

MILTON MOUNT CHURCH,
CLARENCE PLACE, GRAVESEND,
KENT, DA12 1LD

LEVEL 3 HISTORIC BUILDING RECORD
WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

NGR: TQ 64928 73521
SITE CODE: MMC23

Commissioned by
Siri Guru Nanak Darbar

Prepared by HB Archaeology & Conservation Ltd
Project No. 2023535
September 2023

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APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Survey drawings of the property as existing
- Appendix 2: Photographic Locations
- Appendix 3: Photographic Gazetteer

Figure 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** HB Archaeology & Conservation Ltd was commissioned by Siri Guru Nanak Darbar to carry out a programme of historic building recording during remedial works to inform alterations to the former Milton Mount Church, Clarence Place, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1LD (henceforth referred to as 'the property'). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 64928 73521 and its location is shown in Figure 1.

1.2 Planning Application 20220728

- 1.2.1** Permission has been granted to convert the existing building to 14 residential apartments and ancillary facilities subject to the following conditions:

Archaeology

Condition 5:

Prior to the commencement of works, including demolition the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of building recording in accordance with a written specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: *To ensure that historic building features are properly examined and recorded in accordance*

Historic England Level 3 Survey

Condition 6:

Prior to the commencement of works, including demolition, a Historic England Level 3 survey and report shall be made of the building for future record and research. The report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to works commencing.

Reason: *To ensure a suitable record is made of the building before works start in accordance with Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Core Strategy (September 2014).*

- 1.2.2** The Written Scheme of Investigation was submitted to and approved by Casper Johnson, Senior Archaeological Officer at Kent County Council in response to Condition 5. This report is the result of the Historic England Level 3 survey required under Condition 6.

2.0 SCOPE & METHODOLOGY

- 2.1** The building was visited by Maggie Henderson and Justin Russell in order to create a record of the building to level 3 standard as defined by Historic England (Historic England, 2016, Understanding Historic Buildings A Guide to Good Recording Practice).

- 2.2 A level 3 record is an analytical record: a combination of a written, drawn and illustrative record of the building or buildings as they now stand, intended to provide a systematic account of their origin, development and use.
- 2.3 The existing digital survey drawings provided by the client's agents were used for the base-line record. Any phases of construction or significant features relevant to the building's origin and development are indicated on the plans.
- 2.4 The general record was supplemented by a digital photographic record relevant to the analysis, design and form of the building: This has been fully indexed and the photographic locations are shown on site plans.
- 2.5 A targeted programme of research was undertaken for this project supplemented by historic maps and images: these are included within the report.

3.0 LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

3.1 Location

- 3.1.1. The property occupies a prominent position central to the north side of Clarence Place just to the northeast of the Grade II Listed Gravesend War Memorial on the south side of the road List entry No.1432908). The buildings extend across a large plot that is bounded on the south side by Clarence Place and the north side by William Street, the former is the principal front, set back from the pavement, behind low wall with gated access, the latter is the rear elevation bordered by the pavement alone.

3.2 Geology and Topography

- 3.2.1. The latest data from the British Geological Survey describes the underlying solid geology of the site as Thanet Formation - sand (BGS 2023). The property lies at c. 30 metres above Ordnance Datum.

4.0 DESIGNATIONS

4.1 Non-Designated Heritage Asset

- 4.2 The former church is not included in the National Heritage List for England, it is however included in the local list and has been identified, as set out above, as a landmark and a building that makes a positive contribution to the Windmill Hill Conservation Area. The former church has been recognised as a non-designated heritage-asset of '*considerable architectural and historic interest*' (HCUK, 2022:5 quoting the appeal decision APP/K2230/W/20/3255909).

4.3 Conservation Area

The property is situated within the confines of the Windmill Hill Conservation Area first designated in 1975, extended to its current extent on the 14th of February 2001.¹

5.0 HISTORIC BACKGROUND

5.1 Foundation

- 5.1.1 Milton Mount College, named after the hill on which it stands and the nearby parish of Milton (itself incorporated into the Gravesend built up area in 1915), was founded in c. 1870 by the Reverend William Guest (of Princes Street Congregational chapel, Gravesend) as a college for the children of Congregational ministers. Milton Mount became one of three such colleges (out of ten), specifically intended for the education of girls during the 19th c. (Argent, 1998), the remaining seven for boys only'

5.2 Congregationalism in Gravesend and the Reverend William Guest

- 5.2.1 The following section is largely derived from Princes Street to Milton Mount, 1662 – 1975 by Rev'd D. A Douglass, 1975 (Kent Archives and Local Studies), unless otherwise stated.
- 5.2.2 The first church for Nonconformists in Gravesend, was founded in c. 1662 by Rev. Philip Sharp but until the early 18th century, services were held in secret. In 1717, with a steadily growing congregation of dissenters and under a 'more relaxed atmosphere of religious freedom', land was leased in Back Street (later Princes Street) and a meeting-house built under the ministry of Reverend Samuel Pike; an extended and enlarged version of the chapel remained at the site until 1961 when it was demolished.
- 5.2.3 The Reverend William Guest took on the pastorate at Princes Street in April 1869. What little is known about Guest is provided mainly by newspaper announcements and articles held by the British Newspaper Archive (no details about him appear in The Genealogist's Non-Conformist Records and The National Archives among other sources.) in addition to passing comments in Douglass' history, the latter placing Guest at Clarence Chapel, London, from which he had apparently resigned in 1869 on feeling 'drawn towards Gravesend'.
- 5.2.4 Thanks to an obituary of 1891, in The Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser, we are informed he was born in 1818. Guest undertook ministerial training at Spring Hill College (Birmingham), accepting a call to Bilston, Staffordshire in 1845.
- 5.2.5 Following a short illness, he '*removed*' to Reading where he helped to establish Trinity Chapel, until c 1850 when he '*removed*' to Queen-Street Church, Leeds '*then in a state of great depression, and where he laboured with success for ten years*'

¹ <https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/downloads/file/378/windmill-hill->

5.2.6 Having resigned Queen-Street in 1860 (Leeds Intelligencer 20th October) [Guest] *subsequently ministered for four years at Paul's Meeting, Taunton, and for three years at Claremont Chapel, Pentonville.* The article does not mention Clarence Chapel, London but correspondence printed in the Islington Gazette of 23rd March 1869 alludes to William Guest being at Claremont, Pentonville a month before Princes Street.

5.2.7 As to his character, Guest seems to have been a confident man, judging from his correspondences relating to taking up the pastorate at Princes Street, in which he alluded to several other posts he could have taken up at *'important churches in London and other great cities'* (Douglass, 1975).

5.2.8 Guest's strong character appears to have created differences of opinion between him and his superiors (the Deacons) culminating in November 1872 when he announced his intention to resign from Princes Street to found a second Congregational Church *'in the higher parts of Gravesend'*.

5.3 Milton Congregational Church.

19th century

5.3.1 By early 1873, William Guest had found a suitable site, c. 0.4 miles north of the college, adjoining Lacey Terrace at Clarence Place, which was purchased for £420. Shortly thereafter, a campaign ensued to gather funds for the new church for the benefit, not only of members of Princes Street who had left that church to follow Guest but also for the staff and pupils of his College:

'It has been, not entirely but largely, to accommodate and meet the convenience of the pupils of Milton Mount College that this church is about to be reared' (Gravesend Reporter, May 3rd 1873)

5.3.2 The location of the new church was closer to the college, whose existing place of worship was Princes Street and considered problematic to reach during bad weather.

5.3.3 Guest seems to have had a good deal of support in his new church venture, as featured in the Gravesend Reporter of the 8th March, 1873, in which the chair of the Congregational Union, Milton Mount College and several other related bodies wrote:

'We entirely approve of the movement to build the place of worship that we join most heartily in the appeal in its favour, which is now sent forth The Rev. William Guest and his friends are making serious sacrifices to meet this denominational and local necessity and deserve the cordial sympathy and assistance of the promoters of Chapel extension.'

5.3.4 Having raised the necessary funds, architect Mr William John Sulman, A.R.I.B.A., of London was employed to design a suitable building to serve as the new Congregational church of 'Milton on Thames' and a local contractor Mr Blake of Gravesend, was commissioned to construct the church for the sum of £4,128

(excluding a substantial tower, which although intended, was never built, The Building News, January 1874).

- 5.3.5 The foundation stone, containing a time capsule of documents (dated news journals, the church covenant) and coins, was laid by Thomas Scrutton Esq., treasurer of Milton Mount College, on the 29th of April 1873 (Gravesend Reporter, North Kent and South Essex Advertiser, 3rd May, 1873). Whilst the new church was under construction, church business was conducted at the Assembly Hall, Harmer Street.
- 5.3.6 The January 2nd issue of The Building News, Vol. 26, 1874 (babelhathitrust.org), carried a sketch plan and front elevation drawing of the church, describing it as containing seating for 750 people, vestries and conveniences with a school and lecture room with a capacity for 240 people, the latter raised over two additional classrooms, one intended for infant's classroom, all below the school yet level with the 'back road'. in addition to:
- heating chamber
 - coal-cellar
 - scullery and
 - china closet

The entrances to the church are numerous and all parts of the building are easily accessible both from the front and back roads.

- 5.3.7 Galleries, considered necessary additions for worship, were also planned but arranged to appear 'as much a part of the building as possible', and:

The walls are of blue random-coursed ragstone, with Box Ground Bath stone dressings; the roofs banded with green and purple slates and the central pillar to (the) main entrance , with its side shafts, are of polished red Aberdeen granite.

Internally the walls are plastered and a slight amount of stencilling is intended; the roof principals are of hammer-beam construction, springing from moulded stone corbels and the whole of the main timbers showing are stained and varnished

The upper part of the roof being cut off, ventilation is provided by quatrefoils with flaps over.

The organ is to be placed at the end of the church, under an arch and the preaching platform in advance of this.

The whole of the woodwork is stained and varnished.

- 5.3.8 The church as-built did not quite conform to the original drawings as presented in 1874. In the edition of the 23rd January, 1874, the architect John Sulman gave answers to questions raised about a number of features,

the minister's vestry:

'to be located to the right hand of the school staircase, now made a part of the Deacon's vestry, and it was then window lighted and had a private w.c. It was altered to its present arrangement at the desire of the minister and the committee.'

'A font was not originally intended, but one having been offered as a gift, it will probably be placed in the lower platform in front of the pulpit.'

5.3.9 Sulman described other alterations to the scheme:

'the transept columns they are of stone, and needed to support the transept arches The proper access to the transepts is by the side entrances; and the end gallery is supported by two iron columns, not visible in the sketch plan. I may add that the flight of steps on left-hand of school is 8ft. wide not 4ft. as on the sketch plan.'

5.3.10 The church was opened and dedicated on March 31st, 1874 and described as *'In every respect a handsome structure'* occupying *'a very healthy position in Clarence Place'* (Douglass, 1975).

5.3.11 Just two years after the church opened its doors a debt of c. £280 had accrued, mainly due to *'renovating and beautifying the interior'* (East Kent Gazette, 1876) and fundraising was again in full swing.

5.3.12 In 1875, due to a clash of personalities between Guest and Milton Mount college authorities, the reverend found himself stepping aside from his pastoral duties at the college and thereby able to concentrate solely on ministering to the Congregational church members (feelings must have run deep as the college students were then made to transfer their worship back to Princes Street; Douglass, 1975).

5.3.13 In 1877, the new organ was opened, its initial construction having been hampered by the death of the contractor, and by the 1st of January, 1879 all debts had been paid.

5.3.14 In March 1879, Reverend William Guest handed in his resignation due to continuing ill health and ill-will between him and Milton Mount; the resignation took effect from the 9th March 1881 (*ibid.*).

5.3.15 Thereafter, Guest moved to Tunbridge Wells where he remained with his wife until his death on the 7th June, 1891 (Taunton Courier, 10/07/1891).

20th Century

5.3.16 The church organ was renovated and enlarged in 1908. The building adjoining the church (no. 18 Clarence Place), at that time owned and operated by the charity commissioners, opened as the Perrington Institute, which provided good classrooms and a caretaker's residence. During WW1, the Institute was used by troops stationed in the area (Douglass, 1975).

The Demise of Milton Mount Church

- 5.3.17 In 1927, the proceeds from the sale of the Institute were used to '*reduce the deficit on the church accounts*'.
- 5.3.18 Around this time, a growing congregation, created by the incoming residents to the newly constructed King's Farm Estate, necessitated moving church services to nearby Whitehill School hall. The success of this move and of religious services there lead to the establishment of a new church and in 1931 a new Free Church hall was opened on the estate. As a result, services at Milton Congregational church had '*practically lapsed*' and over the next few years, the church continued to serve only a few.
- 5.3.19 In 1948, war damage repairs were carried out, in addition to the installation of electric lighting and although services resumed in 1949, the building continued to cause concern; exterior stonework had deteriorated to such an extent as to be considered a danger. The cost of restoration was beyond the church's capabilities and by 1951 also found itself unable to afford the stipend of its reverend (*ibid.*).
- 5.3.20 Due to the financial difficulties and a general decline of worshipers at Princes Street, the suggestion was made to amalgamate both churches. This was rejected and instead, the call for an entirely new building was made '*both of the old ones being disposed of to meet the costs*'. A new church, formed in 1953, the Gravesend Congregational, occupied redesigned premises in nearby Old Road East (cityark.medway.gov.uk) .

Wholesale Trading Supplies Ltd

- 5.3.21 In 1955, Milton Congregational church was sold to Wholesale Trading Supplies Ltd to be used primarily as a warehouse and renamed Shore Valley House (Kent Messenger, 24th May, 1968). Wholesale Trading was set up in 1953 to deal in wholesale grocery. Rapid expansion from the outset led to the need for larger premises and the company was moved from Park Hall, Gravesend to the former Congregational church at Clarence Place.
- 5.3.22 In May, 1955, Wholesale Trading submitted an outline application for permission to a change of use (TH/2/1955/143 Gravesham Borough Council (formerly Gravesham Civic Centre) (hereafter GBC)) and, as the building was still '*defined as a place of worship*', granted temporary permission, subject to the following conditions:

(i) The use of the premises for which permission is granted shall cease and the premises shall be restored to their original condition on or before 31st December, 1962;

(ii) the materials to be stored shall be limited to packed groceries only;

(iii) details relating to any external alterations proposed to be made to the building, or the means of access thereto, shall be submitted to and approved by or on behalf of the LPA before any works are begun;

and

(iv) the forecourt of the building shall be laid out as garden in a manner to be approved and shall not be used for storage of goods or articles of any kind.

And that the grounds for the imposition of such conditions are:-

(i) In order to protect possible future users of the building and to enable the present proposal to be reviewed at the end of the temporary period in the light of circumstances then prevailing, and of actual experience of the effect of the proposals on the amenities of the locality.

(ii) and (iv) in order to preserve the amenities of the primarily residential area and of the public open space opposite (Windmill Hill); and

(iii) as no such details have been submitted.

- 5.3.23 Shortly thereafter, the Wholesale company was granted permission to erect loading and unloading bays (TH/2/1955/143A GBC): no plans associated with this application have yet been found, however the bays are indicated on a floor plan submitted for a subsequent planning application in 1974 (GR/74/638 GBC).
- 5.3.24 Further development during the 1950s included the installation of a 500-gallon petrol tank and pump to the rear of the church, at William Street (TH/2/1956/215 GBC) and garden landscaping in 1957 (TH/2/1955/143B GBC). No further decision were beyond the decision notices were available for the applications.
- 5.3.25 In February 1963, the Wholesale company was granted permission to continue using the building as storage until the end of that year, subject to the conditions previously set out in 1955.
- 5.3.26 In August 1963, the company tried again to extend the permissions but were refused, possibly in part due to '*storms of local protest*', that had beset the site since the Wholesalers had moved in, relating to '*the amount of traffic generated and inconvenience caused to residents*' (BHD, 2014).
- 5.3.27 In spite of the refusal, the Wholesale company appears to have continued business from 1964 to 1967, after which time it was decided to sell the building on; The Kent Messenger and Gravesend Telegraph article of 17th November 1967 informed the former Congregational church was soon to become a '*temple for Gravesend's Sikh community*' whose present site had become too small for their needs.

The Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara

- 5.3.28 The Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara was formally opened in late 1968 (gurunanakdarbar.org), serving as the hub of the Sikh community until 2010.
- 5.3.29 In March, 1968, the new owner's application to retain the temporary loading and unloading bays for cloakrooms was refused as this '*would result in an intensification of use likely to increase the amount of activity associated with a place of worship*

which, as not a restricted site, would be detrimental to the amenities of the occupants of adjoining residential properties.' (TH/2/68/39 GBC)

5.3.30 A second reason given noted:

'The former temporary loading and unloading bays appear intrusive extensions unrelated to the design of the original building and detract from its appearance.'

5.3.31 However, on appeal, permission was granted subject to certain changes to the bay elevations, i.e. to reduce lorry openings to form doorways and rendering the front of the church and side extensions (BHD, 2014).

5.3.32 In October 1974, the Gurdwara submitted an application and plans for first floor side extensions (above the former loading bays, now cloakrooms) for the use of reading rooms (GR/74/638 GBC). Although initially rejected, an amended application and plans resubmitted in early 1975 were approved.

5.3.33 The proposals included alterations to window openings, two new staircases and the blocking up of original windows present on the side elevations of the church building, above the additional bays.

5.3.34 Further development/ additions/ alterations given permission included:

- *'extensions to form toilets, a porch and internal alterations'* in October 1982 (GRA/BR/82/995 (Kent Archives ref: 82/995))
- drainage works to the rear of the church 1986 (GRA/BR/86/654 FP (Kent Archives ref: 86/654))
- temporary display of decorative lighting/bunting across Clarence Place in front of Gurdwara (GR/20010158 GBC), 2001
- retention of a covered side access, subject to its removal in April 2004 (GR/20011294 GBC), 2001
- renewal permission for *'temporary display of decorative lighting/ bunting'* (GR03/232 GBC), 2003.

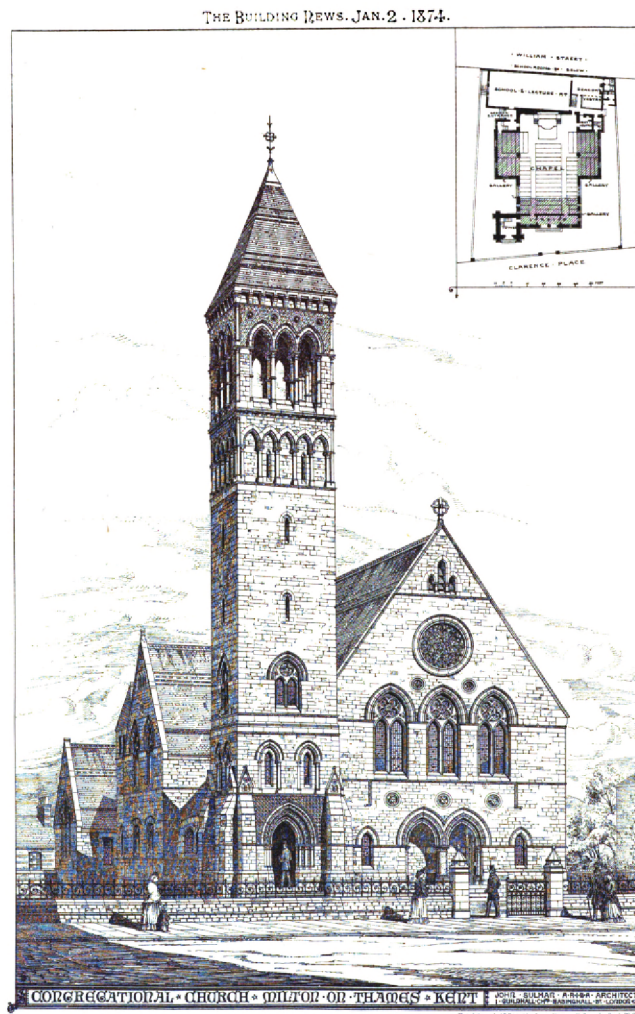
5.3.35 By the late 1990s, the Sikh community had outgrown the Clarence Place Gurdwara and a new site was sought for a replacement temple (gurunanakdarbar.org). The community raised the necessary funds and after eight years of construction, moved into a new temple a short distance to the northeast of the Clarence Place site.

5.3.36 Vacant since 2010, the former Congregational Church was subject to antisocial behaviour and became derelict. Several proposals to demolish the Clarence Place building and replace with flats were refused (2009, 2014 and 2020: 2009/0487 GBC and 20140550 GBC).

5.3.37 A new application to convert the existing building into flats was accepted in 2022, subject to conditions (20220728 GBC).

5.4 The Architect

- 5.4.1 The church was built to a design by Sir John Sulman, intended to accommodate 750 worshippers following a split in the congregations of Gravesend and Milton, in addition to serving as the chapel for Milton Mount College, a boarding school for the daughters of congregational ministers.²
- 5.4.2 Sir John Sulman (1849-1934) was responsible for the design, solely or in collaboration with John W. Rhodes, of c. 70 churches in England; he is however better known for his work in Australia, as an architect and a leader in the field of town planning.³



The church as envisioned by Sir John Sulman
Published in The Building News in 1874

² http://edithsstreets.blogspot.com/2015/04/railway-from-london-bridge-to-gravesend_24.html

³ <https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/en/map?country=global&view=map#0.262466.52493474324.609599.6708161779>

³ <https://www.savebritainsheritage.org/news/item/83/Gravesend-Temple-Escapes-Bulldozers-after-Successful-Legal-Challenge>

6.0 THE BUILDINGS AS EXISTING, 2023

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The property comprised two principal buildings: the church proper and the school and lecture theatre to the rear (north) of it. The two ranges were contemporary, designed by Sulman as a group from the outset, with access between the two parts (Plate 1). Each range is described in turn below, followed by the latter additions to the group.

The Church – *Layout as planned*

- 6.1.2 The church, built to a cruciform plan, comprised a north – south oriented nave flanked by a pair of aisles. The nave, labelled chapel on the initial drawing prepared by Sulman and presented in The Building News in January 1974 (Plate 1). The drawing shows a series of pews that extend into the aisles where they were surmounted by a pair of galleries, a third gallery was situated at the south end of the nave: this extended southwards over the entrance area (Plate 1). The entrance area, separate to the nave and situated at the south end of the church, comprised the principal entrance accessed through an arcade formed by two open arches with pointed heads, flanked by a pair of enclosed lobby areas. A tower had been proposed for the southwest corner; later omitted from the scheme (Plate 1).
- 6.1.3 At the north end of the two aisles staircases were provided for access to the galleries: access to the school was placed at the northern end of the west aisle (Plate 1). The minister's vestry occupied a position at the north end of the eastern aisle, adjacent to the staircase, linked to the school building to the rear (Plate 1).
- 6.1.4 The north end of the nave included a platform and an organ, the latter partially accommodated within a wide arched recess in the north wall (Plate 1).

Layout as Existing (Figure 2)

- 6.1.5 The overall layout of the church remains broadly the same as proposed in 1874, excepting of course, the lack of a tower at the southwestern corner of the building: as outlined above, the tower was never built.
- 6.1.6 The principal access retains the layout designed by Sulman: a central arched arcaded entrance flanked by a pair of lobbies that provided access to the pews surmounted by the south gallery (Plates 1 and 2).
- 6.1.7 The west lobby includes stair access to the gallery: this may represent a change of mind, relocating the staircase from the tower that was never built to the interior of the church building, and in so doing, cutting across one of the front windows to preserve the external elevation's layout as first planned (Plates 1 and 2).

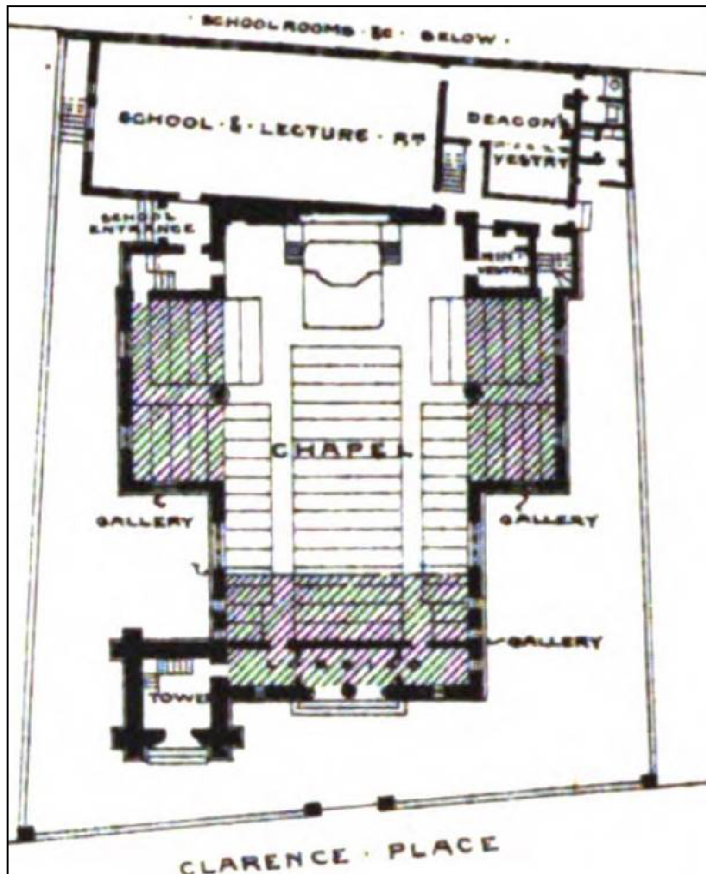


Plate 1: The ground floor plan as proposed and presented in The Building News, January 2nd 1874

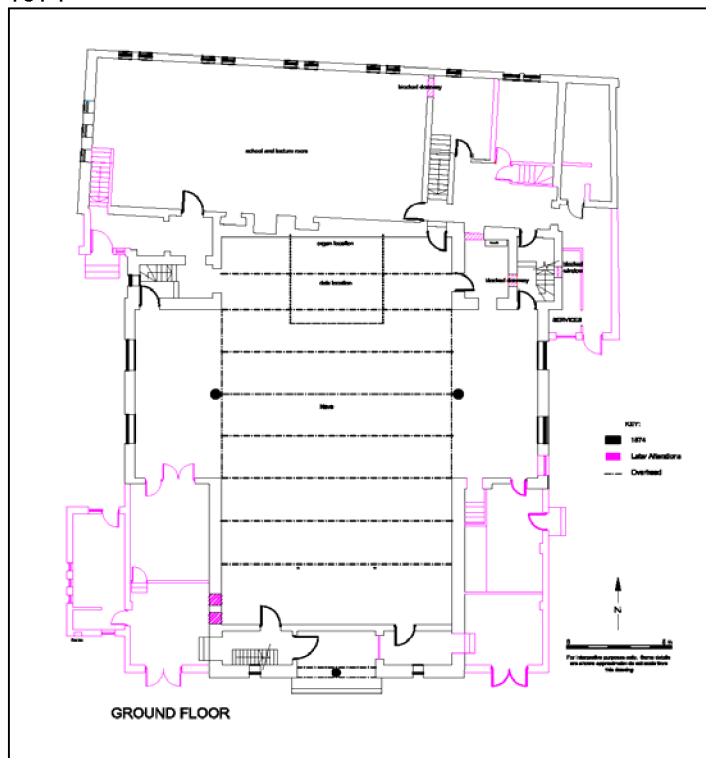


Plate 2: The ground floor plan as existing, 2023

- 6.1.8 Two two-storey extensions had been added (in stages) to the south of each aisle, extending down to meet the south elevation of the church (Plates 1 and 2). Three single-storey extensions had been added to the group. To the southwest, northwest and northeast, the two northern additions linked to the school and lecture theatre range (Plate 2).

The School – *layout as planned*

- 6.1.9 The adjoining school range, built to a rectangular plan and two storeys in height, comprised a pair of class rooms and utility areas on the lower ground floor, surmounted by a large school and lecture room to the west and a smaller suite of rooms for the Deacon to the east (Plate 1).

Layout as Existing (Figure 2)

- 6.1.10 The school building retained its large open-plan room on the upper floor, the alterations to the layout confined to the construction of a second staircase within the southwest corner of the room (Plates 1 and 2). The suite of rooms to the east have been subject to a higher degree of alteration, the former Deacon's room subdivided to create two adjoining rooms, the Deacon's vestry replaced by a staircase leading to an inserted upper floor (Plates 1 and 2).
- 6.1.11 Minor changes had been made to the minister's vestry: this comprised blocking two doorways and a fireplace (compare Plates 1 and 2). The window in the eastern elevation of the neighbouring staircase had been blocked when the service facilities external to the church were added (Plate 2).
- 6.1.12 Alterations were carried out within the utility rooms to the east of the school house (Plates 1 and 2).

Lower Ground Floor

- 6.1.13 The lower ground floor layout now comprises three rooms within the school and a further room situated below the southeastern corner of the church (Figure 2). The external entrance from William Street leads into a hallway that provides circulation through the various parts in addition to accommodating the staircase to the upper ground floor level (Figure 2).
- 6.1.14 The western room is the largest of the group, serving initially as a further class room: the infant's classroom may have been situated adjacent to it at its eastern end with the other areas accommodating the utility areas listed in the article published in 1874 and discussed above.
- 6.1.15 The room below the church includes a pair of access hatches below the floor level of the remainder of the building for maintenance.

Figure 2

The New First Floor (Figure 2)

- 6.1.16 A new first floor had been added over the eastern suite of rooms, linked by the staircase inserted into the area formerly occupied by the vestry (Plates 1 and 2). The floor structure bisects the tall windows, providing natural light to the interior of the rooms.

The Extensions (Figure 2)

- 6.1.17 The first extensions to the group were the southern additions to the two aisles: these were added by Wholesale Trading Supplies Ltd in 1955 as loading bays. The loading bays were converted to cloakrooms in 1968 as part of the Sikh temple facilities, soon after they took ownership of the site in 1967. Extracts of the planning proposals show the layout and the associated alterations to the ends of the aisles to accommodate them (Plate 3).



Plate 3: A view of the Clarence Place elevation showing the two loading bay extensions added in 1955 *in situ*, converted to cloakrooms in 1968

- 6.1.18 A particular condition of the consent at that time included the addition of render to the front elevation of the church.

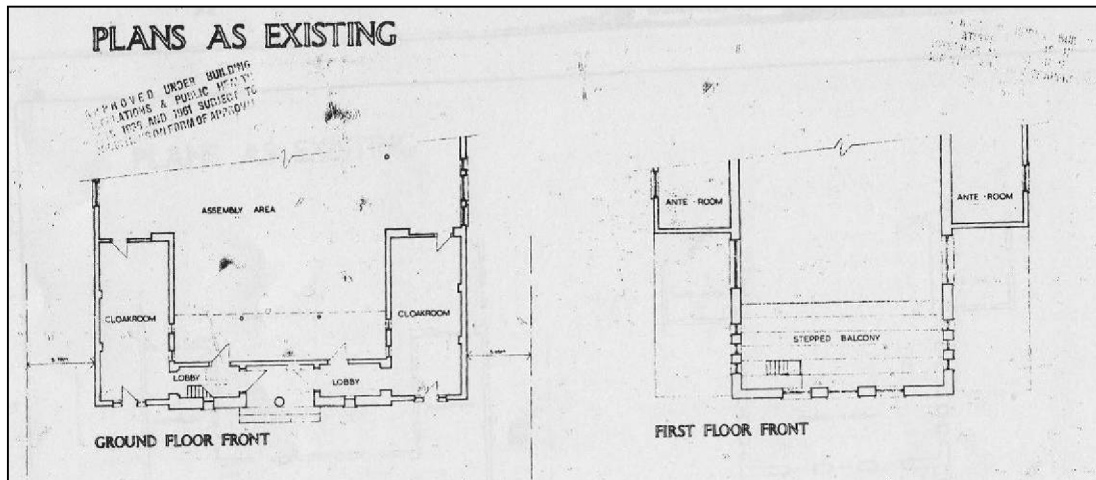


Plate 4: Extract of the building as existing showing the loading bay extensions made in 1955, converted to cloakrooms in 1968 and subsequently extended upwards to include first floor reading rooms

- 6.1.19 First floor rooms were added to the loading bay extensions in 1975, blocking the arch-headed windows in the church (Plates 3 and 5).

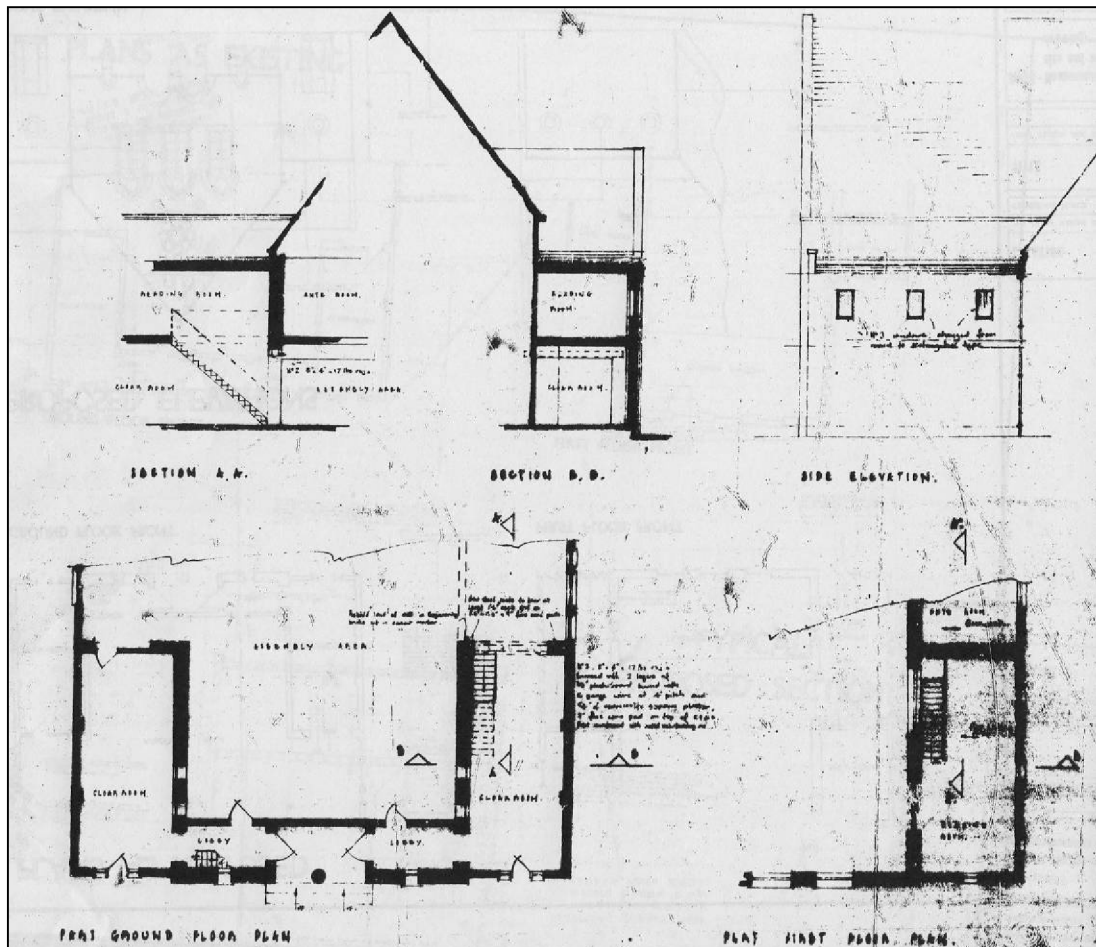


Plate 5: The first floor additions to the two former loading bays as permitted in 1975

6.1.20 In 1982 extensions were made to the toilet facilities in conjunction with interior alterations (Plate 6).

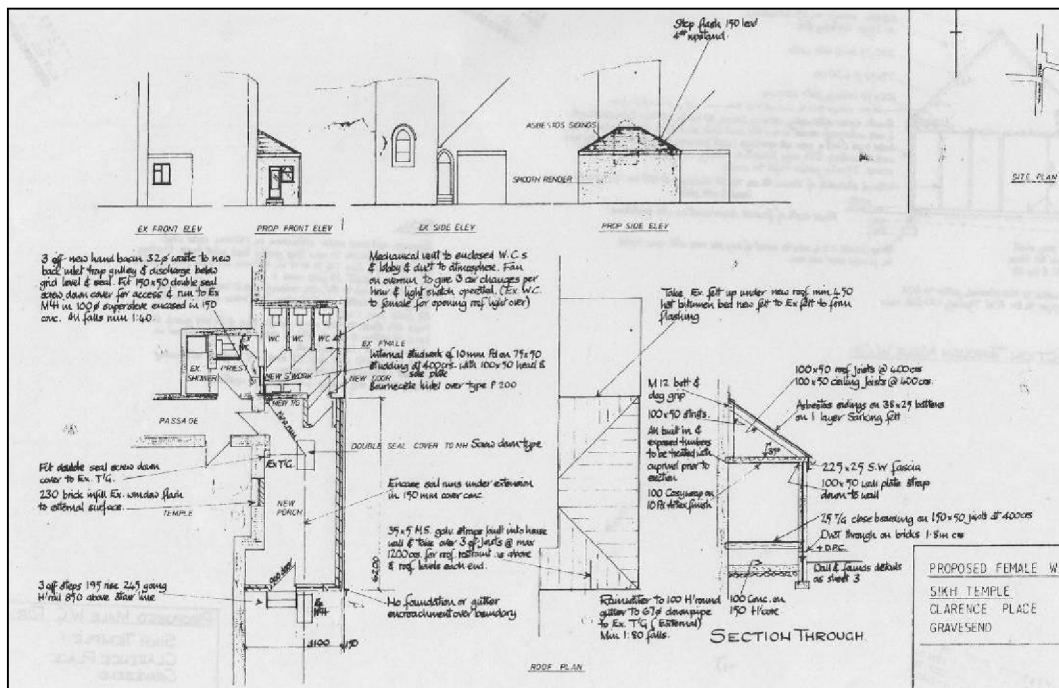


Plate 6: Alterations to the WC facilities at the northeast corner of the former school building and the porch extension to the south of it added in 1982

6.1.21 New toilet facilities were also added at the same time to the west side of the southwest cloakroom (the former loading bay; Plate 7).

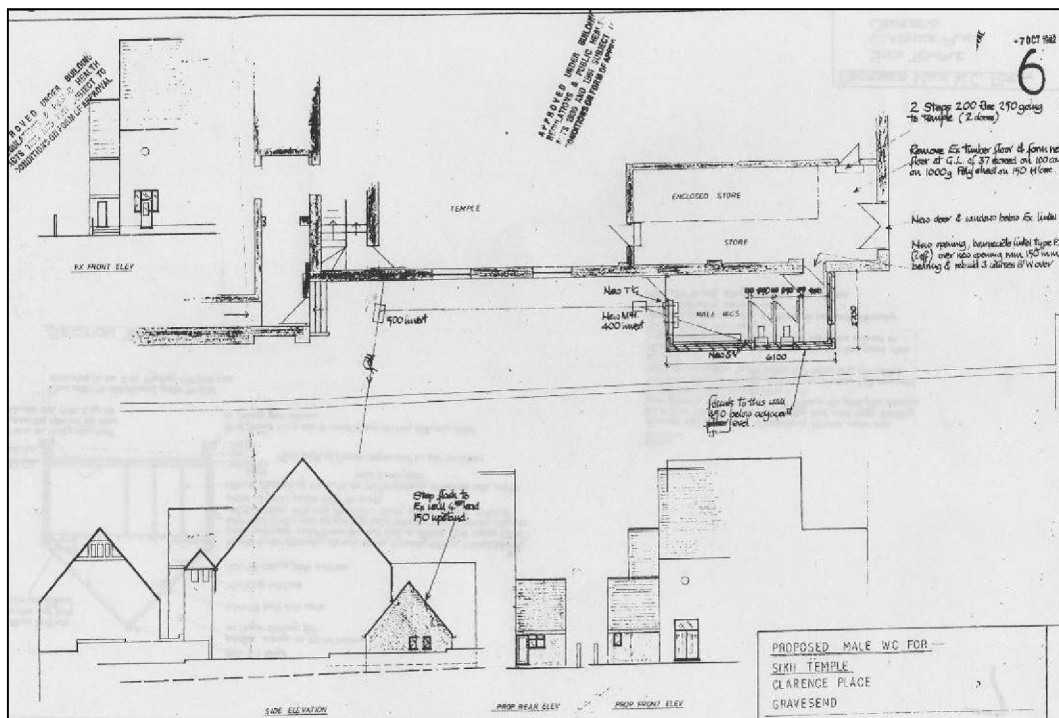


Plate 7: The new toilet facilities added to the west side of the loading bay extension to the church in 1982

6.1.22 The remaining extension is located at the junction of the west aisle and the southwest corner of the former school: no proposal plans were located for the addition, however, it is shown *in situ* on the 1982 proposal plans (Plate 8).

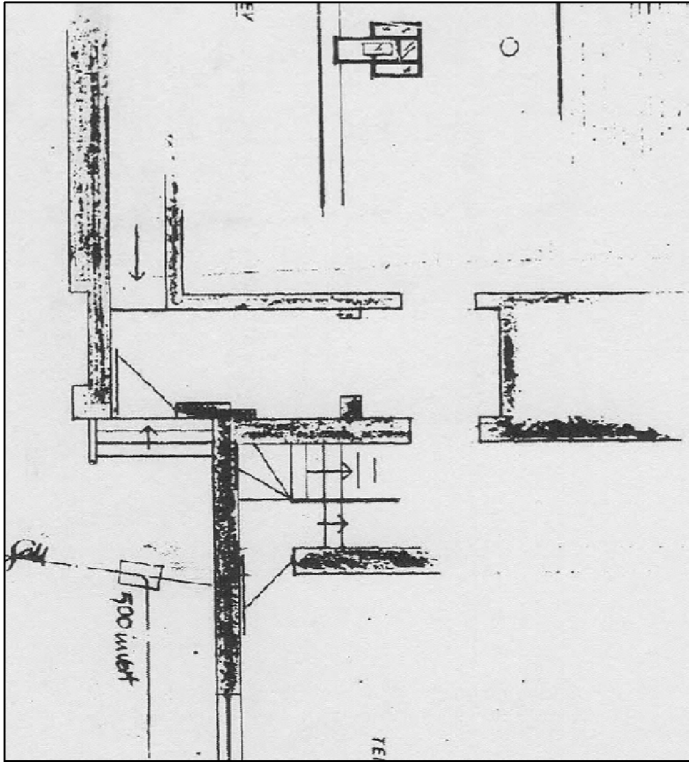


Plate 8: The 1982 proposal plan showing the small lobby extension at the junction of the church and the former school *in situ* by that date

6.1.23 Within the building alterations included the addition of doorways within the fabric of the aisles to link them to the loading bay extensions, with subsequent modifications in response to changes in use (Figure 2).

6.1.24 Undated alterations comprise the following:

- The southwest staircase in the former school
- Alterations to the east end of the school building
- New first floor and staircase at the east end of the school building
- The insertion of a new window in the east elevation of the east aisle (ground floor)
- Partitions inserted into the two galleries over the aisles
- Inserted windows and in-fill of the former arcade to enclose the new rooms laid out within the former galleries
- Alterations to the lower ground floor to accommodate changing functions (dining rooms; kitchens)

6.2 Exterior – Clarence Place (South) Elevation

- 6.2.1 The south elevation of the building is the gabled end of the church, fronting onto Clarence Place. The centre of the elevation at ground floor level comprises the arcaded entrance: two pointed-arched openings raised above external ground level and accessed via a short flight of steps (Plate 9). The entrance arcade includes a central pillar and side shafts of red Aberdeen granite, the arrangement is flanked by a pair of single-light, pointed arch-headed windows that light the lobbies within the entrance area (Plate 9; Figure 2).
- 6.2.2 The original ragstone rubble masonry walls are partially exposed, concealed from the window sill level to the ground surface by applied brick plinths of 20th century origin (Plate 9). The remainder of the elevation is under render, except the Bath stone dressings to the openings.



Plate 9: The front (south) elevation of the church looking northeast (scale 1.00 metres)

- 6.2.3 The first floor part of the elevation comprises a tripartite feature window, a group of three pointed arch-headed openings each of two lights surmounted by quatrefoil tracery (Plate 10).. The tripartite window is in turn surmounted by a large circular

'rose' window. Two round plaques with carved motifs sit between the base of the rose window and the arched heads below and a further three round recessed plaques of plainer design are situated between the base of the tripartite arched window and the entrance arcade (Plate 10). Further embellishments are included at the apex of the gable: this comprises another tripartite opening, a ventilator comprising a taller central pointed-arch flanked by a lower pair, the parts separated by carved columns (Plate 10). The finial currently *in situ* replaced the original carved cross when the building was converted to its temple function.

6.2.4 All of the church windows are metal-framed.



Plate 10: The feature front, the south elevation of the church fronting onto Clarence Place

6.2.5 The two extensions are set back from flush to the principal south elevation of the church. The additions are box-like with flat roofs and a rendered finish embellished by incised ashlar lines. Both extensions have wide central doorways surmounted by simple circular windows (Plate 10). The base of the additions have plinths of brown brick laid in stretcher bond (Plate 9: this continues onto the base of the church elevation indicating that the intervention occurred when the extensions were altered to their current form during the late 20th century.

North Elevation

6.2.6 The north elevation of the property fronts onto William Street and comprises the side elevation of the former purpose-built school building. The school, at two storeys in height, had a substantially lower ridge-line in comparison to the church proper, emphasising the hierarchy and different functions of the two ranges (Plate 11).



Plate 11: The north elevation (based on the drawings prepared by Survey and Engineering Services Ltd for Haskins Designs)



Plate 12: An oblique view of the north elevation as existing in 2023

- 6.2.7 The north elevation comprises a single entrance with a shouldered-arch head, situated towards the eastern end of the range: this leads to the lower ground floor and the stair hall (Figure 2). The remainder of the elevation comprises windows arranged in pairs at regular intervals. The fenestration for the upper ground floor is laid out to

match that of the floor below, with an additional single-light window over the entrance (Plates 11 and 12). The subtle embellishments to the elevation comprise a moulded string course at the base of the upper ground floor windows and a moulded cornice. The roof is gabled at each terminal and is under a cover of slate.

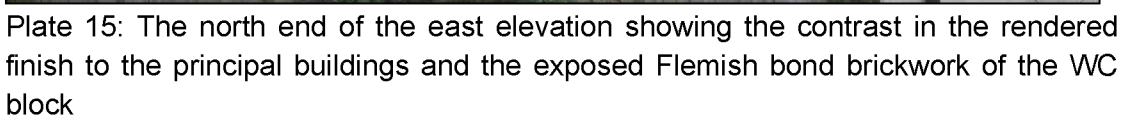
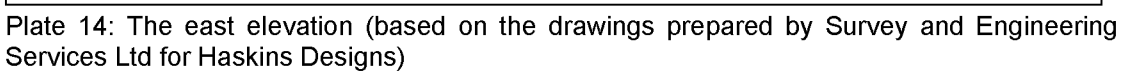
- 6.2.8 The final features on the north side of the group is the pointed arched opening at the eastern end of the building: this is an external entrance leading to the narrow courtyard on the western side of the church. A single modern window is situated at the western end of the building: this lights the interior of the WC facilities in that location, concealed behind a parapet effect on the north side of the group (Plate 11).



Plate 13: The north gable of the church

The North Elevation of the Church

- 6.2.9 The north gable of the church rises above the roof-line of the former school building. The gable is pierced by another tripartite ventilator to match that *in situ* at the front of the church (compare Plates 10 and 13). A decorative band defines the base of the windows and extends to the slopes of the roof: this steps out to the east side in the location of the former (now truncated) chimney stack that had served the fireplace in the minister's vestry at the northern end of the east aisle. The painted motif below the ventilator relates to the temple function of the property.



The East Elevation

- 6.2.10 The east elevation comprises the rendered gabled end of the school: this is rendered with moulded detail to the gable coping and as a string course situated at the base of a two-light ventilator. The ventilator is surmounted by a round openings at the apex of the roof (Plate 14).
- 6.2.11 A squat rectangular projection on the north side of the gable is the chimney stack that served the hearth in the Deacon's rooms at the eastern end of the school building.. The base of the gabled end of the school is concealed behind the single storey WC facilities: this part of the group is in brick laid in Flemish bond (Plate 15).

The Northeast Stair Turret

- 6.2.12 The stair turret situated at the north end of the aisle has a pyramidal roof raised over a prominent rectangular plan structure that is pierced below its eaves by a series of three rectangular single-light windows. Two further windows are situated on the north side of the stair turret. Two moulded string courses alleviate the otherwise blank remainder of the rendered finish to the turret (Plates 15 and 16).

The East Aisle

- 6.2.13 The east aisle has a gabled east elevation: this is rendered throughout and overlain at its northern end by the porch extension added to the group in 1982 (Figure 2). There are four original windows: two to the ground floor providing light to the aisle below its gallery and two above, lighting that gallery. The two ground floor windows have segmental arched heads, the two for the gallery are pointed-arch-headed windows: all have two lights to each, complete with pointed arched heads and pierced motifs. The two gallery windows include a central circular light at the apex of the arch.
- 6.2.14 Further embellishments include four moulded string-courses: one each to the base and springing points of the arch-headed gallery windows and a further course at the base of a four-light ventilator at the apex of the gable and at the base of the ground floor windows. The two string courses that are integral to the gallery windows continue onto the stair-turret to create a coherent and cohesive decorative finish to the group.
- 6.2.15 A recessed circular plaque with carved floral motif is situated below the centre of the ventilator (Plate 14). The ventilator is not without its own embellishments: the four openings include pointed-arched-heads and the junction of each arch includes a decorative plaque.
- 6.2.16 Two modern windows have been inserted into the wall at ground floor level: these are plain rectangular openings that interrupt the string course in that location. The applied brick plinth described above for the south elevation and the 20th century extensions has been continued along the length of the east elevation (Plate 16).



Plate 16: The east elevation and the porch added in 1982

Southeast Extension

- 6.2.17 The remainder of the elevation comprises the two-storey extension at the south end of the aisle: this as discussed above was added as a ground floor extension in 1955 and subsequently supplied with first floor facilities in 1975. The plain rendered finish extant on the south side continues around to the east with a contrasting brown brick plinth at the base of the wall. The single doorway at the north end of the extension is reached by a short flight of steps. The remainder of the elevation includes three single light windows below the eaves (Plate 14).



Plate 17: The west elevation (based on the drawings prepared by Survey and Engineering Services Ltd for Haskins Designs)

The West Elevation

- 6.2.18 The west elevation of the school building comprises a feature tripartite window that lights the interior of the original school room on the upper ground floor (Plate 17). A doorway had been situated at ground floor window: this has since been blocked on the interior and there was no external access to the small courtyard in front of the doorway at the date the survey was undertaken.



Plate 18: The west end elevation of the school, stair turret and west aisle from William Street

- 6.2.19 The gabled end of the school is under render: the capping to the eaves is moulded and there are two visible moulded string courses with at least one further course anticipated at the base of the tripartite window. The two extant string courses are situated at the springing point on the window and at the base of a two-light ventilator at the apex of the roof.
- 6.2.20 The tripartite window includes a tall central light flanked by a pair of lower lights, all with pointed arched heads. The string course is punctuated by the openings yet picked up again on the columns that separate each light (Plates 17 and 18).
- 6.2.21 The ventilators match those *in situ* at the eastern end of the school range, surmounted once again by a circular opening (Plate 18).



Plate 19: The west side of the building showing the stair turret and west aisle

The West Stair Turret

- 6.2.22 The west stair turret is under render, embellished by three string courses: two adorn the ground floor window, one at the base and the other just below the pointed arch of the head. The third moulded string sits below two high-set windows just below the eaves of the turret roof.

- 6.2.23 The ground floor window is a single light one with chamfered leading edges and a prominent moulding that is almost more of a hood-moulding in this instance (Plate 19). The two plain rectangular openings at the eaves do not sit well within the tower and it is possible that they had been altered in the 20th century to the current form (Plate 19).
- 6.2.24 As before, the applied brown brick plinth continues along the entirety of the west elevation excepting the location of the WC facilities added in 1982 and removed by the date of this survey.

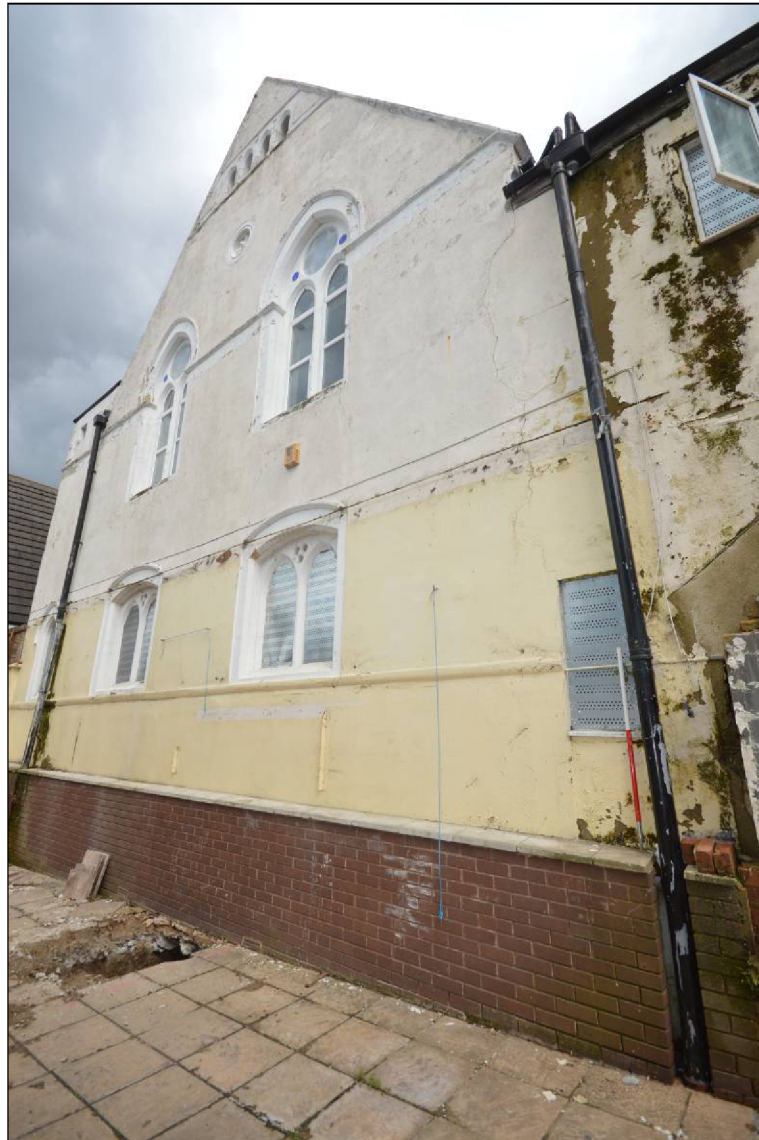


Plate 20: The west aisle

The West Aisle

- 6.2.25 The stylistic details of the west aisle match those described above for its eastern counterpart. The exception to the west aisle is the inclusion of a single modern rectangular window at the south end of the structure. The inserted window truncated the lower string course in that location (Plate 20).



Plate 21: The southwest extension and the scars left by the addition made in 1982 to accommodate new WC facilities

The Southwest Extension

- 6.2.26 The box-like southwest extension matches its eastern counterpart, comprising a plain rendered finish to the two-phases of construction surmounted by a flat-roof. A single entrance leads to the anterior and there are three plain single-light side-hung casement windows just below the eaves (Plate 21).

6.3 The Interior

The South Entrance Arcade

- 6.3.1 The entrance arcade is rectangular in plan, the open central part includes a tiled ceramic tiled floor finish with a geometric motif (Plate 22). The walls are rendered and the ceiling under-plastered. The two entrances leading to the lobbies have rounded jambs with bar-stops detail: additional moulded embellishments surmount the jointed and pegged timber doorframe (Plate 23)
- 6.3.2 The doors are of vertical boarded type, the details on the exterior have been concealed behind recent boarding, added as a security measure.

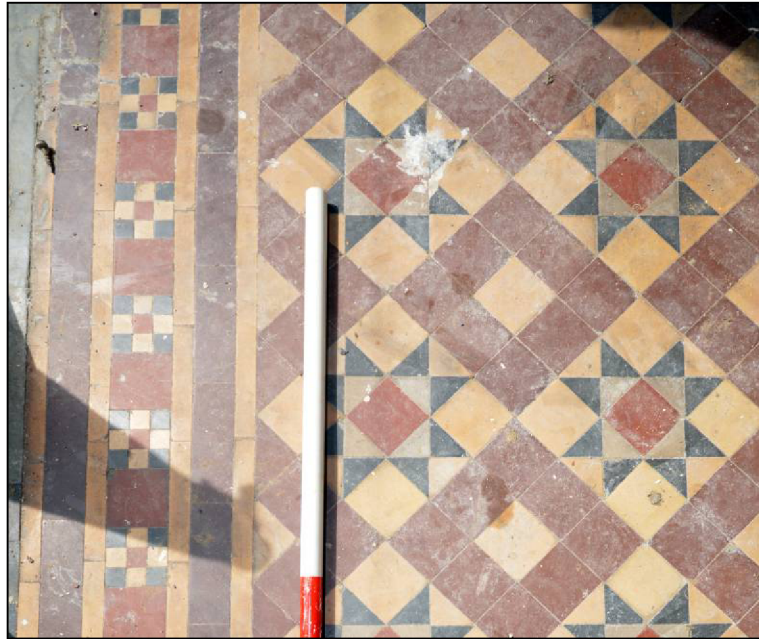


Plate 22: Detail of the tiled floor in the entrance arcade



Plate 23: The entrance arcade, tiled floor and western entrance

The West Lobby



Plate 24: Interior of the west lobby and staircase leading to the south gallery

- 6.3.3 The west lobby has rendered walls, a concrete floor and an under-plastered ceiling. The staircase rising to the south gallery is a plain and very basic straight flight of stairs that overly the southwest window. A pointed arch-headed entrance, with its door removed, is situated to the west side of the lobby providing external access in the first instance, later utilised to link the lobby to its southwestern extension. A further doorway leads from the west lobby to the interior of the church: the door is no longer *in situ*.



Plate 25: The entrance to the west lobby from the southwest extension

The East Lobby

- 6.3.4 The east lobby matches the west lobby in terms of finishes: the plain flat-arched head to the entrance in the east elevation indicates that it was a later alteration to the building, added to access the extension.



Plate 26: the inserted doorway in the east elevation of the east lobby, viewed from the extension added in 1955



Plate 27: The nave looking south towards the gallery and entrance areas



Plate 28: The north end of the nave with the remains of the platform and the recess that had framed the organ

The Nave

- 6.3.5 The nave, or chapel (Plate 1) is an open-plan room at the centre of the church group, intended to provide seating for the congregation, supplemented by the provisions

included within the two aisles and their galleries and in the south gallery that extended beyond the body of the nave into the upper part of the entrance suite (Figure 2).

- 6.3.6 The nave, excepting its south gallery, was full height, entirely open to its hammer-beam roof (Plate 27). The north end of the room had included a raised platform as shown on the 1874 plan (Plate 1). The platform was raised in front of a tall pointed-arch-headed recess in the wall (Plate 28): this had framed the organ and created a strong focal point of the group at the northern end of the nave where the minister would have led his congregation.
- 6.3.7 The walls of the church are under render, the floor is a suspended timber one comprising floorboards at 160 mm wide by 30 mm thick raised over joists that are 50 mm wide by 80 mm thick, set at 400 mm centres.



Plate 29: Detail of the canted southwest corner of the dais platform, the joist arrangement and the integral grilles, part of the heating system

- 6.3.8 The dais platform was positioned 150 mm above the floor proper, comprising 11 joists at 75 mm wide by 110 mm thick. The upper joists were placed at right angles to the lower joists, the latter integral to the general floor structure. The southwest and southeastern corners of the platform were canted (Plate 29). Integral iron grilles with floral motifs were set into the floor of the nave as part of the heating system (Plate 29).

Windows and Doorways

- 6.3.9 The nave is lit by the tripartite and rose windows set within the south elevation: additional light was not doubt provided by virtue of two high-set arch-headed windows just north of the south gallery (Plate 30), in addition to the tripartite groups that lit the south gallery prior to the addition of extensions in 1975. The south group included windows below and above the gallery in that location: all are now blocked.

- 6.3.10 The northern end of the nave no doubt benefitted from the borrowed light derived from the four windows in each side elevation of the aisles; two to each floor as described above (Plate 30).



Plate 30: The west aisle arcade and the blocked high-set window to the south of it illustrating the extent of natural light that would have suffused the church at the date of construction

- 6.3.11 A group of three doorways with pointed arch-heads were situated at the north end of the nave: one each to the two stair turrets and a third leading from the northeast corner of the nave into the school building (Figure 2; Plates 28 and 30).
- 6.3.12 At the south end of the nave, below the gallery, two plain doorways provide access to the lobbies and entrance area; their plain, functional form emphasising the hierarchy within the church, access to the south and a focal point for worship to the north (Plates 27 and 28).

Arcades and Galleries

- 6.3.13 The consistent pointed-arch theme was continued into the arcades that defined the boundary between nave and aisle (Plate 30). A tall graceful pair of arched openings separated by columns with floral carved capitals dominated the side elevations of the nave between the south gallery and dais (Plate 30).
- 6.3.14 The south gallery is simpler in style, the structure supported on two slim columns with moulded capitals. In all cases, the plate supported by the columns is in turn supported by carved corbels with floral detail (Plate 31).
- 6.3.15 All three galleries are defined by low timber balustrades: these are panelled and each panel is embellished with a pierced motif that picks up on external window details.

The pierced element comprises a series of groups of three circles (representing the Holy Trinity) surmounted by a recessed centrally situated circle, in turn embellished by further pierced detail (Plate 31). The south gallery balustrade includes a low timber-framed extension that borders decorative metal detail, intended to raise the height to a safer level at a later date in the building's evolution. The two aisle gallery balustrades have been raised by adding plain hardboard panels (Plates 27, 30 and 31).



Plate 31: Decorative detail in the aisle and gallery construction



Plate 32: The north end of the east gallery showing the interior, the later in-fill of the arcade and the access to the stair turret

First Floor

- 6.3.16 The first floor of each aisle gallery has been much altered, the arcade enclosed and fitted with modern windows (Plate 32). The suspended timber floors remain *in situ*, the walls rendered and the ceilings and skeelings under-drawn (Plate 32).
- 6.3.17 In both aisles, access was via the neighbouring integral stair turret: on the eastern side of the church, a small ante-chamber had been included within the turret, accessed from the gallery (discussed below). The doorway access from the turrets to the galleries were plain flat-arched openings (Plate 32).
- 6.3.18 Later inserted openings at the south end of the west aisle provided access to the first floor extension made to the southwest corner of the church in 1975 (Plate 33).



Plate 33: The north end of the west aisle showing the later alterations to the arcade and the doorway inserted to create access to the 1975 extension

South Gallery

- 6.3.19 The south gallery includes a series of wide steps rising from the balustrade to the south elevation, intended to raise the seating levels (Plate 34). The staircase occupies the southwest corner of the gallery, enclosed by a plain timber balustrade. A further raised platform is situated to the rear of the staircase enclosure (Plate 34).
- 6.3.20 Access to the gallery had initially been via the staircase in the southwest corner, the extensions made to the southwest and southeast corners of the church at first floor level in 1975 were carried out in conjunction with the insertion of two plain, flat-arched entrances flanking the gallery: these replaced the original tripartite window arrangements (Plate 3).



Plate 34: The west side of the south gallery showing the staircase and the entrance inserted into the west wall to link the aisle to the first floor extension added in 1975

Roof Structure



Plate 35: The interior of the church showing the galleries and the roof and ceiling construction

- 6.3.21 The roof of the nave comprises a series of six graceful hammer-beam trusses raised over moulded corbels, simpler intermediate trusses carry the structure over the remainder of the roof. The skeelings and ceilings, the latter set above collar level, are

under-drawn concealing the remainder of the roof structure (Plate 33). The enclosed apex of the roof is well ventilated by virtue of the gable ventilators visible on the exterior of the building as described above.

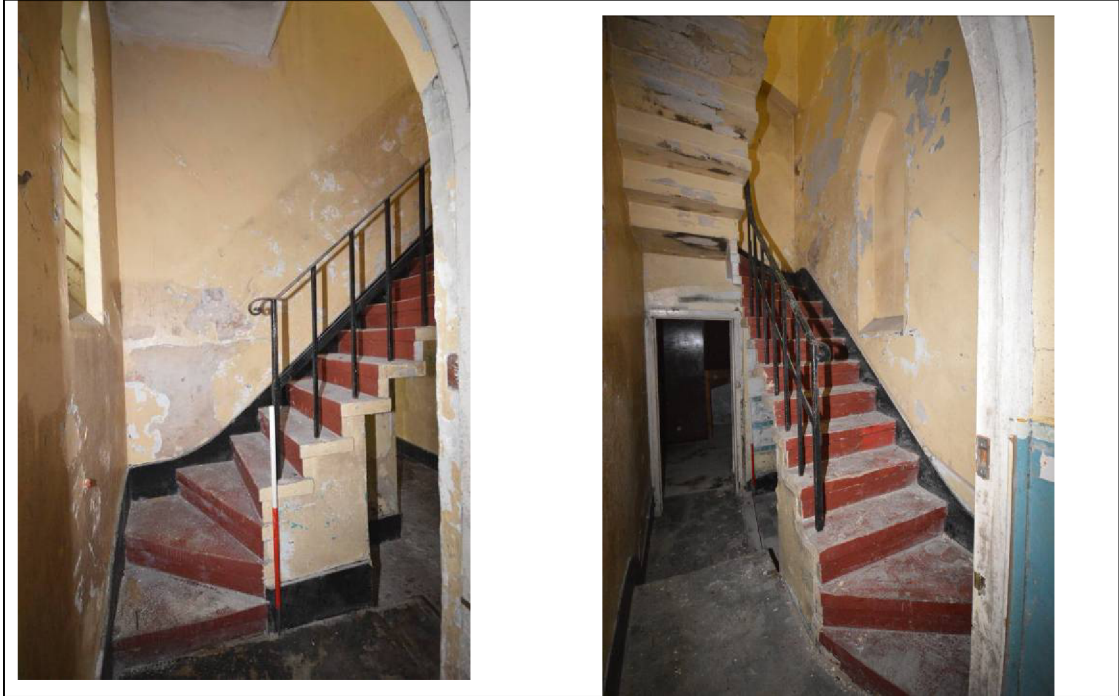


Plate 36: The west and east staircases accommodated within their own purpose-built stair turrets



Plate 37: Details of the stair turret staircases

The Stair Turrets

- 6.3.22 The two stair turrets include simple cantilevered staircases with plain metal balustrade and handrails (Plate 36). Despite the simplicity of the stair stylistically, the cantilevered form and purpose-built staircase enclosure with pointed arched windows and high-set groups of plain lights at the eaves lend an elegance to the construction (Plate 37).
- 6.3.23 The west stair turret included access to a small single-storey lobby area linked to the school range: this had later been extended further to the west (Figure 2). In contrast, the east stair turret included a small ante-chamber on the ground and first floors of the structure (Figure 2).
- 6.3.24 The eastern ante-chamber at ground floor level had been intended as the minister's vestry (Plate 1); with access directly to the dais platform at the north end of the church in addition to separate access into the school. A fireplace had been included within the north wall of the room (Plate 38). The fireplace has been blocked, any surround removed, the hearth remaining *in situ* to indicate its original location (Plate)
- 6.3.25 The first floor room over the former vestry had been lit by an integral rooflight : this has since been blocked (Plate 38). The original function of the first floor room is unknown.



Plate 38: The blocked fireplace in the north wall of the former minister's vestry at the base of the east stair turret and the blocked rooflight in the chamber above

6.4 The School

Upper Ground Floor

- 6.4.1 The upper ground floor includes the original large classroom and lecture theatre: this room remains open-plan, accessed from the lobby at the north end of the west stair turret and from the stair hall at the eastern end of the group (Figure 2). A third doorway provided a link to the Deacon's rooms and vestry at the eastern end of the classroom: this has been partially blocked. One final doorway is situated in the southwest corner of the room: this leads to the inserted staircase and is the result of later alterations to the building (Figure 2).
- 6.4.2 The room and the building that accommodates it is simple in style, contrasting with the more elaborate treatment visible within the church. All doorways and windows are flat-arched excepting the tripartite arrangement at the western end of the range (Plate 39).



Plate 39: The tripartite feature window at the west end of the school room on the upper ground floor, contrasting with the plain window openings in the north elevation

- 6.4.3 The walls are under render, excepting the exposed yellow English bond brickwork at the west end of the room: small sockets at the top of the exposed brick indicate some form of dado panelling, since removed (Plate 39).
- 6.4.4 The floor is a suspended timber one, the ceilings and ceilings are under-drawn. There are three recesses within the south wall of the room (Figure 2). It is unclear if the recesses had been integral to the building's construction as storage facilities, or to include a hearth; all have been modified in line with the changes in use (Plate 40).

The recessed features are accommodated within a thick wedge-shaped boundary between the school and the church: this is interpreted as a result of aligning the north and south elevations to their respective street-frontages (Figure 2).



Plate 40: The three recesses on the west side of the school house and the doorway leading to the lobby linked to the west stair turret

Staircase

- 6.4.5 The staircase in the southwest corner of the room is a later insertion, now encompassed by a hardboard enclosure (Figure 2).



Plate 41: The roof structure over the school classroom on the upper ground floor looking towards the west end of the range

Roof

- 6.4.6 The school room is open to its roof: this comprises three trusses raised on chamfered corbels: the braces of each truss create a pointed-arch, the spandrels embellished by pierced detail (Plate 41).

The East Rooms

- 6.4.7 The eastern end of the upper ground floor accommodates its original staircase linking the accommodation to the facilities on the floor below that front onto and are level with William Street. The remainder of the group at the eastern end is the result of 20th century alterations, now set out to provide a pair of rooms to the north and a stair hall to the south (Figure 2; Plate 42).



Plate 42: The interior of the eastern group at the end of the school house: the doorway to the west is in the location of the original; the partition adjacent, doorway, staircase and ceiling structure are the result of 20th century alterations



Plate 43: Detail of the inserted floor and the staircase structure and a doorway that had led into the neighbouring single storey utility lean-to



Plate 44: The northeastern room of the school house with its fireplace and windows bisected by the inserted floor structure

- 6.4.8 The stair hall provides access to the altered eastern layout and the neighbouring ranges: the inserted staircase links the accommodation to the floor above: both are 20th century modifications.

- 6.4.9 The eastern of the two rooms on the north side of the inserted stair hall includes the remains of its original fireplace (Plate 44). The first floor inserted into the stair hall continues across the remainder of the eastern rooms, bisecting the windows in the north elevation (Plates 44 and 45).



Plate 45: The north wall of the first floor accommodation at the east end of the school house created in recent years



Plate 46: The south side of the eastern rooms at the modern first floor level looking towards the sharking boards laid over the rafters

First Floor

- 6.4.10 The upper parts of the north windows, bisected by the inserted first floor remain extant on the upper floor for natural light (Plate 45). The ceilings and skeelings had been under-drawn; lath and plaster in the first instance as evidenced by striped pressure marks on the collars. Timber sarking boards can be seen on the roof slope above the rafters on the south side of the building (Plate 46).



Plate 47: The interior of the stair hall looking south

Lower Ground Floor

- 6.4.11 The lower ground floor layout is better preserved than its upper ground floor counterpart: the eastern end of the range includes the central stair hall accessed directly from William Street and in turn providing access to the other three rooms in the group (Figure 2; Plate 47). There are clear signs of alteration during the 20th century, however the original proportions of the classroom at the western end of the range remains intact (Figure 2; Plate 48).
- 6.4.12 The former classroom had been lit by pairs of windows on the north side of the room. The walls are rendered and the floor is concrete. The ceiling had been lath and plastered: this has since been removed, evidenced by the pressure marks on the soffits of the joists (Plate 48). The upper ground floor structure is supported by an east – west oriented girder, now boxed-in, in turn supported on a series of columns: these appear to be the result of later intervention intended to stabilise the building (Plate 48).

- 6.4.13 A series of niches are situated within the south elevation of the room at its eastern end (Plate 49). The niches all include segmental arched soffits: suggesting that they had been an original part of the building's construction, again accommodated within the wedge-shaped boundary between the two main ranges (Figure 2).



Plate 48: The lower ground floor classroom at the west end of the range looking east



Plate 49: The lower ground floor west classroom looking south showing the series of niches integral to the wall in that location

- 6.4.14 Later modifications to the main classroom comprise the creation of a window-type opening in its eastern elevation, part of the servery facilities when used as a dining room and the insertion of the staircase into the southwest corner of the room (Plates 48 and 50). The western doorway to the courtyard outside the building has been blocked (Plate 51).



Plate 50: The west end of the main classroom on the lower ground floor looking west towards the inserted staircase and blocked doorway



Plate 51: Detail of the blocked doorway showing the timber-frame *in situ*

- 6.4.15 The former infant's classroom may have been situated within either of the two rooms flanking the stair hall. Both rooms now extend across the full width of the building, each had included lath and plaster ceilings, rendered floor finishes and tiled floors, although the latter may have been the result of later alterations (Plates 52 and 53).



Plate 52: The eastern room on the lower ground floor, looking north towards William Street



Plate 53: The western of the two rooms flanking the stair hall at the east end of the school looking north towards William Street

- 6.4.16 One final room is situated at lower ground floor level: this is located below the northeast corner of the nave (Figure 2). The room below the church had been partitioned to include a separate enclosure, since removed (Plate 54). The room has a concrete floor, rendered walls and had included an under-drawn ceiling, since removed. There is clear evidence of intervention historically to strengthen the floor structure, indicated by the insertion of I-beams and posts (Plate 54).



Plate 54: The room below the northeast corner of the nave looking north towards the doorway leading to the stair hall at the east end of the school



Plate 55: Two access hatched leading from the room under the northeast corner of the nave to the remainder of the floor of the church the later joists and block-work indicate intervention for stability in response to the changing use of the building from the second half of the 20th century

- 6.4.17 The room below the nave includes to access hatches that lead under the remainder of the church floor for maintenance purposes including from the outset, access to the heating system (Plate 55).



Plate 56: The south elevation of the porch added in 1982



Plate 57: The interior of the porch extension added to the east side of the church in 1982, looking south

The North West WC and Porch

- 6.4.18 There was no access to the WC or porch at the eastern end of the school house during the survey due to health and safety concerns. From the exterior, the porch, added in 1982, was constructed in brick laid in Flemish bond: this may represent cladding on a block-work skin. A single doorway and window adjacent adorned the south elevation of the structure. The roof was under slate, sloping in a single lean-to pitch back to the main body of the church (Plate 56).
- 6.4.19 A keyhole view of the interior of the addition looking south through the doorway in the east elevation of the school indicates a simple plasterboard finish to the walls and ceilings (Plate 57).

The South Extensions

- 6.4.20 The two additions made to the south ends of the aisles in 1955, extended by the addition of first floors in 1975 are simple in form, comprising box-like rooms on each floor with rendered walls to the ground floor and plaster-board to the first floors. All ceilings were finished in plaster-board (Plates 58 to 62).



Plate 58: The interior of the southwest extension on the ground floor, looking south

- 6.4.21 The two extensions required blocking the original arch-headed windows and the creation of new doorways on each floor, excepting the original southwestern doorway in the entrance lobby of the church (Figure 2).



Plate 59: The interior of the southeast extension looking north towards the staircase accessed from within the aisle. Note the blocked pointed-arch-headed window in the west wall



Plate 60: The interior of the southwest extension looking north towards the doorway created in the south wall of the west aisle to link the two parts



Plate 61: The east wall of the southwest extension; the three-light window is within infill of an original larger high-set pointed-arch-headed window lighting the nave to the north of the south gallery. The doorway was inserted, replacing part of the tripartite window that had occupied that position prior to extension



Plate 62: The interior of the southeast extension with its integral staircase in the northwest corner

- 6.4.22 The two extensions required blocking the original arch-headed windows and the creation of new doorways on each floor, excepting the original southwestern doorway in the entrance lobby of the church (Figure 2).
- 6.4.23 Access to the first floor rooms varied: the southwest extension was accessed directly from the west gallery, the southeast extension via a staircase integral to its northwest corner, accessed from the ground floor of the east aisle (Figure 2).

7.0 SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT

7.1 Phase 1: 1874

- 7.1.1 The property comprised a cruciform-plan church with an entrance area to the south, a nave and a pair of aisles. At the north end of each aisle, two integral stair turrets were included to provide access to the adjoining school and to the galleries occupying the upper part of each aisle. A third gallery was situated to the south of the nave; this gallery extended over the entrance area on the floor below (Figure 2).
- 7.1.2 The school house to the rear of the church provided two floors of facilities, both included large classrooms to the west with a range of ancillary rooms, circulation areas and a staircase to the east. The eastern end of the school house at upper ground floor level had included the Deacon's rooms and a vestry. All of the rooms on the upper ground floor had originally been open to the roof; the rooms on the lower ground floor, by virtue of the topography of the site, opened directly onto William Street at the same level as the street surface.
- 7.1.3 The two ranges comprised stylistic details appropriate to their hierarchy and function, the higher degree of embellishment reserved for the church, with simple discrete detail integral to the more functional and utilitarian school house range.
- 7.1.4 From the outset, the facilities included an under-floor heating system with integral metal grilles included in the floor of the nave. The school house range and the facilities within the northeast stair turret included fireplaces served by chimney stacks.

7.2 Phase 2: 1955

- 7.2.1 The building had been superseded by the construction of a new church in 1953; the Gravesend Congregational Church, the buildings at Clarence Place having deteriorated throughout the first half of the 20th century exacerbated by damage incurred during the Second World War.
- 7.2.2 In 1955 the property was purchased by Wholesale Trading Supplied Ltd and put to use as a warehouse. Two single storey extensions were made to the south of each aisle to create loading bays.

7.3 Phase 3: 1967 - 2010

- 7.3.1 The property was converted to a Sikh temple in 1967. In 1968 the loading bays had been converted to cloakrooms and plans were in place for their extension through the addition of first floor facilities. Alterations associated with the extensions included the blocking of tripartite windows and the formation of new doorways to link the additions to the existing buildings.
- 7.3.2 Interior alterations, particularly to the school house were carried out in response to changing uses, adding kitchen and dining facilities, ventilation and services suited to the new functions.
- 7.3.3 A first floor was inserted into the eastern end of the school house at upper ground floor level in addition to a new staircase, providing first floor facilities in that location for the first time.
- 7.3.4 The galleries were modified to meet new needs; the arcades in-filled to create enclosed rooms and partitions inserted to create new facilities therein (Figure 2).

7.4 Phase 4: 2010 onwards

- 7.4.1 In 2010 the building was vacant, remaining so until plans were approved by the local authority for the current conversion of the group to domestic accommodation.

8.0 SIGNIFICANCE

8.1 The Significance of Milton Mount Church

- 8.1.1 As a non-designated heritage asset, the property is of significance due to its known origin in 1873 and its intended function, built to Sir John Sulman's design to provide a church and school facility for 750 worshippers following a split in the congregations of Gravesend and Milton, in addition to serving as the chapel for Milton Mount College.
- 8.1.2 The church survived bomb damage yet due to its deteriorating condition was superseded by a new purpose-built facility, the original building being purchased by Wholesale Trading Supplies Ltd to be put to use as a warehouse. The buildings regained their religious function in 1967 albeit as a Sikh Temple. History has since repeated itself, the building replaced by new purpose-built facilities in the area, the temple then falling into disuse until the current proposal scheme was approved for domestic conversion.
- 8.1.3 Despite the change of use to warehouse facilities, the buildings have enjoyed a long life as educational and religious facilities and as such, the original floor-plans and functions of both buildings have remained discernible to date.
- 8.1.4 The significance of the building is predominantly archaeological and architectural, based on following key features:
- The survival of sufficient fabric and form to indicate the intended use of the buildings
 - A clear hierarchy extant between the two ranges, the higher-status of the church with its elegant pointed-arched openings and hammer-beam roof, rose window and subtle decorative detail in sharp contrast to the simple treatment of the school house range
 - The survival within the church of its three galleries; indicators of the need to accommodate a sizeable congregation from the outset yet constrained by the urban site
 - The survival of information contained within historic documents and images to illustrate the clear intention of the architect Sir John Sulman commissioned to carry out the work
- 8.1.5 Despite modifications and disuse, the original vision of the architect and the functionality of the buildings remains clearly discernible illustrating 150 years of use.

8.2 The Setting

- 8.2.1 The immediate setting of the buildings comprises the tiled surface of the narrow courtyards and forecourt that surround the structures. The property is currently bordered by rendered brick walls, surmounted by metal railings and interrupted by gates. The render is a 20th century addition, historic photographs of the property in the third quarter of the 20th century show the exposed brick (Plate 3).



Plate 63: The setting of the property on the Clarence Place side of the group

- 8.2.2 The wider setting of the property on the Clarence Place side of the group has retained its historic character, acknowledged within the Windmill Hill Conservation Area. The William Street side of the group has been subject to a higher degree of more recent modern intervention. The former church and school buildings no doubt form a focal point on both sides of the group contrasting strongly with the domestic architecture that surrounds the site.



Plate 64: The William Street side of the property looking east

- 8.2.3 Despite the change in function agreed for the buildings in order to secure their future, it is clear that the positive contribution made to the character of the conservation area will remain central to the conversion.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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10.0 ARCHIVE

- 10.1 The site archive is currently held by HB Archaeology & Conservation Ltd at their offices. The archive will comprise a hard copy of the approved full report in addition to the digital photographic record.

11.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 11.1 The above statement and recommendations are the opinion of the author intended for information purposes only. Many of the views which inform the conservation of historic buildings are to some extent subjective, particularly in relation to more recent extensions and alterations; therefore it should be emphasised that there is no guarantee that the opinions expressed within this document will be endorsed by the local planning authority.

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