

**An Archaeological Photographic Survey**  
**Of**  
**Gainford Wesleyan Methodist Chapel**  
**Gainford**  
**County Durham**

**June 2015**

# 1. Contents

1. CONTENTS.....	2
2. LIST OF FIGURES & PLATES .....	4
3. SUMMARY .....	5
4. INTRODUCTION.....	6
4.1. Project Background .....	6
4.2. Scope of works .....	7
4.3. Site location.....	8
5. METHODOLOGY.....	9
5.1. Background research .....	9
5.2. Site Visit .....	9
6. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	10
6.1. Location .....	10
6.2. Historical background of the Methodist chapel.....	10
7. BUILDING DESCRIPTION.....	12
7.1. Orientation of photographs .....	12
7.2. Measured Drawings .....	13
7.3. External views .....	14
7.4. Internal views .....	14
8. ARCHIVING .....	16
8.1. OASIS.....	16
8.2. Other archives .....	16

<b>9. REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>17</b>
9.1. Durham County Record Office Sources .....	17
9.2. Other sources .....	17
<b>10. PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES.....</b>	<b>18</b>

## 2. List of Figures & Plates

Figure 1 Detailed site location within Gainford showing outline of plot.....	8
Figure 2 Plan identifying location and orientation of photographs reproduced in this survey.....	12
Figure 3 East elevation, exterior .....	13
Figure 4 North elevation, exterior.....	13
Plate 1 Chapel within its context on Gainford village green .....	18
Plate 2 East elevation, facing village green.....	19
Plate 3 Chapel nameplate detail .....	19
Plate 4 East elevation, north-east oblique perspective .....	19
Plate 5 Sunday school nameplate detail .....	19
Plate 6 Roof covering passageway (view looking west) .....	19
Plate 7 Roof covering passageway (view looking east).....	19
Plate 8 Passageway along north elevation of Sunday school (looking west).....	19
Plate 9 West elevation, from field.....	19
Plate 10 West elevation of main chapel building, from neighbouring garden.....	19
Plate 11 South elevation of Sunday School and kitchen extension, from neighbouring garden.....	19
Plate 12 Entrance hall from front door .....	19
Plate 13 North hallway door, interior .....	19
Plate 14 East hallway door, interior .....	19
Plate 15 Chapel interior south elevation.....	19
Plate 16 Chapel interior west elevation.....	19
Plate 17 Chapel interior north elevation.....	19
Plate 18 Chapel interior east elevation.....	19
Plate 19 Chapel interior window detail.....	19
Plate 20 Sunday school interior west elevation.....	19
Plate 21 Sunday school interior window detail west elevation.....	19
Plate 22 Sunday school interior north elevation.....	19
Plate 23 Sunday school interior window detail north elevation.....	19
Plate 24 Sunday school interior door detail north elevation .....	19
Plate 25 Sunday school interior ventilator detail north elevation .....	19
Plate 26 Sunday school interior east elevation.....	19
Plate 27 Sunday school interior window detail east elevation .....	19
Plate 28 Sunday school interior south elevation showing cellar entrance .....	19
Plate 29 Sunday school interior ceiling hatch detail.....	19
Plate 30 Sunday school interior ceiling detail.....	19
Plate 31 Kitchen lean-to interior north view .....	19
Plate 32 Cellar interior south view.....	19
Plate 33 Cellar interior north view.....	19

### 3. Summary

This photographic survey was carried out in advance of the residential conversion of the former Methodist chapel in Gainford, County Durham (Grid Reference NZ1697716755).

The work was commissioned in response to a condition attached to planning consent for conversion of the Methodist chapel. The chapel consists of a main chapel building, a meeting room built to the rear for the Wesleyan Sunday school and a flat-roofed extension constructed respectively in 1834, 1897 and 1928. The building lies within a Conservation Area in Gainford, but is not listed. This survey was recorded to English Heritage Level 2 survey standards, as detailed in *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (*English Heritage*, 2006). This report summarises the results of on-site photographic recording and research undertaken from local records to establish the history of the Methodist chapel.

## 4. Introduction

### 4.1. Project Background

The report was prepared by Dr J Broderick and Dr H Bienias, with assistance from Mr Ian Wells (BA, BArch, RIBA) of Countryside Consultants, prior to work commencing on conversion of the Methodist Chapel, Low Green, Gainford, County Durham, DL2 3DS into a residential property.

Planning permission has been granted by Durham County Council Planning Department (South/West) for change of use from church to dwelling (Planning Application no 6/2012/0205/DM). The chapel will be converted into a residential property over two floors in the main building with a single storey kitchen and dining room to the rear. Although the building is not listed, it is in a Conservation Area and is deemed to make a contribution to the area's character. A condition has therefore been placed on the planning consent that a measured photographic survey of the building is undertaken before any works commence. This condition is quoted below:

*“No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of the programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which is submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority as follows:*

- i. Methodologies for a Level 1-2 EH-style building record prior to and during demolition of the main farm building/ house.*
- ii. A timetable of works in relation to the proposed development, including sufficient notification and allowance of time to ensure that the site work is undertaken and completed in accordance with the approved strategy.*
- iii. Monitoring arrangements, including the notification in writing to the County Durham County Archaeologist of the commencement of archaeological works and the opportunity to monitor such works.*
- iv. A list of all staff involved in the implementation of the strategy, including sub-contractors and specialists, their responsibilities and qualifications. The archaeological mitigation strategies shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and timings.*

*Reason: To comply with saved policies BE15 and para. 135 and 141 of the NPPF’ (Planning Application no 6/2012/0205/DM, condition 7).*

This report has been compiled in response to the outlined planning condition and in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed by Lee McFarlane, Senior Archaeologist at Durham County Council.

#### **4.2. Scope of works**

The aim of this project was to produce a record of the former Methodist chapel prior to any conversion works taking place. The planning condition recommended a '*Level 1-2 EH-style building record*' and in accordance with this recommendation the building was recorded to Level 2 standard, as outlined in Understanding Historical Buildings: a guide to good recording practice (*English Heritage*, 2006).

The record comprises of the following:

- On site investigation and recording of the chapel, including photographs of principal internal and external views as well as distinct architectural features
- Written description of features of architectural interest
- Summary of desk-based research into the history and development of the chapel within its village location

### 4.3. Site location

The chapel is situated on Low Green, which faces the village green in Gainford, a community located on the River Tees, 11km West of Darlington in County Durham (Grid Reference NZ1697716755). The location of the chapel within the village is shown in Figure 1.

The site is L-shaped, approximately 200m<sup>2</sup> in size and is almost entirely occupied by the footprint of the buildings.

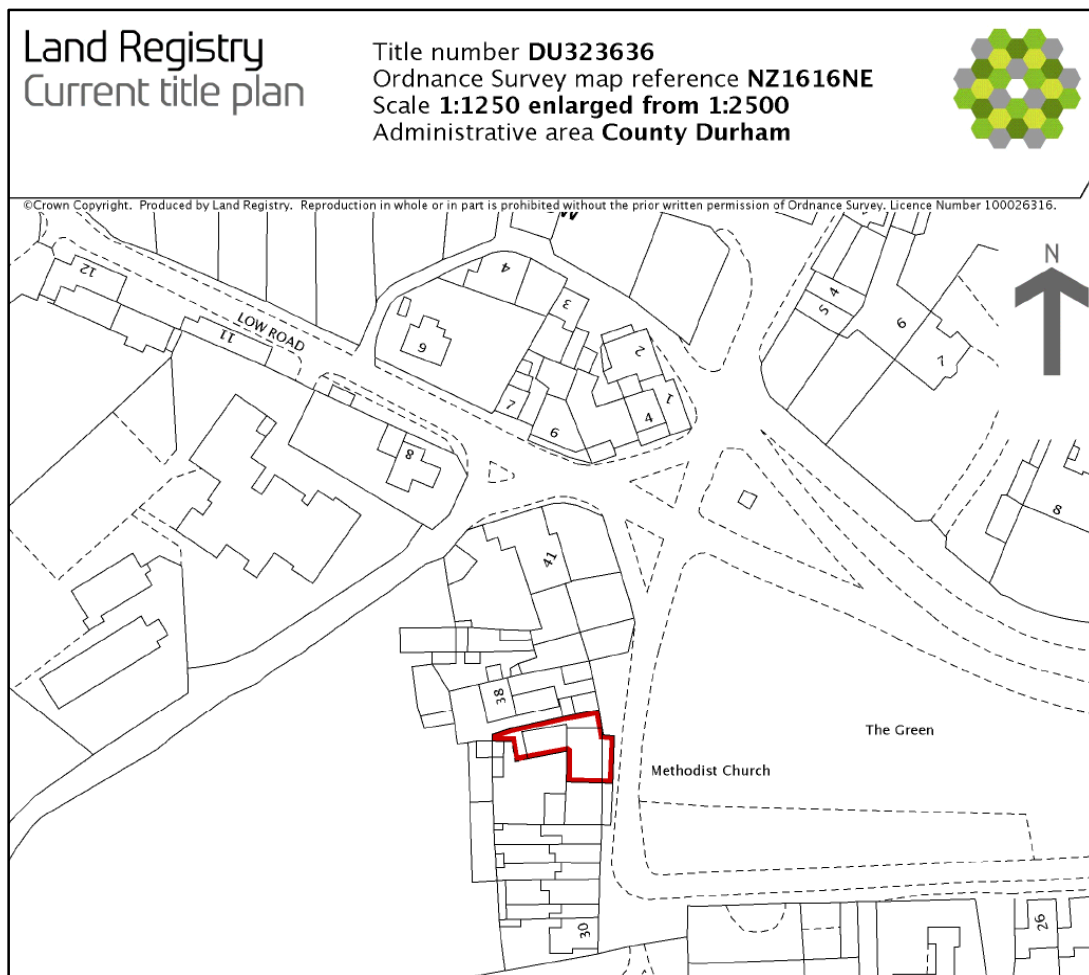


Figure 1 Detailed site location within Gainford showing outline of plot.

Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/business-and-government/licensing/crown-copyright.html>



## 5. Methodology

### 5.1. Background research

In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation, a desk-based assessment investigated primary and secondary historical sources. The following archives & sources were consulted:

- Durham County Council Historical Archives
- British Newspaper Archives
- Wesleyan Methodist Church archives
- Gainford Historical Society

### 5.2. Site Visit

A visit was made to the site on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015 when recording and analysis was undertaken in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures* (1996, revised 2008). The site was fully accessible. Additional external photographs (Plate 3 and Plate 9) were taken on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

Photographs were taken using Nikon D600 and Panasonic G1 cameras in full resolution uncompressed formats (24MP TIFF and 12MP RAW respectively). A ground plan showing the position and orientation of the photos reproduced in this report is included in Figure 2. This photographic survey comprised the interiors and exterior elevations of the chapel, with detailed images of noteworthy architectural elements and inclusion of standard scales.

## 6. Historical Background

### 6.1. Location

The Methodist chapel is located in Gainford, a village situated 11km west of Darlington in County Durham. A Conservation Area was designated in the village in 1971 and comprises a variety of architectural styles and ages (Durham County Council, December 2013).

The village of Gainford has been in existence as a settlement since at least the early medieval period and was most likely established initially as a river crossing. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century it was effectively a border settlement when the River Tees was designated the boundary between Scotland and England. It prospered in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a stopping point on the Stockton to Barnard Castle turnpike, and many of the buildings surrounding the village green were built at this time. The establishment of the Gainford Spa and the development of the railway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century led to further expansion of the village, with larger houses replacing small cottages around the green. The village had a thriving collection of shops, as well as three pubs and two schools until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. After the Second World War new housing estates were built in the village.

### 6.2. Historical background of the Methodist chapel

Evidence of settlement on the chapel site is illustrated in a drawing from 1778 (now in the Kaye Collection in the British Museum) which shows a row of single storey cottages facing the green where the Methodist chapel now stands (Gainford Parish News, 2004). Granting of permission from the Methodist Superintendent to build the chapel is documented in the Darlington Methodist Circuit quarterly meeting minutes from March 1834 and a committee was formed to undertake this (Durham County Records M/Da 1). According to the Souvenir Brochure marking the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the chapel, it was a devoted Methodist who lived in the village, Mr Matthew Preston, who campaigned to have a place of worship built in Gainford (Durham County Records M/Da 1336). The Newcastle Journal from Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1834 records the first stone of the new chapel being laid by Mr Preston, followed by a blessing by the Reverend Thomas Armson who *'then delivered an address to a numerous and deeply attentive audience'* (Newcastle Journal, 1834). According to the 'Religious Intelligence' section of the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine of the time, the chapel was opened for worship later that year, with sermons to mark the occasion over two days on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> December (Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, 1835). The magazine states that the services *'were well attended, and exceedingly interesting'*, and that the chapel was in *'easy circumstances'* with subscriptions and collections amounting to £135 in that year. The article concludes with the statement that *'the attendance is good, and the prospects are promising.'* Notes in the minutes of the Quarterly Meetings of the Darlington Methodist Circuit later in the century suggest that contributions from the congregation at Gainford did not remain so generous (Durham County Records M/Da 2).

In March 1897 permission was granted by the Methodist Church to build a Sunday school at the rear of the chapel, with the minutes from the Quarterly Meeting stating that the costs should not exceed £200 (Durham County Records M/Da 2). A coal shed and stable at the rear of the chapel, used for stabling the lay preachers' horses as they travelled around the Methodist Circuit, were removed to build the Sunday school. The Durham County Records Office holds the original drawings and specifications for the building, which also includes plans to build a new porch on the east elevation of the main chapel building (Durham County Records D/Ad 1/3/147-149). There does not appear to be any evidence that this porch was ever built. The Sunday school was opened by the Rev T. Ferrier Hulme in 1897 (Durham County Records M/Da 1336). The Sunday school was heated by an open coal fire which was removed in 1928 when the kitchen extension was built, however the chimney breast is still visible.

Various alterations have been made over the years. Original quotations for the supply of five new windows and coloured glass in 1891 are held in the Durham County Records Office, as is correspondence from December of that year regarding the quality of the glass, which was apparently not considered '*cathedral grade*' (Durham County Records D/Ad 1/3/142-149a). The 150th Anniversary souvenir brochure gives details of later alterations, including installation of electricity in 1939, re-slating of the chapel roof in 1955, raising of the chapel floor in 1969 and renewing the windows once again in 1981 (Durham County Records M/Da 1336). The chapel was last used as a place of worship in 2011 (Teesdale Mercury, 2011).

## 7. Building Description

### 7.1. Orientation of photographs

The location and orientation of photographs reproduced in this survey are shown in Figure 2.

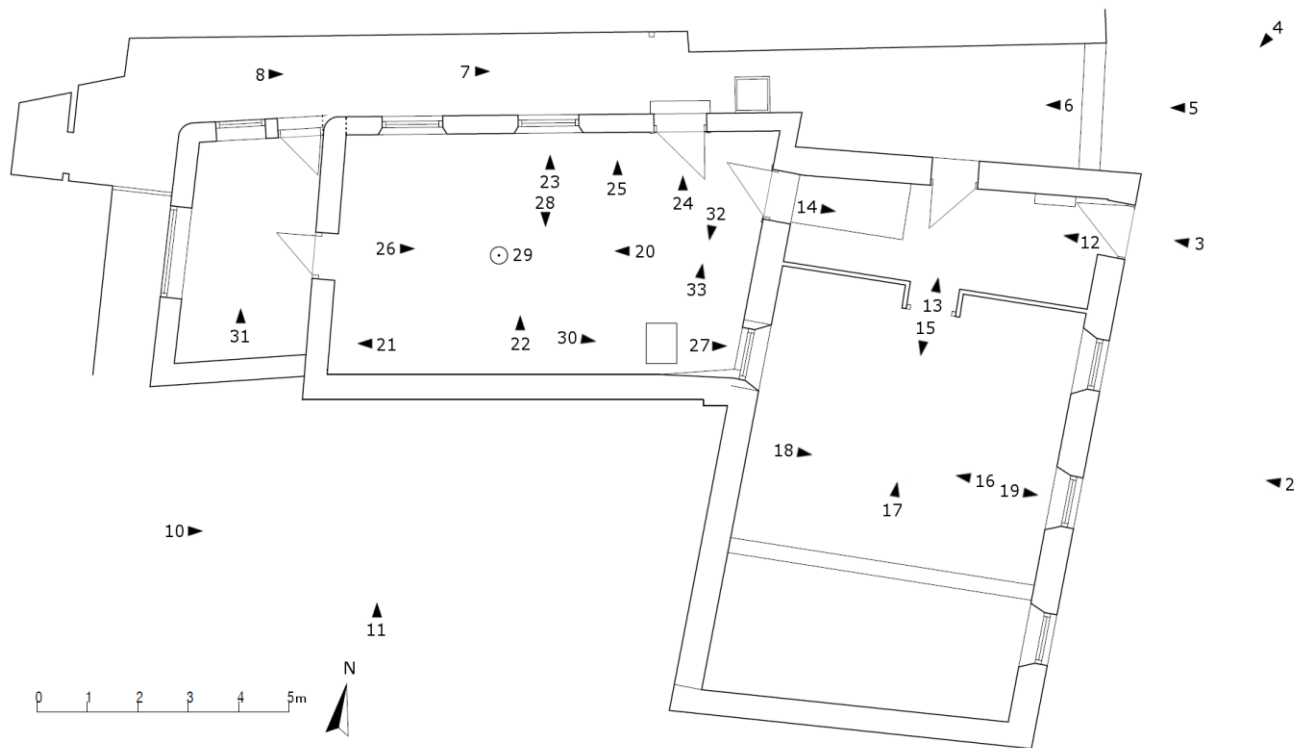


Figure 2 Plan identifying location and orientation of photographs reproduced in this survey

## 7.2. Measured Drawings

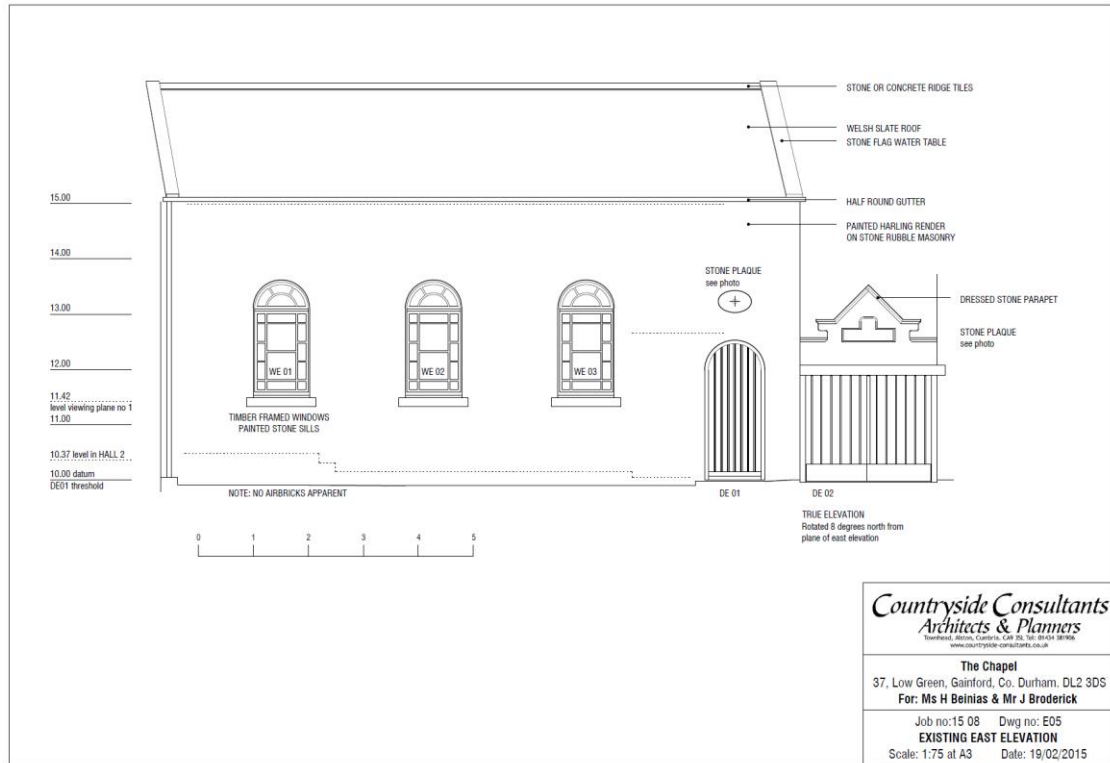


Figure 3 East elevation, exterior

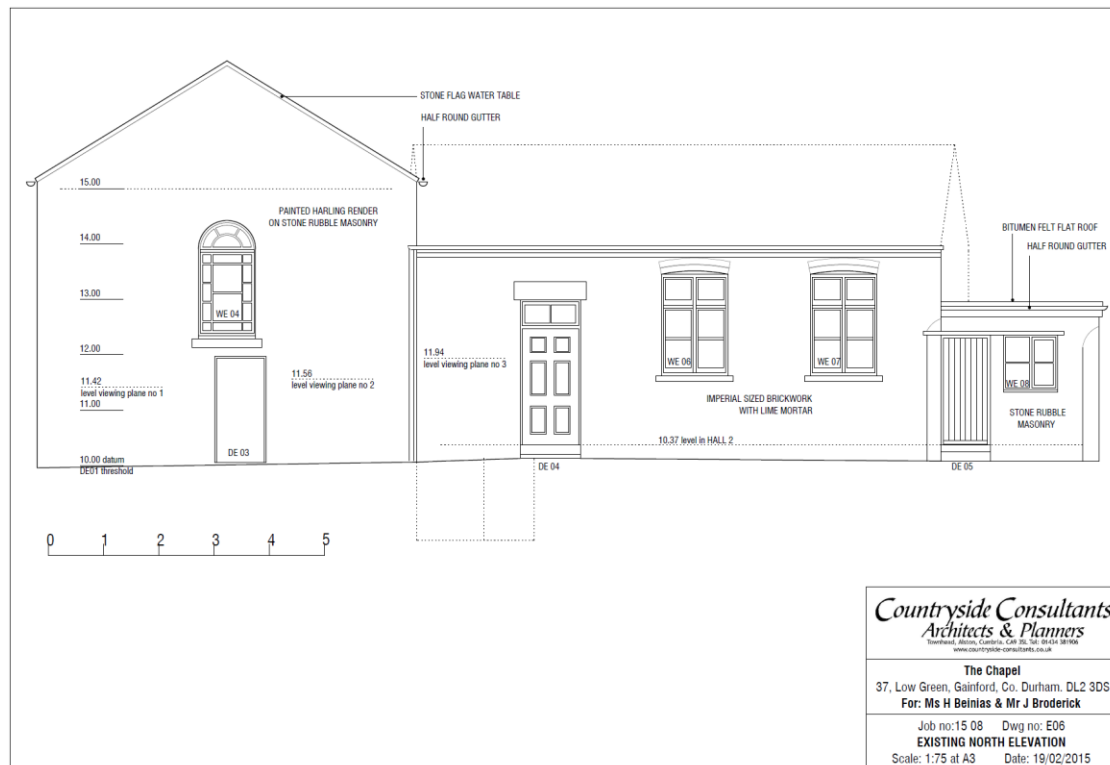


Figure 4 North elevation, exterior

### **7.3. External views**

The chapel is located on the village green (Plate 1). The site consists of the main chapel building, a Sunday school and flat-roofed kitchen extension to the rear, a narrow, covered passageway to the north and a small cellar under the Sunday school. Figures 3 and 4 show drawings of building as existing.

The main chapel building faces east over the village green (Plate 1). It consists of stone masonry, overlaid by render applied at various different periods, under a slate roof (Plate 2). There are three arched windows with panels of coloured glass and a nameplate over the door (Plate 3).

Double wooden doors to the north of the chapel lead into a covered passageway that was once the entrance to the Sunday school (Plate 4). The entrance has an ornate parapet detail above with the Sunday school nameplate (Plate 5). The passageway is part covered by a tin-roof at two different levels (Plate 6 looking west and Plate 7 looking east). Plate 6 also shows the arched partially stained glass window in the north elevation of the main chapel building, which is mostly obscured from other views.

The Sunday school is constructed of red brick along its north elevation and stone masonry along the west and south elevations, with a slate roof. Plate 8 shows the passageway along the north elevation of the Sunday school with detail of curved brickwork at its north-western corner (partly obscured by the adjoining kitchen extension). The west elevation of the Sunday school (taken from the field to the rear of the site) is shown in Plate 9. Plate 10 shows the part-rendered west elevation of the main chapel (taken from the garden of the adjoining property No 36 Low Green and including their lean-to summer house). The south elevation of the Sunday school and the flat-roofed kitchen extension is shown in Plate 11. The slate roof of the Sunday school contains two clear glass tiles which serve to illuminate the roof void below.

### **7.4. Internal views**

The main chapel building has been divided into an entrance hall (Plates 12, 13 & 14) which leads into the Sunday school to the west and the main hall to the south. The main hall has a raised altar area (the altar was removed by the Methodist Church prior to transfer of ownership) at the south end (Plate 15), with wood paneling along the walls. There is an arched window in the west elevation (Plate 16). Plate 17 shows the north elevation, with an arched window high in the gable (covered by a curtain in this photograph), and the partition wall and door to the entrance hall. Three arched windows are located in the east elevation (Plate 18). The windows are very similar in design, a detailed photograph is shown in Plate 19.

The main axis of the Sunday school is oriented perpendicular to that of the main chapel building. Plate 20 shows the Sunday school looking west, with the original chimney breast above the door to the kitchen extension and two windows high in the gable (further detail in Plate 21). The northern elevation is shown in Plate 22, with two large windows (Plate 23) and a door leading to the covered

passageway (Plate 24). Also visible are two inlet boxes with decorative handles to control ventilation into the room (Plate 25). A door to the entrance hall of the main chapel and arched stained glass window are located in the eastern elevation (Plate 26). This window (detailed in Plate 27) would presumably have been external prior to the Sunday school being built in 1897. Plate 28 shows the southern elevation of the Sunday school, including the wooden floorboards and floor hatch to the cellar where the carpet has been lifted, with wood paneling along the walls. The Sunday school has a wood paneled ceiling with three octagonal hatches (Plate 29) giving access to the roof void above supported two carved ribs (detail shown in Plate 30).

To the rear of the Sunday school is the later addition of the kitchen, which is built of rubble masonry with a flat roof. Plate 31 shows the kitchen looking north, including the north-facing door into the passageway and the east-facing door into the Sunday school.

The cellar occupies a small area beneath the eastern end of the Sunday school accessed by a flight of stone stairs from the passageway and a hatch from the Sunday school. Plate 32 shows the interior of the cellar looking south and Plate 33 looking north.

## 8. Archiving

### 8.1. OASIS

The record has been archived to the OASIS platform (reference number hannahbi1-214054) along with high quality digital files of the photographs included in this report.

### 8.2. Other archives

A paper hardbound copy, archive quality photographic prints and a digital copy of this report have been submitted to the Archaeological Department at Durham County Council.



## 9. References

### 9.1. Durham County Record Office Sources

- M/Da 1       Minutes of Quarterly Meetings of the Darlington Methodist Circuit 1828-1838
- M/Da 2       Minutes of Quarterly Meetings of the Darlington Methodist Circuit 1878-1898
- M/Da 1336    Souvenir Brochure of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations of Gainford Methodist Church, 1984
- D/Ad 1/3/142-149a    Papers regarding work carried out on the new windows at Gainford Wesleyan Chapel, 1891
- D/Ad 1/3/147-149    Papers regarding the construction of a new Wesleyan Sunday School at Gainford, 1897

### 9.2. Other sources

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists: *Standard And Guidance For The Archaeological Investigation And Recording Of Standing Buildings Or Structures*, updated December 2014  
[http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/CIAS&GBuildings\\_0.pdf](http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/CIAS&GBuildings_0.pdf)

Durham County Council: *Gainford Conservation Area Appraisal*, December 2013  
<http://www.durham.gov.uk/media/3571/Gainford-Conservation-Area-Character-Appraisal/pdf/GainfordConservationAreaCharacterAppraisal.pdf>

English Heritage: *Understanding Historic Buildings, a guide to good recording practice*, 2006  
<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/understanding-historic-buildings/understandinghistoricbuildings1.pdf>

Gainford Parish News (March, 2004), accessed online 18/11/2014  
<http://www.thehistoryofgainford.com/Census/ParishNewsArticles.pdf>

The Newcastle Journal, Saturday August 23, 1834; pg. 2; Issue 121

The Teesdale Mercury, September 27 2011, <http://www.teesdalemercury.co.uk/Articles/Church-to-close-after-175-years-of-worship>

The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine 1835, Vol 58; pg. 289

## 10. Photographic Plates



Plate 1 Chapel within its context on Gainford village green





Plate 2 East elevation, facing village green



Plate 3 Chapel nameplate detail





Plate 4 East elevation, north-east oblique perspective





Plate 5 Sunday school nameplate detail



Plate 6 Roof covering passageway (view looking west)





Plate 7 Roof covering passageway (view looking east)



Plate 8 Passageway along north elevation of Sunday school (looking west)





Plate 9 West elevation, from field



Plate 10 West elevation of main Chapel building, from neighbouring garden





Plate 11 South elevation of Sunday School and kitchen extension, from neighbouring garden

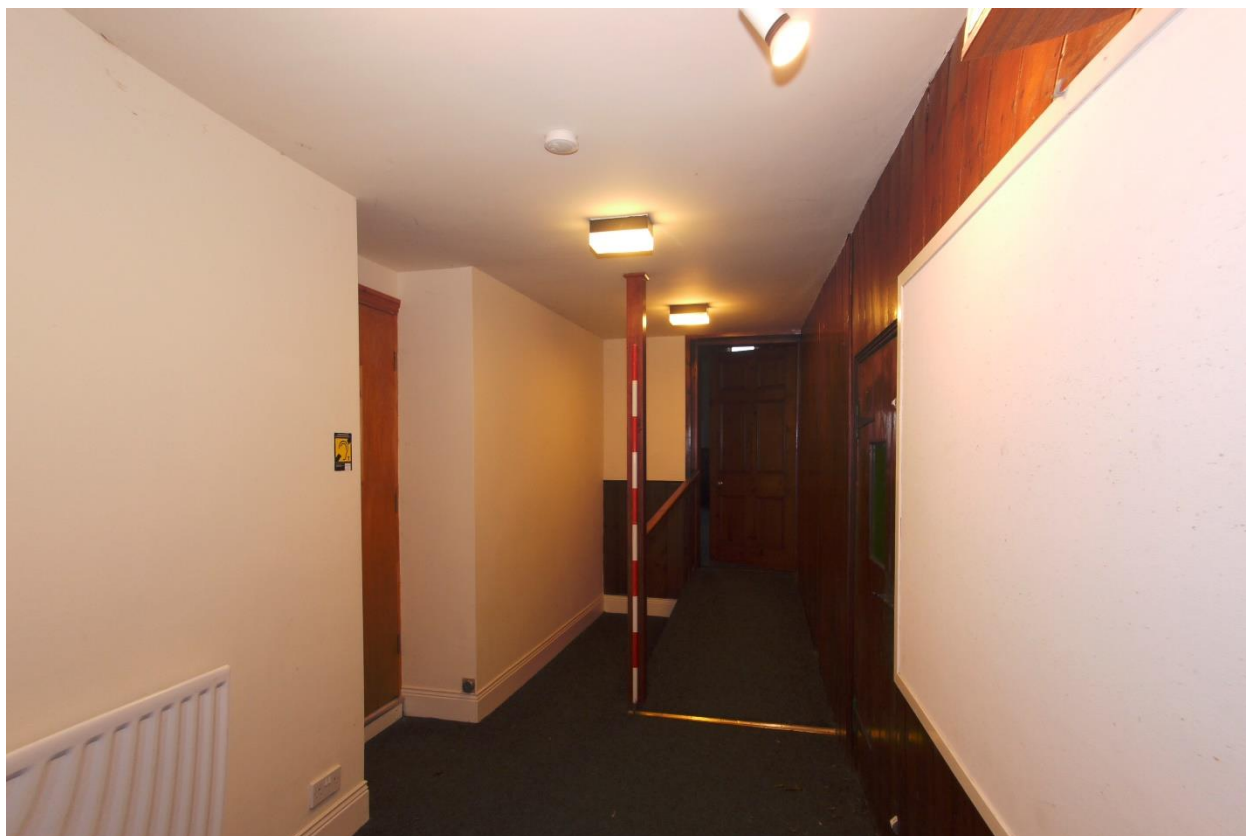


Plate 12 Entrance hall from front door

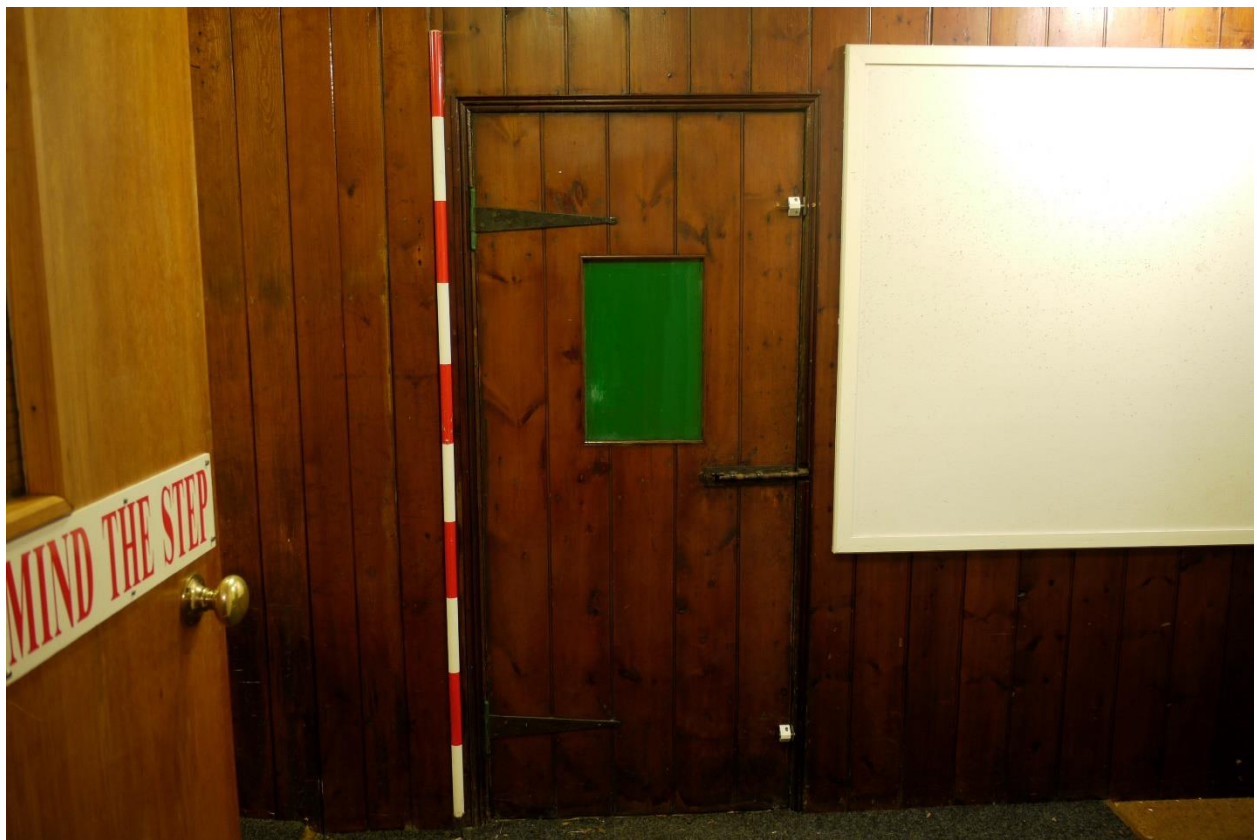


Plate 13 North hallway door, interior



Plate 14 East hallway door, interior





Plate 15 Chapel interior south elevation

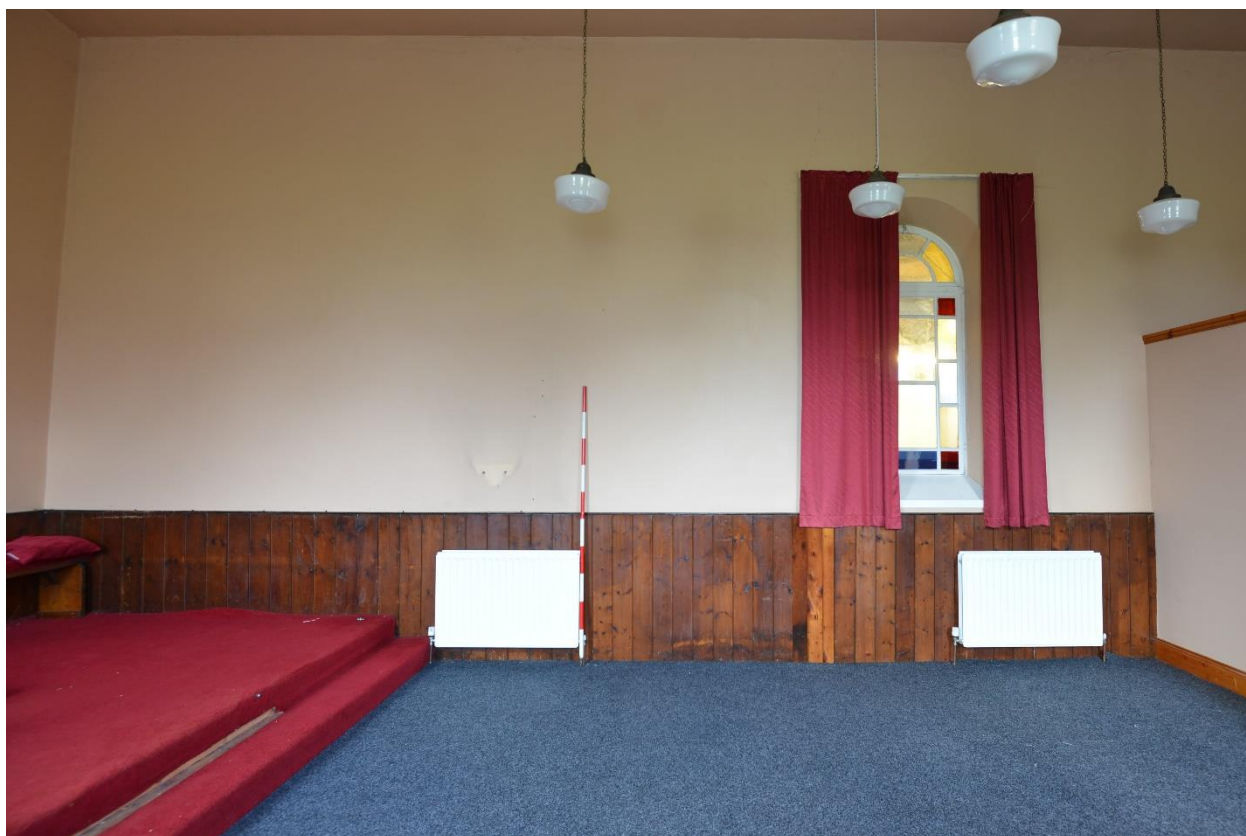


Plate 16 Chapel interior west elevation



Plate 17 Chapel interior north elevation

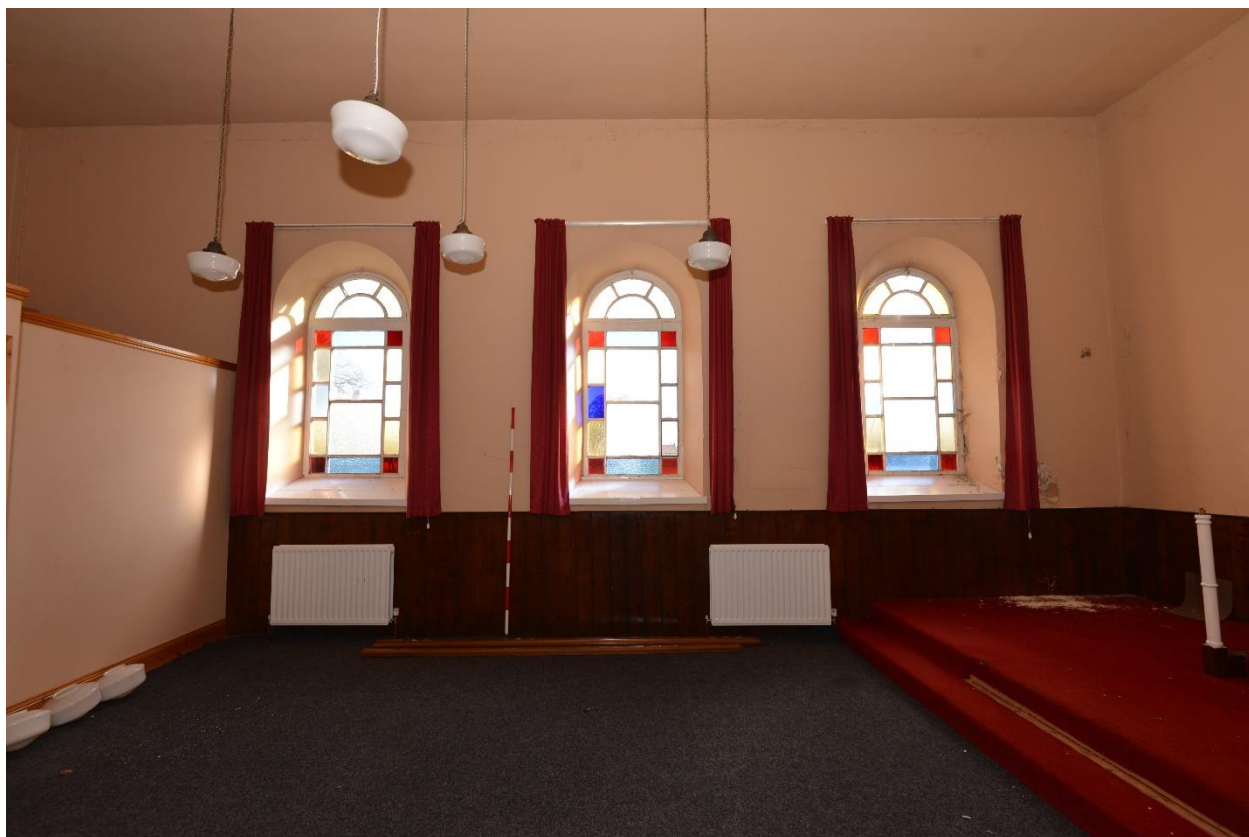


Plate 18 Chapel interior east elevation



Plate 19 Chapel interior window detail





Plate 20 Sunday school interior west elevation



Plate 21 Sunday school interior window detail west elevation



Plate 22 Sunday school interior north elevation





Plate 23 Sunday school interior window detail north elevation



Plate 24 Sunday school interior door detail north elevation



Plate 25 Sunday school interior ventilator detail north elevation





Plate 26 Sunday school interior east elevation



Plate 27 Sunday school interior window detail east elevation





Plate 28 Sunday school interior south elevation showing cellar entrance

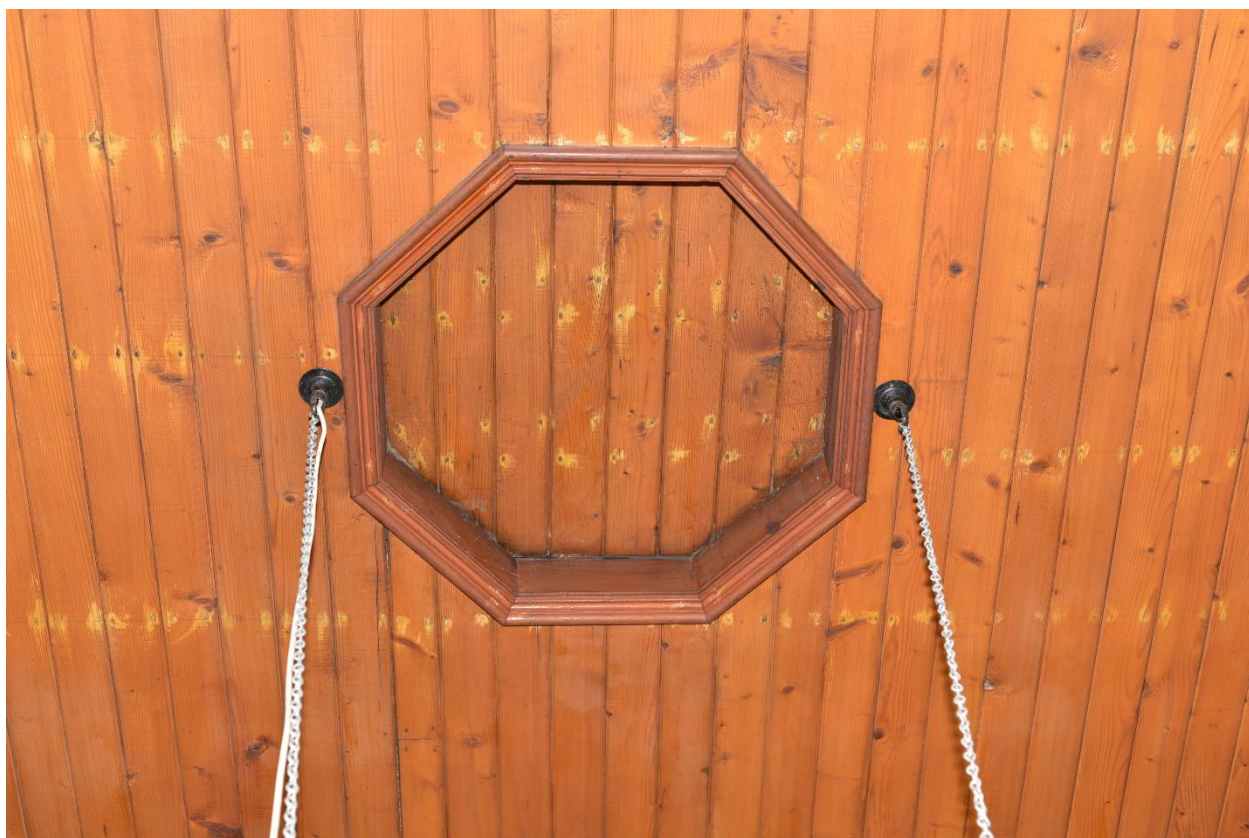


Plate 29 Sunday school interior ceiling hatch detail



Plate 30 Sunday school interior ceiling detail





Plate 31 Kitchen lean-to interior north view





Plate 32 Cellar interior south view



Plate 33 Cellar interior north view