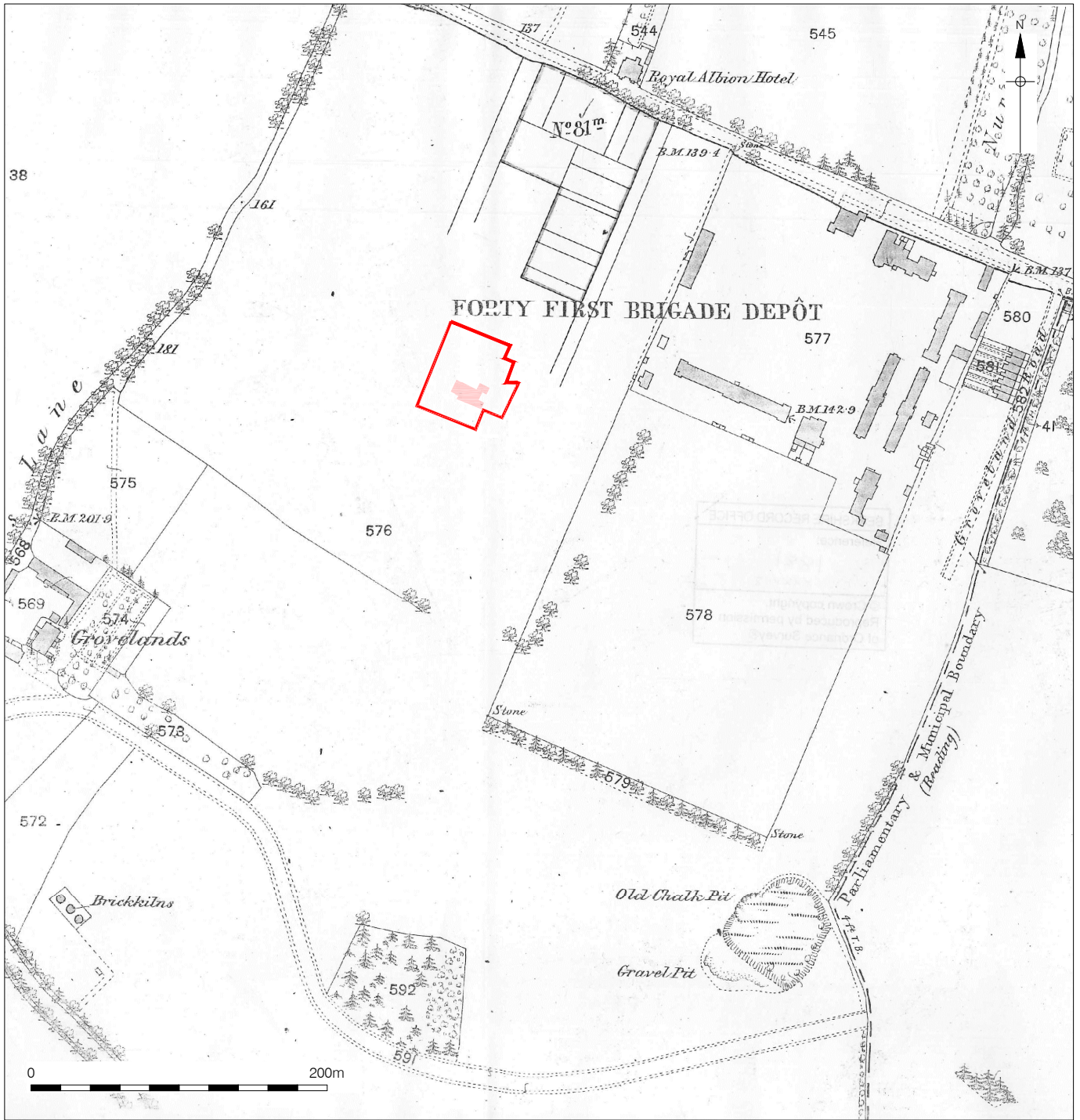
Figure 4A
West Elevation of St George's Church showing Proposed Extension
Not to scale



Based on drawing 11981-0120C, supplied by The Harris Partnership

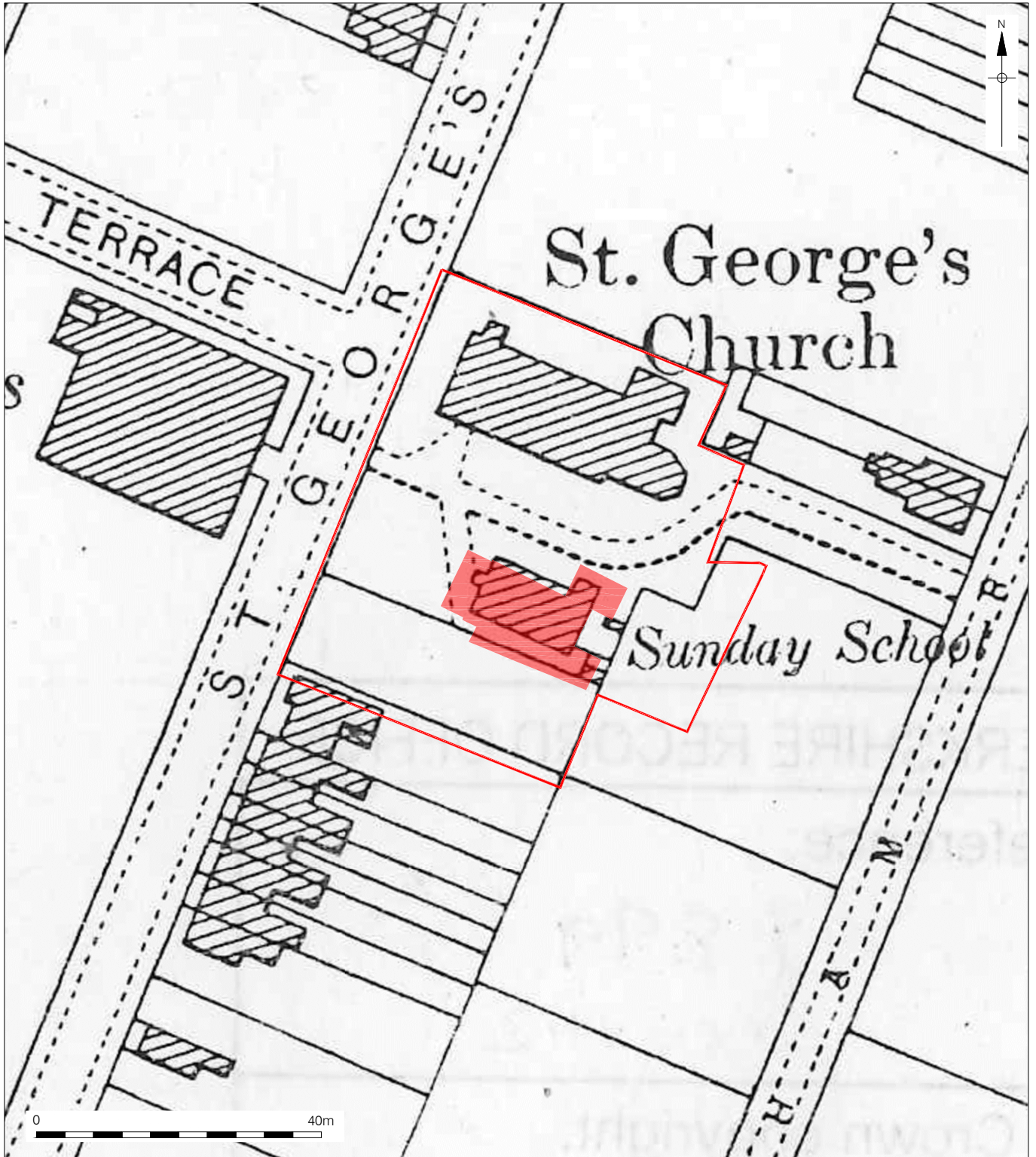
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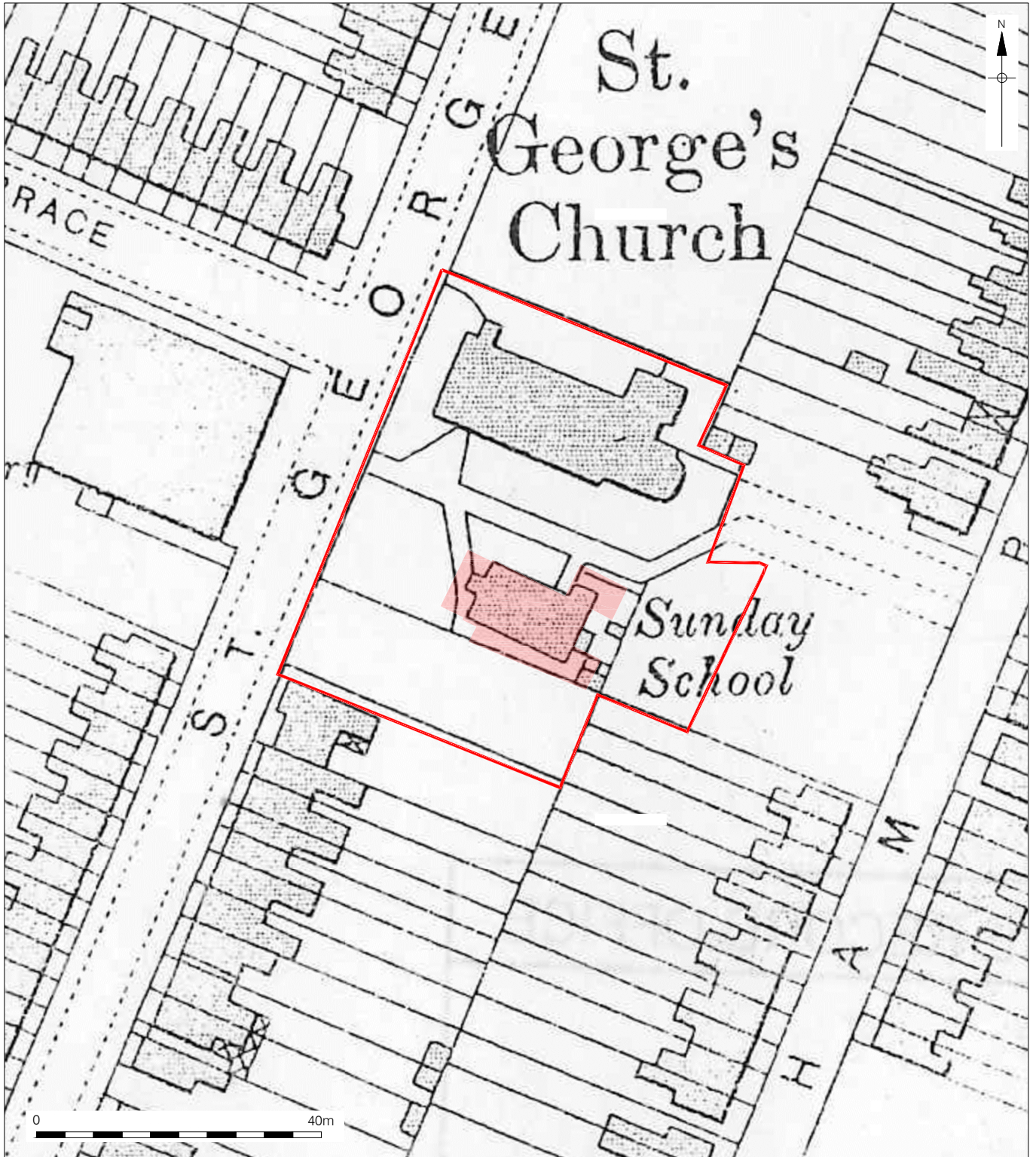
Figure 4B
South Elevation of St George's Church showing Proposed Extension
Not to scale

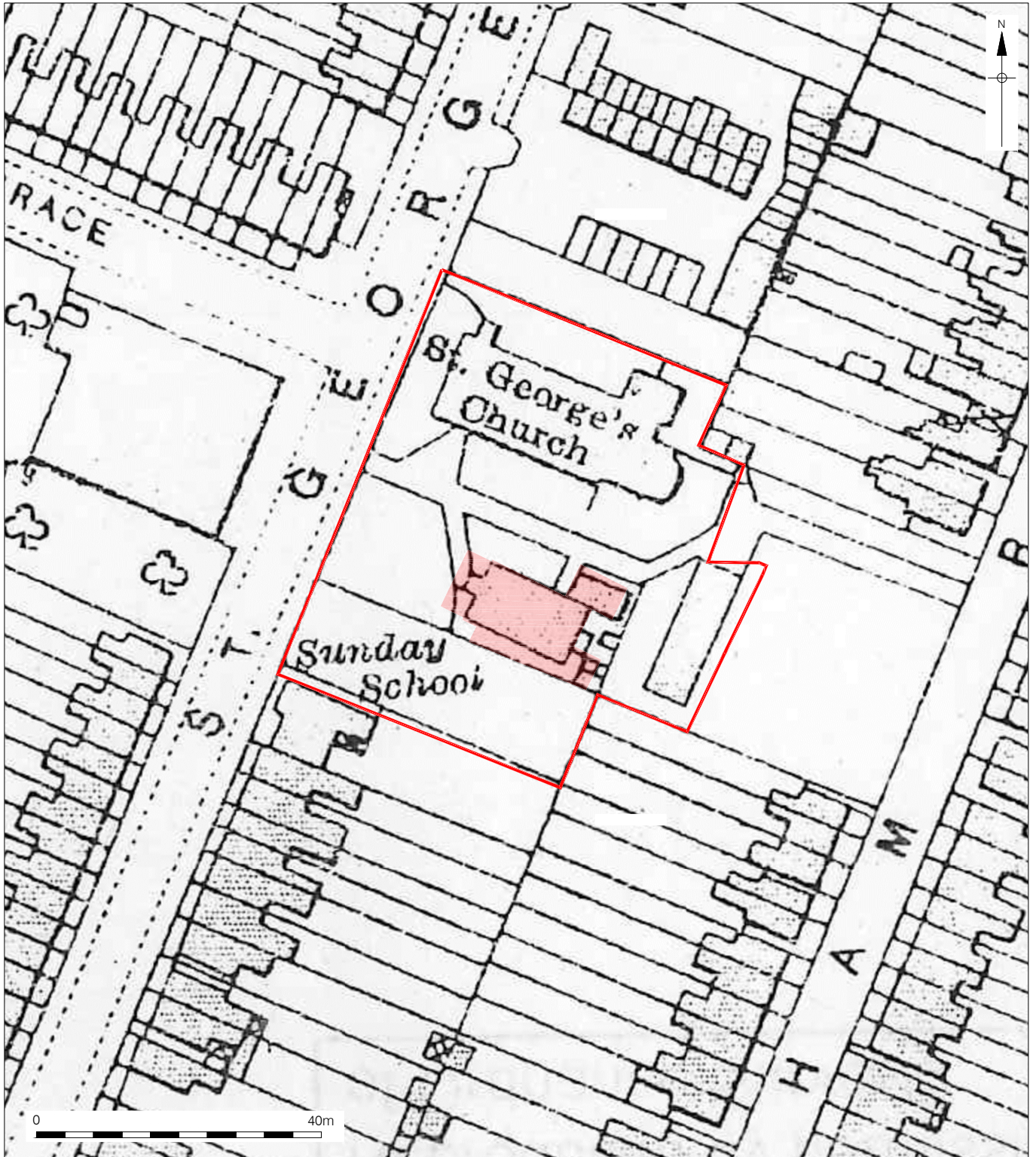


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Figure 5
 Ordnance Survey Map, 1881
 1:4000 at A4







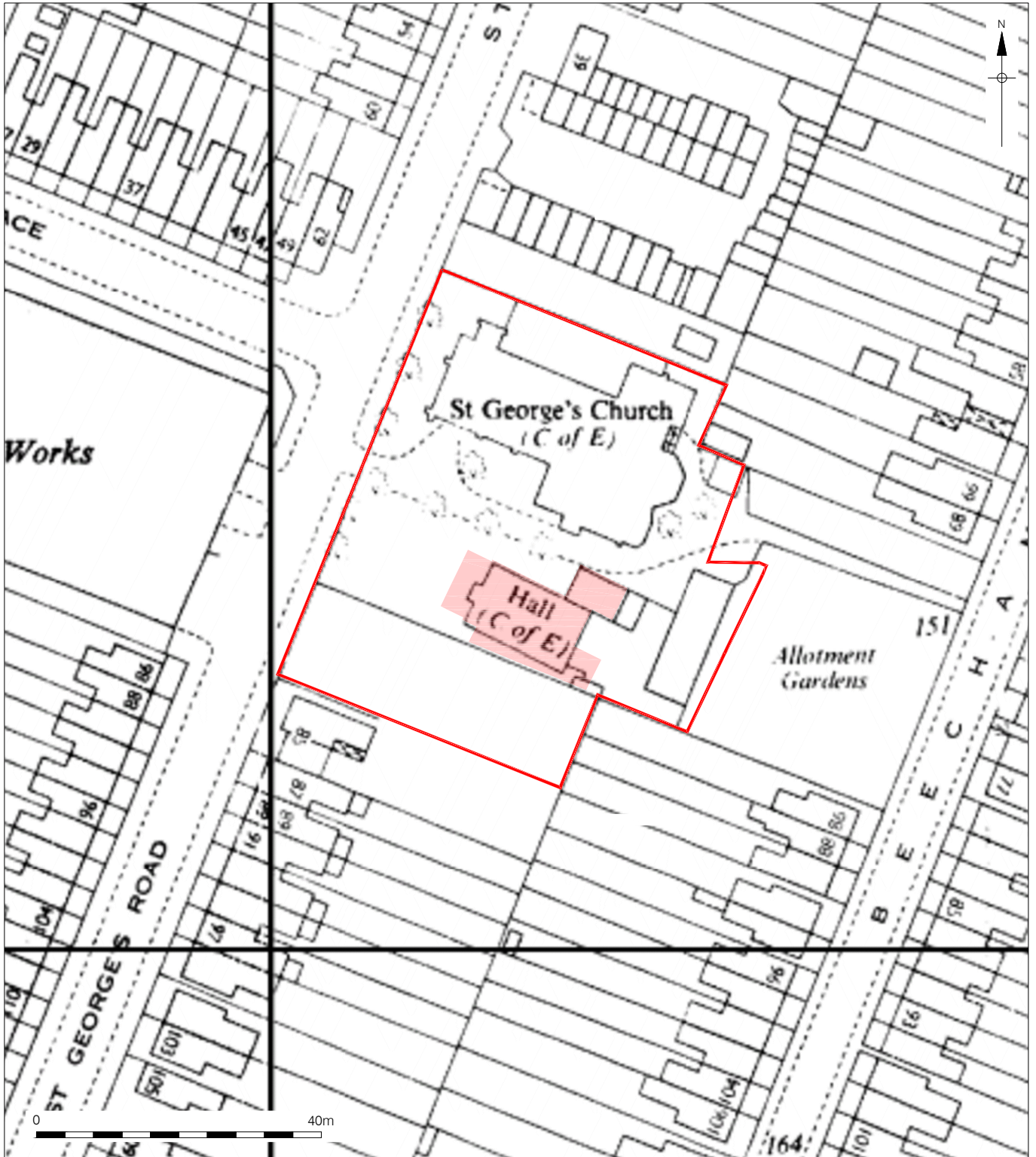






Figure 11
Existing Ground Floor Plan with Plate Locations
1:200 at A4



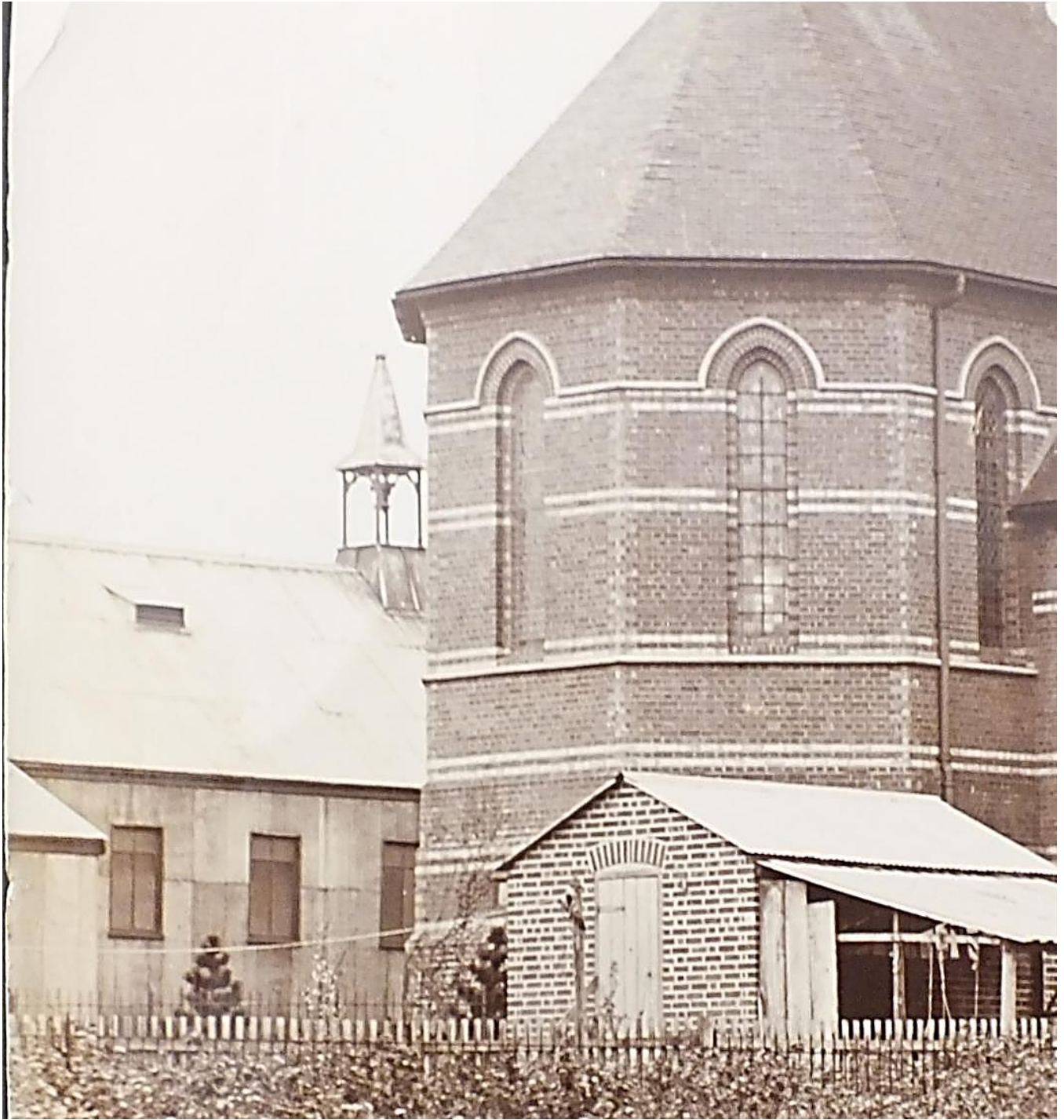
-  Internal Plate Location
-  Roof Space Plate Location

0 5M

Figure 12
Existing Ground Floor Plan with Internal Plate Locations
1:125 at A4



Historic Plate 1: Photograph of the east and north elevations of St George's Church with the Sunday School (Iron Church) in the background c.1899



Historic Plate 2: Detail of Historic Plate 1 showing the Sunday School (Iron Church; left) c.1899



Plate 1: St George's Church (left) and St George's Hall (right), looking east



Plate 2: St George's Hall, looking south-east



Plate 3: Concrete platform at rear (east) of hall, looking west



Plate 4: Concrete platform (left) and brick extension to the hall, looking south



Plate 5: Access road between St George's Hall (left) and St George's Church (right), looking west



Plate 6: Access road between St George's Hall (right) and St George's Church (left), looking east



Plate 7: West (front gable end) elevation of St George's Hall, looking east



Plate 8: Detail of brickwork on south side of west (front gable end) elevation of St George's Hall, looking east



Plate 9: South (rear side) elevation and brick extension of St George's Hall, looking north



Plate 10: South (rear side) elevation and brick extension of St George's Hall, looking north



Plate 11: South (rear side) elevation and brick extension of St George's Hall, looking north-west



Plate 12: East (rear gable end) elevation of St George's Hall, looking west



Plate 13: North (front side) elevation (right) and brick extension (centre) of St George's Hall, looking east



Plate 14: North (front side) elevation and brick extension of St George's Hall, looking south



Plate 15: North (front side) elevation and brick extension of St George's Hall, looking south



Plate 16: Brick extension at northeast corner of St George's Hall, looking south-west



Plate 17: Brick extension at north-east corner of St George's Hall, looking east



Plate 18: Brick extension at north-east corner of St George's Hall, looking south

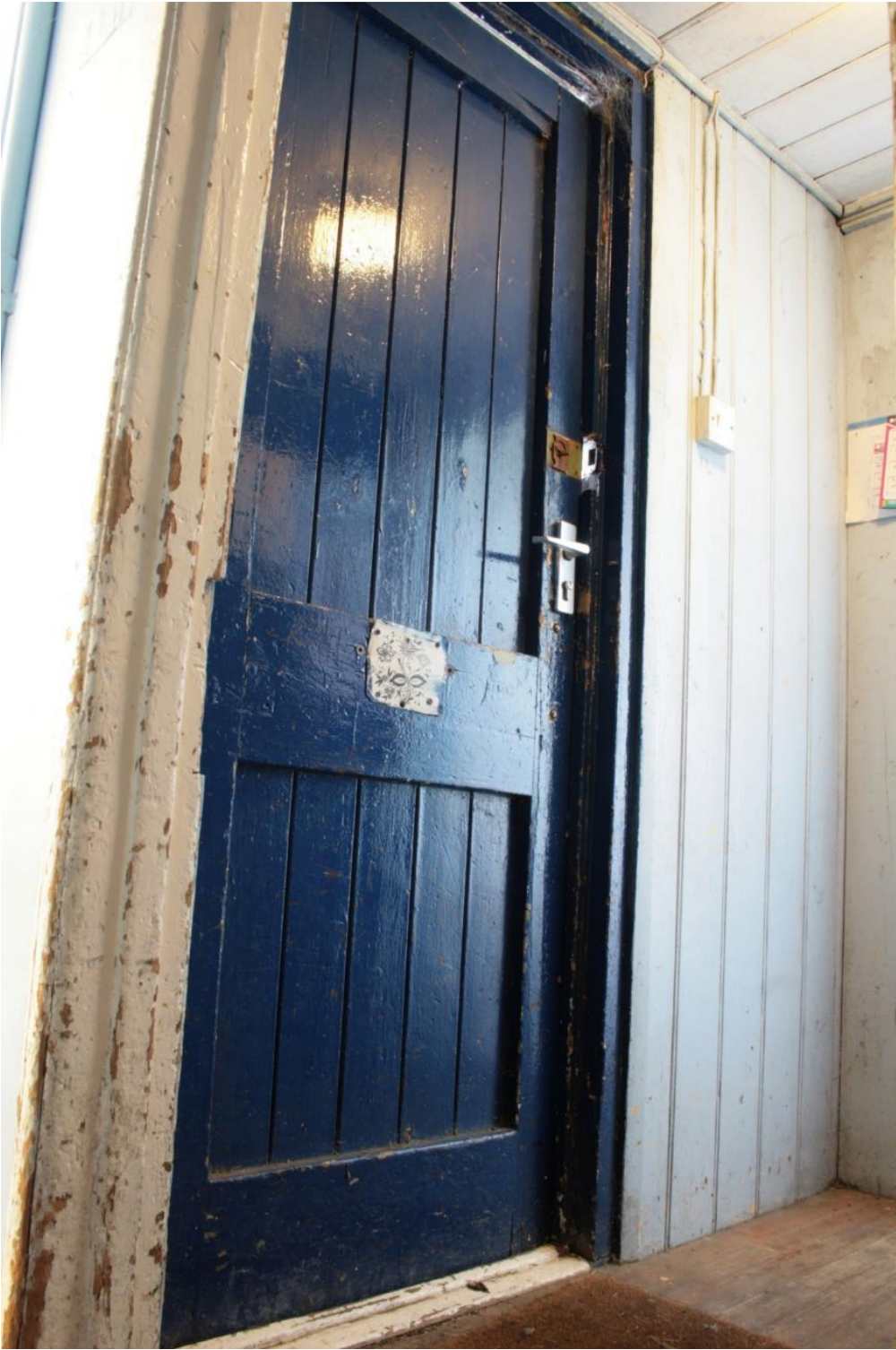


Plate 19: Side entrance into St George's Hall, looking west



Plate 20: Side entrance into St George's Hall, looking south



Plate 21: Side entrance into St George's Hall, looking north



Plate 22: Storage area in front side extension of St George's Hall, looking north

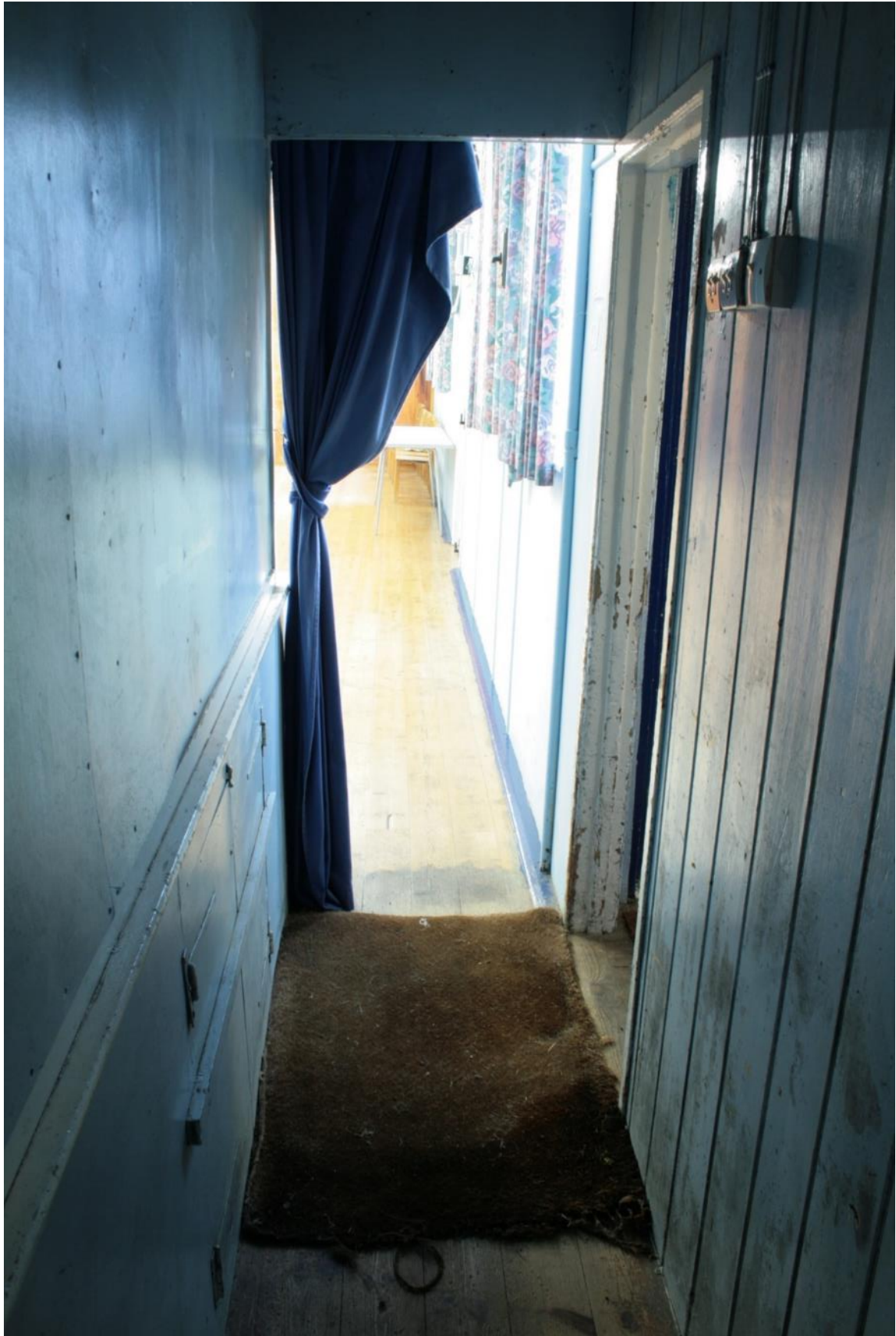


Plate 23: Side entrance leading into main hall of St George's Hall, looking west



Plate 24: Main hall of St George's Hall, looking south-west



Plate 25: Main hall of St George's Hall, looking east



Plate 26: Main hall of St George's Hall, looking north



Plate 27: Main hall of St George's Hall, looking south



Plate 28: Entrance to stage area on north side of St George's Hall, looking east



Plate 29: Stage area of St George's Hall, looking north



Plate 30: Stage area of St George's Hall, looking south



Plate 31: Folding safety screens of stage area of St George's Hall, looking west



Plate 32: View from stage area of St George's Hall, looking northwest (D100)



Plate 33: Back of stage area of St George's Hall, looking east



Plate 34: Entrance stairs to stage (left) and toilet entrance (right) on south side of St George's Hall, looking east



Plate 35: Male toilets at rear of St George's Hall, looking east



Plate 36: Toilet cubicles, looking south



Plate 37: Entrance to male toilets at rear of St George's Hall, looking west



Plate 38: Detail of entrance doorway to male toilets, looking west



Plate 39: Female toilet and baby changing area, looking west



Plate 40: Front entrance hallway, looking west



Plate 41: Kitchen area, looking south-east



Plate 42: Access hatch to roof space above stage, looking east



Plate 43: Original rose window in the east gable of the Iron Church, looking east



Plate 44: Original rose window in the east gable of the Iron Church, looking east



Plate 45: Roof space of showing roof trusses, looking west



Plate 46: Roof space over main building showing purlins and rafters, looking north



Plate 47: St George's Church, looking east



Plate 48: West end of the south elevation of St George's Church, looking north



Plate 49: West end of the south elevation of St George's Church, looking north



Plate 50: South elevation of St George's Church, looking north



Plate 51: West end of the 1886 south elevation of St George's Church, looking north



Plate 52: South-west corner of the c.1936 partial south aisle extension of St George's Church, looking north



Plate 53: South wall of St George's Church, looking south-west



Plate 54: Circa 1936 partial south aisle (left) and south wall (right) of St George's Church, looking south-west



Plate 55: West wall of c.1936 partial south aisle extension in St George's Church, looking west



Plate 56: South-west corner of c.1936 partial south aisle extension in St George's Church, looking south-west



Plate 57: South wall of c.1936 partial south aisle extension in St George's Church, looking south

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