

Historic Building Recording

Site & Landscape Survey

The Garage, Reeds Lane, Wigton **Historic Building Survey** 

Report No 3495







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Date issued	November 2016	
Version	2	
Grid Ref	NY 25684 48479	
Oasis Ref No.	cfaarcha1-267505	

This document has been prepared in accordance with CFA Archaeology Ltd standard operating procedures.

The Garage, Reeds Lane, Wigton Historic Building Survey

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 General

This report presents the results of an archaeological building survey carried out in October 2016 at the Garage, Reeds Lane, Wigton, Cumbria. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by CFA Archaeology Ltd on behalf of Mr & Mrs Saunderson (landowner) and approved by Cumbria County Council Historic Environment Service (CCCHES). The proposal to erect four new dwellings on the site of a former United Presbyterian chapel required that a planning condition for a Level 2 survey (Historic England 2016) be fulfilled prior to its demolition.

A watching brief is also required because the proposed development area lies in the centre of medieval Wigton and is close to one of three medieval market places. The results of the watching brief will be reported on under separate cover.

# 1.2 Historical Background

The former stone and brick-built former chapel occupies an L-shaped footprint and it has a protracted history of use. It was first established as a Congregational chapel as early as 1819, later becoming the United Presbyterian Chapel in1834. Up until 1939 the building was used as a school. In the 1950s the building was used as a workshop (Fletcher 2014) and later became a builders' merchants. Much of the exterior is now rendered. Partially blocked fenestration on the east elevation provides evidence for the building's change to commercial use. The remains of tall arched windows fronting Reeds Lane are still extant but these have been much reduced by the installation of a vehicle opening. On the east side of the former Chapel is a former classroom with a lower roof. The curving boundary wall on the north side of the building was also included in the survey.

### 1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the archaeological recording works were:

- (i) To carry out a Level 2 (Historic England 2016) standing building survey
- (ii) To produce a historic building survey report on the garage and boundary wall prior to their demolition
- (iii) To carry out a watching brief on ground works as required by CCCHES.

#### 2. WORKING METHODS

#### 2.1 General

CFA Archaeology Ltd followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, Standards and Guidance as appropriate. The survey was carried out according to recording levels outlined in *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to good recording practice* (2016).

### 2.2 Desk-based assessment

The Heritage Statement (Fletcher 2014) written in support of the proposed development provided a useful starting point to establish the historical background for the site. This information has been augmented by the examination of historical maps and other readily available on-line information to place the garage and boundary wall in their historical context.

# 2.3 Photographic recording

A Nikon D300 camera was used to take high-resolution digital photographs of the internal and external elevations. All photographs taken were recorded onto photographic record sheets which are appended at the back of this report (Appendix 1). Selective representative images have been included in the report (Figs. 5-21) and all photographs are presented at the end in contact sheet format. Figure 2 shows the orientation at which each photograph was taken.

The client's elevation drawings were considered suitable as a template for the survey and these are produced as Figures 3a-c.

### 2.4 Building Survey

Prior to the start of the survey the client's floor plan and elevations were checked for accuracy and have been annotated as required. Table 1 lists the specific recording requirements set out in the WSI. The survey requirements for the building are based on Historic England (2016).

Specific area or feature	Drawings	Photographic Survey
Exterior elevations and gables	Architects' elevations with additional fabric detail	General to complement and aid written descriptions.
Interior elevations	N/a	General to complement and aid written descriptions
Ground plan	Annotated ground plans with specific floor types, fixtures and fittings	General to complement and aid written descriptions

Table 1 – List of specific recording requirements for the Garage, Reeds Lane, Wigton

A written descriptive record of the building's elevations was made on pro-forma building recording forms to record all significant building fabric and blocking work and any other features of historical and architectural significance.

#### 3. DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT RESULTS

### Bibliographic Sources

The surveyed building was a United Presbyterian Chapel. The Cumbria County History Trust records that there was a Congregational Chapel on Market Hill established in 1819 which then became the United Presbyterian Chapel in 1834. Following its ecclesiastical use, the building was then used as a school and according to Fletcher (2014) the school closed around 1939. Later in the 1950s, the building was used as a garage. During the 1980s the building was in commercial use as a builders' merchants and the boundary wall enclosing the yard was also constructed around this time.

# Cartographic Sources

The 1868 Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 4a) does not name the chapel and only shows the position of a series of buildings in block layout form. The 1901 Second Edition ordnance survey map (Fig. 4b) shows an L-shaped building sharing the same position as the surveyed building. It has been emboldened and labelled as *School*. Subsequent Ordnance Survey maps show the same detail up until c.1952.

### 4. BUILDING SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the building survey are now described. For descriptive purposes the internal and external elevations have been aligned to their cardinal points.

### 4.1 Ground Floor Layout (Fig 2)

The architectural floor plan is shown on Fig. 2. The function of each room is summarised in Table 2. There were two individual rooms on the ground floor conforming to an L-shaped footprint.

Room No	Function	Internal/External Dimensions (m)
1	Chapel/Garage	11.4 x 9.2/ 12.2 x 9.5
2	Class room/Stores	6.5 x 6.6/6.8 x 7

Table 2 - Room number, function and dimensions

### 4.2 Room 1: Former chapel/garage

*Internal south-facing elevation, gable wall (Fig. 5)* 

The internal south-facing gable was constructed of blocks of coursed sandstone. This was visible towards the apex of the gable and both on the left and right hand side of a large roller door that measured 3.5m wide. Most of the elevation had been rendered with grey-painted plaster. About 1m above the roller door mechanism was a line of small sockets marking the position for batons that once supported a lath-and-plaster ceiling.

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Internal west-facing elevation, side wall (Fig. 6)

The internal west-facing elevation (eastern side wall) was constructed of coursed sandstone blocks and had been lined with grey-painted plaster. The plaster had been painted yellow to about dado height (1m). Four arched windows were present. Two windows were complete and were part-boarded up with corrugated sheeting, behind which the wooden window frames could still be seen. The two at the north end (left-hand side facing) had been reduced in height to accommodate a large blocked vehicular opening that was about 3m wide. A doorway was present on the north side (left-hand side facing) of the former blocked vehicular opening.

Internal north-facing elevation, gable wall (Fig. 7-8)

The internal north-facing elevation (south gable wall) was divided into two parts by a brick-built chimney breast laid in stretcher-bonded brickwork (Fig. 7). At the base of the chimney breast was a small blocked fireplace. The fireplace had a single sandstone lintel and had been blocked with brickwork (Fig. 8). The wall on the east side of the chimney breast and a large portion of the chimney breast itself had been lined with grey-painted plaster.

On the west-side (right-hand side facing) of the chimney breast was a small sash-and-case window (formerly 15 over 15) set within flush reveals. To the right of the window some of the sandstone had been laid end on but these did not form a relieving arch as there were no blocked openings below it (Fig. 8). Below the window was a line of sockets marking the position of a possible gallery floor.

Below the window was an earlier rectangular blocked window measuring 1.6m x 1.1m. The window had a wooden lintel and the blocking was demarcated by a risband joint. The blocking work was covered with pink and grey painted plaster. The rest of the elevation was bare sandstone and contained a horizontal line of sockets marking the position of a former lath-and-plaster ceiling.

Internal east-facing elevation (west side wall, Fig. 10)

The west side wall (east-facing elevation) was for the most part covered with grey-painted plaster over coursed sandstone. The principal features included the remains of two blocked round-headed windows that occupied the centre of the elevation. The southernmost window had been reduced by about a half, whereas the one on the north side was complete and covered by a board and chicken wire. Both windows had splayed reveals. A large I-beam had been inserted on the southern half of the elevation to form a large bay opening. This was then later blocked up and a yellow plank-built door inserted. At the south-west corner of the elevation was a small timber-built cash booth measuring about 1.2m wide and 2.1m high.

## Roof and floor

The roof was covered with grey concrete tiles supported on softwood king-post trusses with through purlins (Fig. 11). The braces had been fixed to the king posts with mortise joints. The purlins carried the roof batons and black roofing felt was

exposed. The common rafters had lath-and-plaster fixed to their underside. The floor was concrete.

#### 4.3 Room 2: Classroom/Stores

South-facing elevation, north wall (Fig. 12)

The north wall was brick-built with traces of whitewashed plaster. At the centre of the wall was a brick-built chimney breast laid in stretcher bond. The walls on either side of the chimney breast were largely hidden behind a storage cupboard and Dexian shelving. A fireplace at the base of the chimney breast measured about 0.6m x 0.6m and was surmounted by two sandstone lintels.

West-facing elevation, east wall (Fig. 13)

The east wall was largely hidden behind a series of wooden storage racks. The wall was built of concrete mono-blocks above which was a steel I-beam, a feature that was visible on the other side of the wall. A yellow plank-built door had been inserted on the left-hand side of the wall (facing). The wall above the beam was covered with grey-painted plaster.

North-facing elevation, south wall, (Fig. 14)

The south wall was constructed of coursed sandstone rubble and had been rendered with cement to dado height (c.1m). Remnants of yellow paint were still present on the cement. The wall was otherwise featureless.

West wall (east-facing elevation) (Fig. 15)

The west wall had three round-headed windows with eight panes and grey-painted frames (Fig. 15). The windows were set within a brick-built wall. Below the windows the wall had been rendered and had been painted red.

Ceiling and floor

Room 2 had a pitched tiled roof. Its lath-and-plaster ceiling was combed and whitewashed. The floor was partly covered with wooden parquet floor tiles.

#### 4.4 External Elevations

The principal architectural features recorded on each external elevation are now described and shown on Figs 3a-d.

North-facing elevation (front gable, Fig. 16)

The north-facing gable wall contained the aforementioned roller shutter door and was flanked by walls covered in wet-dash render. The rectangular scar where a builders merchant sign once hung could still be seen above the doorway.

#### East-Facing elevation (side wall, Fig. 17)

The east-facing side wall fronts onto Reeds Lane and was constructed of coursed sandstone blocks then rendered with pebble-dash render. The fenestration comprised two tall roundhead windows and two short windows. The former survived to their full height (c.4m) and still had their window-frames present behind a security grill. The latter windows had been reduced by half to accommodate a steel I-beam that was inserted to make a large vehicular opening. This was later blocked and a plank-built door inserted. The door had been covered with metal sheeting for security.

South-facing elevation (rear gable wall, Fig 18-19)

The south-facing rear gable wall was constructed of coursed sandstone blocks and had the remains of backing plaster present on its eastern half. The aforementioned sash-and-case present on the opposite side of the wall had been inserted into ashlar margins that were raised. Below the window was the blocking work for the rectangular window (described above) and a second blocked window adjacent (Fig. 18). Both windows had sandstone lintels and the blocking work within the former window openings was random rubble.

West-facing elevation (side wall)

The west-facing elevation was partly visible within a small passage formed by a gap between the former chapel and a neighbouring property. The elevation was rendered with a grey cement throughout. Situated towards the end of the passage was a single round-headed window complete with its window frame that comprised lancet estragles at the top and square panes at the base (Fig. 20). This window corresponds with the complete blocked window seen on the internal east-facing elevation. The window is a typical chapel window.

## 4.5 **Boundary Walls** (Fig. 21)

The boundary walls fronting onto Reeds Lane and Market Hill were constructed of concrete mono blocks and faced with snecked sandstone blocks. The walls were built in the late 1970s or early 1980s when the site became a builders merchants.

#### 5. DISCUSSION

Documentary sources state that a Congregational Chapel was established in 1819 on Market Hill. At this time it is likely that the chapel was a single rectangular block (Room 1) and a classroom (Room 2) was added during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 1901 Second Edition Ordnance Survey map attest to the building's use as a school. Subsequent map editions depict the building as a school up until the 1950s whereas anecdotal evidence suggests the school closed around 1939.

### Room 1

The archaeological evidence shows that Room 1 had two round-headed windows looking westwards (Fig. 6). One window was blocked when Room 2 was added, the second window faced into the narrow alley between the external west-facing elevation

and an adjoining property. Here an original 19<sup>th</sup> century window with tracery was still extant (Fig. 20).

The king-post trusses show evidence for the presence of a lath-and-plaster ceiling. This was probably taken down when a new roof was added sometime in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two 19<sup>th</sup> century windows situated on the south gable were later replaced by a sash-and-case window at a higher level above what may have been a small gallery. The chimney breast may also be a feature that was added later when the chapel was converted to a school.

The eastern side wall has been altered with the inclusion of a large blocked vehicular opening fronting onto Reeds Lane. This addition compromised two of the original tall chapel windows. A second, now blocked, wide doorway on the west wall later provided better access into Room 2 when it was used as a storeroom.

#### Room 2

This small former classroom was well lit by three tall round-headed windows on its west wall (Fig. 15). The ceiling was combed and the room had a small fireplace, probably for a small coke-fired stove on its north wall. The main access appears to have been through a blocked doorway situated at the end of the alley between the external west-facing wall of the chapel (Room 1) and an adjoining property.

#### 6. CONCLUSION

The historical building survey has confirmed that Room 1 contained several elements contemporary with the building's use as chapel; these include original, tall round-headed windows facing onto Reeds Lane. The rear gable has evidence for two earlier blocked windows (early to mid-19<sup>th</sup> century) and a later (20<sup>th</sup> century) wooden sash-and-case window that was inserted above a gallery floor. A small c.19<sup>th</sup> century arched chapel window survived on the west-facing elevation. Room 2 appears to be a later addition erected on the west side of the chapel when it became a school. The former classroom was lit by tall round-headed windows and heating supplied by a small stove set within a brick-built fireplace on the north wall (south-facing elevation). Formal access was provided by a now blocked door on the same wall.

The building underwent a major change in the 1980s when the garage was converted to a builder's merchant. This required blocking the vehicular opening and installing a new roller door on the north gable. Internal storage racks were also added in Room 1 and 2. The external boundary wall was added during this period when the yard on the north side of the building was used for storing building supplies (Mr Saunderson *pers comm.*).

### 7. RECCOMMENDATIONS

The garage has been recorded to Level 2 specification and a detailed drawn and photographic survey has recorded the building as it currently stands. CFA recommends that no further recording work is required prior to its demolition; however, it is recognised that the final decision lies with CCCHES.

The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, maps and reports, will be deposited with the CCCHES and copies of reports will be lodged with the Cumbria County Council Sites and Monument Record.

The results of the survey will be reported on through *OASIS England*.

### 8. REFERENCES

Historic England (2016) 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice'.

Fletcher, H 2014 Heritage Statement Proposed Development at The Garage, Reeds Lane, Wigton Cumbria. Unpublished.

Cartographic Sources

Ordnance Survey Cumberland XXIX (includes: Westward; Woodside.) Surveyed: 1865 to 1866 Published: 1868

Ordnance Survey: Cumberland XXIX.NW (includes: Wigton; Woodside.) Revised: 1899 Published: 1901

Cumberland XXIX.NW (includes: Wigton; Woodside.) Revised: 1924 Published: 1926

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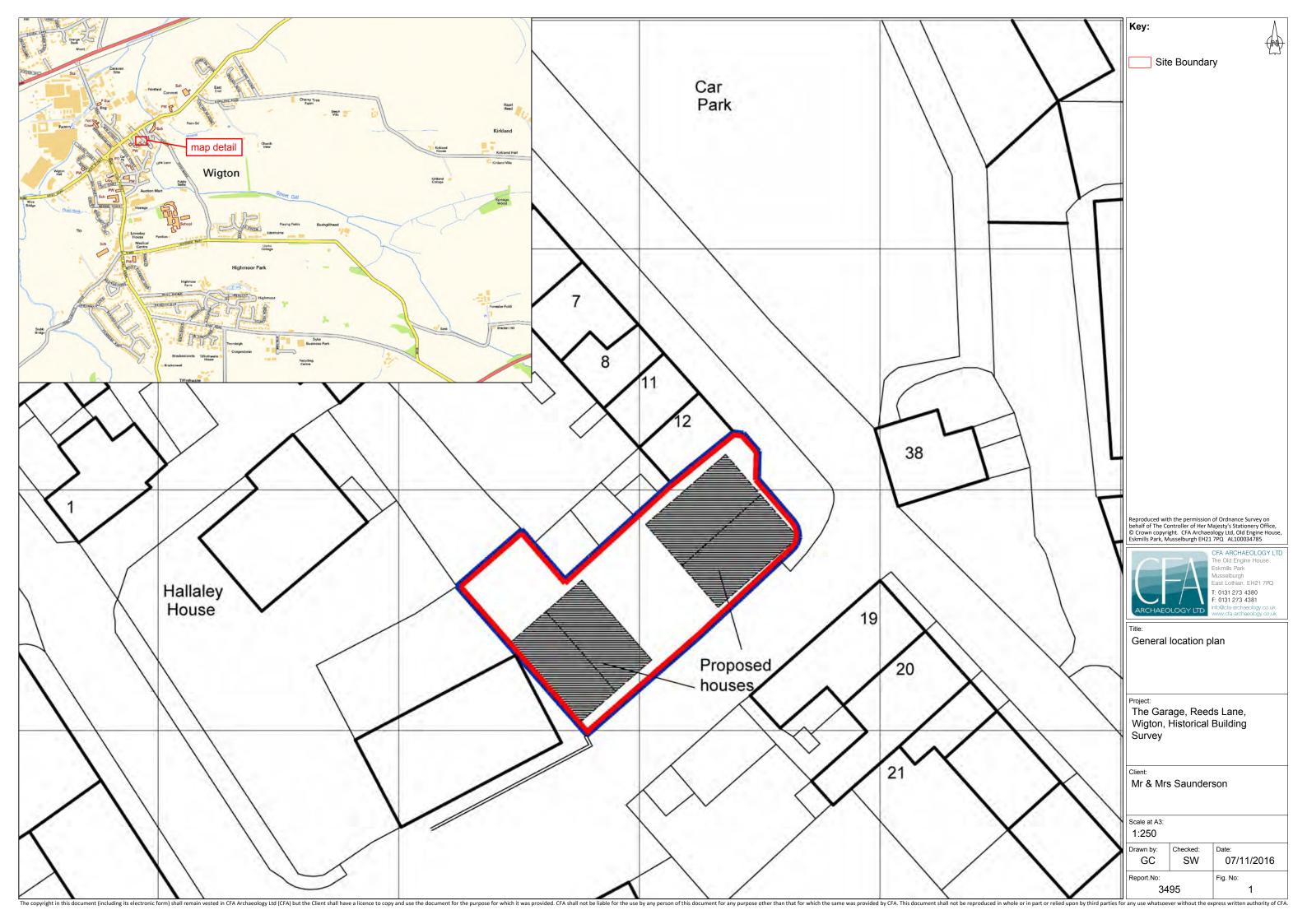
Cumberland XXIX.NW (includes: Wigton; Woodside.) Revised: 1946 Published: 1952

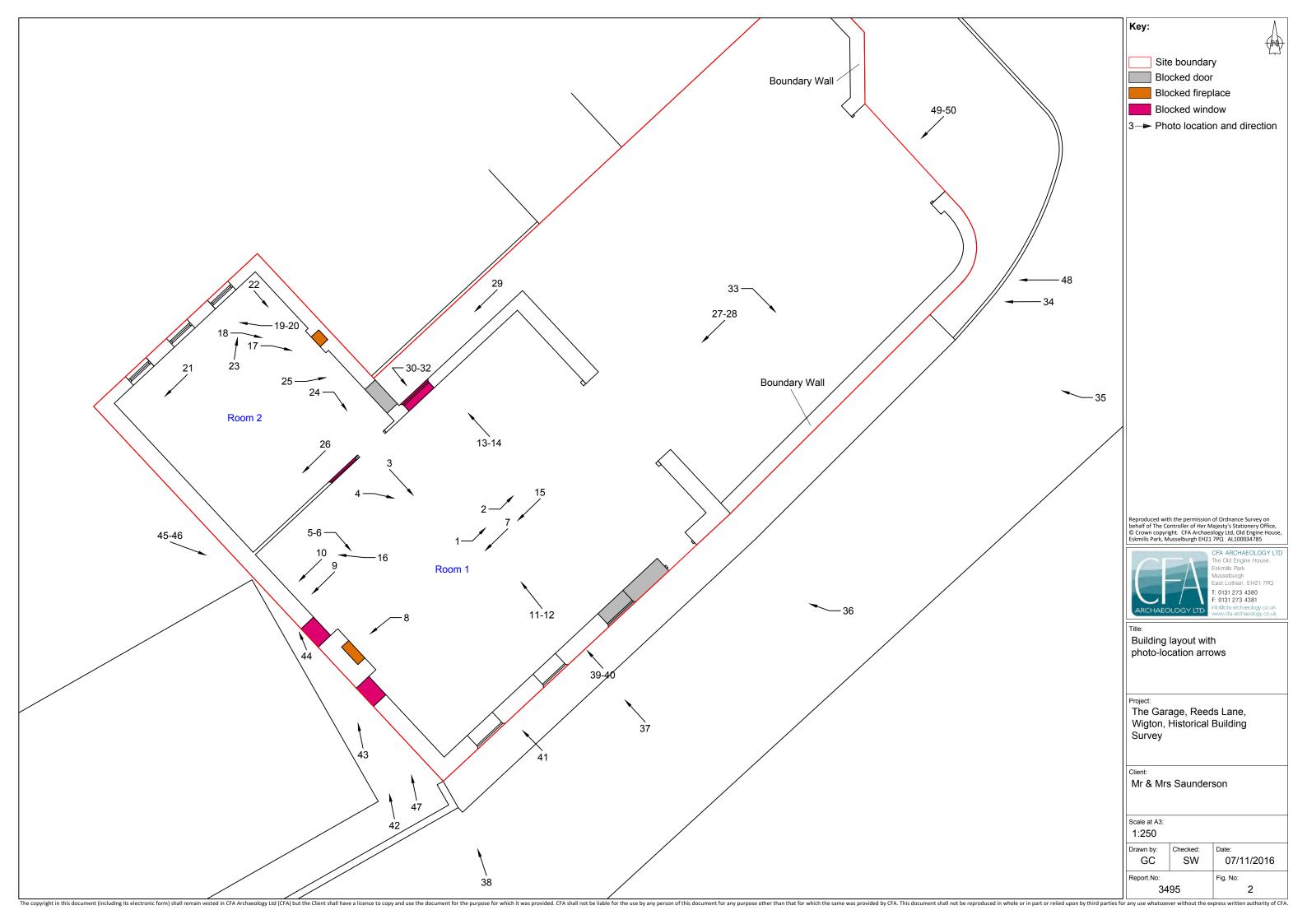
On-line Sources

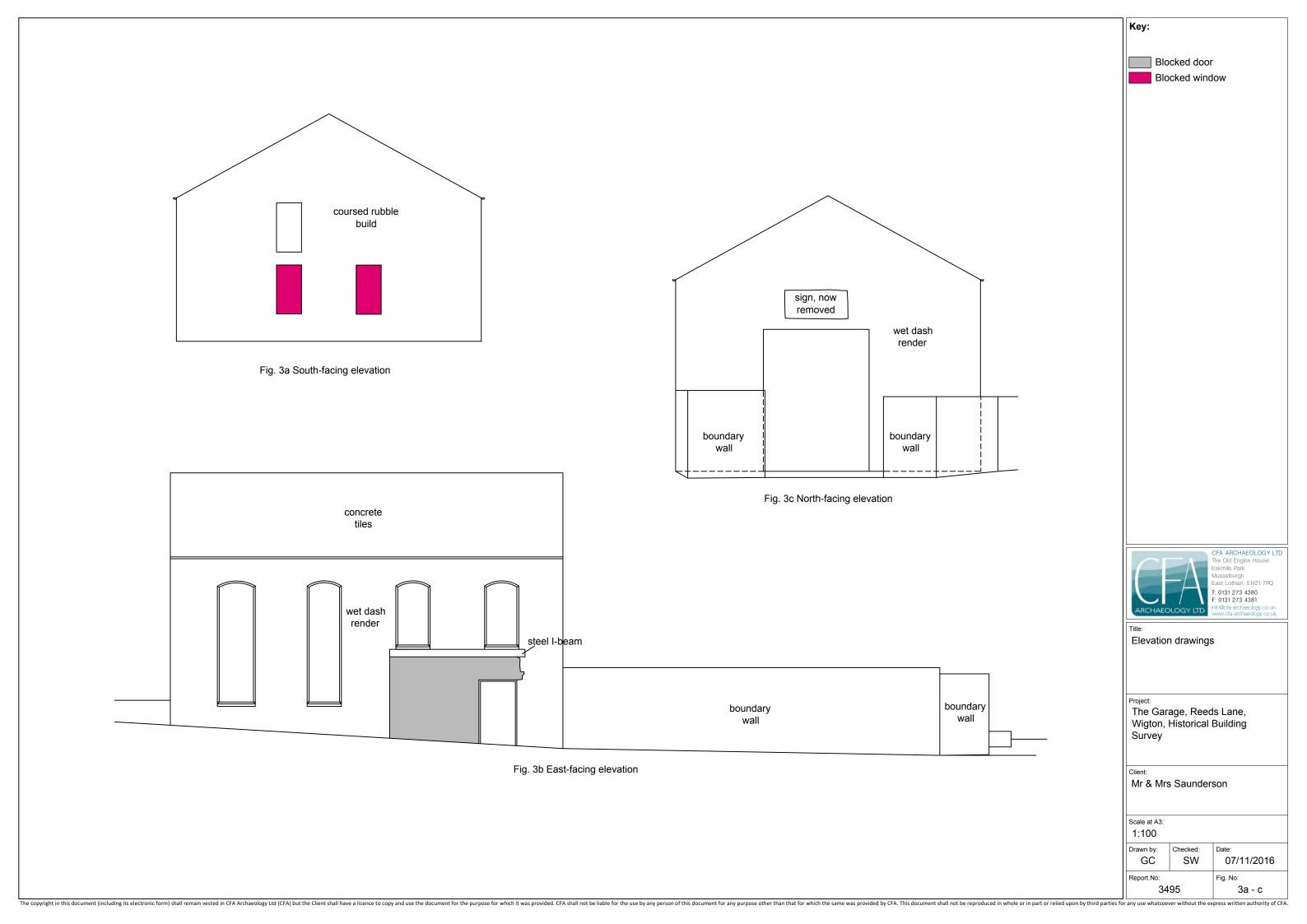
Cumbria County History Trust http://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/township/wigton

# APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Photo Number	Description	Facing
001	Room 1, internal south-facing elevation (gable)	N
002	Room 1, internal south-facing elevation (gable) apex	Oblique
003	Room 1, internal west-facing elevation (side wall)	E
004	Room 1, internal west-facing elevation (side wall fenestration)	Е
005	Room 1, internal west-facing elevation (side wall fenestration, south end)	Е
006	Room 1, internal west-facing elevation (side wall fenestration, south end)	Е
007	Room 1,internal north-facing elevation (south gable)	S
008	Room 1, internal north-facing elevation, brick-built fireplace	S
009	Room 1,internal north-facing elevation, blocked window and wall fabric	Oblique
010	Room 1, internal north-facing elevation, sash and case window	Oblique
011	Room 1, internal east-facing elevation, general shot	W
012	Room 1, internal east-facing elevation, general shot	W
013	Room 1, internal east-facing elevation. Blocked window detail	Oblique
014	Room 1, internal east-facing elevation. Blocked window detail	Oblique
015	Room 1, King-post roof trusses	Oblique
016	Room 1, cash booth in the south-west corner of Room 1.	SW
017	Room 2, south-facing elevation, brick-built fireplace	NE
018	Room 2, south-facing elevation, fabric detail	NE
019	Room 2, east-facing elevation, fenestration details	W
020	Room 2, east-facing elevation, fenestration details	W
021	Room 2, north-facing elevation, fabric detail	S
022	Room 2, combed ceiling detail	Oblique
023	Room 2, brick-built wall return angle	NW
024	Room 2, plank-built door to Room 1	E
025	Room 2, south-facing elevation, blocked door behind shelving	NE
026	Room 2, north-facing elevation, fabric detail behind wooden shelving	S
027	Exterior north-facing gable, general shot	S
028	Exterior north-facing gable, general shot	S
029	Exterior north-facing elevation (Room 2) blocked doorway	S
030	Exterior west-facing elevation (Room 1) original chapel window	Oblique
031	Exterior west-facing elevation (Room 1) original chapel window	Oblique
032	Exterior west-facing elevation (Room 1) original chapel window	Oblique
033	Exterior west-facing wall of the boundary wall	E
034	Exterior east-facing boundary wall	SW
035	Exterior north-facing gable and east-facing elevation onto Reeds Lane	SW
036	Exterior east-facing elevation fronting Reeds Lane	W
037	Exterior east-facing elevation fronting Reeds Lane, fenestration	W
038	Exterior east-facing elevation fronting Reeds Lane, and south gable	NW
039	Exterior east-facing elevation showing sandstone blocks below render	Oblique
040	Exterior east-facing elevation showing sandstone blocks below render	Oblique
041	Exterior east-facing elevation showing fenestration	W
042	Exterior south-facing gable, fabric detail	W
043	Exterior south-facing gable, fabric detail on blocked window	W
044	Exterior south-facing gable, raised margins round a sash and case window	Oblique
045	Exterior distance shot showing the roof of Room 2	N
046	Exterior distance shot showing the roof of Room 2	N
047	Exterior south-facing gable, fabric detail	W
048	Exterior curving boundary wall	SW
049	Exterior curving boundary wall  Exterior curving boundary walls either side of the site gate	S
050	Exterior curving boundary walls either side of the site gate	S







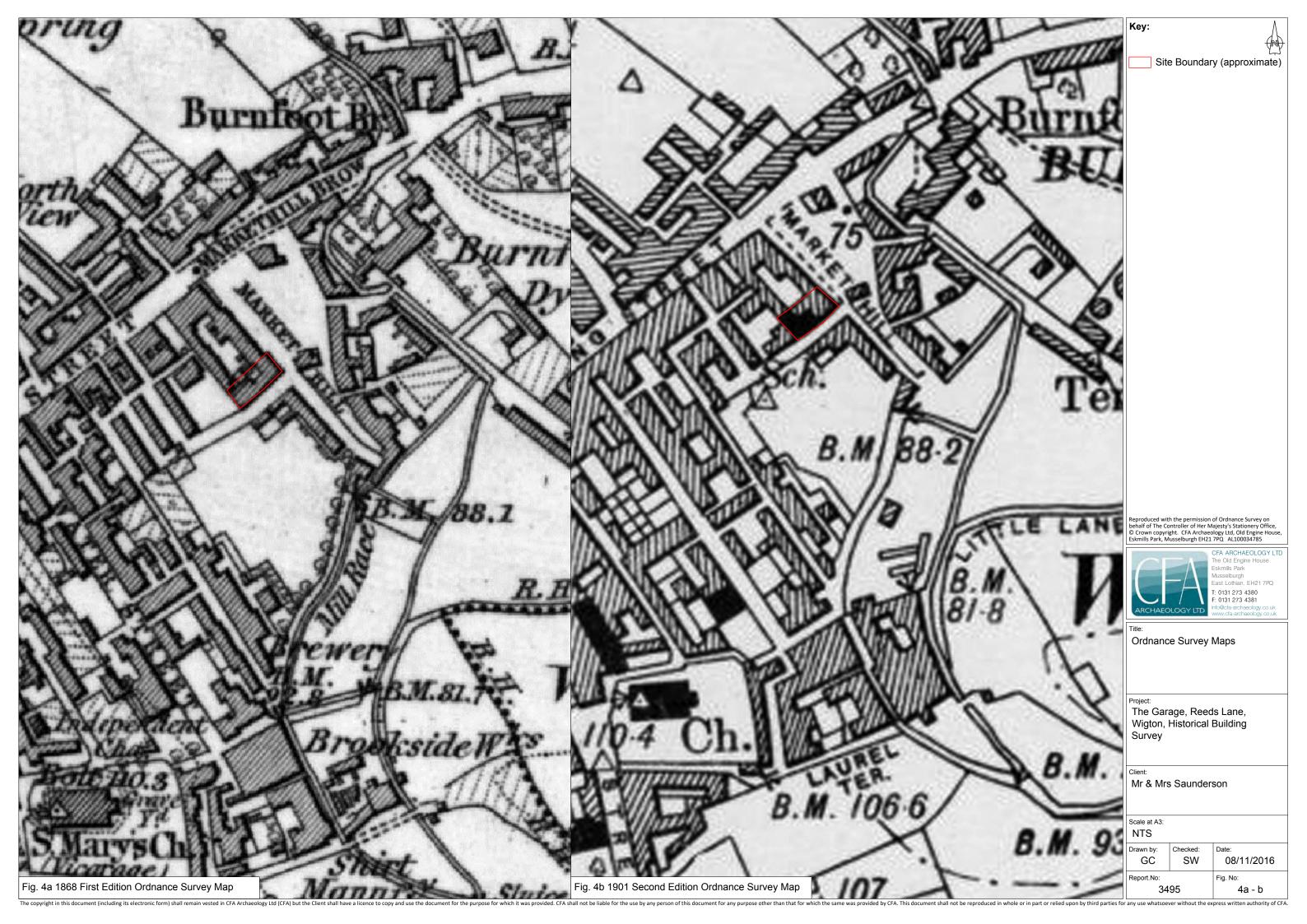




Fig. 5 Room 1, internal south-facing gable wall and roller shutter door



Fig. 6 Room 1, internal west-facing elevation (side wall) with round-headed windows

The Garage, Reeds Lane, Wigton, Historical Building Survey



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Fig. 7 Room 1, internal north-facing elevation (gable wall)



Fig. 8 Room 1, internal north-facing gable, blocked fireplace

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Fig. 9 Room 1, internal north-facing gable with small window and a blocked window below



Fig. 10 Room 1, internal east-facing elevation with two blocked round-headed windows

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Fig. 11 Room 1, king-post roof trusses



Fig. 12 Room 2, south-facing elevation with fireplace

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Fig. 13 Room 2, west-facing elevation with inserted plank-built door



Fig. 14 Room 2, north-facing elevation, rubble-built wall

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Fig. 15 Room 2, east-facing elevation with round-headed windows



Fig. 16 Exterior north-facing gable wall

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Fig. 17 Exterior east-facing side wall with fenestration



Fig. 18 Exterior south-facing gable wall

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Fig. 19 Exterior south-facing gable wall, blocked windows



Fig. 20 Exterior west-facing wall with an original 19th century chapel window

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Fig. 21 Boundary walls and gate on the north side of the former chapel

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GAWI\_025.JPG



GAWI\_026.JPG



GAWI\_027.JPG



GAWI\_028.JPG



GAWI\_029.JPG



GAWI\_030.JPG



GAWI\_031.JPG



GAWI\_032.JPG



GAWI\_033.JPG



GAWI\_034.JPG



GAWI\_035.JPG



GAWI\_036.JPG



GAWI\_037.JPG



GAWI\_038.JPG

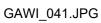


GAWI\_039.JPG



GAWI\_040.JPG







GAWI\_042.JPG



GAWI\_043.JPG



GAWI\_044.JPG



GAWI\_045.JPG



GAWI\_046.JPG



GAWI\_047.JPG



GAWI\_048.JPG



GAWI\_049.JPG



GAWI\_050.JPG