

Crossens Methodist Church

Rufford Road, Southport

Merseyside



Eden Heritage
Archaeology & Heritage Services

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**Historic Building Recording
Report EH117/02**

Crossens Methodist Church

Rufford Road, Southport, Merseyside

Historic Building Recording for 1880 Ltd

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Heritage Impact Assessment
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Historic Landscape Survey
Written Scheme of Investigation

Geophysical Survey
Trial Trench Evaluation
Archaeological Excavation
Archaeological Watching Briefs

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The building recording project was undertaken by Martin Railton, Managing Director, Eden Heritage Ltd.

Summary

In 2021 Eden Heritage was commissioned by 1880 Ltd to undertake an historic building recording project at Crossens Methodist Church, Rufford Road, Southport, Merseyside SD 37413 19886). The building recording project was required as a condition of planning consent, associated with the proposed conversion of the Church building to mixed commercial use, for which planning permission has been granted by Sefton Council.

The survey building comprised a vacant chapel which was built as a Methodist Free United Chapel in 1880 by Maxwell, Tuke and Hurst (HER Reference 18804). The Methodist Society recorded that the site at Crossens was acquired for the chapel in 1879 and on Shrove Tuesday in 1880, the memorial stones were laid. The chapel opened as a Methodist Free United Chapel on the first Sunday in October 1880 and became part of the Southport Circuit of the Liverpool District of Methodist Churches. A Sunday School was added in 1891.

Documentary research has identified that Crossens Methodist Church was constructed on a previously vacant plot of land, located to the south of the village of Crossens on Bankfield Lane. The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1848 shows the area to be rural with a number of isolated farms and market gardens illustrated in the vicinity of the survey building. This changed at the end of the 19th century, when several new housing developments were constructed at the site in response to a growing local population.

A datestone incised with 'Methodist Free Church 1880' in the east elevation confirmed the date of the building. The building survey also identified a clear construction break between the original chapel and Sunday School building, the construction date of which was confirmed by four further datestones. It was evident that the main elevation, which faced onto Rufford Road, was the most visible element of the building and the most elaborate in terms of decoration, having brick facades with contrasting stone detailing, and architectural details such as round headed windows with hoodmoulds. Crossens Methodist Church can be seen to reflect the Italianate Romanesque style which was first used in Britain for church building, but as the 19th century progressed it was adapted for public buildings, museums, schools and commercial buildings.

Internally the main Church comprised an open uninterrupted area of space with tiered seating, which was intended to help to bring the congregation closer to the preacher. The place of worship contained familiar elements, such as tiered rows of pews, a pulpit and predella, which appear to be original to the building, and an organ by George Benson Manchester dated 1911, which may have been added slightly later. Decoration was provided in the form of floral stained-glass windows and timber tracery. Private rooms were also provided to the rear which were plain in their design. The Sunday School comprised a large hall for teaching and other religious activities as well as suite of smaller study rooms and a kitchen/dining area to the rear.

The proposed development will involve conversion of the redundant building, including internal and external alterations, and a new access ramp to the front elevation. The current project will thus contribute towards regional research agendas by providing a permanent record of the building prior to its conversion.

1 Introduction

1.1 Project Circumstances

- 1.1.1 Eden Heritage Ltd was commissioned by 1880 Ltd (the Client) to undertake an historic building recording project at Crossens Methodist Church, Rufford Road, Southport, Merseyside (centred on National Grid Reference SD 37413 19886). The building recording project was required as a condition of planning consent, associated with the proposed conversion of the Church building to mixed commercial use, for which planning permission has been granted by Sefton Council.
- 1.1.2 Crossens Methodist Church was located in the Crossens district of Southport, which lay on the northeast side of the town, in Merseyside (Figure 1). The site was on the west side of Rufford Road, being north of Brade Street, and south of Ridge Close (Figure 2). The building comprised a vacant chapel which was built as a Methodist Free United Chapel in 1880 by Maxwell, Tuke and Hurst (MEAS 2021, HER Reference 18804). The proposed development will involve conversion of the redundant building, including internal and external alterations, and a new access ramp to the front elevation.
- 1.1.3 As a result, Sefton Council advised that a programme of archaeological work was required at the site, which is to be undertaken accordance with a planning condition (Condition 3) of the planning permission, which stated: *“No development shall take place until the applicant has submitted a written programme of archaeological building investigation and recording for approval in writing by the local planning authority. The work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved programme”* (Planning Reference PP-09186078).
- 1.1.4 This is in line with government advice as set out in Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), because the building is classified a non-designated heritage asset (MHCLG 2019).
- 1.1.5 In accordance with the advice of Sefton Council, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the required historic building recording project was produced by Eden Heritage Ltd in March 2021. The WSI was submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in advance of the building survey.
- 1.1.6 The historic building recording project was undertaken by Eden Heritage Ltd in accordance with the requirement of Sefton Council, and in conjunction with the following documents:
- Standards and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessments, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2020a)
 - Standards and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2020b)
 - Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice, Historic England (2016)
- 1.1.7 This report will also be submitted to Sefton Council the to satisfy the planning condition.
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2 Methodology

2.1 Scope of the Work

- 2.1.1 The historic building recording project was concerned with Crossens Methodist Church at Rufford Road, which is due to be converted and adapted under the proposed scheme (Figure 2).
- 2.1.2 The purpose of the historic building recording was to determine the original form of the building, and to record evidence for its construction, development and past use.
- 2.1.3 The project comprised a Level 2 Survey as described by Historic England in '*Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*' (Historic England 2016) and followed the standard and guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2020b).
- 2.1.4 A Level 2 survey is a descriptive record, where both the exterior and interior of the building will be viewed, described and photographed (Historic England 2016, 26).

2.2 Documentary Research

- 2.2.1 Rapid desk-based research was also undertaken to provide the historical context for the building survey and was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists guidance in *Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessments* (CIfA 2020a).
- 2.2.2 This research primarily involved consultation of online resources and focused on evidence for the development of the immediate area. This research was used to provide an account of the origins of the building, and its history, including any phases of development, based on the sources consulted.

2.3 Historic Building Survey

- 2.3.1 The historic building survey comprised an internal and external observation of the building, and the production of a written and photographic record. The work was undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists in *Standards and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (CIfA 2020b).
- 2.3.2 Digital photographs were taken of all external elevations, and internal rooms and circulation areas, and to show the building's overall appearance. Additional photographs were taken where appropriate to illustrate significant structural or architectural detail, details of fixtures and fittings, and to record complex elevations. General views were photographed to show the building in its wider context. All photographs included a graduated scale and are listed in Appendix 1. A plan is included showing where photographs were taken from and their direction (see Figure 4).
- 2.3.3 Photographs are also used to illustrate the report and are included in Appendix 2.

2.3.4 In summary the photographic survey included:

- General views of the exteriors and interiors of the building prior to conversion;
- The overall appearance of principal internal spaces;
- Detailed coverage of the building's external appearances;
- Any external or internal detail, structural, functional or decorative, which is relevant to the design of the building, and to its development and use;
- The relationship of the building to its setting, and to other buildings at the site.

2.3.5 The results of the building survey were used to inform a written description of the building, and to support an account of the building's form, origins, development and use.

2.4 Project Archive

2.4.1 A full professional archive has been compiled in accordance the Archaeological Archives Forum recommendations (Brown 2011). The archive will be deposited with the Liverpool Record Office.

2.4.2 Eden Heritage Ltd supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. This project aims to provide an online index and access to the extensive and expanding body of grey literature created as a result of developer-funded archaeological fieldwork. As a result, details of the results of this study will be made available by Eden Heritage Ltd as a part of this project, and a copy of the report will be uploaded to the OASIS website (Reference **edenheri1-419789**).

2.4.3 A copy of the report (in PDF/A format) will be provided to the Merseyside Historic Environment Record (HER) where it will be available for future reference.

3 Background

3.1 Location and Geological Context

- 3.1.1 Southport is a large seaside town in Merseyside, which lies on the Irish Sea Coast to the south of the Ribble estuary, in North West England. Crossens Methodist Church was located on the northeast side of Southport in Crossens, centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference SD 3741 1988 (Figure 1).
- 3.1.2 The site was located on the west side of Rufford Lane (B5244), immediately to the east of Crossens Recreational Ground. The site was located within the suburban development of Southport, and faced onto Rufford Lane, which housed a mixture of commercial and residential properties (Figure 2).
- 3.1.3 The geology of the site comprised mudstone, known as Singleton Mudstone Formation. This sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 242 to 252 million years ago in the Triassic Period. This was overlain by tidal flat deposits of silt, clay and sand, formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (BGS 2021). The site lay at approximately 7m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

3.2 Historic Background

- 3.2.1 Crossens appears to have originated as a small fishing village in the township of North Meols. The settlement was located upon a slight knoll of clay, within an area that was otherwise very flat and extensively cultivated, occupied by market gardens, arable fields, and pasture. A deep drain or ditch, called the New Pool, served to drain the marshy district east of the township, also forming the boundary with Southport (Farrer and Brownbill 1907).
- 3.2.2 Towards the end of the 18th century visitors began to frequent the North Meols district for bathing in the summer, finding what accommodation they could in the cottages near the shore. From 1820 the town increased rapidly and in 1825 was described as consisting of one main street, with three large hotels and many boarding-houses (Farrer and Brownbill 1907).
- 3.2.3 The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1848 depicts Crossens located either side of its main street, situated to the east of Marsh Side Marsh with the New Pool to the east. The village is located within landscape of small regular enclosed fields resulting from the drainage of the enclosing marshland. To the south of the village Bankfield Lane runs north to south (in the location of Rufford Road), with a number of isolated farms and market gardens illustrated in the vicinity of the survey building between Smithy Lane and New Lane, which ran eastwards from Bankfield Lane (Figure 3a). The plot which would later be the site of Crossens Methodist Church is shown as unoccupied on this map.
- 3.2.4 The Methodist movement originated in the early-18th century within the Church of England. A small group of students, including John Wesley, Charles Wesley and George Whitefield, met at Oxford University and focused on methodical study of the Bible and living a holy life. The first Methodist

society was based in London at the Foundery in Moorfields, where there was a preaching house, living quarters, stables for preacher's horses, a schoolroom and a book room. In 1778 John Wesley moved his headquarters to City Road Chapel (Dictionary of Methodism in Britain and Ireland 2021).

- 3.2.5 Visits to the Southport area were believed to have been made by Wesley in 1765 and 1770; but the first regular minister was not appointed until 1806. In Southport itself the Methodists are stated to have had a preaching place in 1809. Two cottages in Eastbank Street were used in 1811, and these were succeeded by Wesley Chapel in 1824. The Primitive Methodists are also said to have begun preaching in the area as early as 1830, and their first chapel was built at Banks in 1849. In 1851 a Methodist Reform resulted the expulsion of certain members, and two years later the Reformers, now known as the United Methodist Free Church, opened their first chapel. They subsequently had two churches in the town, along with Churchtown and Crossens (British History Online 2021).
- 3.2.6 The Methodist Society record that the site at Crossens was acquired for the chapel in 1879 and on Shrove Tuesday in 1880, the memorial stones were laid. The chapel opened as a Methodist Free United Chapel on the first Sunday in October 1880 and became part of the Southport Circuit of the Liverpool District of Methodist Churches. A Sunday School was subsequently added in 1891; the total cost of the chapel and school being around £2000 (Cornerstone Methodist Southport 2021).
- 3.2.7 The earliest map to depict the chapel is the 1894 Edition Ordnance Survey map (revised 1892) which shows the presence of the Methodist Chapel (Free United) on Rufford Road, to the north of a late 19th century housing development on Brade Street (Figure 3b). Further housing development was also taking place at this time to the south of Land Lane. A rectangular building is also depicted to the north, which is a Primitive Methodist Chapel. The building depicted within the site boundary is T-shaped and occupies roughly the same footprint as the survey building.
- 3.2.8 In 1907 the United Methodist Free Church merged with the Methodist New Connexion and the Bible Christians to form the United Methodist Church. In 1932 the United Methodists joined with the Wesleyan Methodists and the Primitive Methodists to form the Methodist Church of Great Britain.
- 3.2.9 The Ordnance Survey map of 1911 shows the same building as the 1894 Ordnance Survey map, but annotated 'U M Chapel' (Figure 3c). The same building is depicted on the 1926 Ordnance Survey map suggesting the original chapel has survived into the mid-21st century largely unaltered (Figure 3d).
- 3.2.10 During the 20th century further housing developments took place on both sides of Rufford Road, with several new streets being laid out, including Pool Street and Brook Street to the east of the site.
- 3.2.11 The chapel continued to serve the people of Crossens throughout the 20th and into the 21st centuries. However, Crossens Methodist Church closed to worshippers in 2019, after making the decision to join forces with the nearby church on Marshside Road, Crossens (Liverpool Echo 2021).
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3.3 Previous Archaeological Work

- 3.3.1 There have been no known previous archaeological interventions at the site of the survey building.
- 3.3.2 The heritage statement for the proposed development described the building as having brick facades with contrasting stone detailing and a slated gabled roof: *“The brickwork is enlivened by horizontal stone banding and three semi-circular headed windows each topped with hoodmoulds, above which there is an apex datestone. The main entrance to the building is via a small gabled porch to the north elevation. The building has a t-shaped plan with main hall to the front and ancillary spaces to the rear”* (O’Flaherty 2020, 6). The style of the Church, which blends Romanesque styling with the vernacular revival, was determined to be typical for its age but not necessarily typical of Methodist chapels (Serjeant 2004). Late 19th century Methodist chapels commonly adopted Romanesque (and Arts and Crafts) styling, and this particular style was also popular with schools and church halls. It was considered that the Crossens Church was not particularly unusual in terms of its architecture or its plan layout, comprising a tall and open main worship space with rooms to the rear (Ibid, 6).

4 Historic Building Survey

4.1 Site Description

- 4.1.1 The building survey was undertaken on 7th April 2021. Crossens Methodist Church was accessed from Rufford Road which lay immediately to the east, and from which can be seen the main façade of the building (Plate 1). Due to the height and close proximity of the neighboring properties, the building is largely hidden from view from further to the north and south on Rufford Road (Plate 2).
- 4.1.2 The survey building was located on the west side of a narrow yard, defined by a low red brick wall, with two pedestrian entrances providing access (the original gates having been removed). Both entrances were flanked by two octagonal yellow sandstone gate piers (Plate 3 and Plate 4). These had molded projections for boundary walls on either side, which were lower in height than the existing brick walls, indicating these walls were modern and had replaced an earlier boundary wall.
- 4.1.3 The plot was defined by red brick walls to the north and west, and a modern concrete panel wall to the south. The survey building occupied the majority of the plot which was very constrained with restricted access to the sides and rear of the property as a result (see Figure 2 and Figure 4).
- 4.1.4 A complete list of the photographs taken of the building is included in Appendix 1 and the locations are shown on Figure 4. A selection of the digital photographs is also included in Appendix 2 and used to illustrate the report (Plates 1-46). Building plans and elevations are also included in Appendix 3.

4.2 Building Survey

- 4.2.1 The survey building was orientated east to west with the main entrance on the north side (Figure 4). To the east side was the main Church building, which was a rectangular gabled building built of red brick with contrasting stone detailing and a slate roof with perforated ceramic ridge tiles. Adjoining the west side was a further gabled building aligned north to south, which housed the former Sunday School. This was also constructed in red brick with a slate roof and a brick chimney and east-facing Dormer window (see elevations in Appendix 3). Adjoining the southeast corner of this building was a modern red brick extension which housing two toilets and had a split-gable, also with a slate roof.
- 4.2.2 **Building Exterior:** As noted previously the eastern gable of the Church was the principal elevation, which is the most visible elevation from Rufford Road (Plate 5). The brickwork in this elevation was laid in Flemish bond, with four rows of stretchers between rows of alternating headers and stretchers, with four stone courses (painted cream). Decorative detailing was provided in this elevation in the form of three recessed decorative brick panels, each containing two rows of molded foliated bricks (Plate 6). Each had an air vent below. Above each of these were three semi-circular headed stained-glass windows with brick arches, each decorated with a molded keystone with a flower motif (Plate

7). The windows were topped with hoodmoulds with foliated stops. Above was a datestone, incised with 'Methodist Free Church 1880' with three gable niches in the apex (Plate 8). Attached to the east end of the roof ridge was a simple Latin cross painted white (Plate 1), with a carved finial below.

- 4.2.3 The northern elevation was less decorative and was laid in stretcher bond. At the east end was a rectangular three-light stained-glass window with a gauged stone window head with a stone keystone and a stone sill (Plate 9). To the west were two larger four-light stained-glass windows also with gauged stone window heads with a stone keystone and stone sills (Plate 10). At the west end of the elevation was a projecting section with two Dormer windows, and a clear construction break in the wall between the two. The eastern window contained stained-glass and had similar gauged stone window head to the others with a stone keystone and stone sill, indicating it was contemporary. The western window was fitted with a plain 12-light window in a timber frame and was clearly later. This construction break is believed to relate to the later Sunday School building.
- 4.2.4 The entrance porch was located on the north side of the Church facing east and comprised a gabled brick porch with a slate roof (Plate 9). The timber door was accessed via three stone steps and had a molded stone lintel. The apex of the gable was windowless and decorated with a row of five niches in the apex, similar in style to the eastern Church elevation. To the west was a second entrance into the east elevation of the former Sunday School. This had double plank doors with window above and an access ramp with modern handrail and brick edging (Plate 11).
- 4.2.5 The south elevation of the Church was also less decorative and was laid in stretcher bond, with a brick plinth and four recessed sections between and brick piers (Plate 12). This elevation contained five windows with gauged stone window heads with stone keystones and stone sills, being similar to those in the north elevation. Two were rectangular three-light stained-glass window, and three were the larger five-light windows. A brick buttress had been added to this wall which was clearly later.
- 4.2.6 At the west end of this elevation was another construction break, between the Church and the former Sunday School building (Plate 13). There was a foundation in this elevation relating to this phase of construction, which was inscribed with 'This stone was laid by Mr Robert Hall May 6th 1891'.
- 4.2.7 Immediately to the west were stone steps leading down to a Church basement door, with was a plank door with a latch and an arched stone head. There was a plain glass ten-light window to the east of this entrance, but below it was a blocked window to the basement with a stone sill, which had been bricked up (Plate 14). To the south the Church adjoined the former Sunday School building.
- 4.2.8 The northern gable of the former Sunday School building had a central semi-circular headed window flanked by two rectangular windows all with fixed panes of clear glass, protected by mesh screening. The windows were topped with hoodmoulds with foliated stops, like the eastern elevation of the Church. However, this elevation proved impossible to photograph due to the constrained nature of the site, and the gable is no longer easily visible from outside the site boundary (see Plate 11).
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- 4.2.9 There were three more foundation stones present in the north gable of the Sunday School building, all being constructed of yellow sandstone. These were inscribed (from west to east): 'This stone was laid by Mr Geo. Omerod May 6th 1891', 'This stone was laid by Rev.d Geo. S.K. Hocking May 6th 1891' and 'This stone was laid by Mrs J.J. Barlow May 6th 1891' confirming beyond any doubt the date of the Sunday School building. In addition, the construction break was marked by a commemorative stone which read 'In loving memory of Jane Wright of Crossens, Died April 6th 1890, Aged 72 years. Also of Alice C.W. Linacker, Died May 2nd 1887, Aged 12 years' (Plate 15).
- 4.2.10 The south side of the Sunday School building took the form of a single-storey lean-to extension, attached to the southern gable (Plate 16). This elevation was plain and had four rectangular eight-light plain glass windows in timber frames, with stone sills and brick arched heads. The west end of the building was a flat-roofed extension with four small square windows present in the west elevation, which was otherwise featureless (Plate 17).
- 4.2.11 Attached to the southeast side of the Sunday School building was the modern red brick extension which housed two toilets and had a split-gable with two narrow windows in plastic frames (Plate 18).
- 4.2.12 **Church Interior:** Internally, the main Church building was five bays long and measured approximately 18m by 8.5m. The Church interior was accessed via an entrance porch in the north wall, with double timber paneled doors. The roof was supported by four arch braces with plain corbels painted cream, each of which was decorated with a circle motif comprising a central circle surrounded by eight smaller circles. The interior was lit by stained glass windows in three of the walls (plus modern electric strip lighting), there being three semi-circular headed windows in the east wall, three rectangular windows in the north wall and five rectangular windows in the south wall, all with floral motifs (Plate 19-23). The lower portions of the walls were covered in timber paneling with plastered walls and ceiling above, painted white. The heating system in the nave comprised electric heaters.
- 4.2.13 The layout of the nave consisted of twelve rows of timber pews facing west, which split into three sections, which were tiered at the east end. At the west end of the nave was a predella (raised platform for an altar) and the pulpit, behind which were three further rows of tiered pews (presumably for the church quire) and the organ (Plates 23-27). The predella had a handrail supported by a wrought iron frame and a padded step on two sides for kneeling (Plate 25). The timber pulpit was to the north and was pentagonal and decorated with carved tracery panels which were replicated on the front of the quire pews, indicating that they were contemporary (Plate 24).
- 4.2.14 The pipe organ was made by George Benson Manchester and dated 1911 (Plate 26 and Plate 27). This was located in the northeast corner of the nave, with the keyboard facing south. This would have allowed the organist to see the congregation whilst being discretely hidden behind the pulpit.
- 4.2.15 A doorway between the pulpit and organ led via a short corridor to a private room, presumably used by the residing priest. The corridor also had paneled walls and was lit by a further stained-glass
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window which provided light and color to an otherwise very narrow space (Plate 28). The back room was also accessible from the northern entrance to the former Sunday School building and comprised a small rectangular room lit by a clear glass window in the north wall, which was being utilised as an office at the time of the survey (Plate 29). The only original feature of note in this room was a wood paneled cupboard or locker on the east wall which was probably used by the priest to store valuables.

- 4.2.16 Another door in the west wall of the nave provided access to another private room, which was probably utilised by the quire. A flight of timber steps provided access from the rear of the pews into this room which was lit by a ten-light window (Plate 30 and Plate 31). This room was within the later portion of the church as seen from the exterior of the building. A tiered floor on the south side of this room also indicated that it had been provided with seating. The only other feature of note in this room was a free-standing timber lectern, which had probably been moved from the nave (Plate 32).
- 4.2.17 **Sunday School Interior:** The main hall of the former Sunday School building was accessed via two hallways in the east wall located to the north and south of the main Church building (see Figure 4). The building was four bays long and measured approximately 13m by 8.m internally (Plate 33 and Plate 34). The roof was supported by three arch braces with plain corbels painted cream, each of which was decorated with a fish motif. The hall was lit by a central semi-circular headed window flanked by two rectangular windows in the north wall, and several smaller windows in the roof. On the west wall of the hall was a cupboard which may have originally been used to store bibles and other teaching materials, above which was a plain timber cross (Plate 35). This may have been inserted into a former chimney breast, as indicated by the chimney as seen from outside the building. The room was heated by cast iron radiators (Plate 36) with a boiler probably housed in the basement.
- 4.2.18 To the west of this hall was an extension which housed three smaller rooms which were possibly used for teaching and/or study. The southern room was separated by timber paneling and would have originally had sliding doors or screens to allow it to be opened to the main hall (Plate 37). The smaller room to the north had fixed seating on three walls and paint marks which were indicative of former shelving units (Plate 38). The room to the north was being used for storage during the survey.
- 4.2.19 **Southern Extension:** from the hall there was access via a short corridor to a kitchen and two doors led to a dining room, which were housed in the single-storey extension to the south. This appears to have been constructed at the same time as the hall but has seen some internal alterations. The dining room was lit by four large eight-light windows in the south wall and had timber paneled walls and timber door frames like the main hall (Plate 39 and Plate 40). There may have originally been a fireplace in this room as indicated by the chimney as seen from outside of the building. However, this appears to have been blocked up, with cupboards inserted into the apparent false north wall. The kitchen was housed in a smaller room to the west, with a serving hatch providing access between the two rooms (Plate 40 and Plate 41). The kitchen was fitted out with modern stainless-steel units.
-

- 4.2.20 **Toilet Extension:** the modern toilet block comprised two separate toilets (male and female) accessed via a short corridor from both the hall and dining room, via original timber doors/frames (Plate 42).
- 4.2.21 **Basement:** Access to the basement was via stone steps from the exterior of the building (see Plate 13). This comprised five small rooms subdivided by brick walls, the walls and floors being painted. The three rooms to the west were located beneath the office and private room to the west of the nave. The first room encountered upon entering the basement had a sloping ceiling, which related to the tiered floor of the room above (Plate 43). This room housed a modern heating system but could have also housed the original boiler.
- 4.2.22 The room to the north provided access to two further rooms located beneath the west end of the nave. One contained the base of the organ (Plate 44). The room to the south provided access beneath the floor of the nave where the timber structure for the tiered floor was visible (Plate 45). This related to the pews for the quire at the west end (Note: the basement plan provided is inaccurate). A restricted view was also provided beneath the floor of the nave extending to the east, which was supported on low brick walls (Plate 46).

5 Conclusions

5.1 Origins, Development and Use

- 5.1.1 The rapid desk-based assessment has identified that Crossens Methodist Church was constructed in 1880 on a previously vacant plot of land, located to the south of the village of Crossens on Bankfield Lane. The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1848 shows the area to be rural with a number of isolated farms and market gardens illustrated in the vicinity of the survey building. This changed at the end of the 19th century, when several new housing developments were constructed at the site in response to a growing local population, and the area gradually became more densely occupied.
- 5.1.2 The Methodist Society recorded that the site at Crossens was acquired for the chapel in 1879 and on Shrove Tuesday in 1880, the memorial stones were laid. The chapel opened as a Methodist Free United Chapel on the first Sunday in October 1880 and became part of the Southport Circuit of the Liverpool District of Methodist Churches. A Sunday School was subsequently added there in 1891.
- 5.1.3 A datestone incised with 'Methodist Free Church 1880' in the east elevation confirmed the date of the building. The building survey also identified a clear construction break between the original chapel and Sunday School building, the construction date of which was confirmed by four datestones. It was evident that the main elevation, which faced onto Rufford Road, was the most visible element of the building. This was also the most elaborate in terms of decoration, having brick facades with contrasting stone detailing, and architectural details such as round headed windows with hoodmoulds. This contrasted with the less decorative elevations to the north, south and west.
- 5.1.4 Internally the main Church comprised an open uninterrupted area of space with tiered seating, which would help to bring the congregation closer to the preacher. The place of worship contained familiar elements, such as tiered rows of pews, a pulpit and predella, which appear to be original to the building. Decoration was provided in the form of floral stained-glass windows and timber tracery. Private rooms were also provided to the rear which were plain in their design. The Sunday School comprised a large hall for teaching and other religious activities as well as suite of smaller study rooms and a kitchen/dining area to the rear.

5.2 Research Potential

- 5.2.1 The survey building originated in the late 19th century as a Methodist Church (founded 1880) which was quickly extended to include a Sunday School (founded 1891). The building therefore provided both a place of worship and educational facilities from an early date. This developmental sequence is evident from the exterior of the building, with a clear construction break present between the main Church and the Sunday School building to the west. This comprised a main hall with ancillary

rooms provided in single-story extensions to the west and south, the latter with a kitchen and dining room. The building survey has also identified the addition of a modern toilet block to the southeast.

- 5.2.2 During the Victorian period, the increase in population led to an increasing demand for houses, churches and public buildings of all kinds, and the architectural fashion favored the use of bricks and terracotta in buildings, helped by the mechanisation of brick manufacture (Brunswick 1997, 171). Flemish bond and its variations were commonly used for the main elevations as is the case at Crossens Methodist Church, which can be seen to have been constructed in the context of an expanding local population and associated new housing developments in the late 19th century.
- 5.2.3 In Lancashire there was a preference among Methodists throughout the 19th century for classically inspired buildings, and in the later 19th century for increasing elaboration as they built in more ornate Italianate styles (Newman 2001, 36). Crossens Methodist Church can be seen to reflect the Italianate Romanesque style which was first used in Britain for church building, but as the 19th century progressed it was adapted for public buildings, museums, schools and commercial buildings.
- 5.2.4 The more elaborate chapels were built by the wealthiest and largest congregations. In contrast, the Primitive Methodists were largely working-class lacking resources, and had less elaborate buildings (Newman 2001, 36). This difference is evident on Rufford Road, where the Primitive Methodist Chapel located to the north is a much simpler building, compared to Crossens Methodist Church.
- 5.2.5 The at Crossens Methodist Church was by George Benson Manchester and dated 1911. The workshop of this firm was in Hulme/Old Trafford Manchester (the smallest of four firms working in Manchester). The output of the Benson brothers (George and Thomas) was from c.1880 until 1917 when they ceased trading. The instruments they produced were modest organs like the one at Crosses Methodist Church, which were suited to smaller places of worship (Morgan 2001).
- 5.2.6 The current project will contribute towards regional research agendas by providing a permanent record of the building prior to its conversion. No further archaeological work is required at the site.

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Dictionary of Methodism in Britain and Ireland (DMBI) 2021

APPENDIX 1: Photograph Index

Location Ref.	Facing Direction	Description
1	NW	Crossens Methodist Church from Rufford Road to the south
2	SW	Crossens Methodist Church from Rufford Road to the north
3	W	Crossens Methodist Church from Land Lane to the east
4	SE	Crossens Methodist Church from Crossens Recreation Ground to the northwest
5	W	Crossens Methodist Church from Rufford Road immediately to the east
6	NW	The east-facing elevation of Crossens Methodist Church
7	W	Windows in the east gable showing decorative detailing
8	W	Detail of a decorative brick panel in the east gable
9	W	Datestone in the east elevation with gable niches above
10	W	South side of the survey building from the east
11	NE	South elevation of the Church
12	NW	South elevation of the Church showing modern toilet block extension
13a	NW	Construction break in the south elevation showing entrance to basement
13b	NW	Construction break in the south elevation showing foundation stone (Mr Robert Hall)
14	W	Southern entrance to the Sunday School building showing modern toilet block extension
15	NE	South elevation of the Sunday School building
16	N	West elevation of the Sunday School building
17	E	North elevation of the Sunday School building
18	SE	Northern entrance to the Sunday School building
19a	SE	Construction break in the north elevation showing commemorative stone
19b	S	Detail of commemorative stone
20a	SE	North elevation of the Church building
20b	SE	North elevation of the Church building
21a	SE	Entrance porch to the Church building
21b	SE	Detail of entrance porch
22	E	Church interior showing tiered pews
23	SE	South wall of the nave
24	NE	North wall of the nave
25	W	Church interior showing pews, pulpit and organ
26	E	Corridor to the private office
27	NE	Steps leading down to the room west of the nave
28	S	Tiered floor of the room west of the nave
29	N	Interior of the Sunday School hall
30	S	Interior of the Sunday School hall
31	NW	Rooms to the west of the Sunday School hall
32	W	Small side room with fixed seating
33	W	Northern entrance to the Sunday School hall
34	W	Interior of the dining room showing serving hatch
35	E	Interior of the dining room

Location Ref.	Facing Direction	Description
36	N	Interior of the kitchen
37	S	Interior of the kitchen showing serving hatch
38	S	Hallway to modern toilet extension
39	E	Private office with cupboard to the west of the nave
40	E	Basement room with heating system
41	E	Basement room showing base of organ
42	S	Timber frame supporting tiered floor of the nave as seen from the basement
43	E	Timber floor of the nave as seen from the basement
44	N	Base of the organ as seen from the basement
45	S	Foundation stone in the north wall of the Sunday School (Mr Geo. Ormerod)
46	S	Foundation stone in the north wall of the Sunday School (Rev.d S K Hocking)
47	S	Foundation stone in the north wall of the Sunday School (Mrs J J Barlow)
48	W	Detail of southern gateway to Church
49	W	Detail of northern gateway to Church
N/A	N/A	Further detailed photographs of interior fixtures and fittings are included on the CD

APPENDIX 2: Plates



Plate 1: The survey building known as Crossens Methodist Church, looking west



Plate 2: Location of Crossens Methodist Church on Rufford Road, looking northwest



Plate 3: Northern site entrance showing gate piers with church entrance beyond, looking west (1 x 1m scale)



Plate 4: Southern site entrance showing matching gate piers with later brick wall, looking west (1 x 1m scale)



Plate 5: Eastern gable of the church showing decoration, looking northwest (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 6: Detail of decorative brick panel in the east gable, looking west



Plate 7: Window detail in the east elevation, looking west (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 8: Datestone in the east elevation with gable niches above, looking west



Plate 9: Entrance porch showing window in the north elevation, looking west (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 10: Windows in the north elevation, looking west (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 11: Entrance in the north elevation of the former Sunday School, looking west (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 12: South elevation of the Church, looking northeast (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 13: Construction break in the south elevation, looking northwest (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 14: Blocked window and door to basement in south elevation, looking northwest (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 15: Construction break in the north elevation with commemoration stone, looking south (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 16: South elevation of the Sunday School building, looking northeast (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 17: West elevation of the Sunday School building, looking north (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 18: East elevation of the Sunday School building and modern extension, looking west (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 19: Church interior, looking east (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 20: Stained glass windows in the east wall of the Church, looking east



Plate 21: Stained glass windows in the north wall of the Church, looking northeast (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 22: Stained glass windows in the south wall of the Church, looking southeast (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 23: Church interior, looking west (1 x 2m scale)

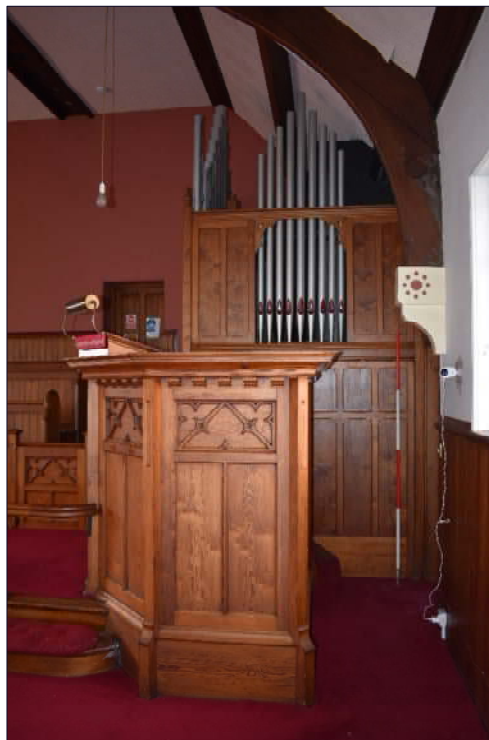


Plate 24: Detail of pulpit and organ, looking west (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 25: Predella, pulpit and pews, looking northwest

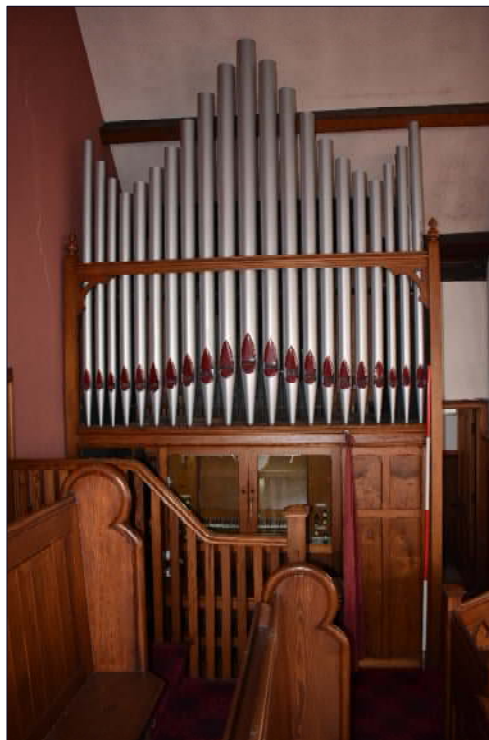


Plate 26: Organ by George Benson Manchester 1911, looking north (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 27: Detail of organ keyboard and stops, looking north



Plate 28: Corridor leading to the private room west of the nave, looking east (1 x 2m scale)

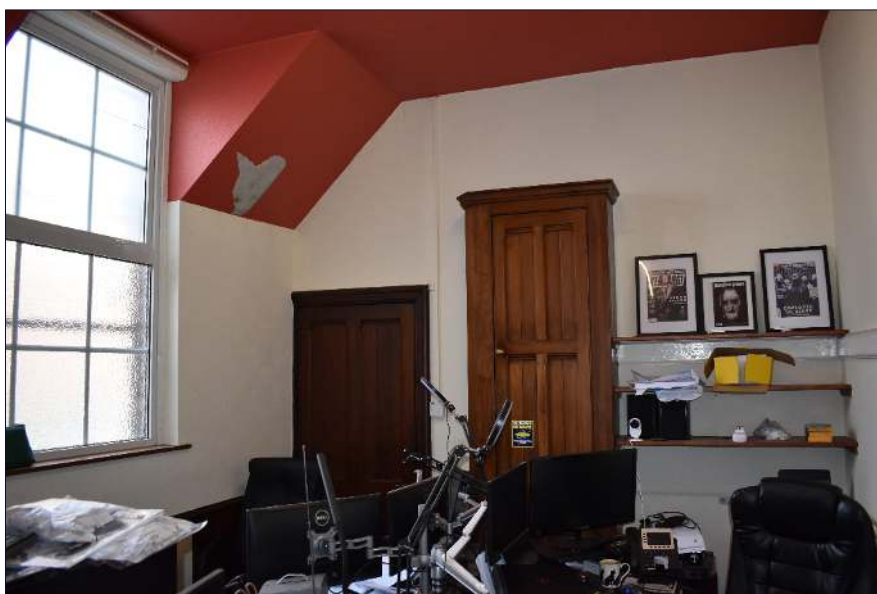


Plate 29: Private room/office showing paneled cupboard, looking east

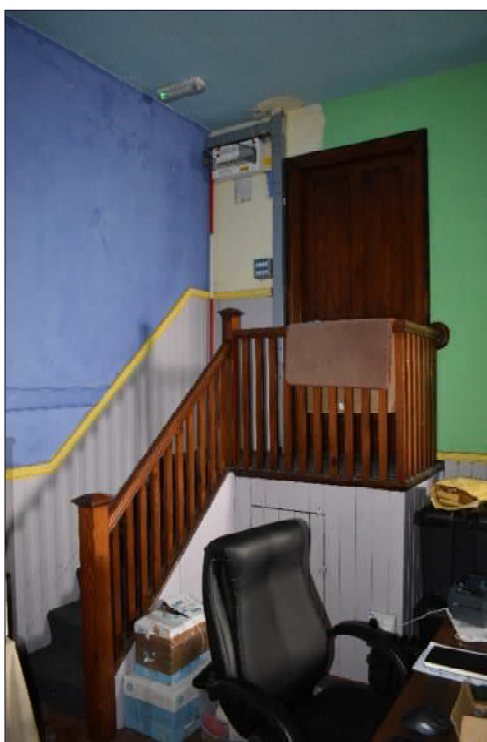


Plate 30: Stairs and door to the west of the nave, looking northeast (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 31: Room to the west of the nave, looking southwest (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 32: Detail of lectern, looking east (1 x 1m scale)



Plate 33: Interior of the Sunday School hall, looking north (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 34: Interior of the Sunday School hall, looking south (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 35: Detail of , looking south (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 36: Detail of paneled wall and cast iron radiator, looking east (1 x 1m scale)



Plate 37: Room to the west of the main hall, looking northwest (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 38: Small room to the west of the main hall with seating, looking west (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 39: Dining room to the south of the main hall, looking east (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 40: Dining room showing serving hatch, looking west (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 41: Kitchen showing serving hatch and modern units, looking south (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 42: Corridor to modern toilet block, looking south (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 43: Basement with heating system, looking east (1 x 2m scale)



Plate 44: Basement room showing the base of the organ, looking north (1 x 1m scale)



Plate 45: Timber frame supporting the tiered floor in the room above, looking south (1 x 1m scale)



Plate 46: Timber floor in the nave, looking east

APPENDIX 3: Figures






 <p>Eden Heritage Ltd 2021</p>	<p>PROJECT: Crossens Methodist Church Rufford Road, Southport, Merseyside</p> <p>CLIENT: 1880 Ltd</p> <p>REPORT: EH117/02</p> <p>SCALE: 1:50,000 at A4</p> <p>DRAWN BY: MDR</p> <p>DATE: April 2021</p>	<p>KEY:</p> <p> site location</p>	 <p>Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right (2018)</p>
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Figure 1: Site Location.



Eden Heritage
 Archaeology & Heritage Services
 Eden Heritage Ltd 2021

PROJECT: Crossens Methodist Church
 Rufford Road, Southport, Merseyside
CLIENT: 1880 Ltd
REPORT: EH117/02
SCALE: 1:1,000 at A4
DRAWN BY: MDR
DATE: April 2021


KEY:
 site boundary



Figure 1: Detailed Site Location.

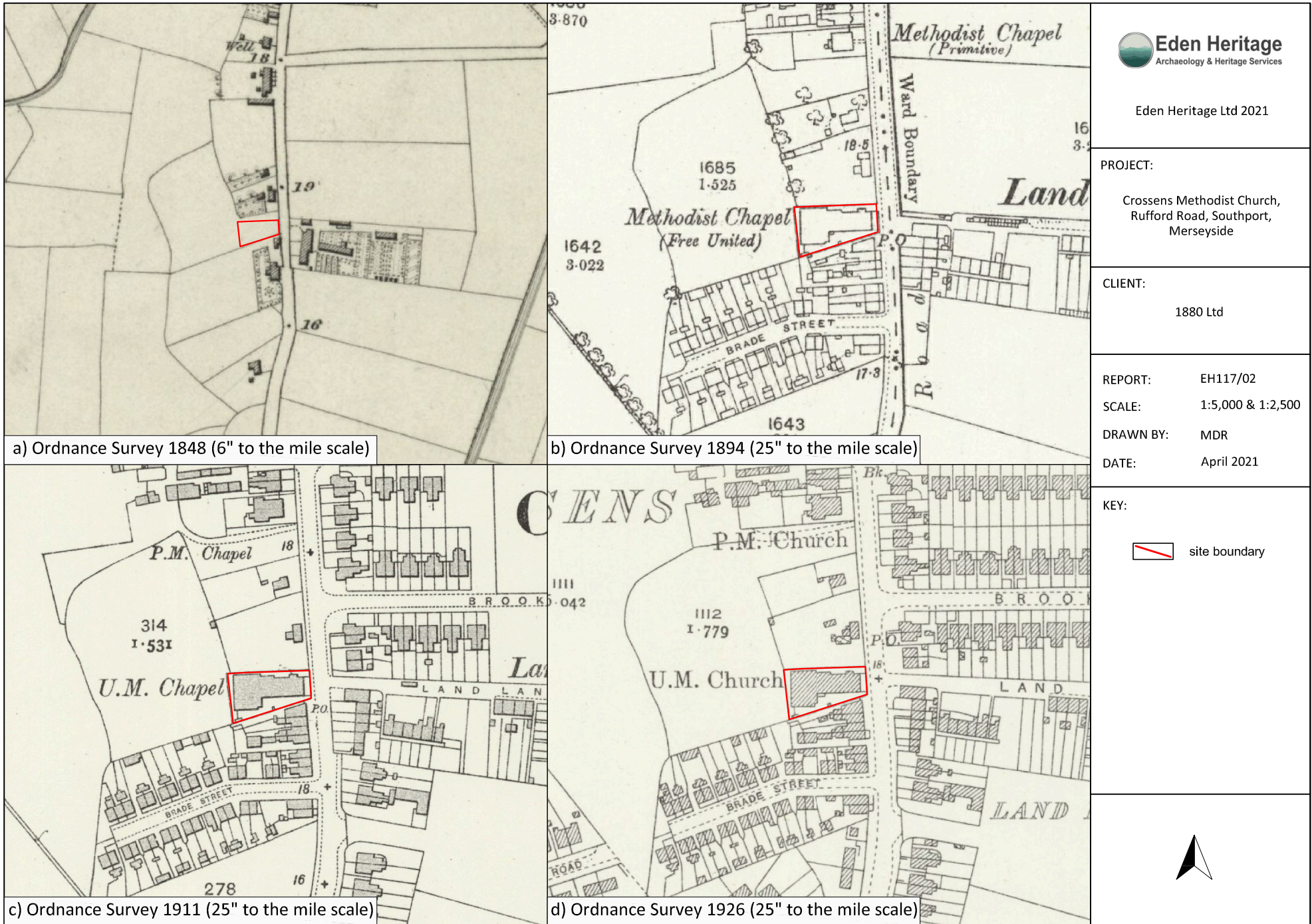
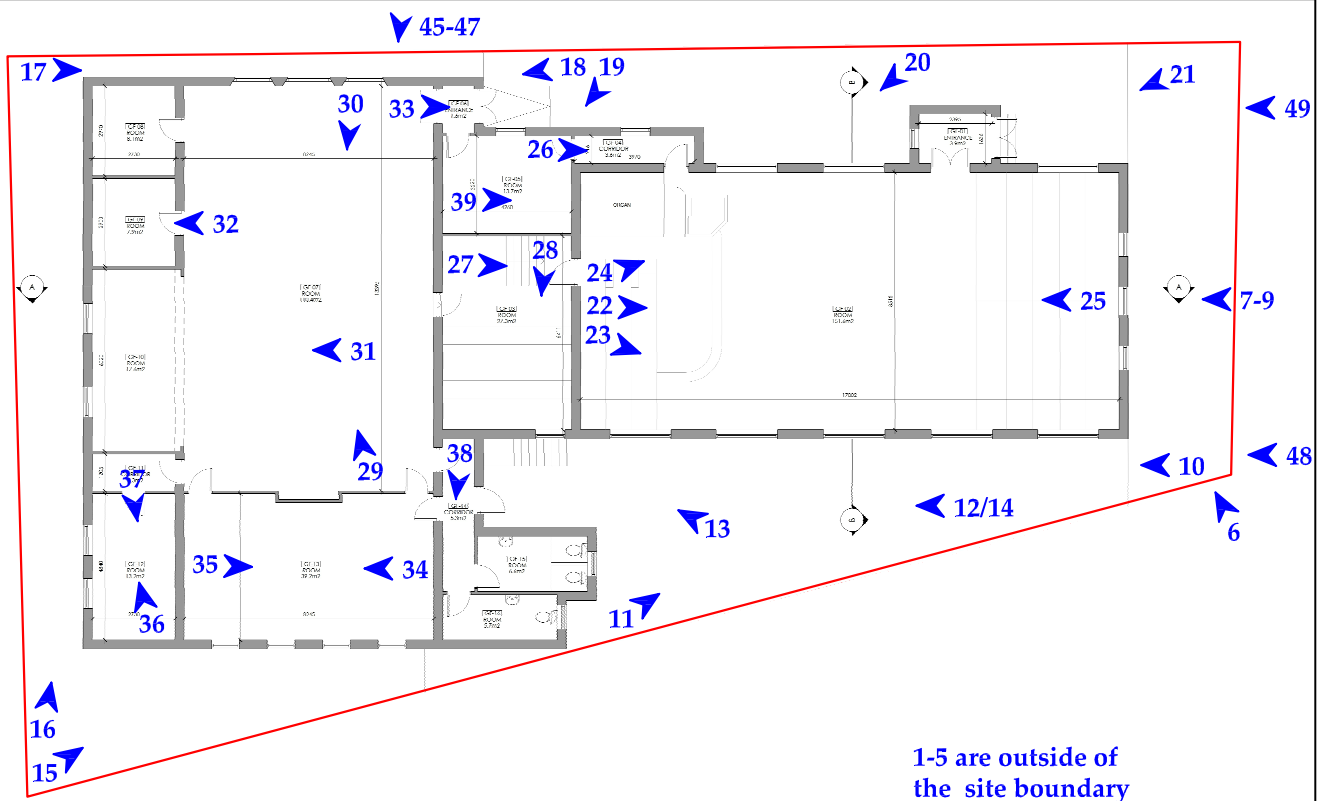


Figure 3: Extracts from historic Ordnance Survey maps (1848-1926).



Ground Floor Plan



Basement Plan



Eden Heritage Ltd 2021

PROJECT: Crossens Methodist Church
Rufford Road, Southport, Merseyside

CLIENT: 1880 Ltd

REPORT: EH117/02

SCALE: 1:250 at A4

DRAWN BY: MDR

DATE: April 2021

KEY:

-  site boundary
-  photo direction



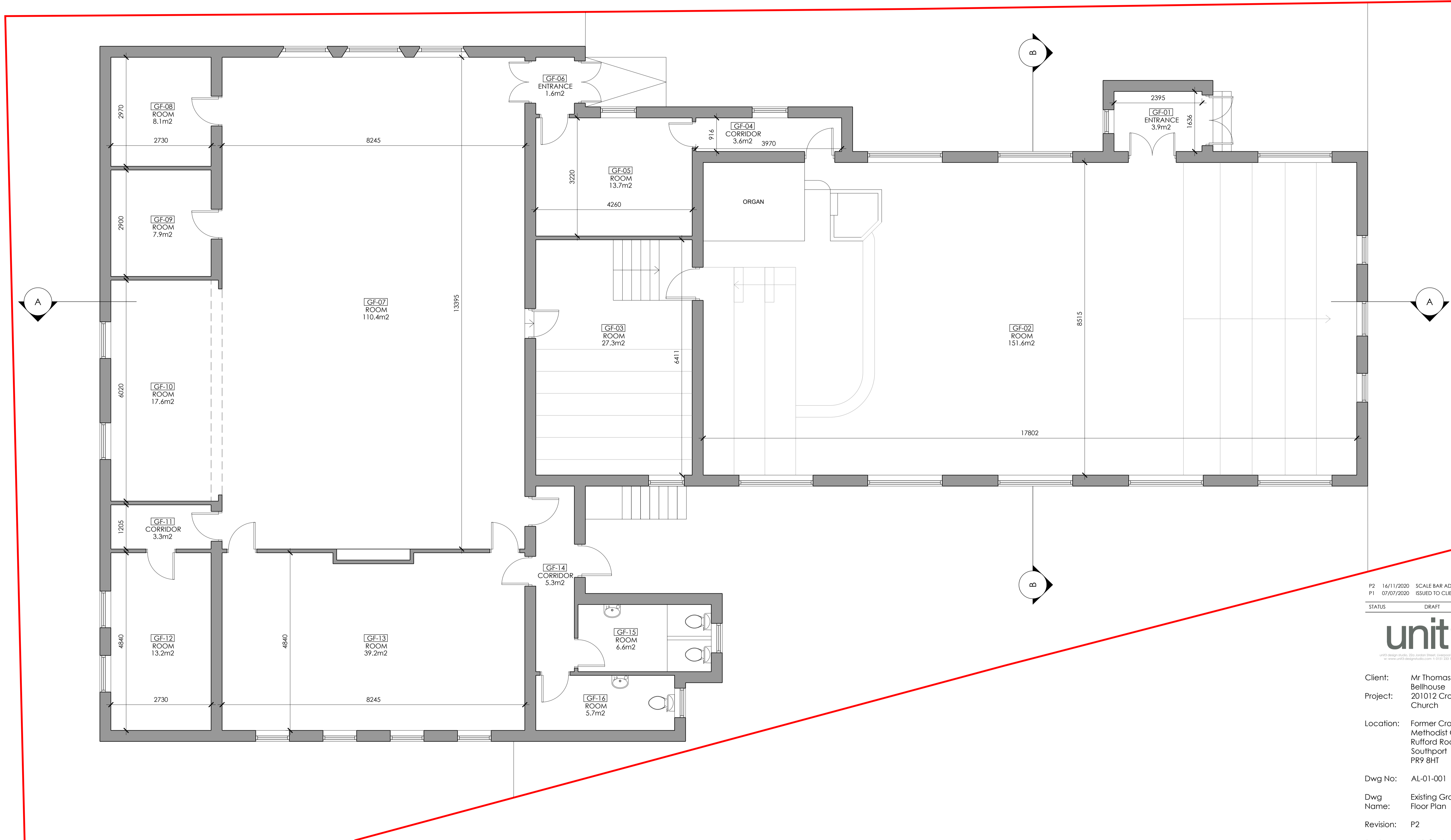
Contains survey data provided by Unit3 (2020)

Figure 4: Plans of the survey building showing photograph locations.

APPENDIX 4: Building Plans and Elevations

NOTES

ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CHECKED ON SITE
 ANY DISCREPANCIES ARE TO BE REPORTED TO THE ARCHITECT BEFORE ANY WORK COMMENCES
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 READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT DETAILS, SPECIFICATIONS, CONSULTANTS SPECIALISTS AND SUBCONTRACTORS DRAWINGS / SPECIFICATIONS



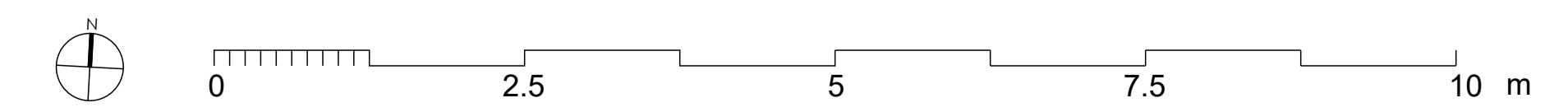
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 P1 07/07/2020 ISSUED TO CLIENT
 STATUS DRAFT



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 Bellhouse
 Project: 201012 Crossens Church
 Location: Former Crossens Methodist Church, Rufford Road, Southport PR9 8HT

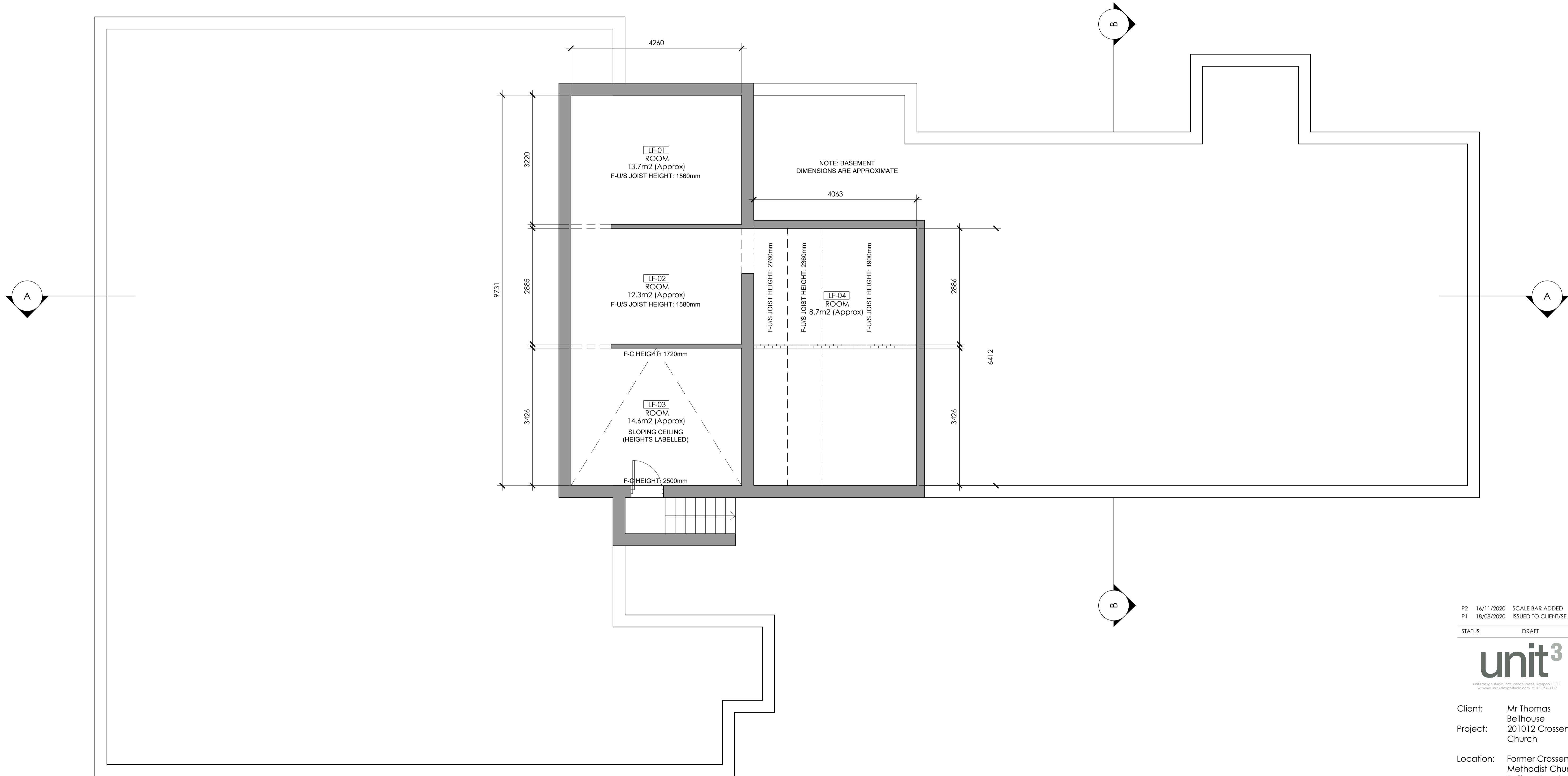
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 Revision: P2
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 Date: July 2020
 Drawn: SM Checked: MS

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 1:50



NOTES

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 READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT DETAILS, SPECIFICATIONS, CONSULTANTS SPECIALISTS AND SUBCONTRACTORS DRAWINGS / SPECIFICATIONS



P2 14/11/2020 SCALE BAR ADDED
 P1 18/08/2020 ISSUED TO CLIENT/SE

STATUS DRAFT



unit3 design studio, 25a Jordan Street, Liverpool L1 5DP
 www.unit3designstudio.com | 0151 228 1111

Client: Mr Thomas
 Bellhouse
 Project: 201012 Crossens
 Church

Location: Former Crossens
 Methodist Church,
 Rufford Road,
 Southport
 PR9 8HT

Dwg No: AL-01-002

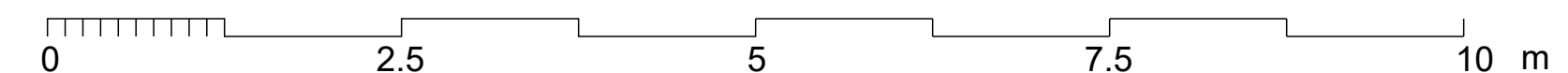
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 Floor Plan

Revision: P2

Scale: 1:50 @ A1

Date: July 2020

Drawn: SM Checked: MS



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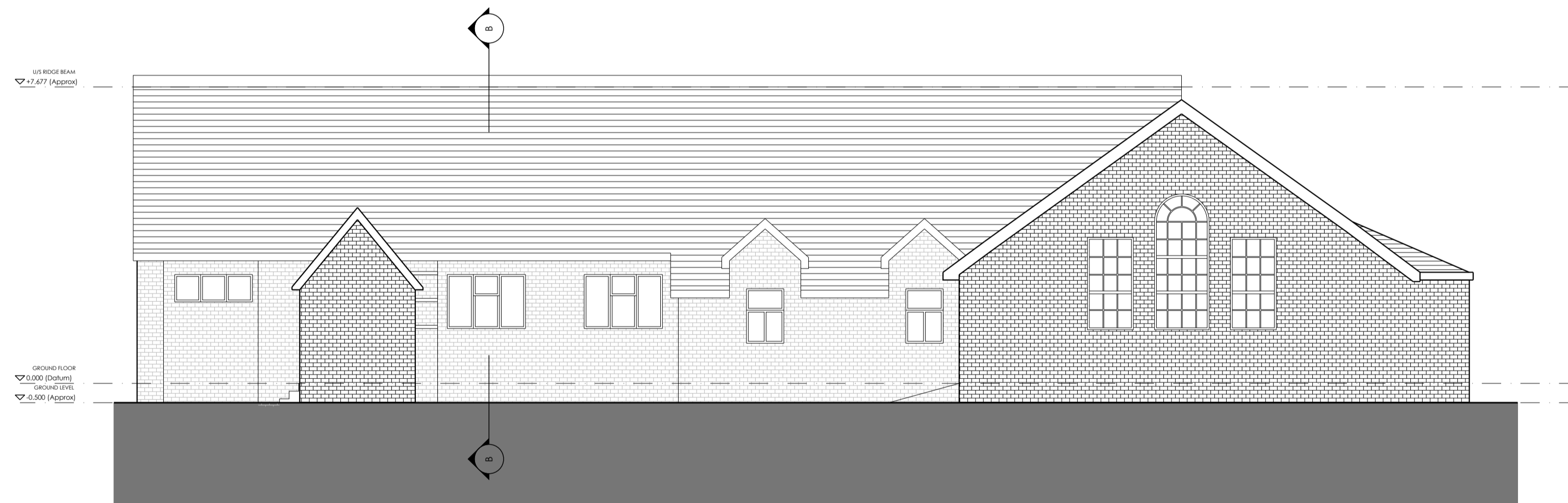
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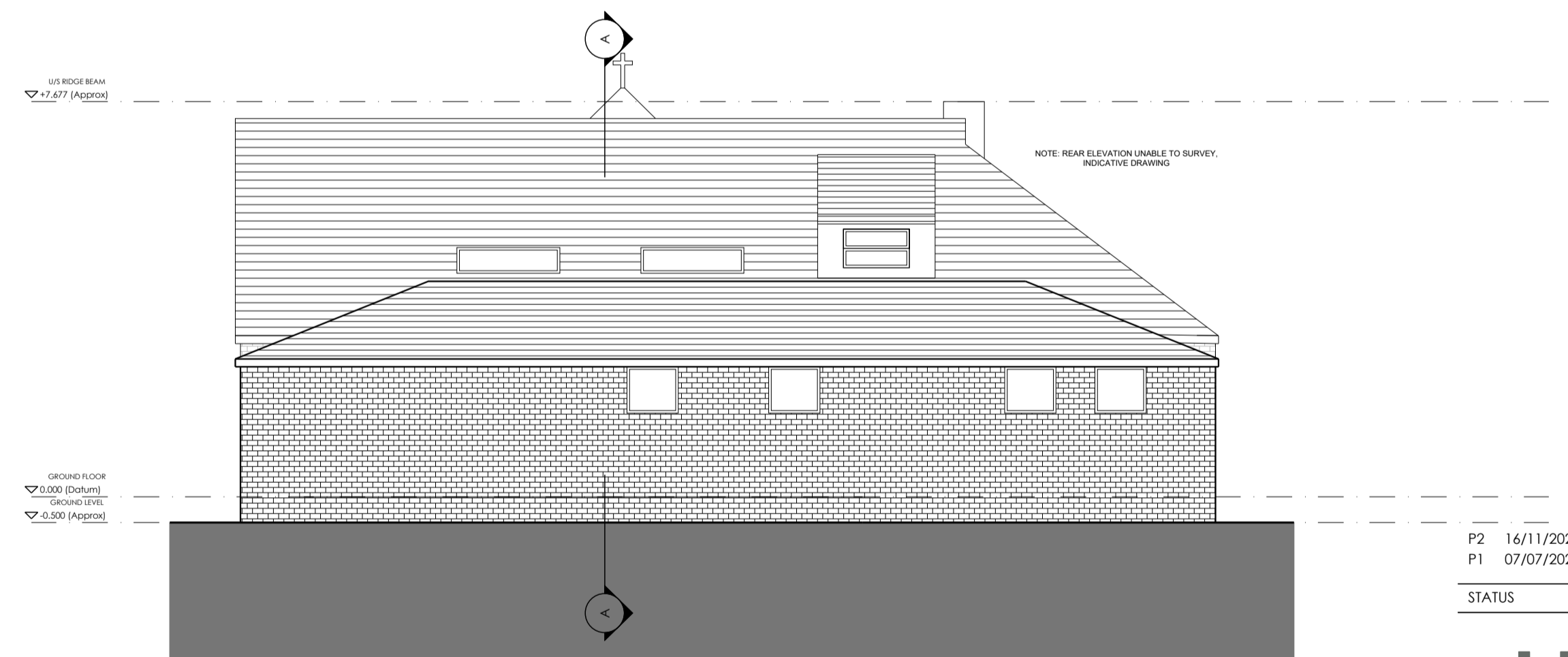
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1:100



1 EXISTING NORTH ELEVATION
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 P1 07/07/2020 ISSUED TO CLIENT
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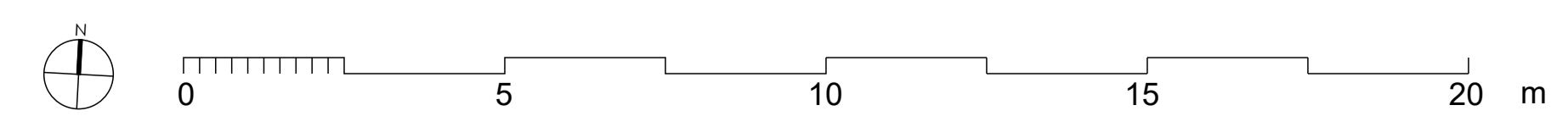
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 Project: 201012 Crossens Church

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 Dwg Name: Existing Elevations

Revision: P2
 Scale: 1:100 @ A1
 Date: July 2020

Drawn: SM Checked: MS



**Heritage Impact Assessment
Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
Historic Landscape Survey
Written Scheme of Investigation**

**Geophysical Survey
Trial Trench Evaluation
Archaeological Excavation
Archaeological Watching Briefs**

