

FORDYCE PARISH CHURCH
WEST CHURCH STREET
FORDYCE
ABERDEENSHIRE



Standing Building Survey

Carried out 1st May 2014

by

Murray Archaeological Services Ltd



Report No: MAS 2014-23

by

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- Standing Building Survey -

1. Background

1.1 A standing building survey was required for the former Parish Church at Fordyce, Aberdeenshire, prior to its conversion into a dwelling house.

1.2 The archaeological condition (Condition No 1) was applied in the context of planning legislation (PAN 2/2011, SPP, SHEP), which states that it is necessary for developers to arrange for archaeological work to take place prior to development, in appropriate circumstances. Planning Application Number: APP/2013/3902.

1.3 A Level 1 Standing Building Survey was required which includes measured floor plans and a written account of the building's plan, form, function, age and development sequence, in addition to a photographic survey.

1.4 Murray Archaeological Services Ltd was commissioned to undertake the work by Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect, on behalf of his clients Mr and Mrs Temple. The site element of the survey was completed on the 1st May 2014.

2. Desk-top survey

2.1 A search was carried out in the Sites and Monuments Record, Archaeology Service, Aberdeenshire Council, in the Sites and Monuments Records of the Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland (RCAHMS) and in the Listed Buildings Register of Historic Scotland.

2.2 The 25"/mile 1st and later Ordnance Survey maps were consulted.

2.3 Site plans of the site were kindly supplied by Leslie F. Hunter and have been annotated and used as a basis for detailed plans of the observed areas.

3. The Site

3.1 The church lies in West Church Street on the SW side of Fordyce village, built within a curve of the Burn of Fordyce.

Parish: Fordyce

NGR: NJ 55406 63646

RCAHMS No: NJ56SE34

Aberdeenshire SMR: NJ56SE0084

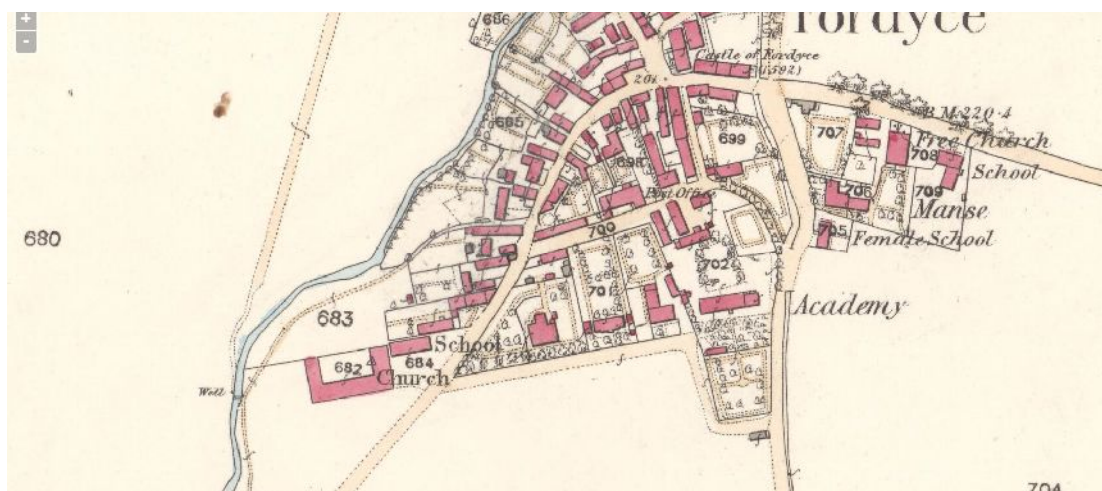
Historic Scotland Ref: 10636. B Listed Building.

4. Documentary evidence

4.1 The New Statistical Account of 1834-45 vol.13 p.188 notes that the church was built in 1804 <http://stat-acc-scot.edina.ac.uk/link/1834-45/Banff/Fordyce/13/188/>.

4.2 Both Historic Scotland and Aberdeenshire SMR indicate that William Robertson of Elgin, who did much work for the Earls of Seafield, is likely to have been the architect for the bellcote of c. 1830. He is wrongly named as the architect for the whole building by the Scottish Church Heritage Research website www.scottishchurches.org.uk/sites/site/id/402. The Dictionary of Scottish Architects http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=201792 gives William Robertson's dates as 1786-1841, with his earliest known buildings cited from c 1820. The Fordyce bellcote is not cited. Perhaps more cautiously Charles McKean (1990, 48) describes the bellcote as in the 'style of William Roberston'.

4.3 The 1st edition Ordnance Survey 25" to the mile map (Banff sheet III.15 (Fordyce)) shows the church and enclosing wall but does not show the outshot building on the N wall. The coloured version of the map is confusing as there is an error, with the yard coloured red as opposed to the church (Illus 1).



Illus 1 1st edition OS map (25"/mile) surveyed 1866, published 1871 (www.nls.ac.uk)

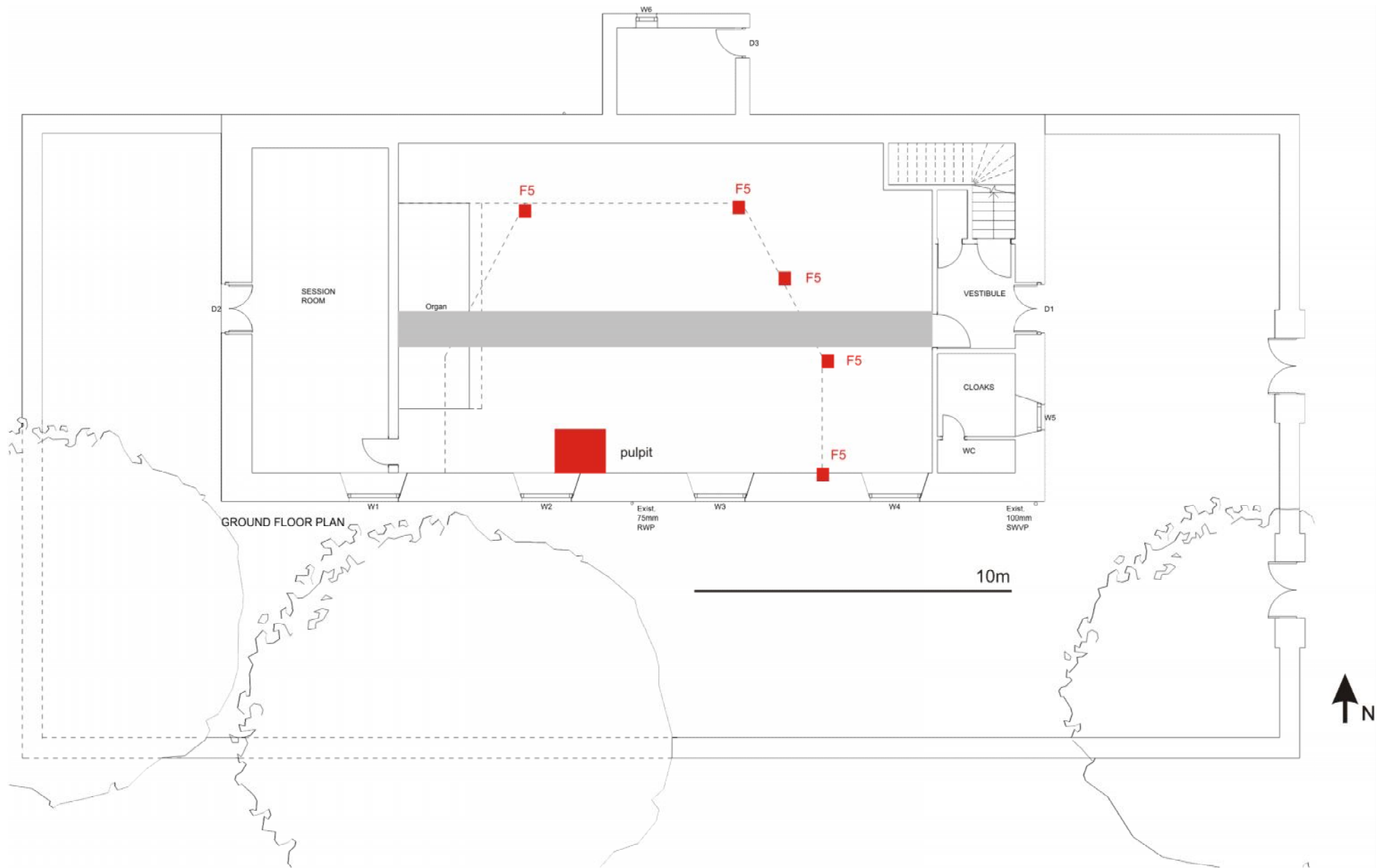


Illus 2 2nd edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey of 1902 (pub 1904) (www.nls.ac.uk)

4.4 By the 2nd edition 25"/mile Ordnance Survey of 1902 (published 1904. Banffshire Sheet 003.15) the church is shown with the outshot on the N wall (Illus 2).

5 Methodology

- 5.1 The ground plans have been annotated to show details and to indicate differences in the building materials which may help in understanding the development and history of the building.
- 5.2 The areas recorded were photographed. The full set of photographs will be supplied on CD for the archive and annotated plans in the present report (Illus 26-31) indicate the position of each.



Illus 3 Main plan annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.

6 The Building

THE CHURCH

The church was closed c 2011 and, by the time of the survey in 2014, a number of internal fittings, specifically the wall memorials, pews and organ had been removed.



Illus 4 Fordyce Church viewed from the E.

Description

The church is an imposing, but plain, rectangular block set E/W with round arched doorways in the E and W gable walls with large round arched windows above.

Matching round arched windows light the S wall. A rectangular bellcote thought to date to c 1830 is on the apex of the E gable; the bell itself is dated 1702 and was re-used from the old Fordyce church.

A small outshot building stands against the N wall.

Dimensions Width: 12.2m ext. Length: 25.8m ext.

Walls Concrete harling (buff/pink) with sandstone ashlar at corners and openings. As the building is on a slight slope down to the W, there is a rubble stone foundation at the W end, at the base of the wall.

Roof Steeply pitched, slated. Small metal skylight at E end of N aspect. Bellcote at E gable apex. Plain ball finial at W gable apex.

Bellcote

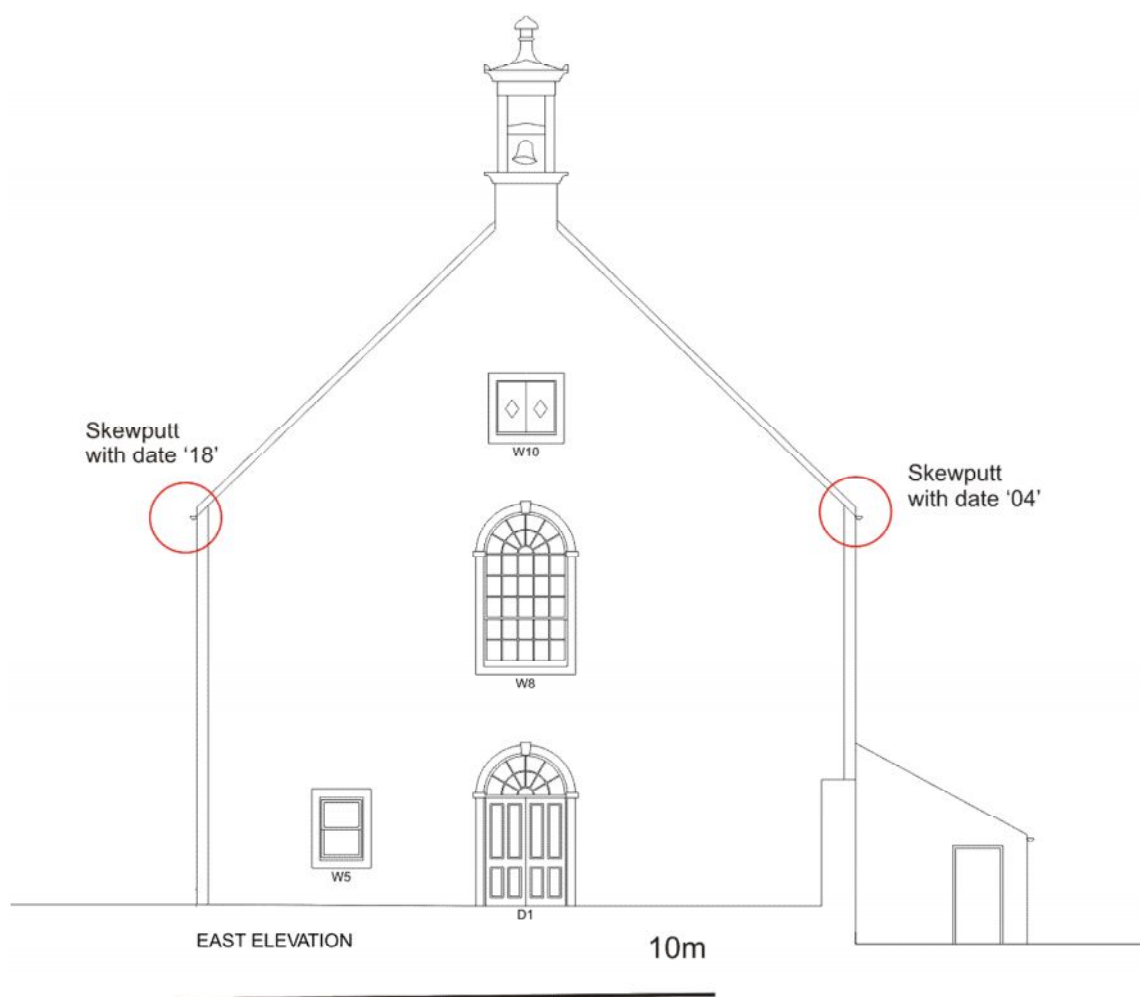
Rectangular, open to E and W, with solid sides to N and S with pyramidal top and ornamental finial. Some visible damage to the stonework, with iron strapping from the bell support to the S side.



Illus 5 Bellcote from E (above) and from N (RHS).

E gable wall

The E gable is the main entrance and has an imposing central doorway (D1) with window W8 and loft window W10 above. A small window (W5) to the S of the entrance opens into a cloakroom and is probably secondary.



Illus 6 E elevation annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.

D1 W: 1.53m. H: 2.01m from lintel to ground. Round-headed arch with projecting key stone and impost. Fanlight above doorway. Double doors. (Illus 7)

W8 W: c1.45m H: c2.8m (from elevation). Round-headed arch with projecting key stone and impost. Lower sash window with 5 over 5 panes. Upper window of 3 rows of 5 panes. Fanlight in arch. Remnant of iron bars.

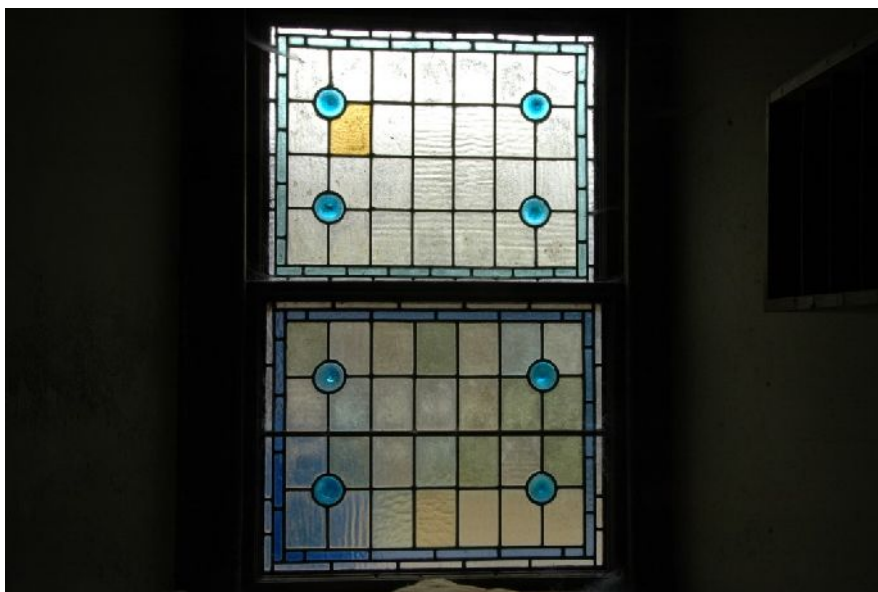
W10 W: c 0.90m. H:c1m (from elevation). Rectangular opening with wooden shutters with diamond shaped inserts of textured glass. Must open into loft space.



Illus 7 Door D1

W5 W: 0.80m H: 1.3m. Sash window 1 over 1 panes, with leaded coloured glass. (Illus 8). The use of large single pane sashes and the textured coloured glass suggest this was later 19th century and part of the remodelling of 1894 (Historic Scotland 2008, 2010).

A built-up break through the wall below this window and a vent to the top LHS of it both probably relate to the WC.



Illus 8 Window W5 from inside

Skewputts as date stones.

Skewputts with gently rolled moulding and with the date of the church (1804) on the front (E) face being '18' on the S skewputt and '04' on the N skewputt. (Illus 9, 10).



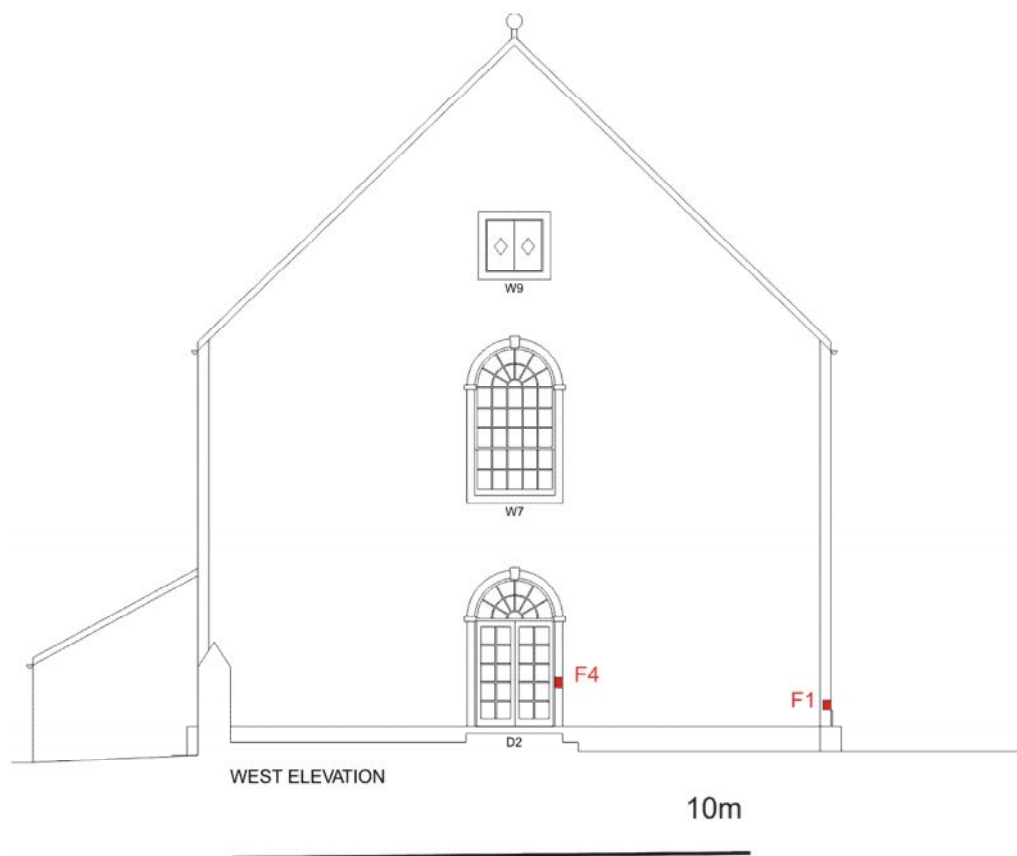
Illus 9 Skewputt at S side of E gable with date numbers: 18



Illus 10 Skewputt at N side of E gable with date numbers: 04

W gable wall

The W gable mirrors the E gable, with central door and the same pattern of windows above.



Illus 11 W elevation annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.

D2 W: 1.53m. H: 2.03m from lintel to ground. Round-headed arch with projecting key stone and imposts. Fanlight above doorway. Replacement glazed doors.

W7 As W8. W: c1.45m H: c2.8m (from elevation). Round-headed arch with projecting key stone and imposts. Lower sash window with 5 over 5 panes. Upper window of 3 rows of 5 panes but, unlike W8, the central pane in the topmost straight row is an angled glazed vent. Fanlight in arch.

W9 As W10. W: c 0.90m. H:c1m (from elevation). Rectangular opening with wooden shutters with diamond shaped inserts of textured glass. Must open into loft space.

F1 At c1m above ground level a small panel is incised in the face of one of the sandstone corner stones (Illus 12). It appears to be chisel cut and reads:

WR
F 1837

While this is most likely to be graffiti and is just around the corner from graffiti F2 in the S wall- it is possible that it may relate to William Robertson, the architect to whom the bellcote is attributed c 1830. It would however appear very unusual to have the attribution distant from the bellcote.



Illus 12 Graffiti on stone F1 in W gable

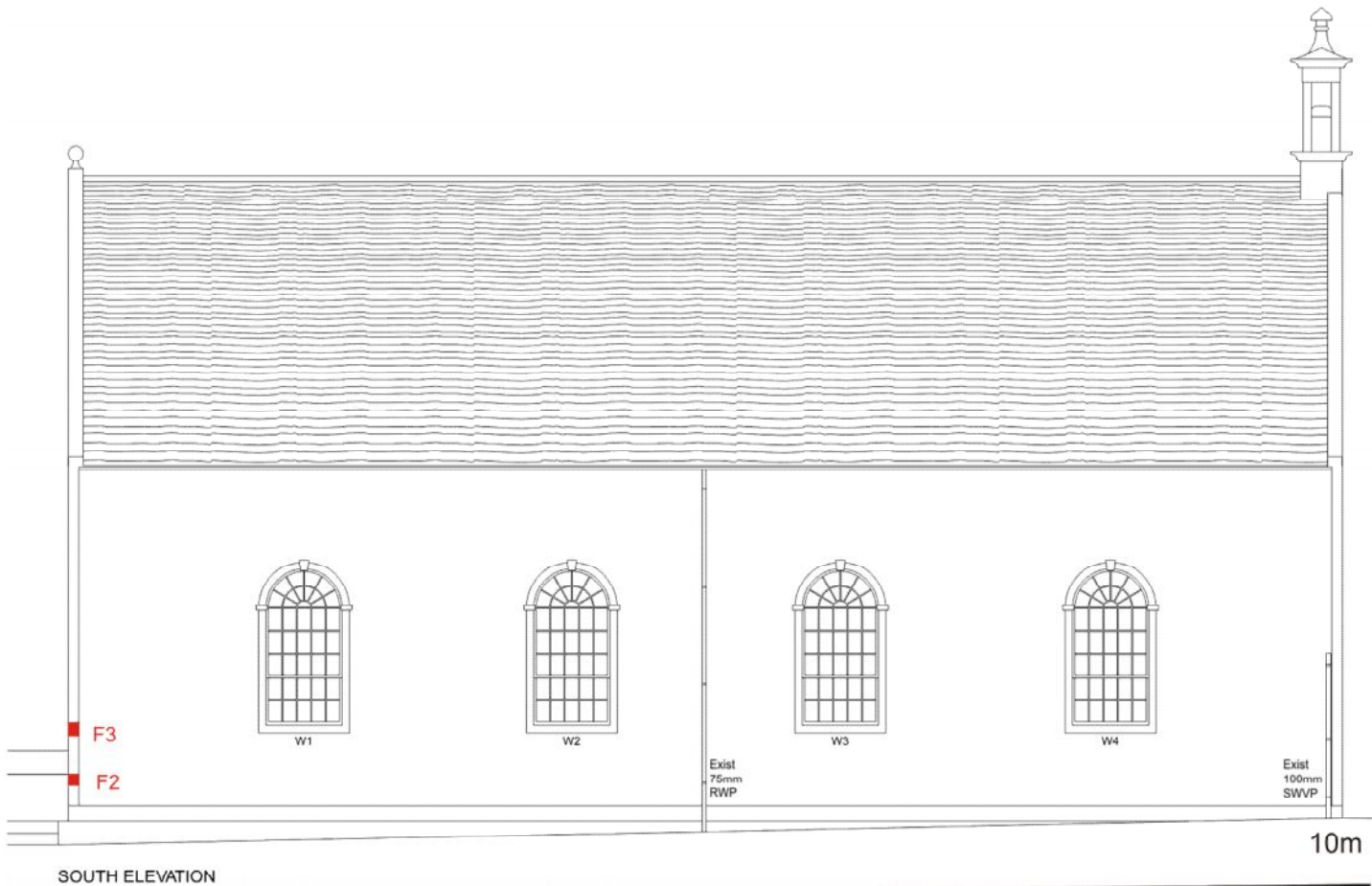
F4 Graffiti 'W' on 4th stone from base on S side margins of door D2.

S wall

The S wall is punctuated by four identical windows (W1-W4). A cast iron down-pipe runs down the middle of the wall. (Illus 13).



Illus 13 Looking W along S wall



Illus 14 S Elevation annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.

W1-W4 Same style as W7 and W8, but slightly taller. W: c1.45m H: c3m (from elevation). Round-headed arch with projecting key stone and imposts. Lower sash window with 5 over 5 panes. Upper window of 3 rows of 5 panes. Fanlight in arch. In some of the panes, the glass is clearly the original early 19th-century glass, with clear ripples and occasional bubbles which typify the cylinder sheet and patent plate glass which began to be used at this period (Historic Scotland, 2008, 1). (Illus 15).



Illus 15 Detail of window W1 in S wall, bottom E panes to indicate glass ripples and bubble

F2 and F3 Graffiti on S face of lower corner stones at W end. F2: On the 2nd stone from base there appears to be a knife or chisel cut A, A (Illus 16).



Illus 16 Graffiti F2

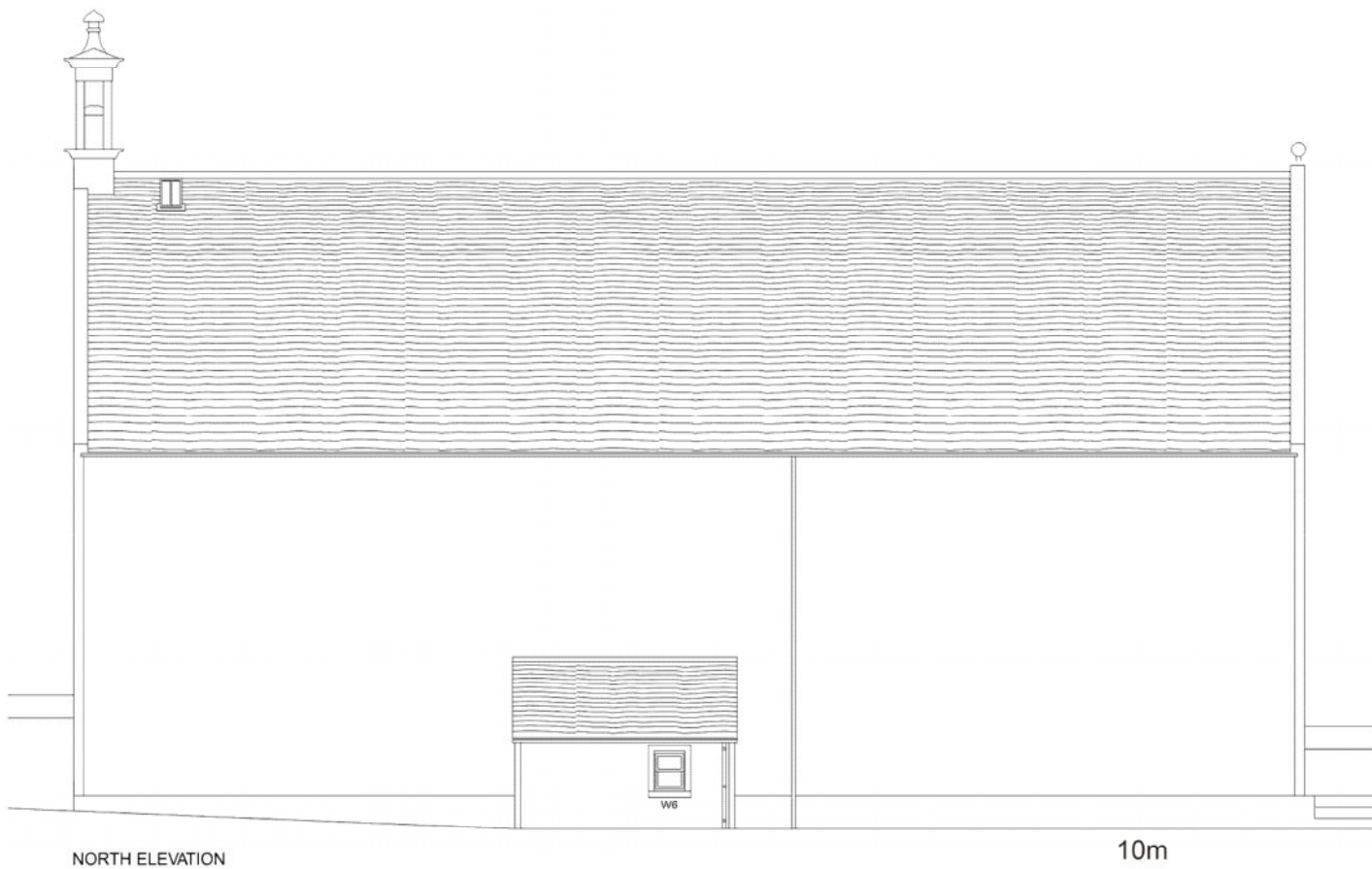
F3: On the 4th stone up there appear to be the pocked initials SLB. (Illus 17).



Illus 17 Graffiti F3

N wall

Apart from a cast iron downpipe, there are no features on the N wall. The outshot building is a secondary lean-to against the middle of this wall.



Illus 18 N elevation annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.

Interior

In its present form the interior was divided into three areas. At the E end the main door opened into a vestibule with pine panelling. Doors opened from this, ahead to the main church, on the RHS to a cloakroom and WC, and on the LHS to a cupboard and to the stairs to the Gallery. The main church was in the centre, with the W end used as the Session Room. (Illus 3).

The original gallery was 5-sided, facing to the S, and supported on wooden columns. Subsequent renovations reduced the size of the church by building a partition wall across the W end, awkwardly obscuring part of window W1. The blocking of the W gallery appears more recent as the upper part of the partition is of plywood.

In its original 1804 plan, the main area of the church would have been very light, focussing on the 4 large windows in the S wall and with the higher gable windows W7 and W8 giving light to the galleries. Windows W1 and W4 were placed so that the fanlight and upper panes were on the level of the Gallery, with the lower sash window opening to the ground floor. Some of the windows had remnants of the pulley system above the window and the cord fixed to the base of the sill which was used to open the sash.



Illus 19 Interior looking E

Ground floor

Vestibule: The vestibule had pitch pine panelling to 2.3m and all six doors leading from it were of pine.

Main church: At the time of the survey in 2014, the wall plaques, organ and pews had been removed. The large organ had been put in during the 1970s replacing a smaller, organ. It had been placed in the NW end of the main part of the ground floor. Some of the heavy wooden surrounds had been salvaged and were photographed in the W room.

The organ had been made by James J. Binns of Leeds. It had 16 pipes and 14 buttons on the left, 5 pipes in the middle and 16 pipes and 11 buttons on the right. It had 4 sets of bellows which were driven by the motor in the outshot building by the N wall.

It had been in use in Forres before it was moved (pers. comm Mr and Mrs Temple).

The octagonal pulpit stood beside window W2, with steps to it from the W (Illus 20).

No other internal fittings remained.



Illus 20 Pulpit below window W2

There was a band of stone flooring, 1.2m wide, extending E/W along the centre of the floor, along the edge of where the ground floor pews would have been. The original panelling, 1.25m high, survives on the N, S and E sides, with plaster above. Five of the Gallery pillars (Illus 3: F5) are still visible; they range in size between 190 x

130mm and 190 x 270mm. They are of rough timber, clad with pitch pine to match the panelling. (Illus 19).

Session Room: This had been lined out and only retained its wooden panelling on the S side.

First floor

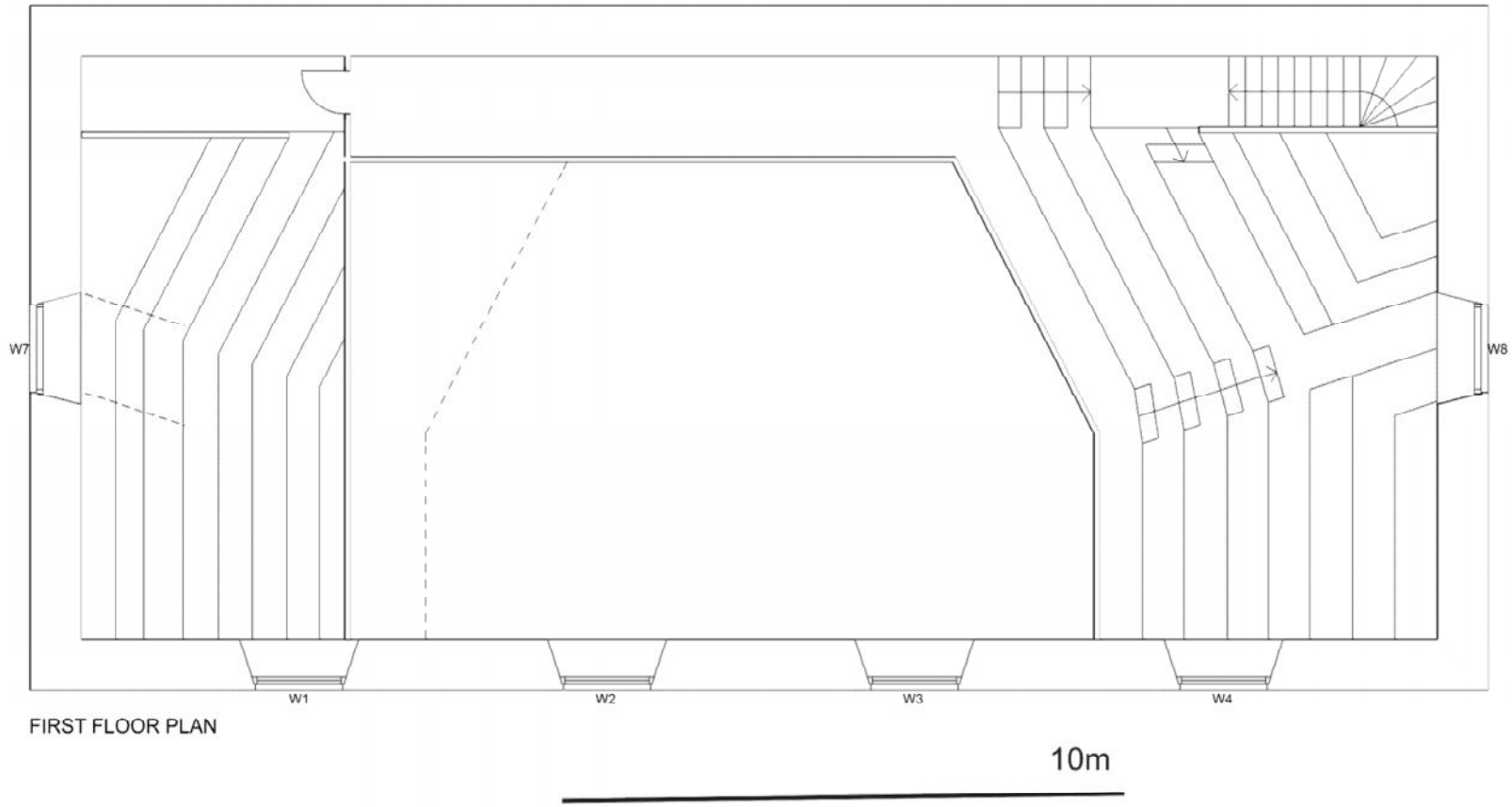
The Gallery staging on the E side had 7 rows of stepped staging for the pews. As downstairs, the pews had been removed, although they could be seen in shadow on the S wall. The front of the Gallery and of the passage between the two ends of the Gallery had a pine partition 0.85m high. The N wall of the passage also had pine panelling to 1.18m.

At the W end the stepped staging had been truncated. It was possible, at that end, to see below the staging to the fairly rough timber framework and the lathe and plaster of the ceiling of the Session Room.

The inside of E window W8 had a wooden railing; traces of a similar railing were visible beside the W window W7. The rope for the bell hangs down beside window W8.



Illus 21 Gallery looking E towards window W8. Note the hanging lights.



Illus 22 First floor plan annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.

THE OUTSHOT TO N WALL

Small lean-to outshot, 3.2 x 4.6m.

Walls: Harled rubble stone with concrete blocks around door and window.

Roof: Slate.



Illus 23 Lean-to outshot

Description:

D3 W: 0.92m H: 1.80m. Concrete surround.

W6 W: 0.61m H: 0.83m. Concrete surround.

Internal: The floor is cut down c 1.1m below the external ground level, with 7 steps down inside door D3. This structure is not on the 1866 OS map, but is on the 1902 OS map, so it is probably part of the 1894 renovation. Most recently it was used to house the electric motor and drive for the bellows for the organ and a spare organ bellows is fixed against the wall (Illus 25).

However, in the Owner's Deeds, there is a Certificate of the Sheriff dated October 1932, under the Church of Scotland (Property and Endowments) Act of 1925 which details the boundaries of the church lands and refers to this building as the 'Heating Chamber'. So it is probable that its original function was as a furnace house. This is probably the explanation of two blocked holes, one through the church wall and one to the W (Illus 24).



Illus 24 Drive for organ bellows with vent through pipe in wall. Note earlier blocked openings for heating.



Illus 25 Inside the outshot, looking E to stair. Spare organ bellows to RHS.

THE ENCLOSING WALL AND GATES

The church grounds are enclosed on the E, S and W by a rubble stone coped wall with two flat-arched entrance gateways in the E wall. The archways project from the wall facade and are 3.58m wide. The gate openings are 1.76m wide and 1.96m high.

with double wooden doors.

7. References

Historic Scotland 2008 *Sash and Case Windows: A short guide for homeowners.*

Edinburgh: Historic Scotland

Historic Scotland 2010 *Managing the Historic Environment: Windows.*

Edinburgh: Historic Scotland

McKean, C 1990 *Banff and Buchan: An illustrated architectural guide.* Royal

Institute of Architects Scotland: Edinburgh.

8 Archive

A full set of photographs with the photo location plans will be supplied on CD to the Aberdeenshire SMR in Aberdeen and to the NMRS.

Appendix 1:

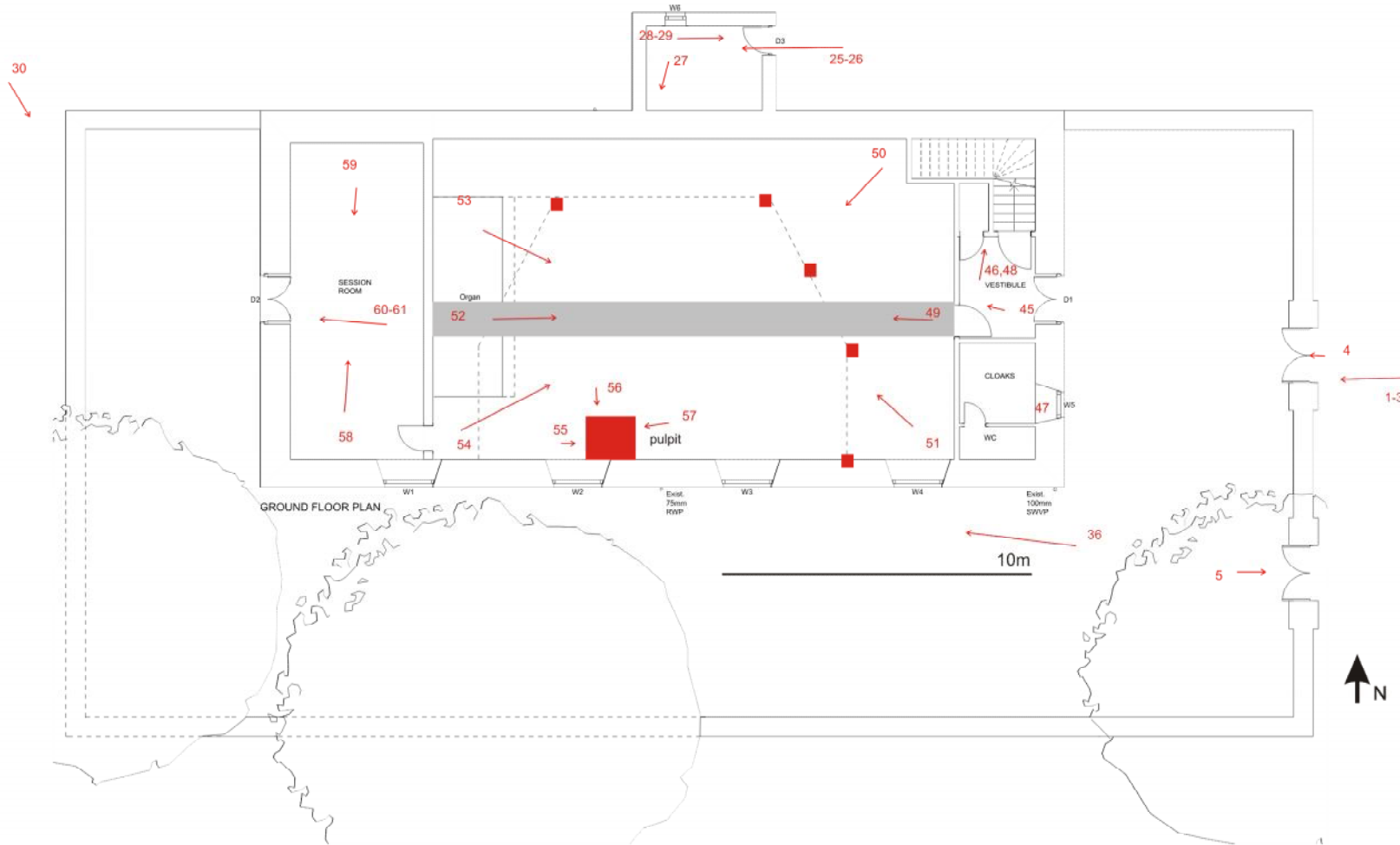
Photographic Catalogue

The position of photographs can be seen on annotated drawings Illus 26-31.

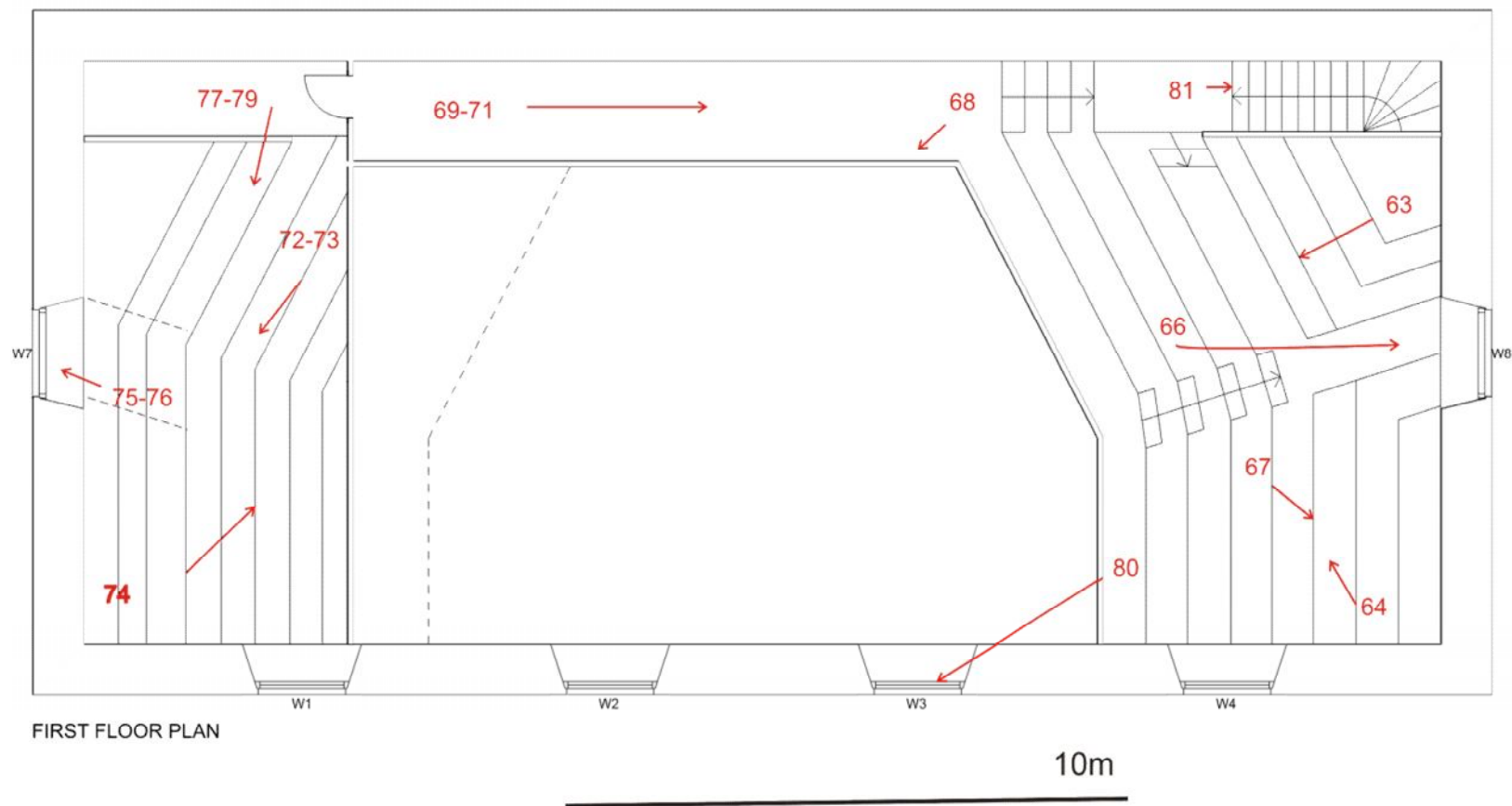
File number	Photo number	Date taken	Content
FORDYCE PARISH CHURCH		1 MAY 2014	
	01-03		E facade with outer churchyard wall and gates
	04		Detail of N gate of churchyard
	05		Detail of inside of S gate to churchyard
	06		E wall: Door D1
	07		E wall: window W8
	08-09		E wall: window W5
	10		E wall: window W8
	11		E wall: window W9
	12-13		E wall: Bellcote from E
	14-16		E wall. S skewputt with date: 18
	17		E wall: N skewputt with date :04
	18-19		N wall: general
	20-21		Bellcote from N
	22		W ball finial from N
	23		N outshot from N
	24		N outshot from E
	25-26		Outshot looking S inside to organ bellows engine

File number	Photo number	Date taken	Content
	27		Inside outshot showing pipe through to church
	28-29		Inside outshot looking E with spare organ bellows
	30		View looking SE
	31		W wall
	32		W ball finial from W
	33		W wall: window W9
	34		W wall: window W7
	35		W wall : door D2 across churchyard wall
	36		S wall: general view looking W
	37		S wall: window W 4
	38		S wall: Detail of window W1 to show ripples and bubble in glass
	39-40		W wall: graffiti F1
	41		S wall: graffiti F2
	42		S wall: graffiti F3
	43		W wall: door D2
	44		W wall: graffiti F4
	45		Interior of vestibule looking W
	46		Interior of vestibule looking N
	47		Interior. W5 from inside
	48		Interior of vestibule looking N
	49		Interior looking W
	50		Interior looking SW
	51		Interior looking NW
	52		Interior looking E
	53		Interior looking SE

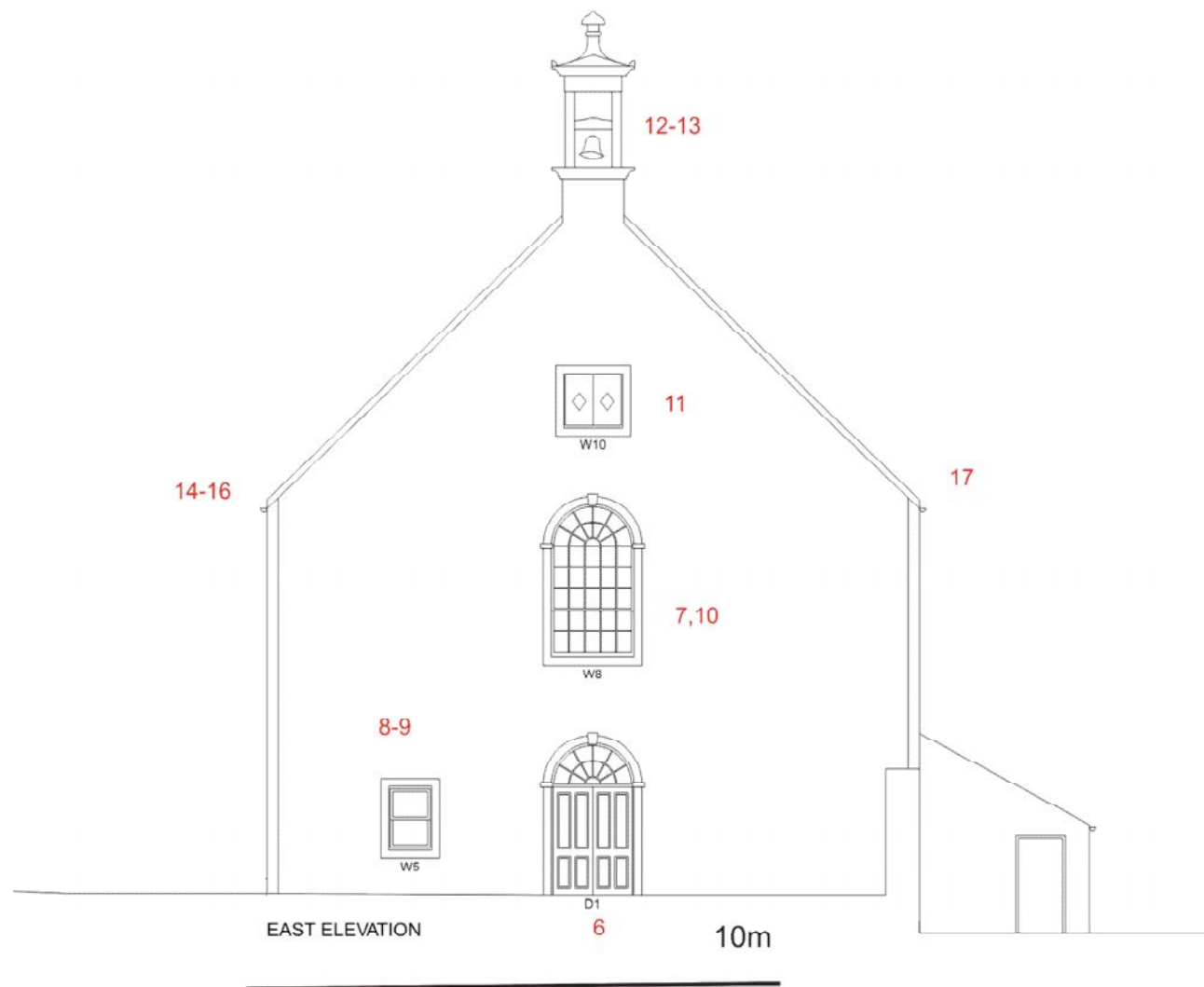
File number	Photo number	Date taken	Content
	54		Interior looking NE
	55		Pulpit looking E
	56		Pulpit looking S
	57		Pulpit looking W
	58		Session Room looking N
	59		Session Room looking S
	60-61		Session Room looking W at D2
	62		Session Room looking E showing salvaged wood from organ surround
	63-64		Gallery looking W
	65		Detail of hanging lights
	66		Gallery. Window W8 from inside and bell rope
	67		Gallery looking S at shadows of pews on wall
	68		Looking from gallery towards pulpit and windows W2 and W3
	69-71		Looking E along passage to E end of Gallery and window W8
	72-73		W (blocked) end of Gallery, looking S
	74		W gallery blocking at upper level
	75-76		W Gallery: detail of window W7 vent from inside
	77-79		W Gallery- understructure
	80		Detail of window pulley
	81		Stair to Gallery, looking down



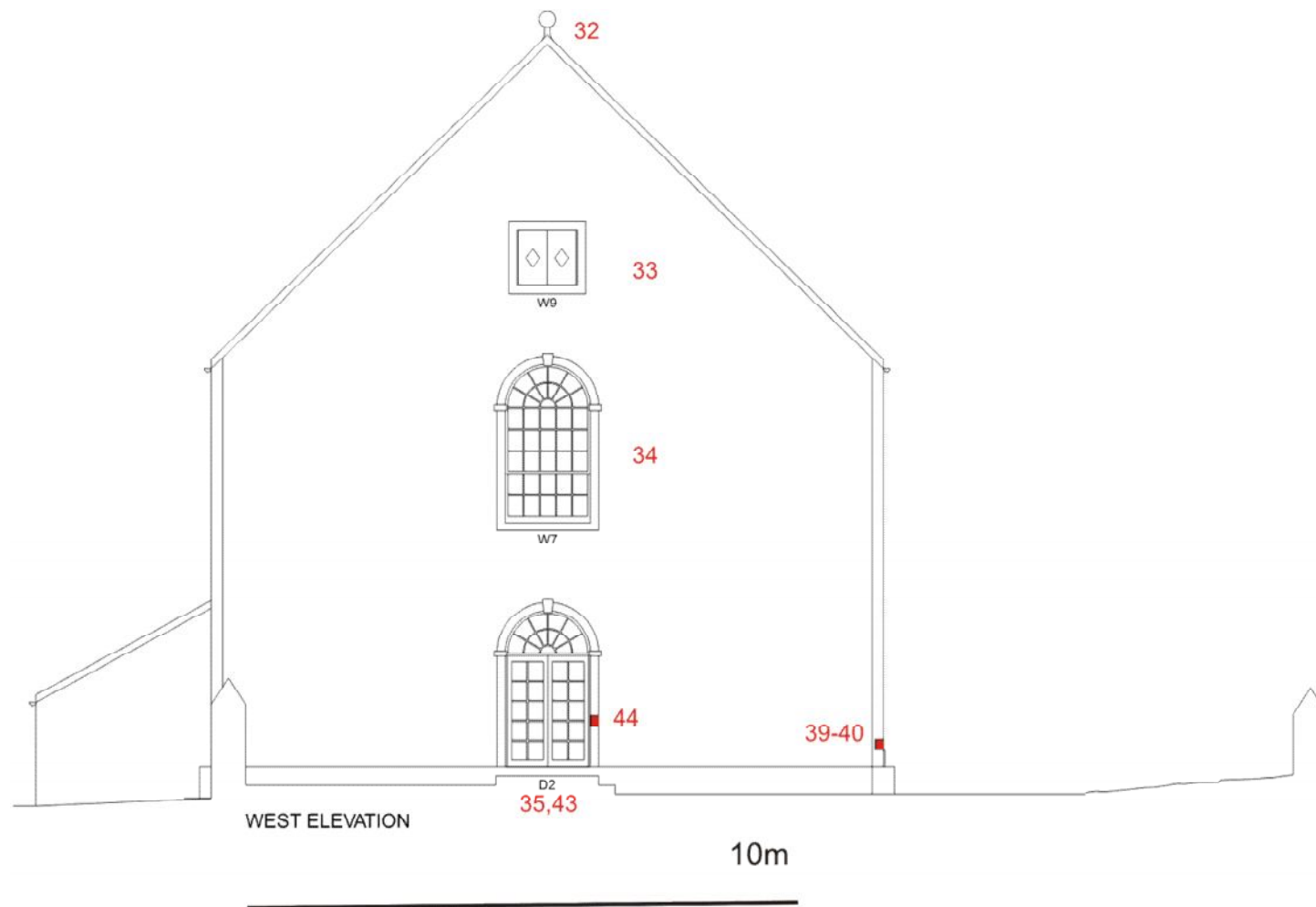
Illus 26 Main plan with photograph numbers in red. Annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect



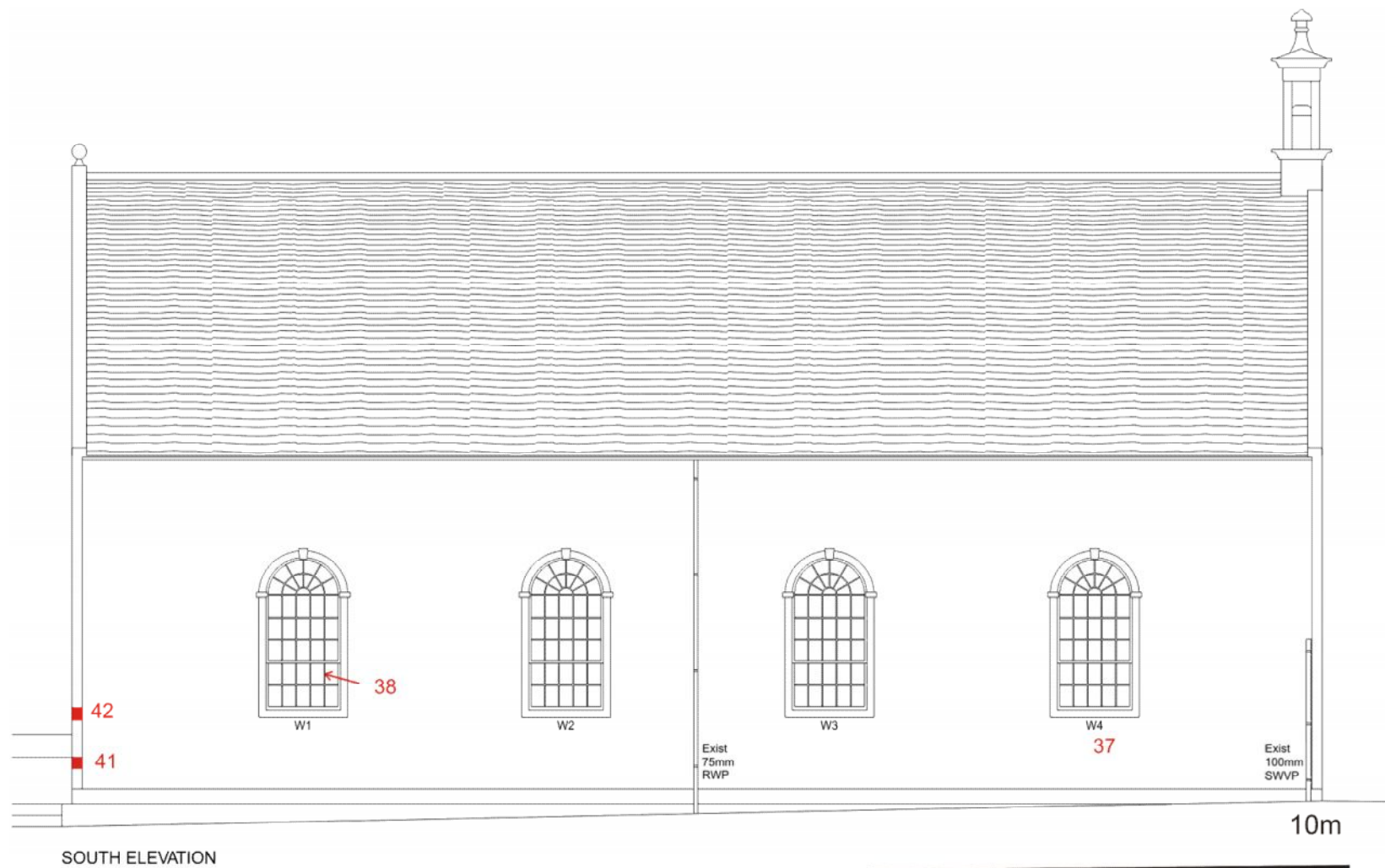
Illus 27 First floor plan with photograph numbers in red. Annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.



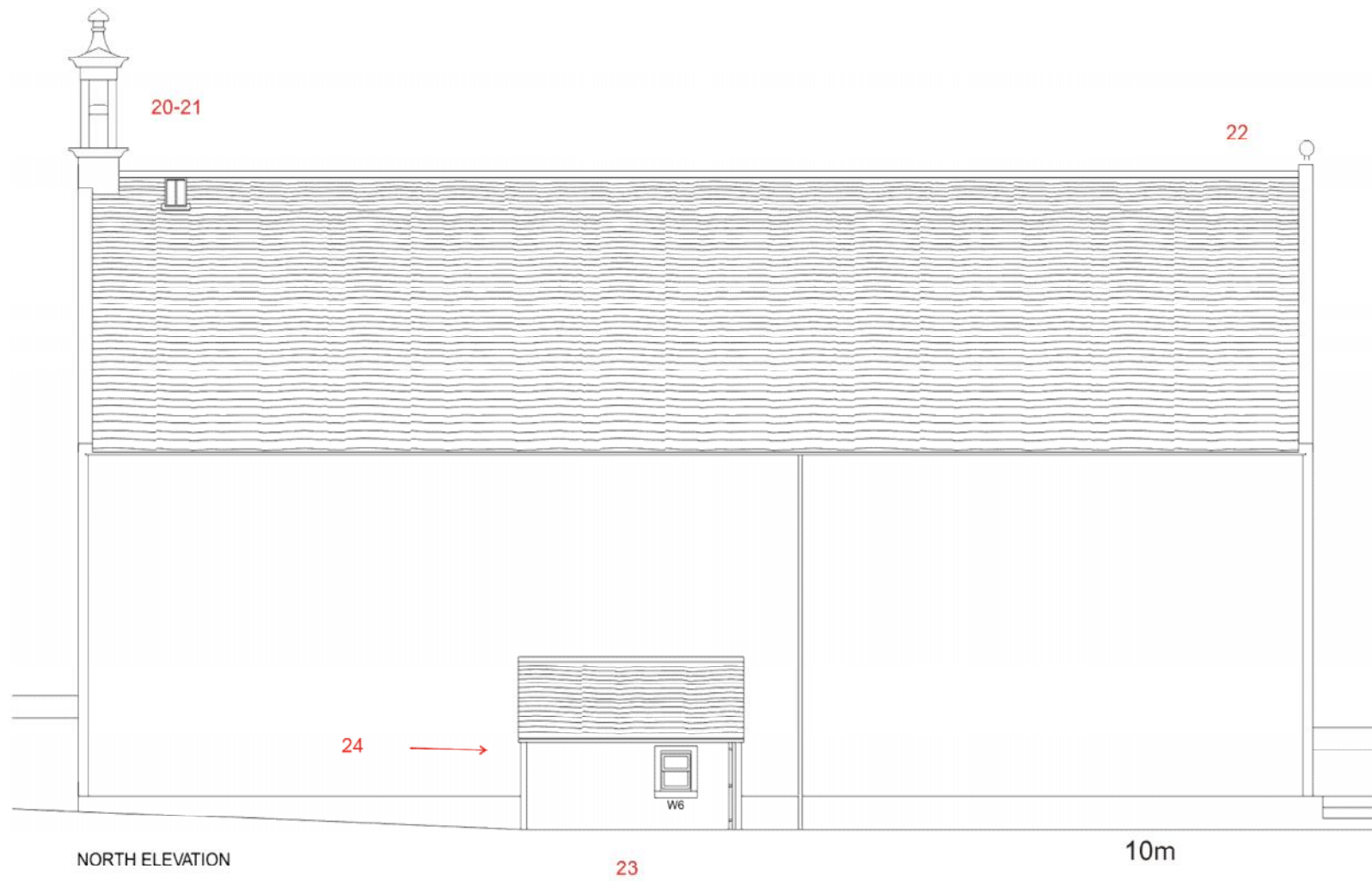
Illus 28 E elevation with photograph numbers in red. Annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.



Illus 29 W elevation with photograph numbers in red. Annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.



Illus 30 S elevation with photograph numbers in red. Annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.



Illus 31 N elevation with photograph numbers in red. Annotated from drawings courtesy of Leslie F. Hunter, Chartered Architect.