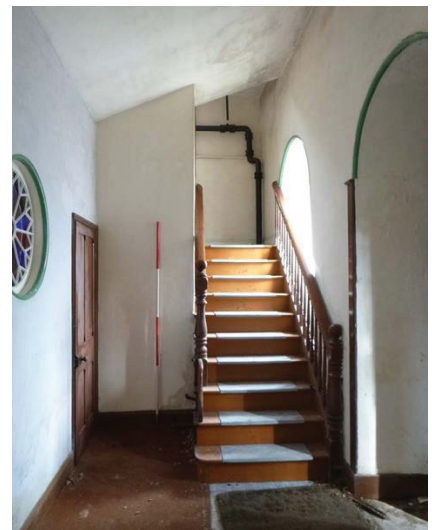
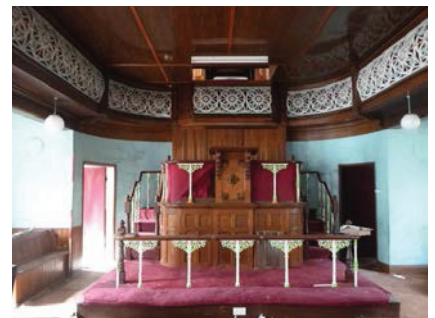


METHODIST CHURCH, NENTHEAD, ALSTON, CUMBRIA

Archaeological Building Recording



Client: Nenthead Chapel
Restoration Project

NGR: 378123 543746

Listed Building Application No.
14/0917

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October 2015



Greenlane Archaeology Ltd,
Lower Brook Street,
Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 7EE

Tel: 01229 588 500
Email: info@greenlancearchaeology.co.uk
Web: www.greenlancearchaeology.co.uk

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Non-Technical Summary

Following the submission of a Listed Building application for the repair and conversion of a redundant Methodist Church, Nenthead, Alston, Cumbria, a condition was placed requiring the completion of a Level 2 archaeological building recording. Following the provision of a project design by Greenlane Archaeology the work on site was carried out in September 2015.

The building comprises a large two storey structure, known to have been built on the site of a predecessor constructed in 1826. Methodism was established early in Nenthead; the first chapel was in a modified schoolhouse and was vacated in 1816. Nenthead itself is primarily a planned village, developed by the London Lead Company on Quaker principles in 1825, in place of a smaller settlement established in the mid-18th century. The current church was constructed in 1872-1873 to the designs of George Race, who was a Methodist and responsible for the design of an almost identical church at Westgate in Weardale. Original documentary evidence relating to its construction is remarkably lacking, but there is some information about later modifications, and considerably more concerning changes, both proposed and actual, made in the 1970s and 1980s. The construction of 1872-1873 seems to have incorporated some of the original building in the form of a hipped outshut at the west end, although contemporary accounts suggest that the original building was demolished or collapsed. The purpose of this section is not clear, although it may have acted as a Sunday School; it was evidently no longer part of the church by 1910 and later acted as the Post Office and is now a shop and not part of the current application.

The building recording revealed a number of phases of alteration, which in general could be connected to the documentary sources, although confirming the detail is particularly difficult. This is especially the case concerning alterations and improvements made in the early 20th century, for which there is some evidence for substantial changes associated with the organ and the decorative scheme but it is not clear when this took place.

The church remains a significant building in Nenthead not only for its considerable architectural merit but also for its historical interest in the context of the development of the settlement. It also represents a remarkably complex structure, in part because of the manner in which it incorporates parts of its predecessor, but also because of the various phases of alteration carried out in the 20th century.

Acknowledgements

Greenlane Archaeology would like to thank the Nenthead Chapel Restoration Project, in particular Kim Hobson, for commissioning the project and for providing access to the building and information about it. Thanks are also due to John Coward Architects, in particular Mike Darwell, for providing the 'as existing' drawings and further information about the building.

The desk-based assessment was carried out by Dan Elsworth, who also carried out the building recording and wrote this report with assistance from Tom Mace. The illustrations were produced by Tom Mace and the report was edited by Jo Dawson. Dan Elsworth managed the project.

1. Introduction

1.1 Circumstances of the Project

1.1.1 Following the submission of a Listed Building application to Eden District Council (ref. 14/0917) for the repair and conversion of a redundant Methodist Church, Nenthead, Alston, Cumbria (NGR 378123 543746) a condition (No. 3) requiring an archaeological building recording was placed on the decision notice. Greenlane Archaeology was appointed by the Nenthead Chapel Restoration Project (hereafter 'the client') to carry out the archaeological building recording in order to meet this condition. In response to this Greenlane Archaeology produced a project design and, following its acceptance by the Historic Environment Service at Cumbria County Council, the recording was carried out in September 2015.

1.1.2 Throughout this report the current building will be referred to as a 'church', even though such non-conformist structures were often referred to as chapels, in order to be consistent with the address given in the planning application. In some of the historical sources it is referred to as a chapel and so where a direct quotation is made or it is more appropriate this term will be retained. In addition, in naming the parts of the building the main body (Room G2) has been referred to as the chapel rather than nave, as it would be in a church proper.

1.2 Location, Geology, and Topography

1.2.1 The site lies at the heart of Nenthead to the north side of the A689 (Figure 1). Nenthead is approximately 7km south-east of Alston, which is located at the north end of the Pennine Chain (Countryside Commission 1998, 43). The site is at approximately 430m above sea level (Ordnance Survey 2011).

1.2.2 The landscape of the North Pennines is characterised by high moorland ridges divided by broad pastoral dales (Countryside Commission 1998, 43). Glacial deposits cover some of the valley slopes and hilltops and the higher ground is often blanketed by extensive areas of peat (*ibid*). The underlying geology is Millstone Grit, which caps the higher fells (*ibid*; Moseley 1978, figure 1).

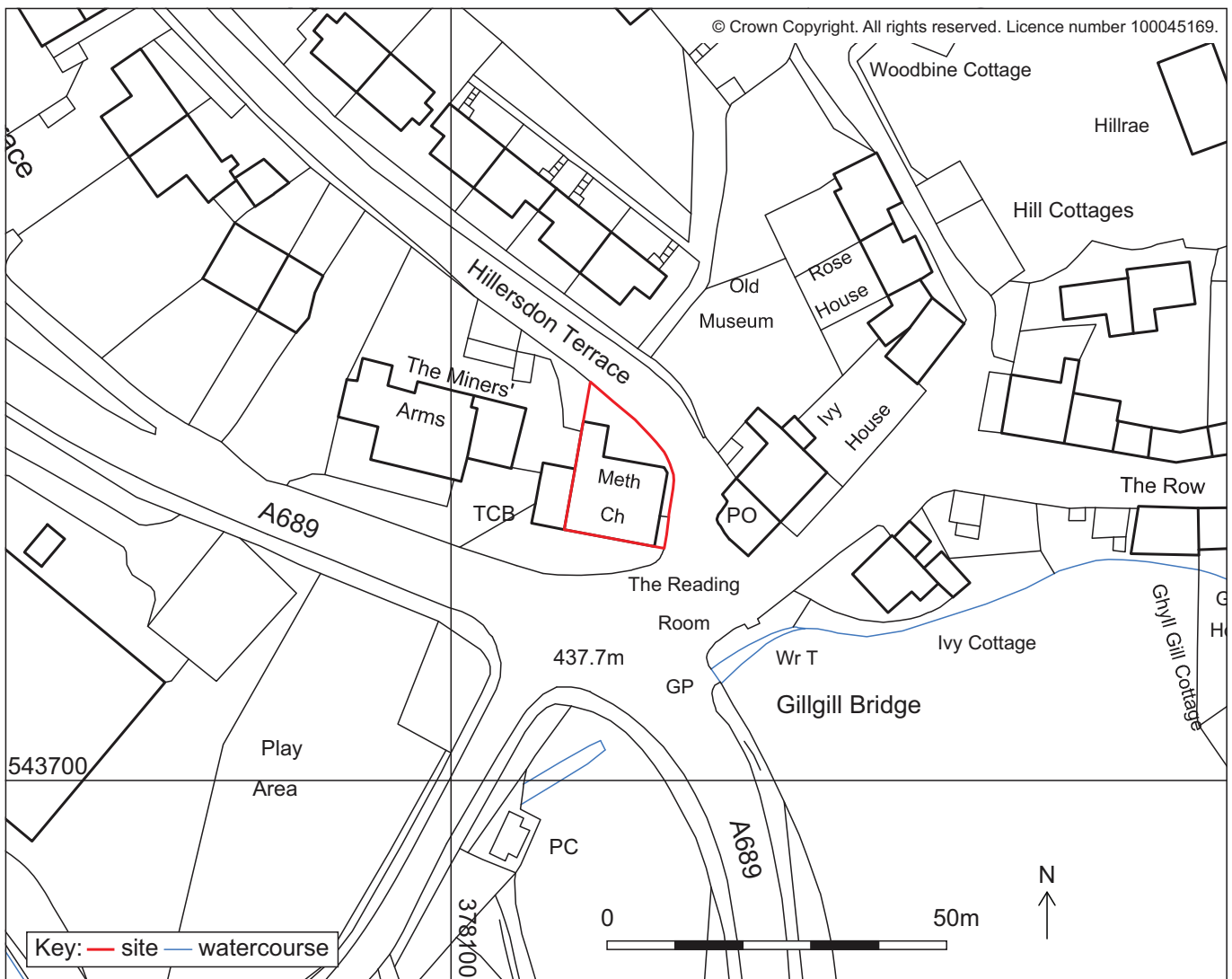
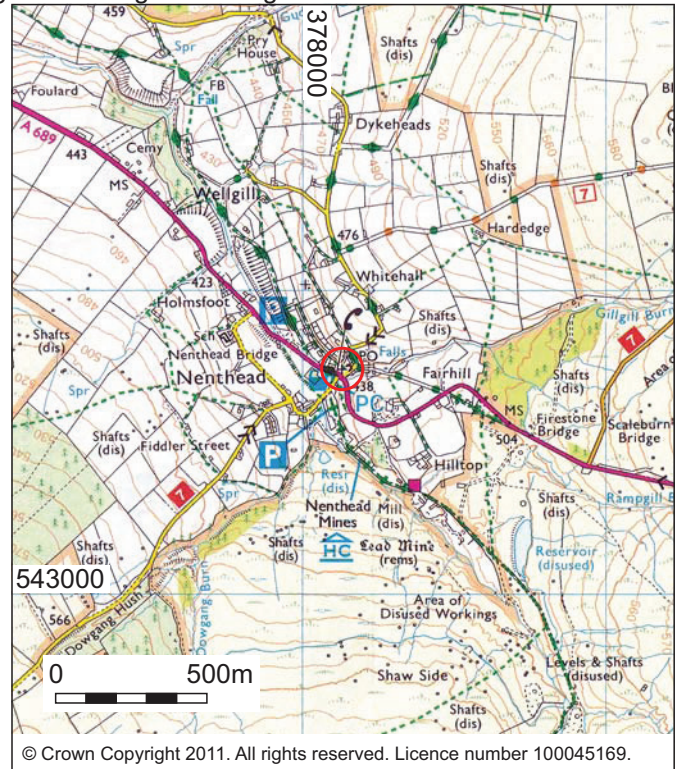
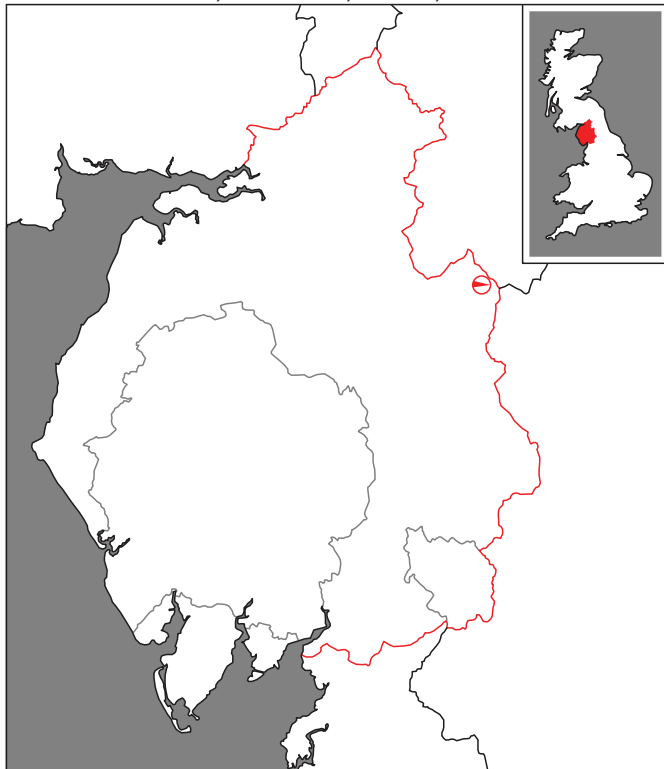


Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The building investigation comprised three separate elements intended to provide a suitable record of the structure, in line with English Heritage standards (English Heritage 2006) and the guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a). In addition a desk-based assessment was carried out in accordance with the project design and CIfA guidelines (CIfA 2014b) prior to the building recording, and a suitable archive was compiled to provide a permanent record of the project and its results in accordance with English Heritage and CIfA guidelines (English Heritage 1991; Brown 2007).

2.2 Desk-Based Assessment

2.2.1 In order to provide some historical context for the building recording a rapid desk-based assessment was carried out, utilising information gathered from the following locations:

- **Cumbria Archive Centre (Carlisle) (CAC(C)):** primary and secondary sources, primarily early maps but also other documentary sources including documentary records relating to the Methodist church in Nenthead were examined;
- **Durham Record Office:** details of primary sources relating to the Westgate Methodist Chapel in Weardale, which was built by the same architect, were obtained from the online catalogue of the Durham Record Office, although this was not visited and copies of these documents were not obtained;
- **Client:** background information already collated by the client, including a copy of the results of a previous historic assessment of the building, were provided for use during the project;
- **Greenlane Archaeology library:** relevant secondary sources covering local history but also other relevant historical information connected with buildings of this type were consulted.

2.3 Building Recording

2.3.1 A programme of archaeological building recording to English Heritage Level 2-type standards was carried out (English Heritage 2006). This provides a relatively detailed record of the building, giving information about its development, form and function without necessarily incorporating the results of the desk-based assessment. It comprised three types of recording:

- **Drawn Record:** plans showing the relevant features of the building were produced by hand-annotating detailed 'as existing' drawings provided by the project architect. In addition, a plan showing the location of the building in relation to other nearby buildings, structures and landscape features was also produced;
- Existing plans, elevations, and cross-sections have been included in order to help explain the relationships between different elements of the building or showing features of architectural or historic interest;
- **Written Record:** brief descriptive records of the building were made on Greenlane Archaeology standard pro forma record sheets. These records describe the building's form and the location of specific features of historical interest as well as any obvious evidence for phasing. In addition, the landscape and historic setting of the building is described, in particular its relationship with other nearby buildings, streets, settlements and other structures;
- **Photographic Record:** photographs in both 35mm colour print film and colour digital format were taken. These comprised general shots of the whole building and detailed shots of features of specific historical interest. In addition, a record of the associated landscape and nearby buildings was also made. Digital photographs have also been used for illustrative purposes within the report, and a written record was kept of all of the photographs that were taken.

2.4 Archive

2.4.1 A comprehensive archive of the project has been produced in accordance with the project design and current ClfA and English Heritage guidelines (Brown 2007; English Heritage 1991). The paper and digital archive and a copy of this report will be deposited in the Cumbria Archive Centre in Carlisle on completion of the project. A single paper copy of this report will be provided for the client and one will be retained by Greenlane Archaeology. In addition a digital copy of the report will be provided to client's agent and the Cumbria Historic Environment Record (HER) in Kendal and a digital record of the project will be made on the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) scheme.

3. Desk-Based Assessment

3.1 Map Regression

3.1.1 **Introduction:** early maps of the area tend to be relatively lacking in detail and are certainly not specific enough to be useful in understanding the development of an individual building. The earliest useful maps are therefore only from the 19th century. There is a considerable gap in the plans available in the archives in the early 20th century. However, there are a number of collections of plans relating to alterations proposed in the late 20th century, and these have also been included below.

3.1.2 **Plan of Nenthead, 1828:** this plan of the Nenthead Estate as it was laid out by the London Lead Company (reproduced in Jessop *et al* 2013, 76 – the original document is in the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, ref. 3410/LLC/Plans/2/3; Plate 1) shows the chapel that had been built in 1826 (see *Section 3.2.2* below). This is of interest as it is detailed enough to show the form of the roof, which is hipped throughout although the side wings are evidently arranged so that they must be lower than the central block.



Plate 1: Extract from the plan of the Nenthead Estate (as reproduced in Jessop *et al* 2013, 76; the plan is turned slightly so that north is to the top left corner)

3.1.3 **Ordnance Survey, 1861:** at this time the site is still occupied by the earlier, 1826, chapel and this building is still shown at this date and named 'Methodist Chapel' (Plate 2). The building at this time is shown as a long, east/west aligned, rectangular block (apparently divided into three sections) adjacent to the road.

3.1.4 **Ordnance Survey, 1867:** this map shows the same arrangement as the earlier Ordnance Survey map, although as both were surveyed at the same date (1859) this is not surprising. It is, however, at a smaller scale so lacking in some detail (Plate 3; cf. Plate 2).

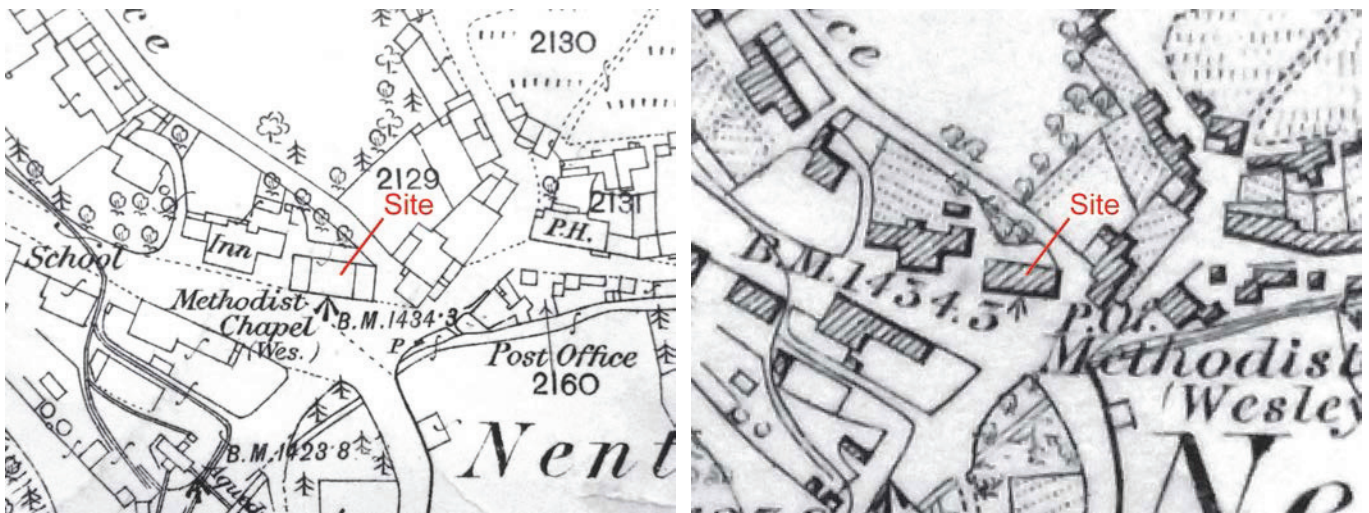


Plate 2 (left): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1861

Plate 3 (right): Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1867

3.1.5 **Ordnance Survey, 1899:** the shape of the church has changed by this point, corresponding with the construction of the present building in 1873 (Plate 4, cf. Plate 3; see Section 3.2.3 below). The westernmost division shown on the 1861 edition appears to be the same, but the east end of the church is no longer in line with the west end (Plate 4, cf. Plate 2). A further small section juts out at the west end on the north side of the current church building (immediately to the east of the dividing line).



Plate 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey map of 1899

3.1.6 **Photograph, 1977:** a photograph taken from the Nenthead Chapel Restoration Project Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/nentheadchapel>) shows the west end of the south elevation in 1977, and is of interest because it shows the original steps at this end of the building leading up to the doorway, which at this time was not blocked and had the original panelled door still in place and a cast iron hand rail remaining to the west (Plate 5).



Plate 5: Photograph dated 1977 showing the steps to the doorway at the west end of the south elevation (from <https://www.facebook.com/nentheadchapel>)

3.1.7 **Plans, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983):** these drawings comprise both ‘as existing’ plans and cross-sections of the church at that time as well as proposed alterations including the reorganisation of the internal space. The ‘as existing’ drawings show that the arrangement of the building was much as it is at present, with the ‘kitchen’ labelled in the north-west corner room, ‘vestry’ in the south-west corner room, and other details such as the pulpit labelled, although the extension to the north end of the west elevation is not shown (Plate 6 and Plate 7). The proposed alterations show the addition of toilets in the vestibule at the east end and even new stairs in the outshut on the west side of the north elevation (Plate 8 to Plate 10), although it is clear that these were never carried out. The section drawings evidently show that a new floor spanning the opening left by the gallery was proposed at this date (Plate 11 to Plate 15), but it is not clear if this corresponds to the floor suspended over the gallery that is now present or what was intended at this time.

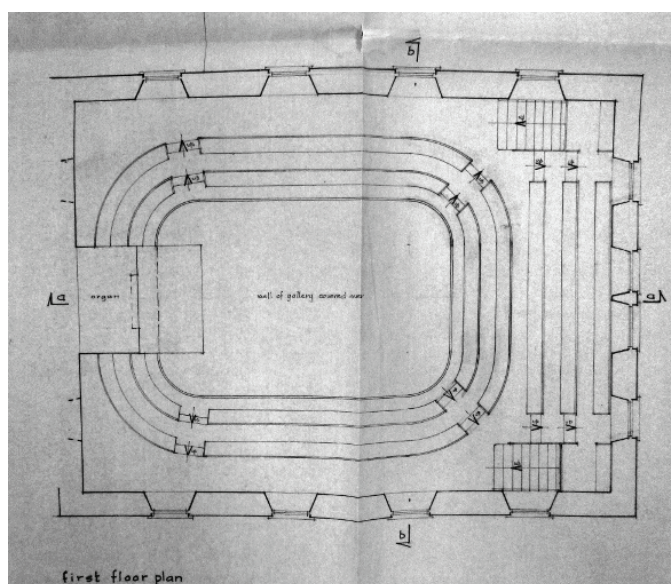
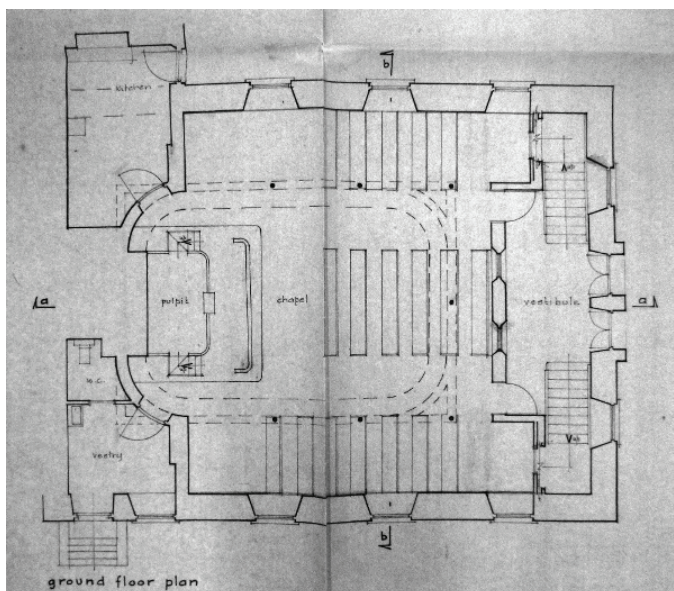


Plate 6 (left): ‘As existing’ ground floor plan, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

Plate 7 (right): ‘As existing’ first floor plan, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

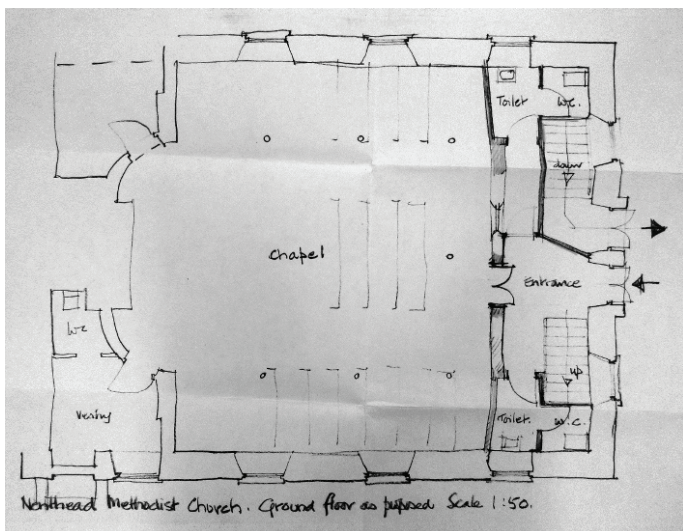


Plate 8 (left): Ground floor as proposed, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

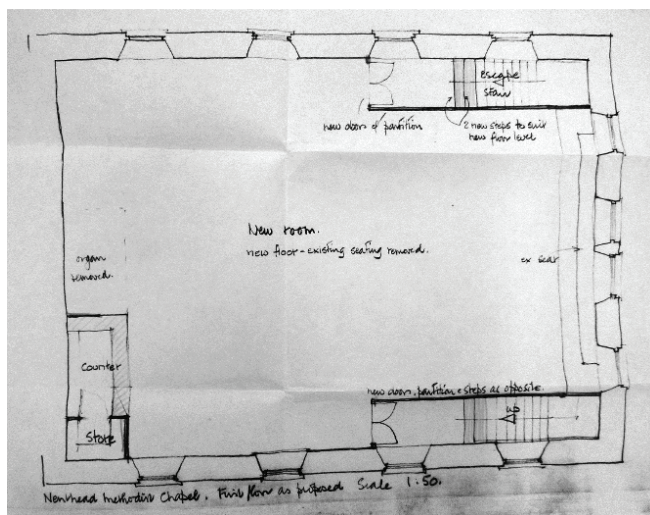


Plate 9 (right): First floor as proposed, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

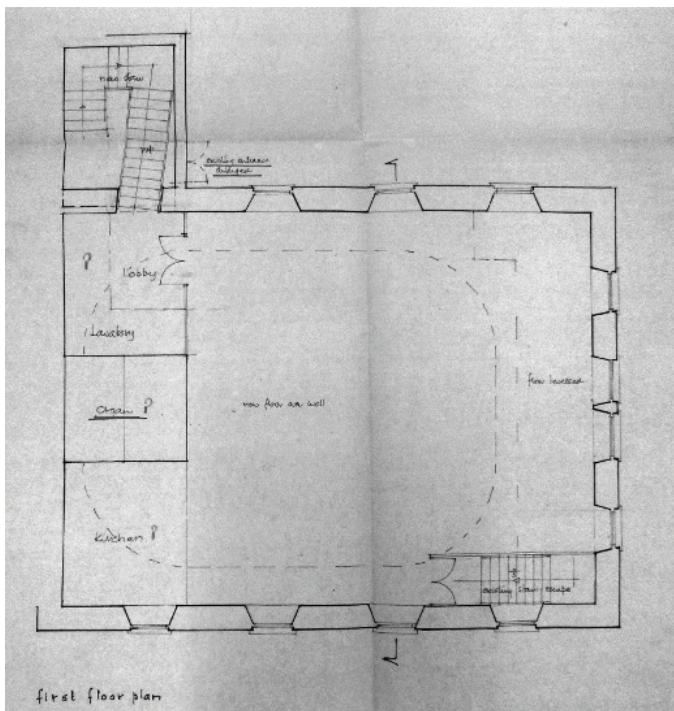


Plate 10 (left): First floor as proposed, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

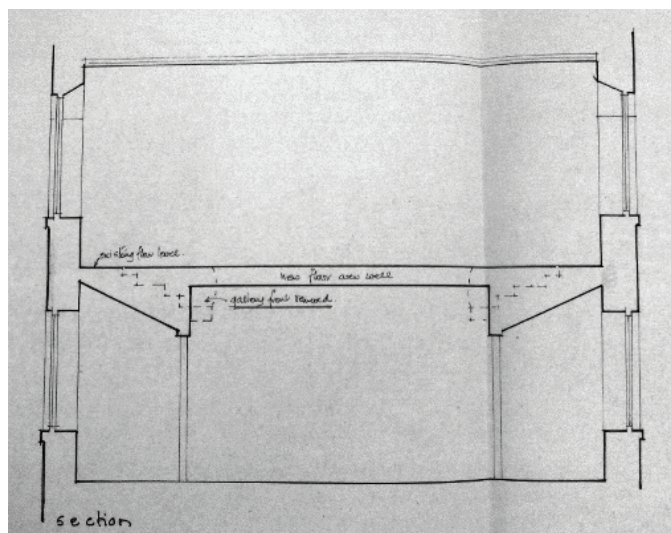


Plate 11 (right): Section as proposed, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

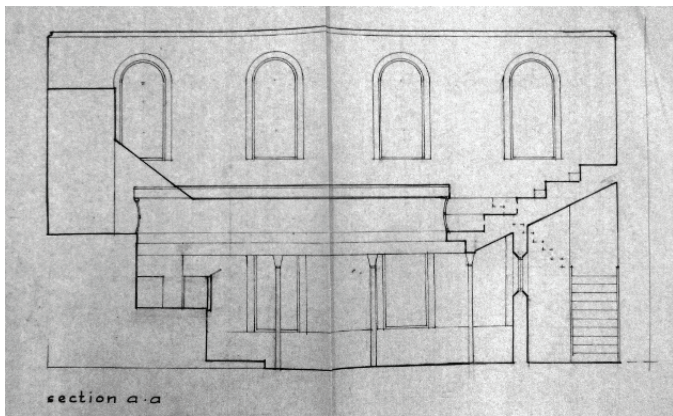


Plate 12 (left): 'As existing' section a-a, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

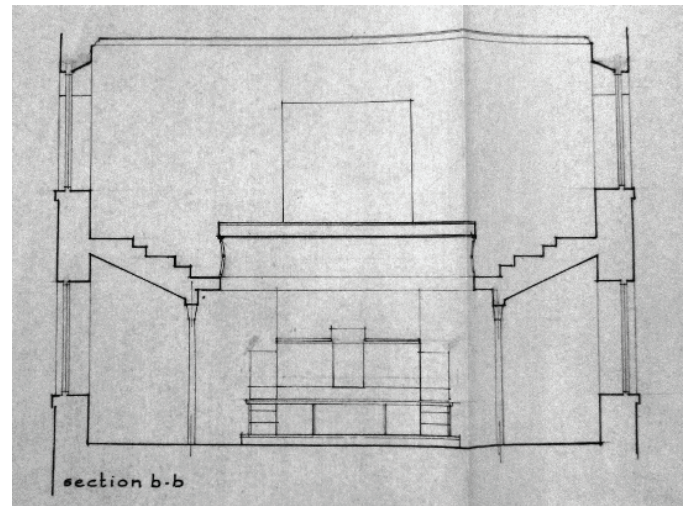


Plate 13 (right): 'As existing' section b-b, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

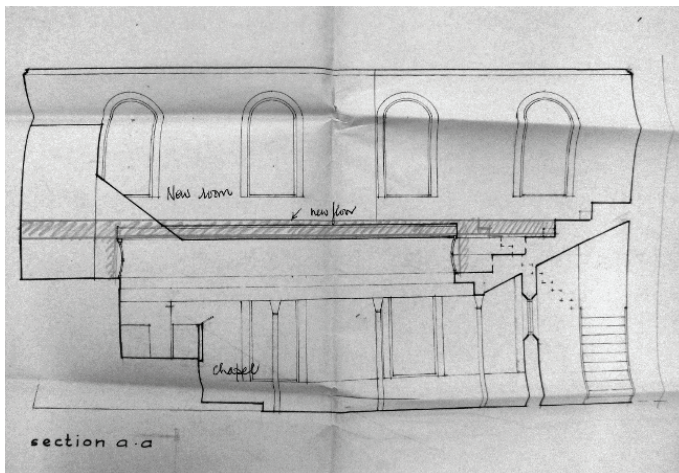


Plate 14 (left): Section a-a, new floor as proposed, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

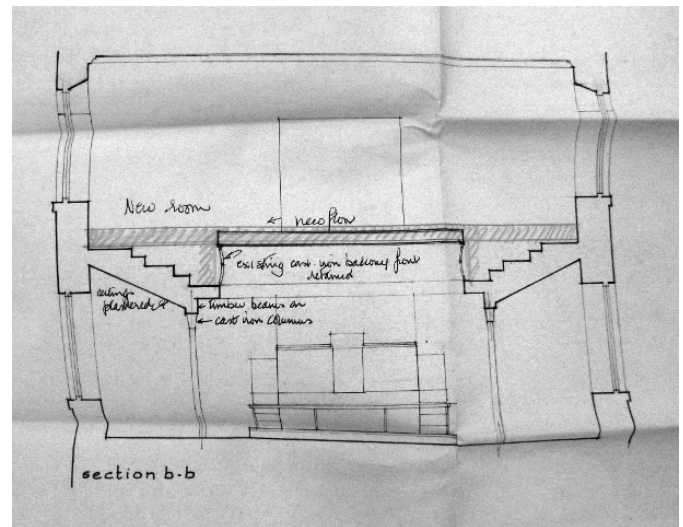


Plate 15 (right): Section b-b, new floor as proposed, 1983 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/236 1983)

3.1.8 **Plans and Reports re: Proposed Alterations to Chapel, 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986):** a further set of drawings for further proposed alterations exist, dated 1986. These show that in general the building had evidently changed very little since 1983 and that the proposals of that date were in general not carried out. The 'as existing' ground floor plans again demonstrate that the arrangement of the building is much as it now is (Plate 16 and Plate 17), the 'as existing' cross-sections however show that the gallery had been covered over by this time, although not in the manner depicted in the earlier drawings (Plate 18 and Plate 19). Proposals were again made at this time for a reorganisation of the internal rooms and the insertion a new floor spanning the whole of the first floor (Plate 20 and Plate 23).

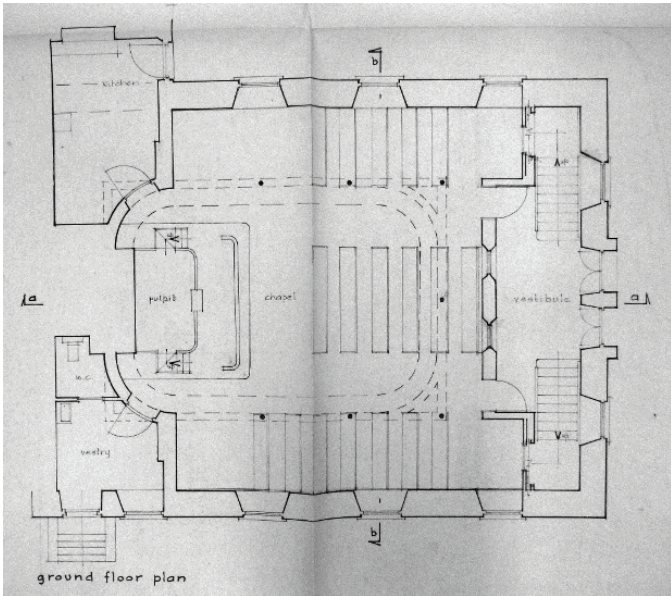


Plate 16 (left): 'As existing' ground floor plan, 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986)

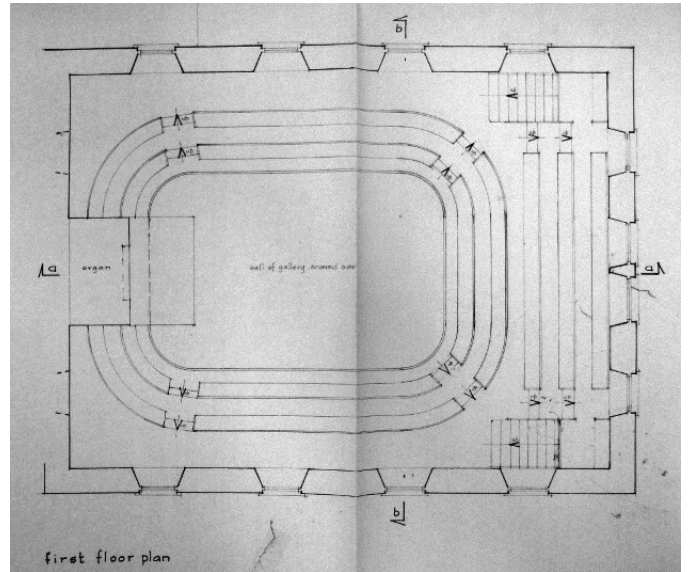


Plate 17 (right): 'As existing' first floor plan, 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986)

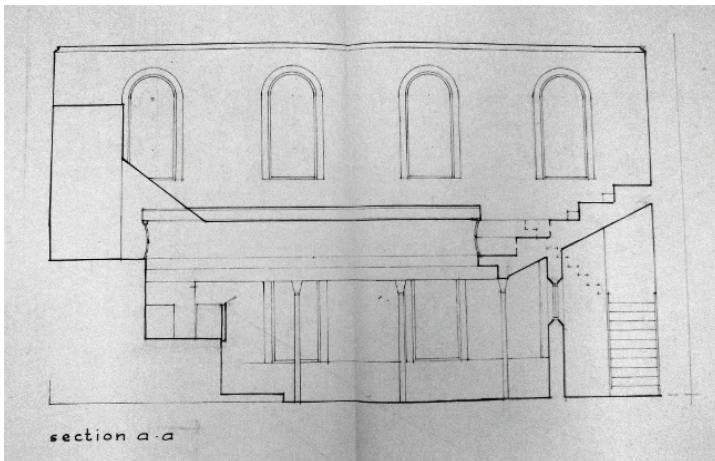


Plate 18 (left): 'As existing' section a-a, 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986)

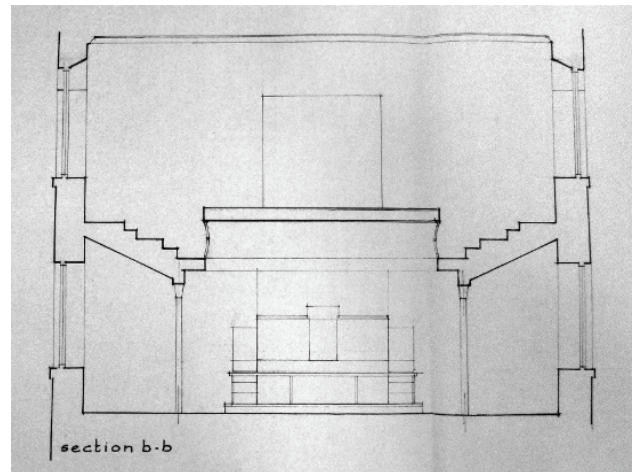


Plate 19 (right): 'As existing' section b-b, 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986)



Plate 24 (left): General view of building, showing leaking and damaged 'downcomers', 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986)

Plate 25 (right): Internal cast iron columns and covered over wall, 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986)

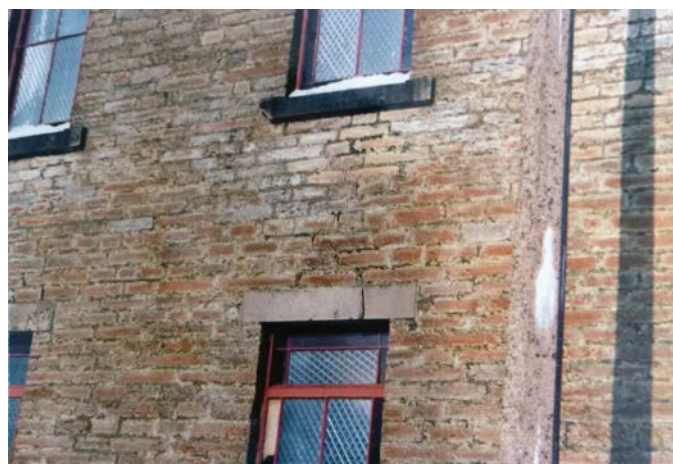


Plate 26 (left): First floor, 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986)

Plate 27 (right): West elevation, showing cracking to stonework and damaged lintel, 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986)



Plate 28: Cast iron column base, 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/237 1986)

3.1.10 **Photographs accompanying Correspondence re: Sale of Nenthead Methodist Church Property, 2002 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/363 1993-2003):** a series of photographs were evidently taken in 2002 in connection with the sale of the building at this time (Plate 29 to Plate 36). These shown that the building was very much as it is at present.



Plate 29: General view of the exterior from the south-east, 2002 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/363 1993-2003)

Plate 30: Main east entrance, 2002 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/363 1993-2003)



Plate 31 (left): General view of east end of the chapel, 2002 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/363 1993-2003)

Plate 32 (centre): General view of west end of the chapel, 2002 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/363 1993-2003)

Plate 33 (right): General view west end of first floor, 2002 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/363 1993-2003)



Plate 34 (left): General view of the exterior from the south-east, 2002 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/363 1993-2003)

Plate 35 (right): General view of the exterior from the north-east, 2002 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/363 1993-2003)



Plate 36: General view of the west end of the chapel, 2002 (CAC(C) DFCM/10/363 1993-2003)

3.2 Site History

3.2.1 **Nenthead:** unlike its larger neighbour, Alston, which comprised a relatively substantial settlement of medieval origins, Nenthead owes its existence almost entirely to the development of the lead mining industry. The Manor had been acquired by the Greenwich Hospital from the crown in 1734 and began leasing off mining rights, with the London Lead Company becoming the major lessee in 1745 (Robertson 2002, 28). In 1825 the London Lead Company, also known as the Governor & Company (*ibid*), which by that time had been working in Nenthead for several decades, created a model village intended to house their workers and based on Quaker principles (Jessop *et al* 2013, 75). Prior to that a smaller settlement had been created by the company for the miners after 1753, but many were simply accommodated in lodgings within existing farms (Raistrick 1988, 17). The new development of 1825 centred on Hillersdon Terrace, a planned street including a range of housing, of various types but generally of relatively generous proportions for the time but some detached examples intended for the higher class workers such as the surgeon and overseers (Jessop *et al* 2013, 79). The Quaker principles of the London Lead Company also led to the creation of a school in 1818 and a Reading Room in 1833 (*op cit*, 81-82). In turn the various religious groups added their signature to the village through the construction of new chapels, meeting houses, and churches (*op cit*, 83), and it is into this landscape that the first Methodist chapels at Nenthead were added.

3.2.2 **Methodism in Nenthead and the Early Chapels:** a detailed history of the growth of Methodism has (to date) not been published, but a summary is presented in the previous historic building assessment report (Ryder 2011, which incorporates as yet unpublished information from 'Notes about Nenthead Chapel' by Alan Robertson) and other details are provided in a collection of manuscript notes, apparently written by several different people at different times but compiled in the mid-20th century (CAC(C) DFCM 10/219 20th century). John Wesley is known to have preached in Nenthead in 1748 and 1770 and the village soon acquired communities of both Primitive and Wesleyan Methodists, the former largely representing the more working-class members of the community, the latter the 'white collar' workers (Ryder 2011). The first Methodist chapel in Nenthead was housed in "a schoolhouse fitted up for preaching with a kind of temporary pulpit but no gallery" (CAC(C) DFCM 10/219 20th century). The original building was vacated in 1816, and a new building occupied, which stood on the site of what is now the Miners' Arms (*ibid*). This building seems to have been later raised and perhaps enlarged to form a more regular preaching house with galleries at each end, accessed by stairs inside the building, and a school attached to the west end (*ibid*). In 1826 this property was purchased by the London Lead Company for £220 (although one version gives as sum of £200) who also gave a new plot of land for the construction of a third chapel, which was completed by at least 1827 (*ibid*). It is interesting to note, however, that a later copy of the schedule of deeds for the site only begins on December 15th 1836 with an 'assignment of premises at Nenthead in the parish of Alston for the purposes of the Methodist Chapel' made between 'The Governor & Company for Smelting Down Lead &c' and Messrs Cain, Deasdale & others (CAC(C) DFCM 10/354 1970-1974), which perhaps suggests that the original arrangement in 1826 was somewhat *ad hoc*. The form of the new chapel is unclear although as stated above, the London Lead Company's plan of 1828 (Plate 1) is detailed enough to indicate that the east and west wings had hipped roofs and so were presumably lower than the central block (Plate 37).



Plate 37: Extract from a reconstruction drawing of Nenthead in c1850, showing the 1826 chapel (from Jessop *et al* 2013, 78)

3.2.5 **The Later Wesleyan Methodist Church:** details regarding the construction of the current chapel building are not plentiful. The decision to build a new church was apparently made at the Quarterly meeting of 28th March 1872 (CAC(C) DFCM 10/219 20th century) and it was evidently constructed on the site of the 1826 chapel, which was described as either being '*pulled down*' before work began (CAC(C) DFCM 10/219 20th century) or collapsing during work (Ryder 2011). The architect was George Race, a Methodist from Westgate in Weardale, as recounted in a later account of 1915 (Ryder 2011) and also stated elsewhere (see *Appendix 1*), who not only built a virtually identical church in Westgate (Historic Chapels Trust nd) but also designed buildings closer to Nenthead, including a Primitive Methodist Chapel in Garrigill in 1885 (CAC(C) DFCM 10/338 1885) and a Wesleyan Chapel in Nentsbury in 1888-1890 (CAC(C) DFCM 10/370 1888-1902). The foundation stone was laid on 27th August 1872 by Mrs WD Stephens and the church is said to have cost £1,413-13-0 (CAC(C) DFCM 10/219 20th century). Construction was seemingly not complete until 1873, and an assignment with '*The Governor & Company for Smelting Down Lead &c*' for '*Two pieces or parcels of Ground on [sic] Nenthead in the parish of Alston for the purposes of a Methodist Chapel*' only appears in the schedule of deeds in August 12th 1873 (CAC(C) DFCM 10/354 1970-1974). However, it is clear that the building was not totally finished at this time as the organ, which was supplied by Harrisons of Durham, was only added in 1878, at a further cost of £116-2-10 (CAC(C) DFCM 10/219 20th century; Harrison and Harrison Organ Builders 2012). Documentary information about any later phases of alteration is less readily available but some inference can be made. It appears that the original organ was replaced with an organ dated c1900 with a model built by HJ Nelson & Co, who were established in 1880; Nelson having originally been an employee of Harrisons (Lightbown and Sons 2014). One source, however, indicates that the organ was installed in 1943 but apparently re-used, a note reading '*organ from Chapel Terrace ex PM [Primitive Methodist] Alston erected*' (CAC(C) DFCM 10/219 20th century), which might indicate that the date of 1900 is correct but that the installation was later. An account book for renovations carried out in 1937, which is described only as relating to the Methodist Chapel in Nenthead and so may not be for the Wesleyan church, relates to a phase of redecoration and is limited in terms of the information it provides other than the exterior (presumably meaning woodwork) is to be 'brown', the interior walls 'buff', the floors of the ground floor and stairs to be finished with linoleum, and the seats varnished (CAC(C) DFCM 10/359 1937).

3.2.6 The history of the adjoining shop, although not now part of the church, is of interest as it clearly formed part of the original structure. It has been assumed to represent part of the original fabric of the 1826 chapel (see *Appendix 1*; Ryder 2011), but given that a number of sources suggest that this was

demolished or collapsed during the building of the 1873 church this seems impossible. However, its hipped roof does match that of the 1826 chapel, in as far as this can be ascertained, so it is likely it was reconstructed based on the original building. Its original purpose is unclear, although it is conceivable that it formed a school room and was later detached from the rest of the church when this purpose ended. The valuation of 1910 is particularly revealing in this regard as shows that it was rated as part of the adjoining Miners' Arms rather than the church (CAC(C) TIR 4/8 1910). This is perhaps because of the provision of a new school in Nenthead in the 1864 (Raistrick 1988, 65; Jessop *et al* 2013, 82), which might have removed the need for religious institutions to provide such as service. By at least the late 20th century this part of the structure was being used as a post office, as is apparent in the photographs taken in 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM 10/237 1986), before becoming a shop.

3.2.7 The later history of the church is less clear, although it is apparent that in the 1970s a new oil boiler was installed, to replace the former solid fuel one, in part because of the unhelpful arrangement of the existing boiler room: *'Nenthead is reputed to be the highest village in the country; certainly the Chapel stands at some 1400ft or more, by the side of the A689 where it proceeds to rise steeply to the Durham border and quickly reaches 2056 and is here reputed (by the A.A.) to be the highest main road in England. So winters are particularly severe and prolonged, and we now feel, with the increasing difficulty of securing the services of caretakers, it is essential to simplify and ease the duties as much as possible where access to the boiler house is frequently blocked by snow and has to be dug out. The new boiler would be in the kitchen and be accessible from indoors by means of the Chapel Entrance in weather of that kind'* (CAC(C) DFCM 10/354 1970-1974). By the 1980s a number of substantial alterations were proposed and made, the first being the effective creation of a full floor laid across the gallery between 1983 and 1986 (CAC(C) DFCM 10/236 1983; CAC(C) DFCM 10/237 1986), although several suggested changes were not made. Reports carried out on the building in 1986 suggest that it was in generally reasonable repair at this time, although it is apparent that it was still in use, but some general wear and tear was reported and damp was beginning to penetrate the west end (CAC(C) DFCM 10/237 1986). Little repair was evidently carried out in spite of this, so these issues continued to worsen from that date onwards, as shown in subsequent quinquennial inspections (CAC(C) DFCM 10/360 1989; CAC(C) DFCM 10/361 1994). By the time the church was put up for sale in 2002 it had reached essentially its present condition, with a considerable need for repair and severe damage caused by damp at the west end (CAC(C) DFCM 10/363 1993-2003). It was designated Grade II Listed in 2012 (*Appendix 1*).

3.3 Conclusion

3.3.1 The settlement at Nenthead is primarily the result of development brought about by the London Lead Company in 1825 and the development of the lead mines in this period, although an earlier settlement existed and the neighbouring town of Alston has more ancient origins. The current Wesleyan church is actually the third in Nenthead, the first being an adapted school room and the second a purpose-built structure on the current site. Elements of this building are thought to have been incorporated into the present building in what is now an adjoining shop and what may have originally served as a school room. However, this incorporation was probably the result of almost total rebuilding that took place during the construction of the current church in 1872-1873, with the first organ not added until 1878. The building clearly saw some alterations in the early part of the 20th century including redecoration and the addition of a new organ, although the exact date that this took place is uncertain. By the later 20th century it was beginning to suffer from a number of issues through lack of maintenance and the ingress of damp through the west gable wall, in part exacerbated by the addition of inappropriate external rendering and internal cladding.

4. Building Recording

4.1 Arrangement and Fabric

4.1.1 The main part of the building comprises a large rectangular block of two storeys with an attic, from the west end of the north side of which is a small projection with a hipped roof, which has been further extended by a monopitch extension. Both of these projecting sections are single storey, although the monopitch part is effectively mostly situated below ground level as it is built into the slope to the north. At the west end there is a further single storey section projecting from the line of the main block with a hipped roof, which appears to be added to the main part of the building, despite the suggestion that it is in fact part of the earlier chapel (see *Appendix 1*). This element does not form part of the building subject to the present planning application but because it formed part of the original structure it has been included in the description below and is depicted in the figures.

4.1.2 The whole building is constructed from the local yellowish gritstone (although the west end is finished with roughcast concrete render), typically laid in somewhat random courses of thin pieces, with narrow quoins at the corners with detail in the same material only typically well-finished. The roof is grey slate with ceramic ridge tiles, with the exception of the monopitch extension to the north, which is finished with stone flags, and the hipped sections, which have v-shaped stone copings. The west and east ends were originally finished with ashlar copings on kneelers, although these have mostly been lost at the east end. There is a truncated chimney at the west end and an ashlar finial with an iron fitting at the east end (remains of a weather vane?). The gutter is supported by squared brackets and comprises a mixture of cast iron and plaster rain water goods. The windows typically have multi-light timber casements with coloured or frosted glass, although the attic level ones are blocked with boards and those in the west end are blocked with bricks. The north side is enclosed by a drystone wall, which changes to plain square-section iron railings with spiked tops at the east end. This meets a pair of ashlar stone gate posts with pyramidal tops in front of the centre of the east elevation, the south of which has a short section of stone wall running between it and the main east elevation. In front (to the east) of this gate is an area of cobbling forming a threshold. A line of ashlar blocks with holes for an iron fence continues the line of the fence in front of the remainder of the east elevation and the south.

4.2 External Detail

4.2.1 **North elevation:** this side of the building is obscured from a distance on account of the building having been cut into the slope, but is two storeys (Plate 38). The ground floor has a row of three tall windows each with dressed stone lintels and projecting sill, with an additional narrow supporting lintel over the main one (Plate 39). The windows have timber casements with four main lights with a single light over and narrow side lights. The west end is essentially obscured by the hipped roof and later monopitch roof outshuts, the latter of which runs into the slope (Plate 40). The first floor has four windows, all with dressed stone rounded heads with incorporated keystone and dressed stone sills, and timber casements matching those of the ground floor but with a three part light with curved divisions in the top (Plate 41). The easternmost window has a cracked sill and the west has noticeably sunk on the west side. The iron gutter is supported on a row of cavetto-moulded square stone brackets and there is coping remaining on the west end of the roof below which various electrical and telephone cables are attached. The monopitch outshut has an iron oil tank sat against its north end, which is otherwise built into the slope and obscured.



Plate 38 (left): The north external elevation, viewed from the road to the north



Plate 39 (right): Typical ground floor window in the north external elevation, viewed from the north



Plate 40 (left): The outshuts at the west end of the north external elevation, viewed from the north-east



Plate 41 (right): Typical first floor window in the north external elevation, viewed from the north

4.2.2 **East elevation:** the north end is extended by the hipped-roof projection and monopitch extension to the north, the latter of which clearly butts the former and is therefore a later addition and has the remains of a thin layer of concrete skim over it (Plate 42). The upper part of the monopitch section has a small window at higher level with a dressed stone sill and thin stone lintel, which has been blocked with modern concrete blocks. The lower level is accessed by a flight of steps leading to a doorway with a plank and batten door, to which later boards have been attached and which has a decorative iron handle. To the north of this is a further small window with a stone sill and dressed stone sill, which is also blocked with concrete blocks. The lowered area that allows access to the doorway runs into the slope to the north

but this too is apparently an opening with a long stone lintel blocked with concrete blocks. The hipped section to the south is essentially plain, apart from a single doorway with a tongue and groove plank and batten door in a stop chamfered surround with a single light overlight and a decorative iron latch handle.



Plate 42 (left): The east external elevation of the north outshut, viewed from the south-east

Plate 43 (right): Detail of the decorative handle on the door of the north outshut, viewed from the east



Plate 44 (left): The east external elevation of the hipped north projection, viewed from the east

Plate 45 (right): Detail of the decorative door handle on the door of the hipped north projection

4.2.3 The main part of the east elevation forms one gable end of the building extending over two storeys plus attic level (Plate 46). The ground floor has a dressed ashlar block on the south side (Plate 49; the blank face of the foundation stone, see *Section 4.2.4* below). In the centre there is a pair of doorways with projecting moulded surrounds with elaborately moulded ashlar rounded heads sat on moulded brackets with incorporated keystones (Plate 47). The doors themselves comprise double doors each with three moulded panels and panelling over (perhaps a blocked overlight?). Each double door has a decorative cruciform latch handle (Plate 48). There is a window either side of the paired doorways in the same style as the doors with timber casements matching those in the first floor of the north elevation (Plate 49), and above the doors is a dressed block with the words 'WESLEYAN CHAPEL 1873' carved into a recessed central panel (Plate 47). At first floor level there are four windows across the elevation, matching those below, with two paired together in the centre. At attic level there is a row of four smaller openings filled with board, in the same style but all linked and sharing brackets. The elevation is topped with the remains of some of the coping on the top and dressed kneelers at either end, and in the centre is an ashlar finial topped with decorative ironwork.



Plate 46 (left): Main part of east external elevation, viewed from the east

Plate 47 (right): Paired doorways and datestone in the ground floor of the east external elevation, viewed from the east



Plate 48 (left): Detail of the decorative latch handle on the northern door, east external elevation, viewed from the east

Plate 49 (right): Typical window at ground floor level and dressed block at the south side of the east external elevation, viewed from the east

4.2.4 **South elevation:** this is essentially a mirror image of the north elevation (Plate 50), except that at the east end the dressed block built into the wall is inscribed 'Laid by M^{rs} W.D. STEPHENS of Newcastle August 22nd 1873' (Plate 51) and at the west end there is a low flight of steps leading up from the west, which are evidently a relatively late rebuild and are partially of concrete construction, leading to a doorway with a dressed stop-chamfered surround and a moulded round-head with keystone (Plate 52). This doorway has been mostly blocked with stone in a cement mortar but a small gap has been left at the top with a three-light window. To the west of the blocked doorway are short pieces of projecting iron – presumably the remains of a former hand rail. Across the centre of the main part of the elevation are four windows at ground floor level, matching those in the north elevation, but without the extra lintels. Almost at ground level is a row of five small iron vents. In addition, there is a bench mark carved into one of the quoins at the west end. The west end of the elevation is extended at ground floor level where it steps back by a hipped roof section at first floor level only. This has a large modern shop window with a metal roller-shutter below a heavy timber lintel.



Plate 50 (left): General view of the south external elevation, viewed from the south

Plate 51 (right): The foundation stone at the east end of the south external elevation, viewed from the south



Plate 52: Blocked doorway at the west end of the south external elevation, viewed from the south

4.2.5 **West elevation:** this forms the opposing gable end of the building, but the lower part is obscured by the hipped roof outshut and the upper part by roughcast concrete render (Plate 53). The lower extension has two windows with round heads constructed as segmental arches, both of which have been blocked with concrete blocks, rendered and painted although with a single ceramic vent in each (Plate 54). To the south of the southern of these is a line perhaps denoting a further opening and there is also a line below. Both apparently have infilling below the current sill line up to former sills suggesting that the windows were once taller. The chamfering detail on the disused sill below the northern window suggests that it is actually upside down. The main elevation above has two windows at first floor level with rounded heads with moulded surrounds and keystones projecting beyond the line of the wall and so not covered by render. Both are blocked with modern buff bricks. At attic level there is a further single window in a similar style, although plainer, and also blocked (possibly with a slate). To the north the elevation is continuous into the hipped outshut on the north side where a lot more of the render has come away. It is

extended further by the monopitch extension, which has a thin skim of concrete render over it and a large iron pipe projecting through it near the base, presumably to form the flue for a stove (Plate 55). The north side of the west hipped extension, although not part of the building, was also examined (Plate 56); it also has a single round-headed window, like those to the west and blocked and rendered with a single ceramic vent. It too has an area of infilling below the current sill and above an earlier and now disused sill. To the west is a former doorway under a flat stone lintel. This doorway has been mostly blocked with stone to leave a small window with a concrete sill, before this too was later blocked with red brick incorporating a single ceramic vent.



Plate 53 (left): General view of the west external elevation, viewed from the west

Plate 54 (right): The hipped outshut covering the lower part of the west external elevation, viewed from the west



Plate 55 (left): The northern extension to the west external elevation viewed from the south-west

Plate 56 (right): The north side of the hipped outshut, viewed from the north-west



Figure 2: External elevations

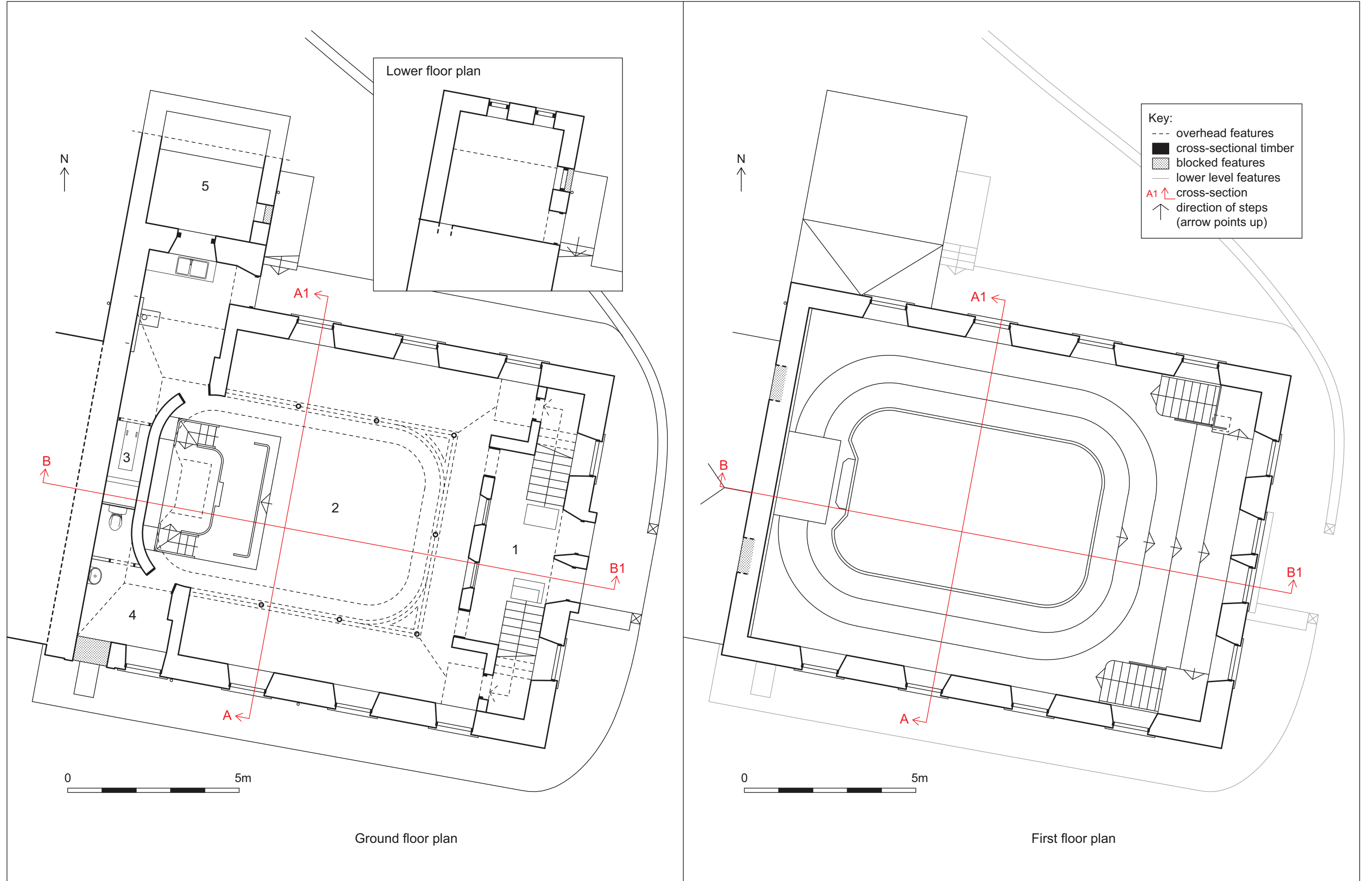


Figure 3: Ground floor and first floor plans

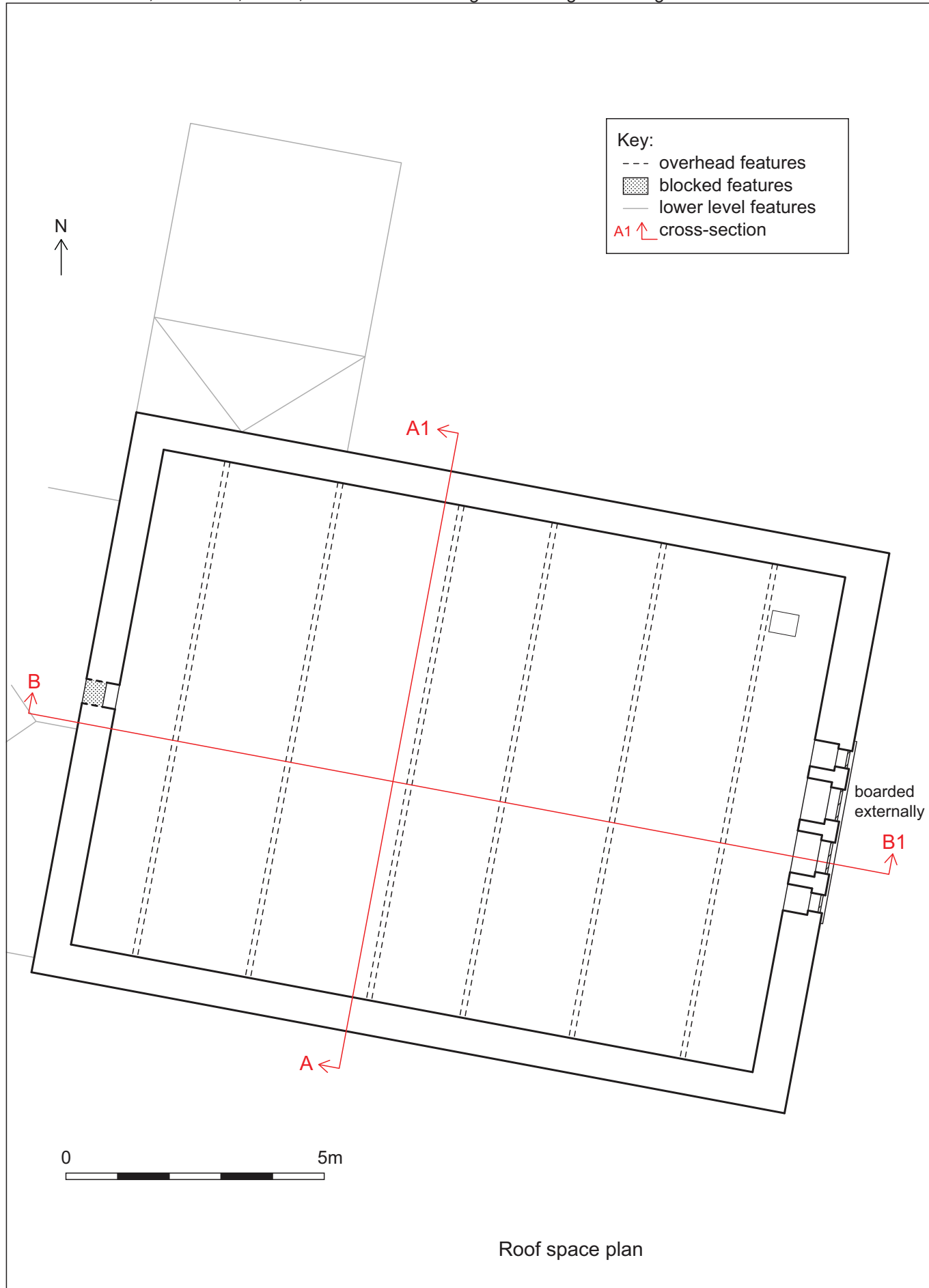


Figure 4: Roof space plan

4.3 Internal Detail

4.3.1 **Ground floor Room 1:** this comprises the entry hall and access, via staircases at the north and south ends, to the rooms beyond and the upper floor at the east end of the building. It has a timber tongue and groove board floor apart from blocks at the bottom of each of the staircases, the northern of which is concrete. The southern is stone and is actually a re-used datestone inscribed 'CHAPEL ERECTED 1826' and 'WESLEYA[N ME]THODIST', the latter text having partially lost where the stone has been cut down, presumably to fit its current location (Plate 57). It is also decorated with scallops at the corners and a floral roundel at the top of the centre. The stairs at the north and south ends are of timber construction with turned balusters and newel posts and decorative string brackets (Plate 58). The south has an additional curving bracket from the newel post, which is missing from the north but the slots for where it was attached are evident. Each newel post also has a printed flower on it, matching those in the centre of the windows to the west. The ceiling is lath and plaster, sloping down to the west, and the walls are finished with plaster and paint. The north elevation is plain, with stairs going through it on the east side (Plate 58), which come to a landing at which point there are iron pipes for the heating attached to the wall and a slight step in the wall line finished with a timber shelf. The east elevation has a pair of doorways in the centre each with double doors with three plain but fielded panels in each and a blank panel above (Plate 59 and Plate 60). To the north and south of these doorways there is a narrow section of panelling with a beaded edge, perhaps indicative of the whole wall having originally been panelled and the rounded doorheads also have plaster beading over them which stops at the level of the plaster. At either end of the elevations there is a single window with splayed jambs and rounded heads, also with beaded edges that stop at the level of the panelling. The main part of the casement has four lights and a hinged top light with narrow side lights. The south elevation is essentially as per the north elevation. The west elevation has a doorway at either end, the doors decorated with a four panels decorated with stop chamfers (Plate 61). The locks attached are probably early 20th century, with Bakelit handles, but the scars for the earlier fittings are evident. The surrounds are ovolo-moulded. In the centre of the elevation there are two circular windows with elaborate 'flower' pattern casements with coloured glass with a flower printed on the central pane (Plate 62). These also have a beaded surround.



Plate 57 (left): Re-used datestone in the floor at the foot of the southern staircase in ground floor Room 1, viewed from the north



Plate 58 (right): North elevation and staircase in ground floor Room 1, viewed from the south



Plate 59 (left): Dooways in the east elevation, ground floor Room 1, viewed from the north-west
Plate 60 (right): Door detail in the east elevation, ground floor Room 1, viewed from the west



Plate 61 (left): Doorway at the south end of the west elevation, ground floor Room 1, viewed from the north-east
Plate 62 (right): Round window in the west elevation, ground floor Room 1, viewed from the east

4.3.2 Ground floor Room 2: this comprises the main body of the church (the chapel). It too has narrow tongue and groove floorboards with rows of pews, the latter mostly orientated north/south and facing west although two on the south side are orientated east/west and face north. At the west end is a raised pulpit comprising an elaborate structure finished with timber panelling with stop chamfer decoration (Plate 63) and short flights of steps up on either side with turned timber posts and handrails, supported by cast iron balusters decorated with floral motifs in an almost Arts and Crafts style, and decorative open string brackets (Plate 64). The top rail of the pulpit is similar but with T-shaped cast iron brackets, again with a floral style as well as other, slightly plainer brackets (Plate 65). The outer communion rail is similar in style. The centre of the pulpit itself has decorative timber carving in the form of leaves and acanthus leaf brackets supporting the lectern, again all in an essentially Arts and Crafts style (Plate 66). Behind the pulpit area there is timber boxing wall bringing the line of the wall out, presumably associated with the organ above. Underneath the pulpit there is some evidence that the timberwork has been remodelled but it was not clear exactly how. There is a gallery at first floor level around all sides filled with a decorative geometric and floral cast iron panels, again in a very Arts and Crafts style (Plate 67); the timber filling piece above looks slightly different to the rest, perhaps suggesting that these panels were inserted at a later date. The gallery is supported on iron columns, with decorative floral brackets (Plate 68) but there are also scrolled timber brackets. The opening that would have existed up to the first floor has been filled in with plywood sheeting.



Plate 63 (left): General view of the pulpit and communion rail at the west end of ground floor Room 2, viewed from the east

Plate 64 (right): Side detail of the stairs leading to the pulpit, ground floor Room 2, viewed from the south



Plate 65 (left): Detail of the iron brackets supporting the pulpit rail, ground floor Room 2, viewed from the north

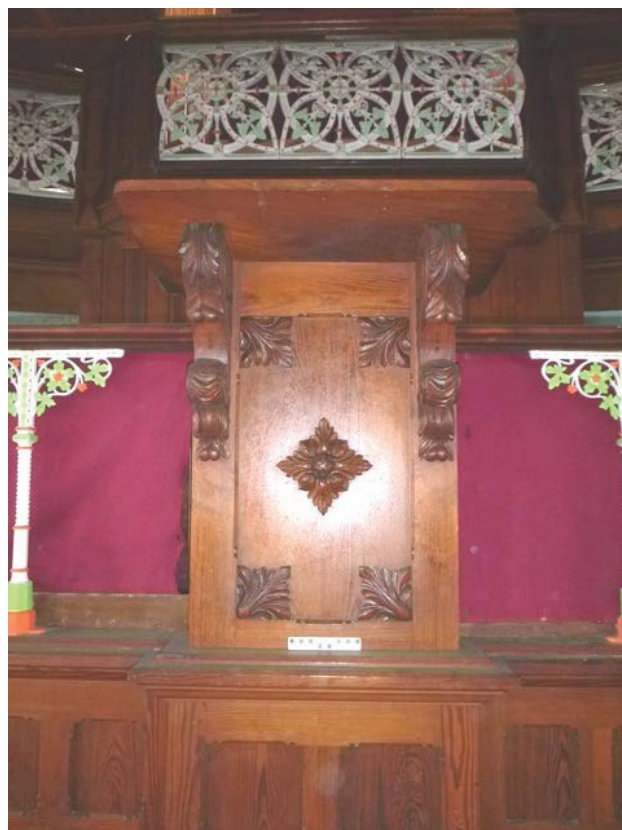


Plate 66 (right): Detail of the timber carving decorating the lectern on the pulpit, ground floor Room 2, viewed from the east



Plate 67 (left): Example of the iron panels around the gallery, ground floor Room 2



Plate 68 (right): Iron column supporting the gallery, ground floor Room 2, viewed from the south-east

4.3.3 The walls are finished with plaster and paint and there is an ovolo-moulded skirting board throughout as well as complex moulded cornice along the north and south elevations. The north elevation steps out on the west side and is partially set at a curving angle, where there is a doorway with an ovolo moulded surround. The door itself is curved and covered with red felt, attached with metal studs. There are three windows across the elevation to the east of this, each with splayed jambs with decorative plaster beading in a twisted rope effect (Plate 69). The casements are as per the external view, except it is evident that the top light is hinged. Below the sill level of these windows tongue and groove plank panelling is attached and at high level there are three vents in the wall. The east elevation has a small doorway on either side allowing access into a cupboard under the stairs. The doors each have four panels with stop chamfering and plain handles, probably modern (Plate 70). Inside the cupboards the floor is finished with stone flags and there are lots of iron pipes for the heating system and the underside of the timber stairs is visible. On the south graffiti has been added in chalk in an early copperplate handwriting, of which only 'J Vickers' and 'John Vickers' is discernible (Plate 71). The central part of the east elevation has two circular windows in the centre and a doorway at either end, each with four stop-chamfered panels. The south elevation is essentially a mirror image of the north (Plate 73), with the same curved door (Plate 74). The west elevation is set at an angle on the north and south sides while the centre is essentially covered by attached tongue and groove panels over the projecting section presumed to be associated with the organ above.



Plate 69 (left): North elevation, ground floor Room 2, viewed from the south-west

Plate 70 (right): Doorway to cupboard under stairs, south side of east elevation, ground floor Room 2, viewed from the west



Plate 71 (right): Graffiti in south cupboard under stairs, east side of ground floor Room 2, viewed from the south

Plate 72 (left): Central part of east elevation, ground floor Room 2, viewed from the west



Plate 73 (right): South elevation, ground floor Room 2, viewed from the north



Plate 74: Doorway in angled wall at west side of south elevation, ground floor Room 2, viewed from the north-east

4.3.4 **Ground floor Room 3:** this comprises something perhaps equivalent to a vestry or service wing for the building essentially forming a corridor at the west end and perhaps originally forming a single larger room with Room 4. The floor is mostly tongue and groove floorboards, although there is a large block of concrete in the floor with iron fittings at the west end. The ceiling is irregular lath and plaster but with a section of large timber beams projecting on the north side of a curved area, which presumably relate to the position of the organ (Plate 77). The walls are finished with plaster and paint in a generally poor condition with square timber panelling along the lower part. The north elevation has a wide opening, presumably originally a window, now fitted with double doors constructed with tongue and groove planks (Plate 75) leading into an area above the monopitch outshut. The east elevation has a doorway at the

north end with a tongue and groove plank door with angled battens with stop chamfers (Plate 76). The wall returns as the curved section at the south end where the curving doorway has a six panel door with stop chamfer decoration (Plate 77). At the south end there are the remains of a doorway across the room, at the point where the concrete block is in the floor, with a small upper opening door with beaded and plain panels (Plate 77). The south elevation is relatively modern infill comprising hardboard over timber framing, although the timber framing appears earlier and may be mirroring that to the other side of the concrete block in the floor. The west elevation is largely plain and exposed stone at the south end where the plaster has come away. Beyond this there is square timber panels over the lower part and a former fireplace on the north side, largely obscured by an attached later boiler. The fireplace has projecting square surrounds and a timber mantel piece, which has been truncated at the north end to accommodate some electrical fittings and cut through in the centre to accommodate the flue for the boiler (Plate 78). The opening of the fireplace is covered by modern sheeting.



Plate 75 (left): North elevation, ground floor Room 3, viewed from the south



Plate 76 (right): Doorway at the north end of the east elevation, ground floor Room 3, viewed from the west



Plate 77 (left): The south end of ground floor Room 3, viewed from the north

Plate 78 (right): Fireplace at the north end of the west elevation, ground floor Room 3, viewed from the north-east

4.3.4 **Ground floor Room 4:** this comprises a small area, little more than a toilet and lobby, at the south-west corner of the building, and presumably originally formed the south end of a larger room including Room G3. The floor is tongue and groove timber boards and the ceiling lathe and plaster, with a projecting timber section over the curving wall in the north-east corner. The walls are finished with plaster and paint and plain panelling over the lower part plus a moulded skirting board on the north side of the east elevation. The north-west corner has been partitioned to form a toilet accessed by a doorway with four stop-chamfered panels and a plain surround (Plate 79). The west side of the north elevation, inside the toilet, is a timber stud partition with a toilet attached. To the east, out of the toilet, the wall is curved and includes a doorway with a curved door with six stop-chamfered panels, with an early 20th century lock with Bakelite handle (Plate 80). The east elevation is plain, with a slight step in the centre, with the panelling to the south. The south elevation has a window on the east side with splayed jambs, the casements as per the external view although the top light is hinged. To the west is a doorway, blocked with masonry to leave as small window at the top with three fixed lights below the round door head (Plate 81). The west elevation is essentially plain; there is a sink on iron brackets attached on the north side with a tiled splash back and panelling over the lower part (Plate 79). The lower part of the wall is entirely tiled within the toilet.



Plate 79 (left): Toilet and sink in the north-west corner of ground floor Room 4, viewed from the south-east
Plate 80 (right): Curved door in the east side of the north elevation, ground floor Room 4, viewed from the south-west



Plate 81: Window and blocked doorway in the south elevation, ground floor Room 4, viewed from the north

4.3.5 Ground floor Room 5: this is located in the monopitch outshut extending from the west end of the north elevation and is at a lower level than the rest of the ground floor, with a small 'attic' on top that is accessible from Room G3, but it will be described as a single room as the upper floor is only temporary. The lower part has a concrete floor and the floor above comprises three re-used plank and batten doors that do not extend all the way to the north elevation and rest on timber joists orientated east/west. The walls are largely plain and comprise exposed stone. The north elevation has two narrow but tall windows the lower part of both of which is blocked with stone and the top covered by timber plank shutters. The east elevation has a window in the centre with a four-light fixed timber casement and a long timber lintel, which extends the full length of the elevation and is utilised by a doorway on the south side, which has a plank and batten door. The south elevation has evidently originally the external wall of the main building, and has what is clearly a window sill projecting from the centre below what is now the access to Room G3 above. A large iron pipe runs through the wall on the west side. The west elevation is plain. The upper level is generally plain, although it is even more apparent that the south elevation was originally the external wall of the building and that the access to Room G3 was originally a window as the dressed lintel is evident. There is also a small window in the east elevation, which is partially blocked with concrete blocks leaving an alcove.



Plate 82 (left): The north elevation of ground floor Room 5 showing the two windows, viewed from the south

Plate 83 (right): The east elevation of ground floor Room 5 showing the window and doorway, viewed from the north-west



Plate 84: The south elevation of ground floor Room 5 showing the sill of the former window, viewed from the north

4.3.6 First floor Room 1: this comprises a single room extending over Rooms G1-4 below. The ceiling comprises decorative plasterwork comprising several geometric panels divided by moulded bands with floral corner sprays (Plate 85), elaborate ceiling roses including a large central rose (Plate 86) and four smaller secondary ones (Plate 87), and an elaborate and deep cornice again with floral decoration. Electrical light fittings are attached around the edges and there is an access hatch to the attic in the north-east corner. The floor comprises timber tongue and groove boards, stepping up to the walls on all sides but with an additional two steps on the east side and with scars denoting the former positions of the pews. The access from Room G1 via staircases in the north-east and south-east corners, which are flanked by low walls finished with timber plank panelling. The central part over the gallery is filled with modern chipboard sheeting, which sits on top of the gallery rail; in places small sections of the gallery rail have been cut out apparently to fit the decorative iron panels, further suggesting that they are actually a later addition. The top part of the organ with the exposed pipes and a small bench is set against the centre of the west elevation. The walls are mainly finished with plaster and paint, although the west is in poor condition due to damp and has had asbestos sheeting attached to it, excluding the central part where the organ is positioned, which obscures any detail and is probably the reason why the cornice is missing at this end. The lower part of the walls is finished with tongue and groove plank panelling and there are large iron pipes for the heating running along the base of all of the walls. The north elevation has four windows with round heads beaded edges in a rope pattern (Plate 88). The casements are multi-light and coloured, as per the external view, with the top section hinged. The east elevation has four windows, as per those to the north and south although the central two are set next to each other, and the plank panelling extends up to their sills (Plate 89). The south elevation is a mirror image of the north (Plate 90) and the west elevation is essentially obscured by the asbestos sheeting (Plate 91).



Plate 85 (left): General view of the ceiling in first floor Room 1, viewed from the south-west

Plate 86 (right): Detail of the central ceiling rose in first floor Room 1



Plate 87 (left): Detail of a secondary ceiling rose in first floor Room 1



Plate 88 (right): North elevation, first floor Room 1, viewed from the south-east



Plate 89 (left): The east elevation in first floor Room 1, viewed from the north-west



Plate 90 (right): The south elevation in first floor Room 1, viewed from the north-east



Plate 91: The west elevation in first floor Room 1, viewed from the east

4.3.7 **Attic:** the difficult of safe access made detailed examination impossible. Roof is exposed and comprises grey slate. It is supported by five trusses each with a king post and queen posts and two pairs of angled braces, notched to meet the principle rafters (Plate 92). There are four purlins per pitch plus a ridge plank. There are no north and south elevations as such. The east elevation has a row of four openings blocked with timber boards externally and so remaining as alcoves internally (Plate 93). They share a single timber lintel, which has Baltic marks cut into it. At the south end of the elevation there is a ceramic pipe buried into the wall following the angle of the gable, which is presumably the flue for a stove or similar that there is now no evidence for. The west elevation also has a single opening in the centre, blocked externally and leaving an alcove and on the north side a ceramic pipe set into the wall following the angle of the gable. This is only evident because in places the wall has been broken into to access the pipe, apparently so a modern liner could be installed.



Plate 92 (left): The trusses in the attic, viewed from the north-east

Plate 93 (right): The east elevation in the attic, viewed from the west

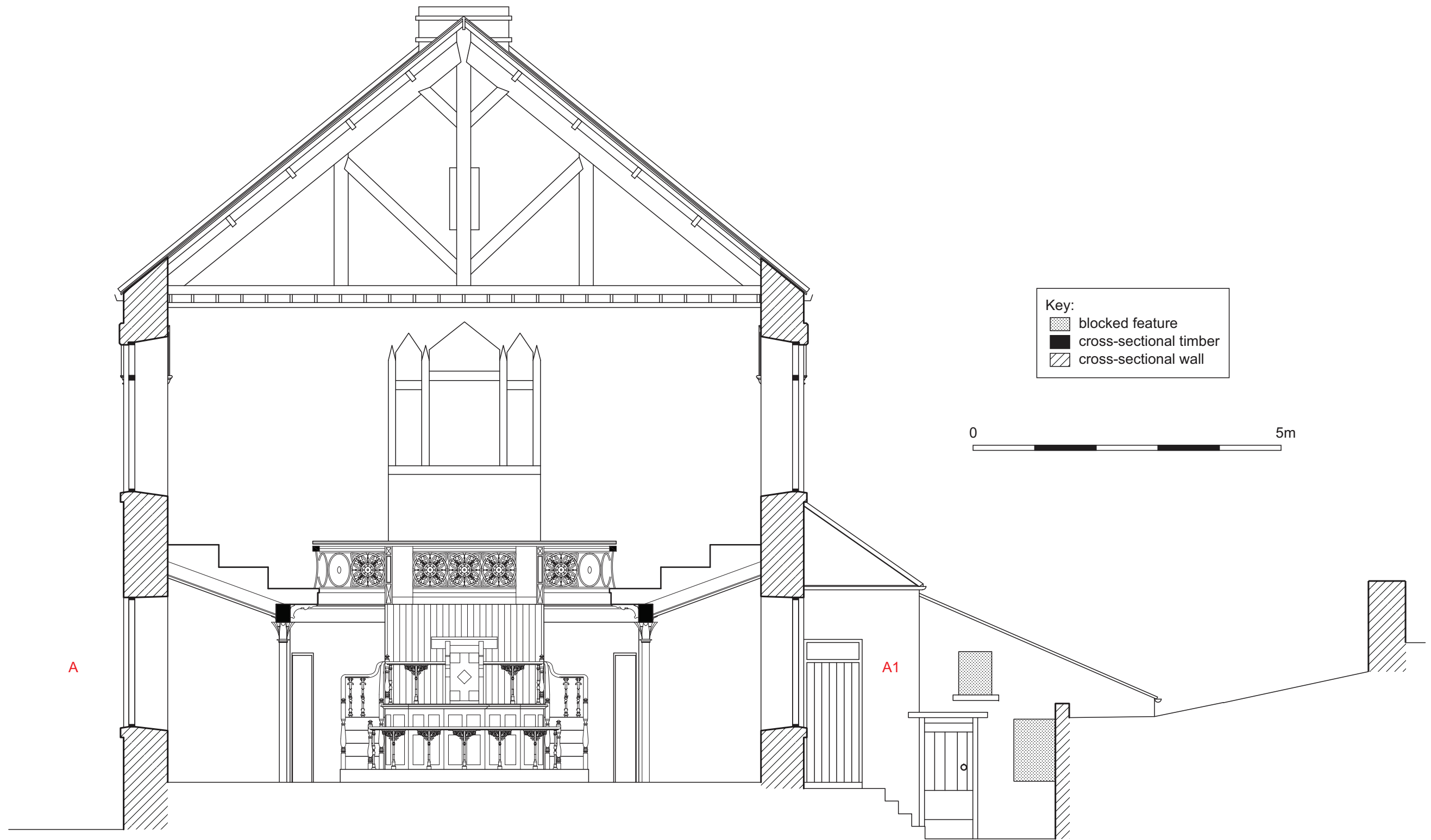


Figure 5: Cross-section A-A1



Figure 6: Cross-section B-B1

5. Discussion

5.1 Phasing

5.1.1 **Phase 1 – 1826:** while it is apparent from the documentary evidence that there was an earlier chapel on the site, built in 1826, there is no particular evidence for it within the building, with the exception of the reused datestone in Room G1, despite the claims of the Listed Building description (see *Appendix 1*) which had been subsequently repeated (Ryder 2011). The argument is that the section at the west end now used as a bike shop, which is not part of the current application and so was only examined externally, represents part of the 1826 chapel. This, however, seems very unlikely as structurally it seems implausible that either the new and presumably much taller church would be built onto an existing wall or that one end of the old church could be retained and attached onto the new building without collapse; indeed one source describes the old chapel as collapsing during the building of the new one, while another states that the 1826 chapel was demolished. No evidence is present within the building to suggest that the hipped section at the west end is anything less than a later addition, although what it was built for and when is unclear. It is clearly present on the Ordnance Survey map of 1899, which is the first to depict the present building but was produced over 20 years after the rebuilding of 1873. Nevertheless, the west end does bear a resemblance to the original chapel, in as much as this can be ascertained. It is therefore most likely that the intention had been to retain the west end of the 1826 chapel, but this had collapsed or had to be demolished and so had effectively been rebuilt on the same footprint and in the same style, against the west gable of the new chapel.

5.1.2 **Phase 2 – 1872-1878:** the bulk of the standing building was evidently constructed between 1872 and 1873, to the designs of George Race. In this regard it is almost identical to the Westgate Chapel in Weardale, which was also designed by George Race and built in 1871 (Historic Chapels Trust nd). The detailing and this connection would suggest that some of the same contractors and/or suppliers were perhaps used, although there is seemingly limited information about the construction of the Westgate Chapel available. The Nenthead Chapel at this time evidently comprised the main part of the building comprising the entrance lobby at the east end (Room G1), the chapel (Room G2), service room (Room G3), and a smaller room at the south-west corner (Room G4) of uncertain function but probably the original vestry, as well as the first floor (Room F1) and attic. According to several documentary sources the original organ was not installed until 1878, although it was presumably incorporated into the original design. The concrete block in the floor between Rooms G3 and G4 probably represents its location, and it was evidently accessible via small doorways built into timber partition walls. The hipped addition to the west clearly dates to this phase or later, but incorporates some elements of the earlier chapel, albeit almost entirely rebuilt (see *Section 5.1.1* above). There was evidently a fireplace providing heating in the back room (G3), the flue of which ran up the west gable wall to the chimney, and there must have been some form of heating at the east end as there is a flue in the east gable, although no evidence for a fireplace or chimney remains. It perhaps served a free standing stove on the first floor. Much of the original decorative scheme, including the iron columns supporting the gallery, the plaster ceiling, and cornices probably belongs to this phase.

5.1.3 **Phase 3 – Early 20th century:** at some point after the 1898 revision Ordnance Survey map, which led to the publication of the 1899 edition, a new monopitch extension (Room G5) was added to the north side of the west end of the building. This was clearly to house a solid fuel boiler, although this is now missing, and the extensive iron pipes and radiators incorporated rather awkwardly around the building again relate to this phase. The dating of this alteration is unclear due to the lack of available mapping, although there was evidently a general period of improvements carried out in the early part of the 20th century, as shown by the extensive scheme of redecoration recorded in 1937, something that is to some extent confirmed by the recent analysis of the paint (Crick Smith 2014). In addition, the installation of a new organ, either in c1900 or in 1943, depending on what exactly is meant by the available evidence, would presumably have necessitated some further alterations given that the whole pulpit area is effectively integral to this. Indeed, it is notable that the seemingly Arts and Crafts style of the metal work associated with the pulpit and the gallery is not exactly in keeping with the date at which the church was constructed (although the cast iron around the pulpit is arguably more fitting in terms of its style) as the

Arts and Crafts movement did not really begin until the 1880s and reached its peak c1900 (see Haslam 2004; Hyde and Whittaker 2014, 122-171). The manner in which the gallery panels appear to have been inserted somewhat crudely into the rails also suggests that they are a later addition. This, however, presents some difficulties as they are exactly the same as those used in the Westgate Chapel, which would suggest that it too was modified at this time. In the absence of a detailed study into this building it is difficult to make a proper comparison, but it is notable that documentary sources do indicate that some improvements or alterations were carried out there in 1887 (DRO M/We 396 1887; DRO M/We 397, 1887, although it is not clear if this is referring to the chapel or the minister's house) and 1901, at which time work relating to the 'organ platform' is specifically mentioned (DRO M/We 391 1901). It is also evident that, following the removal of the original organ and addition of the new boiler house, some changes were made to the arrangement of Rooms G3 and G4, with what had originally been a window in the north side of Room G3 forming a doorway into the upper part of Room G5 and a toilet created in Room G4 (although it is possible that an earlier one had stood in this area).

5.1.4 Phase 4 – Late 20th century: the later part of the 20th century was generally a period of decline in the condition in the building, presumably in part at least due to a decline in use, but more specifically because of the rendering of the west external elevation, which led to moisture getting trapped in the wall and substantial damp problems. It is not clear when the render was added and it may have been in Phase 3; it was certainly early enough for a solution to the damp to be sought in cladding the west internal wall, at first floor level, in asbestos concrete sheeting. The blocking of the upper level windows in the west end must have taken place at the same time, and the blocking of the attic level windows in the east end, albeit only with timber boards, probably also took place at this time. More specific alterations in this phase include the formation of a floor by spanning over the gallery at first floor level, which was carried out between 1983 and 1986, and the removal of the steps leading up to the doorway at the west end of the south elevation (into Room G4) and partial blocking of this doorway, which must have taken place between 1977 and 1986.

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 The church represents a structure of considerable architectural merit, something recognised by its Grade II Listed status, but is also of historical interest within the context of the development of the settlement at Nenthead. The building also shows a remarkably complex development, given its date, although this is in part because of its early predecessor on the site, some of which has evidently been incorporated into the building, although probably essentially entirely rebuilt. The lack of available documentary sources relating to the original construction in of the present building in 1872-1873 makes a detailed understanding of what this included and the original decorative scheme difficult, and there is some evidence that there was considerable alteration to the interior in the early 20th century, but whether this represents a substantial change including replacement of some of the cast iron elements c1900 or just repainting in the 1930s is difficult to be certain of. The fact that the almost identical Westgate Chapel has the same cast iron elements suggests that either it is original to both, or both had a similar scheme of redecoration at the same time. Later alterations were largely concerned with sub-dividing the internal space and putting it to different uses, also several schemes were clearly never carried out. More recently declining use has led to a general period of decay, in particular caused by damp penetration through the west wall.

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Appendix 1: Listed Building Information

From: www.historicengland.org.uk

Name: Nenthead Methodist Church

List entry Number: 1408095

Location: Methodist Church, Nenthead, Alston, Alston, CA9 3PF

County: Cumbria

District: Eden

District Type: District Authority

Parish: Alston Moor

Grade: II

Date first listed: 23-Apr-2012

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Asset Groupings: This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description:

Summary of Building

Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, 1873 to the designs of George Race, incorporating the western block of an earlier 1826 chapel at its west end.

Reasons for Designation

Nenthead Wesleyan Methodist chapel of 1873 is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

*Historic interest: Methodism was an integral part of the character of C19 lead mining settlements in the North Pennines, the spiritual and social lives of their inhabitants being inextricably bound up with activities centring upon chapels such as these.

*Architectural interest: Italianate in style, the exterior is articulated with ashlar detailing including stop-chamfered jambs, moulded imposts and keyed archivolt and similarly well-detailed interior plaster and metalwork.

Cast-Iron work: the unusually ornate decorative ironwork of the interior is attractive and precisely made, of which the gallery fronts, paralleled at the Grade II Westgate Chapel, are of particular note.

*Intactness: this is an almost intact C19 Methodist chapel, whose only significant loss is that of the gallery seating.

*Group Value: it has group value with a cluster of features associated with the lead mine to which the village owes its existence which illustrate the significant relationship between lead company and community.

History

The Quaker-owned London Lead Company, lessee of the area's mines, was keen to encourage nonconformist faith within its mining communities and, in common with many villages in the North Pennines, Nenthead was provided with both a Primitive and a Wesleyan Methodist chapel. John Wesley is known to have preached in the area in the mid and later C18. In 1826, the London Lead Company gifted a site upon which a Wesleyan chapel was erected; the footprint of this building is depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1860 as a rectangular building with smaller blocks appended to either end. In 1873, the present chapel was constructed and its depiction on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1890 shows it to occupy the site of the central and eastern block of the first chapel; this suggests that the original western block remained standing and it is thought that it was used as a Sunday school to the new chapel. The two Methodist congregations in the village joined in the 1930s and there after used only the Wesleyan Chapel.

Details

MATERIALS: coursed square sandstone blocks to east and south elevations, more roughly laid to north elevation; west elevation is rendered and roughcast. Sandstone dressings and graduated Lakeland slate roofs with stone flag roof to porch extension. Wrought-iron finial and cast-iron balustrades.

PLAN: rectangular with a small porch with later extension to north side, later extended, and a small rectangular building attached to the west end.

EXTERIOR: situated at the centre of the village on a corner site with main elevations fronting Church Lane and the main road. All windows have 4-pane fixed casements, which retain some original latticed glazing; their hinged top lights have Y-pattern glazing, and all windows have coloured glazed borders. The roof is pitched, there are gable copings and the east gable is surmounted by an ashlar block carrying a cruciform plan finial and the west gable by a stone stack. The east gable is symmetrical with a pair of central pair of round-arched doorways, with double panelled doors, stop-chamfered ashlar jambs, moulded imposts and keyed archivolt. There are fanlights above the doors (boarded over) and above these is a large ashlar block with the words 'WESLEYAN CHURCH 1873' inscribed within a sunken panel. To either side are windows with similar heads and sills. At gallery level there is a similar arrangement with two central windows rather than doors and above this the pattern is repeated at a smaller scale (all boarded over). The south elevation fronts the main road with four square-headed windows to the ground floor and four round-headed windows to the gallery; there is a partially blocked doorway at the west end similar to the main entrance. At the south eastern corner of the chapel, there is a large ashlar block inscribed: Laid by/ MRS W D STEPHENS/of Newcastle/August 22nd 1873. The north elevation has four rectangular-headed windows to each level and a hipped roof porch at the west end with a boarded door and overlight; the porch has a later lean-to extension. The west gable is partially obscured by an attached single-storey building with a hipped roof, interpreted as part of an earlier chapel on the same site and later used as a Sunday school; it has a large inserted opening in its south elevation and a pair of round-arched windows in its west elevation. Above its roof line, at gallery level on the main chapel there are two round-arched windows (blocked in with brick), and a similar window above.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: there are two large chamfered stone piers with pyramidal caps in front of the main doorway, to the south is a low flat-coped wall and to the north a length of spiked-top railings.

INTERIOR: the entrance opens into a rectangular lobby with an open string staircase with turned balusters and moulded newels, at each end giving access to the gallery. Set into a mat well at the foot of the south stair there is a stone tablet from the earlier chapel bearing a flower decoration and scallop-like ornaments in its upper corners; it is inscribed 'CHAPEL ERECTED 1826' beneath lettering in the form of an arch reading 'WESLEYAN METHODIST'. A four-panelled door at each end of the lobby leads into the main body of the chapel, and between them a pair of circular windows with coloured radial glazing. The main body of the chapel has a boarded floor and dado, and pine fixed benches with shaped ends; a central block of six, even under the gallery on the south with two further at the front set at right angles, and six on the north. The dais is centrally placed at the west end, enclosed by communion rails it has a panelled front with a raised reading desk on scrolled foliate brackets with rails on either side carried by similar decorative uprights to the communion rail below. There is a short stair at each side with a handrail carried on ornamental cast-iron balusters and the organ is set to the rear. Curved doors to either side give access to the Minister's room and a large kitchen, which extends into the porch projection. The windows have rope-moulded plaster surrounds. The gallery is carried on seven cast-iron piers with foliate capitals, and the gallery front is of cast-iron openwork with cruciform, floral and leaf motifs. Beneath the gallery, the side walls have a moulded plaster cornice. The main body of the chapel has been ceiled over at the level of the top of the gallery balustrade.

At gallery level there is a boarded dado, and all seating has been removed. The windows have rope-mould surrounds and plaster archivolt carried on shaped corbels. With the exception of the west wall there is an ornate plaster cornice, and the ornate ceiling has a large central rose within a diamond-shaped panel enclosed by a further twelve panels; the corner panels contain smaller roses. The organ remains in situ with stencilled pipes.