

**HISTORIC BUILDING SURVEY REPORT:
STATHERN METHODIST CHAPEL, CHAPEL LANE
STATHERN, LEICESTERSHIRE**

Planning Reference: 10/00501/FUL

NGR: SK 7702 3113

Site Code: STMC 10

Leicestershire Museum Arts and Record Service Accession Number: X.A190.2010

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Report prepared for Mr P Enderby

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
Report Number 2011001

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Summary	1
1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Site Location and Description	2
3.0 Planning Background	2
4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background	2
5.0 Methodology	3
6.0 Results	3
7.0 Discussion and Conclusions	4
8.0 Acknowledgements	5
9.0 References	6

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Colour Plates	7
Appendix 2: Photographic Archive List	13

- Figure 1:** Site location at scale 1:25,000, with the site in red
Figure 2: Site location at scale 1:500, with the development area outlined in red. Numbered arrows indicate location and orientation of all exterior shots. Interior shots shown on Figure 3
Figure 3: Floor plan at scale 1:100. Numbered arrows indicate location and orientation of all interior shots. Exterior shots shown on Figure 2
Figure 4: Elevations at scale 1:200
Figure 5: Floor plan at scale 1:100, showing provisional phasing of building

- Plate 1 (Shot 16):** North elevation of the former chapel and brick outbuilding, looking south
Plate 2 (Shot 1): East elevation of the chapel, looking east
Plate 3 (Shot 14): Detail of east elevation showing joint between two early building phases of the chapel. Notice the large quoins to the right representing the corner of the early chapel
Plate 4 (Shot 3): Detail of brick porch on east elevation, looking west
Plate 5 (Shot 6): Latest phase of extensions at south end of chapel, looking north-east. Note south elevation of earlier extension to left of shot
Plate 6 (Shot 8): West elevation of chapel, looking east-north-east
Plate 7 (Shot 9): General view of the concrete rendered coal shed on the north-west corner of the building. Looking north
Plate 8 (Shot 11): Derelict brick outbuilding adjacent to the coal store. Looking north
Plate 9 (Shot 20): Interior roof structure of the converted dovecote, also showing dove holes and the traces of a psalm plate to the right of the window, looking north
Plate 10 (Shot 23): Kitchen block, looking north-west from south-east corner of chapel. Note also recessed floor at south end of chapel
Plate 11 (Shot 25): Wooden arcade dividing the north-west corner of the chapel. Doorway to the left of shot leads to the kitchen. Looking west-south-west
Plate 12 (Shot 24): Kitchen interior showing brick sleeper walls. Looking north

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- A photographic survey was undertaken of Stathern Methodist Chapel on Chapel Lane in Stathern, Leicestershire, in advance of its replacement with a new dwelling.
- The chapel was converted from a stone dovecote in 1825, and extended and altered in the following years. The north wall of the chapel was confirmed as representing the only surviving part of the former dovecote, with dove holes visible above the roof line inside the building.
- Following its initial conversion to a place of worship, the chapel was extended to the south and west in stone and brick in 1832, with the possible addition of a coal shed and outbuilding at the same time. A porch was added to the east elevation, probably in the late 19th or early 20th century, and the building was further extended to the south in 1956.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited (hereafter AAL) was commissioned by Mr P Enderby to carry out a photographic survey of a former Methodist chapel in Stathern, Leicestershire in advance of its demolition and replacement with a new dwelling.
- 1.2 The fieldwork and reporting conforms to a brief prepared by the Historic and Natural Environment Team at Leicestershire County Council (HNET 2010), the English Heritage guidelines in '*Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice*' (English Heritage 2006), the IfA '*Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures*' (IfA 1996, revised 2001 and 2008) as well as a specification prepared by AAL (Clay 2010).
- 1.3 The documentary archive will be submitted to Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Record Service for long-term storage, and will be stored under the museum accession number X.A190.2010.

2.0

- 2.1 Stathern is situated in the administrative district of Melton Borough Council, approximately 12km north-north-east of Melton Mowbray. The site is located in the centre of the village, at the west end of Chapel Lane, and is centred on NGR SK 7702 3113.

3.0

- 3.1 A planning application has been submitted for the demolition of the former Methodist Chapel and erection of a three bedroom one and a half storey dwelling (Planning Application Reference 10/00501/FUL), and has been approved with conditions. The planning conditions include the undertaking of a programme of historic building recording of the structures that are affected by development prior to their demolition.

4.0

- 4.1 The village of Stathern is of probable Late Saxon origin, and it appears in the Domesday Book as *Stachetone*, a name of Old English origin literally meaning 'stake-thorn' and perhaps referring to a thorn tree marking a boundary (<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/~aezins/kepnp.php>). At this time the land was under the ownership of Robert of Tosny and Geoffrey de la Guerche (Williams and Martin 2002).
- 4.2 It is believed that non-conformist preachers first came to the village in the late 18th century, and adapted a former dovecote as a makeshift chapel. Elements of the former dovecote were built into a proper chapel in 1825 after the land had been handed over by Mr Guy of Plunger. The chapel was extended in 1832 and again in 1956 (Breslin 2010).
- 4.3 As grain prices fell during the mid 17th to mid 18th centuries, dovecotes became very common on farms, providing a cheap source of meat in the winter, and the dung they provided was another important commodity. They went out of fashion in the late 18th century however with the rise of the new model farms and increasing grain prices and pigeons were considered as vermin (Wade Martins 1991).

5.0

- 5.1 The building survey was undertaken by Chris Clay of AAL on Thursday 9th December using a Fujifilm Finepix twelve megapixel 35mm digital SLR camera. The weather was overcast, and light was generally good, and there was a light coverage of snow at the time of the survey. Prior to the survey part of the floor within the later extensions had been removed as had some of the render on the external east elevation.
- 5.2 Photographs were taken of the following: -
- All external elevations
 - All internal elevations, including internal walls and subdivisions
 - The roof structure of the buildings, internally and externally, where visible
 - The relationship of the structures to their surroundings
 - Architectural details, i.e. windows, doors, decorative brickwork, and other significant features, fixtures or fittings. Generally a single representative shot was taken of particular features such as windows or openings of a single type that occur more than once within the structure
 - A general internal photographic record of the building. Photographs were taken of each room/discrete internal space from sufficient points to show the form, general appearance and methods of construction
- 5.3 Metric scales of appropriate length and a tripod were used when required, with all photos annotated and linked to a floor plan (Figures 2 and 3).

6.0

(2 – 4)

- 6.1 The former chapel is a single storey building. It has a double pitched gable roof, half-hipped at the north end, with a coverage of S-shaped ceramic pantiles. Brick coping runs along the roof line (Plates 1 and 2).
- 6.2 The north elevation is believed to be the earliest part of the building and the only surviving wall of the original dovecote. It consists of irregular, coursed ironstone blocks with thick mortar joints and large quoins, and a brick repair at the bottom of the wall. Two concrete buttresses have been added for support. To the west can be seen the north elevation of a later extension, built in coursed ironstone blocks with English Garden Wall brickwork above, and rusticated brick quoins. There is a single nine-light window with thin glazing bars in a wooden frame in this elevation (Plate 1).
- 6.3 The east elevation is partially covered in a concrete render, and where it has been removed an underlying steel mesh is visible, originally held in place with metal pegs. Where the render has been removed the elevation displays evidence for three phases of development. The majority of the elevation is built in regular coursed limestone, representing the earliest two phases. A noticeable joint indicates where the later extension from 1832 abuts the earlier 1825 chapel to the north (Plate 3). Large dressed quoins to the right of this joint indicate the original south-eastern corner of the early chapel (Plate 3). Further to the south is the rendered brickwork of the 1956 extension, with rusticated brick quoins (Plate 2).
- 6.4 The eastern elevation also includes the later addition of a brick porch, with a brick plinth, an open pediment gable and a stone lintel. Angle bricks have been used on the corners of the porch and red and black quarry tiles cover the porch floor, leading up to a six-panelled wooden door which forms the entrance to the chapel. The roof of the porch is a double pitched pantile roof (Plate 4). The porch is stylistically too late to be associated with the 1825 or 1832 building phases, and may be a late 19th or early 20th century addition.

- 6.5 Also in the east elevation are four tall windows in wooden frames, each with three fixed lights and one top opening casement window (Plates 2 and 4).
- 6.6 The latest additions of 1956 are at the south end of the building, built in stretcher bond brickwork. This component of the building has three two-light windows, each with a single top opening casement, as well as a six-light window with two top opening casements. Within the eaves on the south elevation there is a small rectangular opening, perhaps being a decorative feature reflecting the former use of part of the chapel as a dovecote. All the openings in this part of the building have flat brick soldier arches (Plate 5).
- 6.7 The remainder of the west elevation is covered in concrete render, except for the south elevation of the kitchen block, which is built of a brickwork that is noticeably older than the adjacent extensions. It seems likely that this part of the building was converted into a kitchen during the latest phase of extension in 1956.
- 6.8 There are two further windows in the west elevation; a two light window in the kitchen with a single large fixed light below and a top opening casement above, with a four light window with a small top opening casement further to the north looking into the chapel itself, which is identical to the windows in the east elevation.
- 6.9 There is a brick built coal store on the north-west corner of the structure, covered by a pitched roof and rendered on its south elevation (Plate 7). There is a single opening on the south elevation. There is another derelict brick outbuilding to the west with a double pitched pantile roof (Plate 8).
- 6.10 The internal roof structure of the building comprises kingpost roof trusses, supporting principal rafters with through purlins. Straw insulation is visible below the roof tiles throughout most of the structure with plastic sheeting covering part of the western half of the roof. At the north end of the building above the roof line are a number of square dove holes which have been blocked off from the outside, probably when the structure was converted into a chapel. Traces of a possible psalm plate can also be seen on the northern wall (Plate 9).
- 6.11 The interior is divided into two areas; a large open space forming the chapel itself, with a kitchen and lobby in the south-west quarter of the building, separated by a brick partition wall with a single square opening (Plate 10). To the north of the kitchen, the north-west corner of the chapel is divided off with a wooden three bay, semi-circular arched arcade (Plate 11). All the internal walls are plastered and painted white.
- 6.12 The chapel floor is covered in cement, although floor at the southern end of the chapel, is c.0.5m lower the remaining floor, reflecting the location of the latest phase of extension. Inside the kitchen the floor has been removed, exposing brick sleeper walls as well as slots in the walls showing the position of the floor beams (Plate 12).

7.0

- 7.1 The surviving building displays as many as five possible phases of development, beginning with the former dovecote which was used when the non-conformist preachers came to the village in the early 19th century. A conjectural plan of this phasing is shown in Figure 5.
- 7.2 The northern wall of the chapel was indicated in the heritage statement submitted in support of the planning application as the only surviving element of the original dovecote (Breslin 2010), and this is confirmed by the survey, although this too has been substantially altered. The dove holes, which are visible from the inside of the chapel have been blocked up from the outside and

a window has been added at a later stage. Several brickwork repairs are also evident, and the wall is supported by two concrete buttresses (Breslin 2010).

- 7.3 Phase 2 of the development dates to 1825, when the dovecote was converted to form a new chapel, which probably retained the original dimensions of the dovecote, although altered for the purpose of religious worship.
- 7.4 The chapel was then extended to the south and west seven years later (Phase 3), and the join in the two phases of construction are evident on the east elevation (Plate 3). It is possible that the coal shed attached to the west elevation and the adjacent outbuilding are also of this date, as the brickwork is very similar to that exposed in the south elevation of the chapel.
- 7.5 The next phase identified, Phase 4, relates to the addition of a brick porch on the east elevation. The porch uses better quality machine made bricks with a much finer fabric than the coarser slightly irregular bricks used for the outbuildings and the south elevation of the kitchen. Although undated, it is stylistically of a late 19th or early 20th century form, and therefore does not belong to any of the documented phases of development in 1825, 1832 or 1956.
- 7.6 The final phase of construction (Phase 5) is represented by the 1956 brick extension at the south end of the chapel. The concrete render is likely to be an addition of this date, as well as the windows in the east and west elevations of the earlier chapel phases. It seems likely that the kitchen area was subject to internal alterations at this time as well.

8.0

- 8.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Mr P Enderby for this commission.

9.0

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Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1 (Shot 16): North elevation of the former chapel and brick outbuilding, looking south



Plate 2 (Shot 1): East elevation of the chapel, looking east



Plate 3 (Shot 14): Detail of east elevation showing joint between two early building phases of the chapel. Notice the large quoins to the right representing the corner of the early chapel



Plate 4 (Shot 3): Detail of brick porch on east elevation, looking west



Plate 5 (Shot 6): Latest phase of extensions at south end of chapel, looking north-east. Note south elevation of earlier extension to left of shot



Plate 6 (Shot 8): West elevation of chapel, looking east-north-east



Plate 7 (Shot 9): General view of the concrete rendered coal shed on the north-west corner of the building. Looking north.



Plate 8 (Shot 11): Derelict brick outbuilding adjacent to the coal store. Looking north



Plate 9 (Shot 20): Interior roof structure of the converted dovecote, also showing dove holes and the traces of a psalm plate to the right of the window, looking north

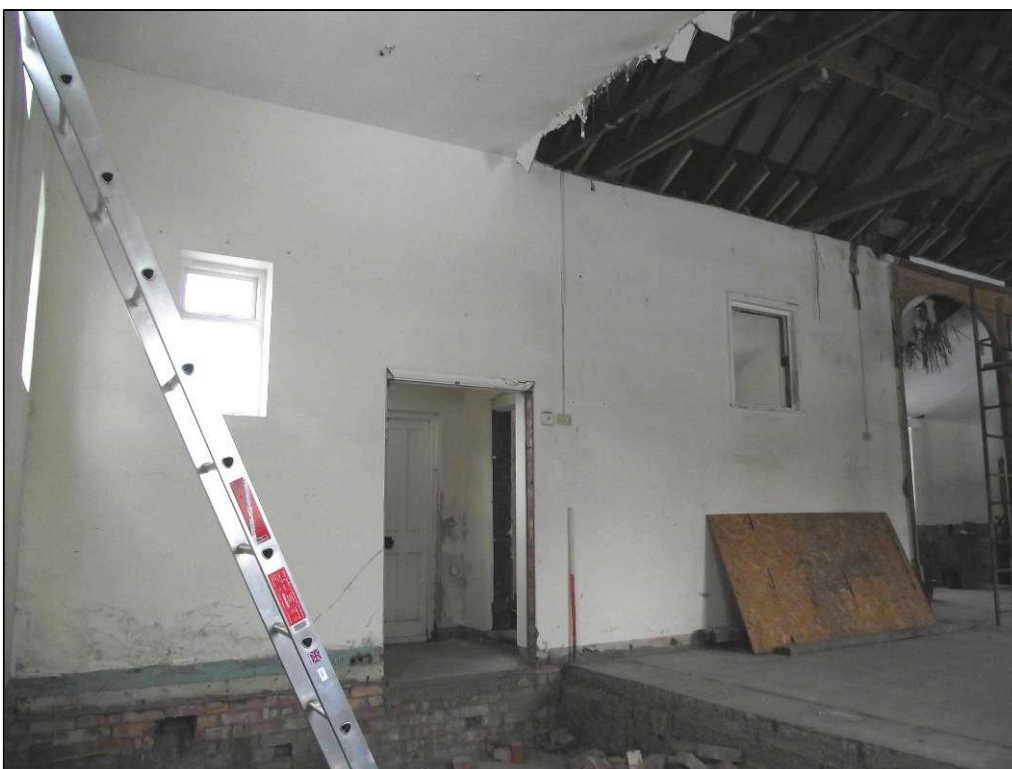


Plate 10 (Shot 23): Kitchen block, looking north-west from south-east corner of chapel. Note also recessed floor at south end of chapel



Plate 11 (Shot 25): Wooden arcade dividing the north-west corner of the chapel. Doorway to the left of shot leads to the kitchen. Looking west-south-west

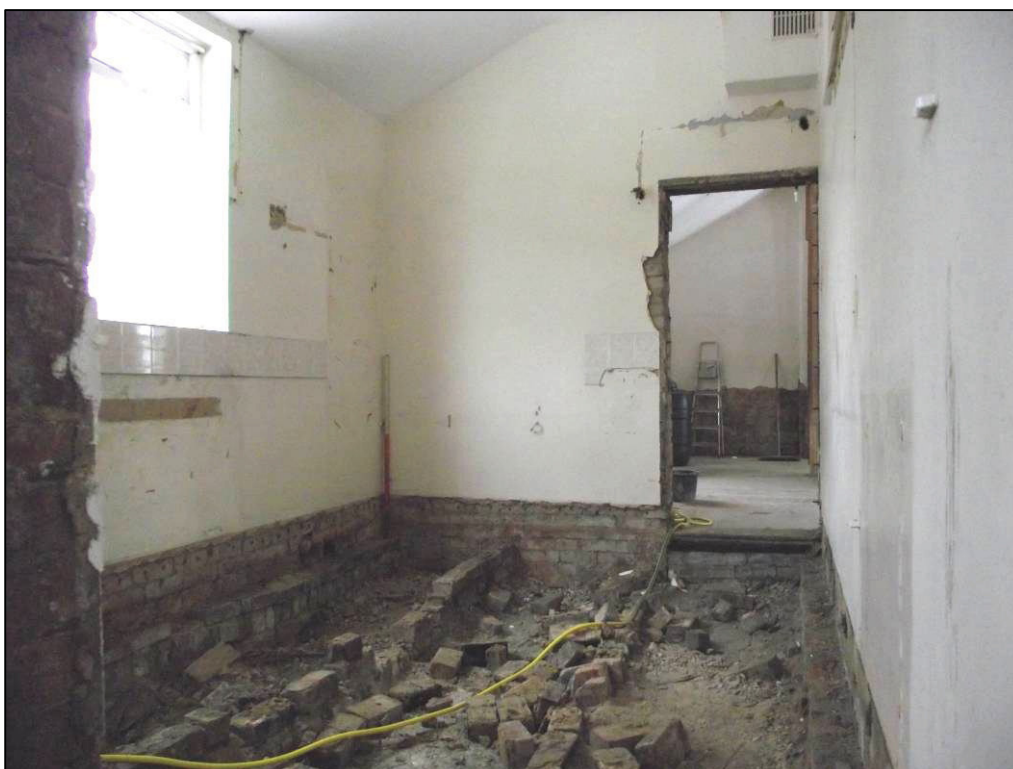


Plate 12 (Shot 24): Kitchen interior showing brick sleeper walls. Looking north

Appendix 2: Photographic Archive List

Shot	Looking	Type	Description
1a	WNW	Exterior	East elevation of chapel
1b	WNW	Exterior	East elevation of chapel
2a	WSW	Exterior	East elevation of chapel
2b	WSW	Exterior	East elevation of chapel
3a	WNW	Exterior	General view of porch on east elevation of the chapel
3b	WNW	Exterior	General view of porch on east elevation of the chapel
4a	WNW	Exterior/Detail	Detail of window in east elevation of chapel
4b	WNW	Exterior/Detail	Detail of window in east elevation of chapel
5a	NE	Exterior	South elevation of chapel
5b	NE	Exterior	South elevation of chapel
6a	NE	Exterior	South-western corner of chapel
6b	NE	Exterior	South-western corner of chapel
7a	ESE	Exterior/Detail	Detail of door in west elevation of chapel
7b	ESE	Exterior/Detail	Detail of door in west elevation of chapel
8a	ENE	Exterior	West elevation of the chapel
8b	ENE	Exterior	West elevation of the chapel
9a	NNE	Exterior	South elevation of coal shed
9b	NNE	Exterior	South elevation of coal shed
10a	SE	Exterior/Detail	Detail of the chimney stack
10b	SE	Exterior/Detail	Detail of the chimney stack
11a	NNE	Interior	South elevation of outbuilding
11b	NNE	Interior	South elevation of outbuilding
12a	WNW	Interior/Detail	Detail of chapel door inside porch
12b	WNW	Interior/Detail	Detail of chapel door inside porch
13a	WNW	Interior/Detail	Porch floor
13b	WNW	Interior/Detail	Porch floor
14a	WNW	Exterior/Detail	Join between earlier and later building phases on east elevation
14b	WNW	Exterior/Detail	Join between earlier and later building phases on east elevation
15a	NW	Exterior	General shot of the chapel
15b	NW	Exterior	General shot of the chapel
16a	SSW	Exterior	North elevation of chapel
16b	SSW	Exterior	North elevation of chapel
17a	SSW	Exterior/Detail	Detail of window in north elevation of chapel
17b	SSW	Exterior/Detail	Detail of window in north elevation of chapel
18a	NNW	Interior	General shot of chapel interior
18b	NNW	Interior	General shot of chapel interior
19a	S	Interior	General shot of chapel interior
19b	S	Interior	General shot of chapel interior
20a	NNE	Interior	General view of roof space showing dovecote wall
20b	NNE	Interior	General view of roof space showing dovecote wall
21a	S	Interior	General view of roof construction
21b	S	Interior	General view of roof construction
22a	S	Interior	General view of roof construction
22b	S	Interior	General view of roof construction
23a	WNW	Interior	General shot of the southern interior of the chapel
23b	WNW	Interior	General shot of the southern interior of the chapel
24a	N	Interior	Kitchen area
24b	N	Interior	Kitchen area
25a	WSW	Interior	General shot of wooden arcade
25b	WSW	Interior	General shot of wooden arcade
26a	E	Interior	Detail of make up of rubble core of wall
26b	E	Interior	Detail of make up of rubble core of wall

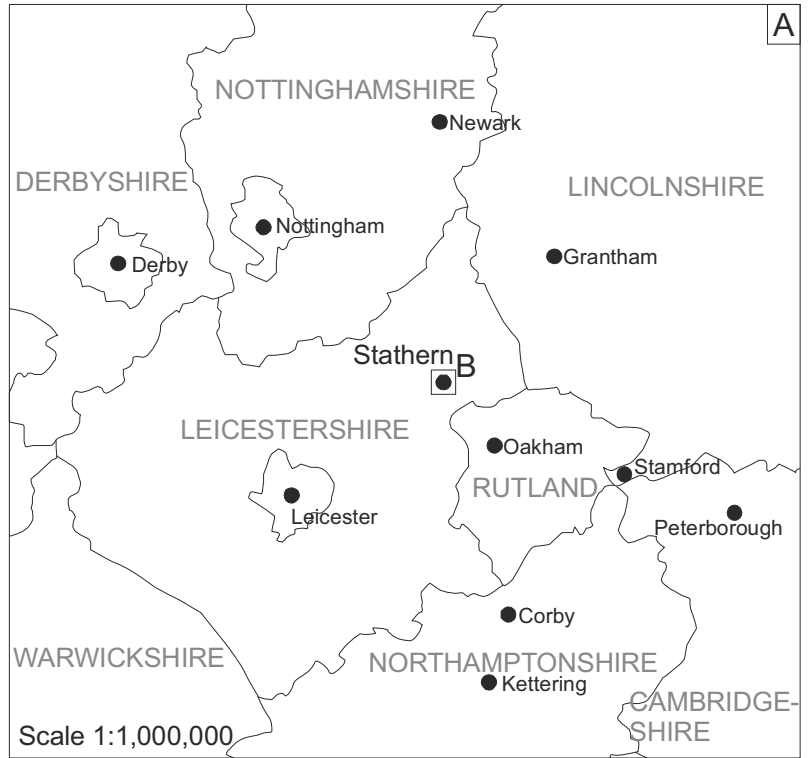
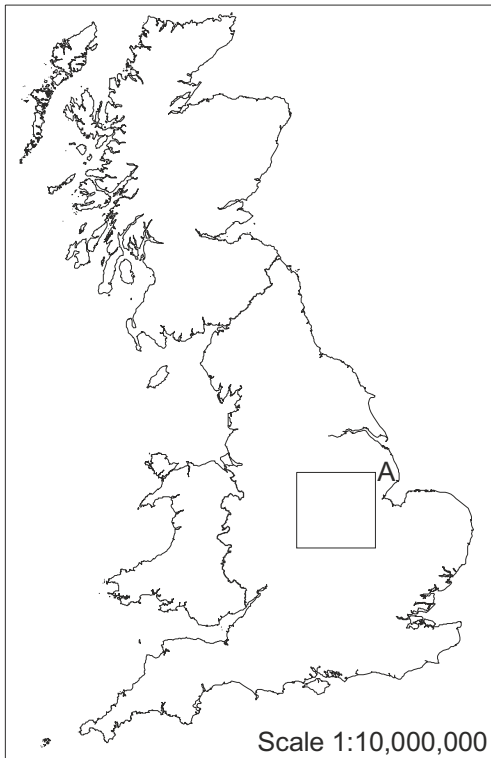


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1:25,000, with the site in red
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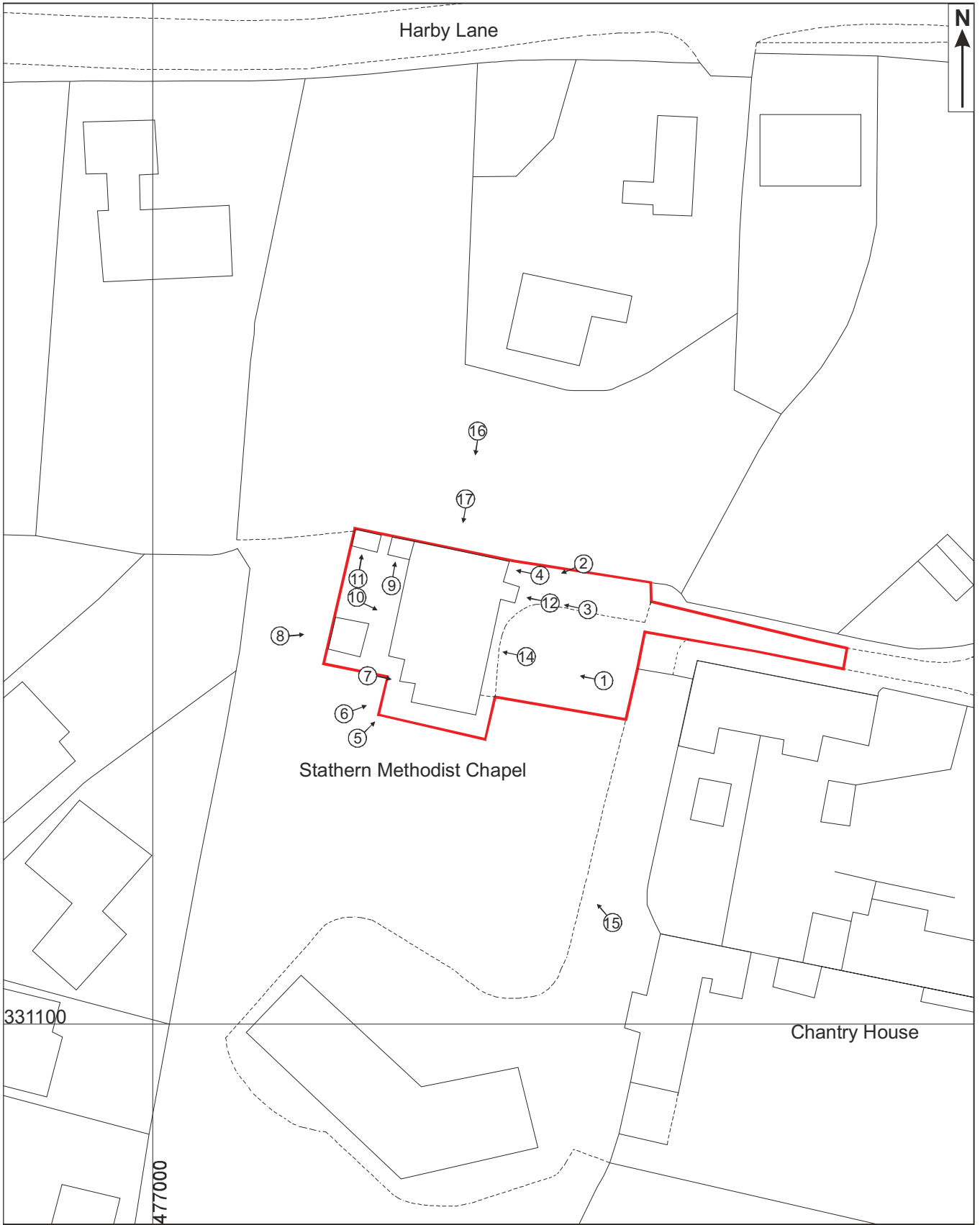


Figure 2: Site location at scale 1:500, with the development area outlined in red. Numbered arrows indicate location and orientation of all exterior shots. Interior shots shown on Figure 3

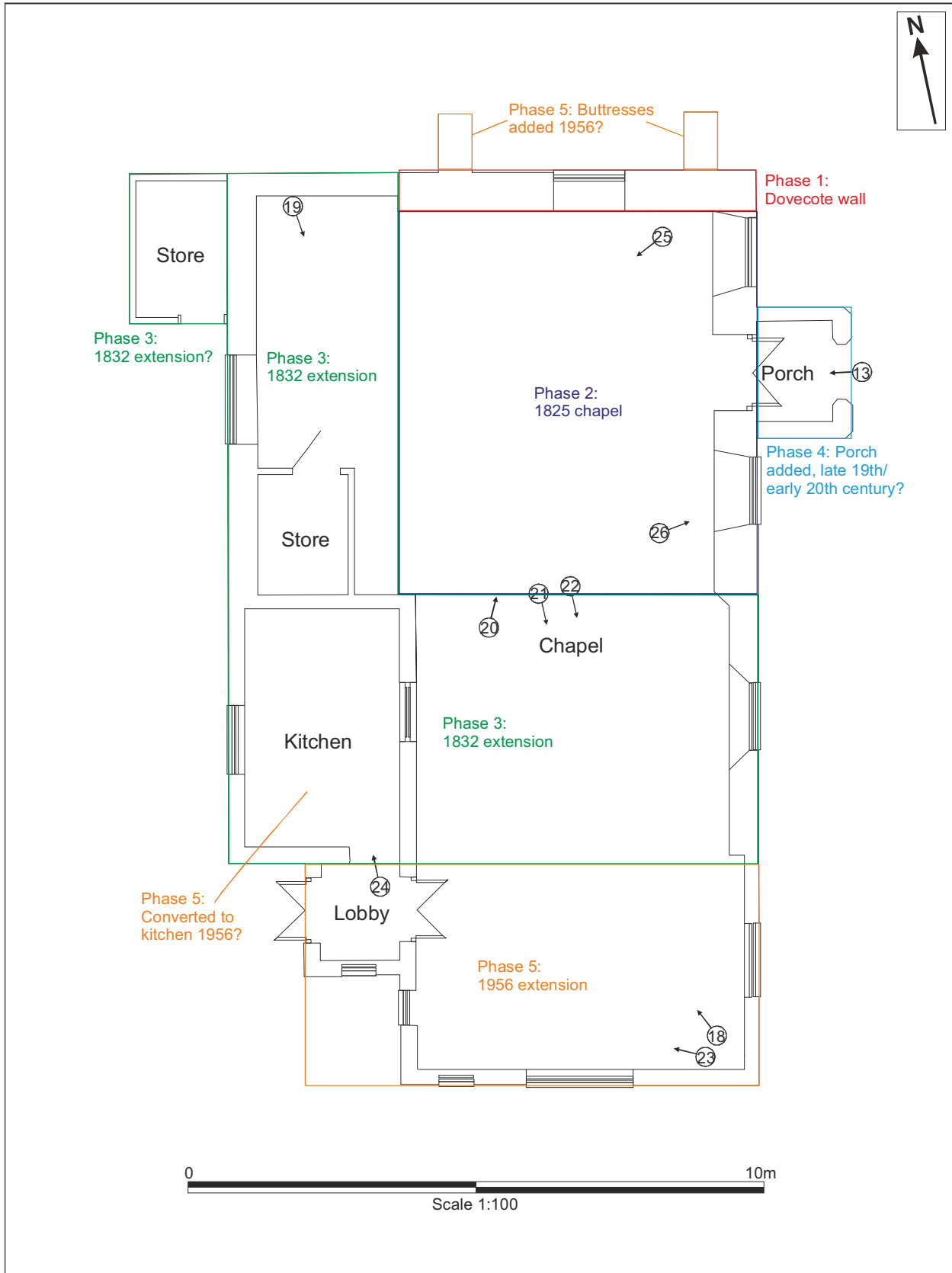


Figure 3: Floor plan at a scale 1:100 showing provisional phasing of building and orientation of all interior shots. Exterior shots shown on Figure 2

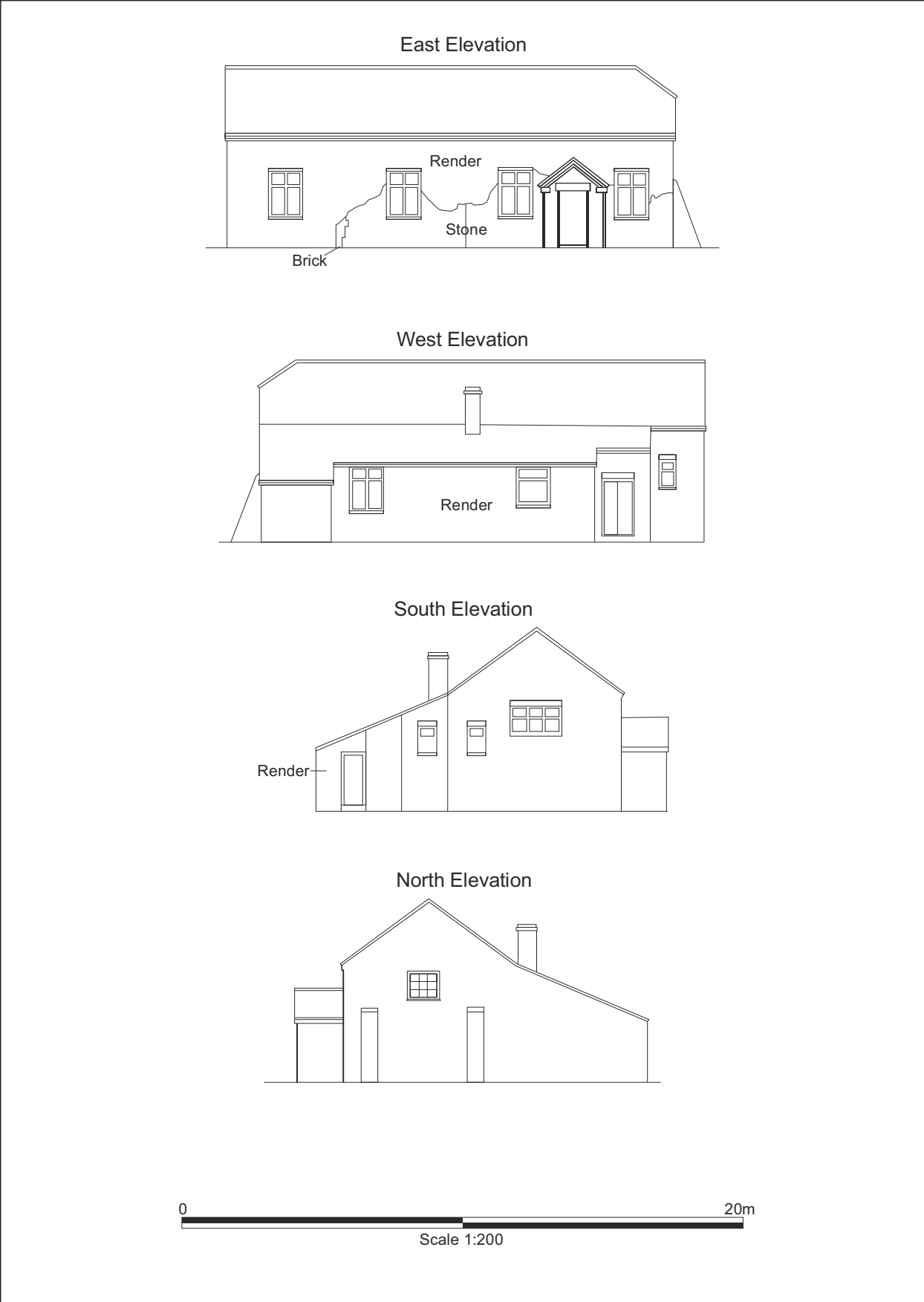


Figure 4: Elevations at scale 1:200