



HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING OF THE BEACON CHURCH, LONDON ROAD, DOVER, KENT

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Front cover: 21st century photograph of the site (looking north-east)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2019 Dr Paul Wilkinson of SWAT Archaeology carried out a historic building recording of the Beacon Church, London Road, Dover in Kent (Figures 3-8). The building is presently unoccupied and is undergoing development and repair.

1.2 The building recording was carried out on 11th February 2019 in accordance with a Level 1 survey as detailed in the English Heritage publication ‘Understanding Historic Buildings: *A Guide to Good Recording Practice*’ (2016). *The Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2014) and the *KCC Historic Building Recording Requirements Part C*.

This is essentially a visual record. Historic England guidelines suggest that written information should be the minimum to identify the building’s location, age, type, materials, use and when and whom compiled the report.

General photographs of the exterior as well as any specific architectural or historic features (both internal and external) should be taken.

1.3 In summary the work consists of a basic descriptive report accompanied by digital photographs.

1.4 The principal elements of the survey involved the creation of a record and description of the historic fabric of the building together with an analysis and interpretation of the buildings origins and historic development.

1.5 A review of Historic OS mapping has been made (MAP 1-3) and the Pevsner Architectural Guide (*Kent, North East and East 2013*) was consulted as was the National Heritage Register for England.

1.6 This report consists of a descriptive report accompanied by drone coverage, digital photographs and annotated plans.

2.0 HISTORICAL/ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Location

The Beacon Church is located on the east side of London Road in the centre of Dover (Figures 1-3). The first recorded Primitive Methodist meetings in Dover were in 1848 in a cow loft in Brook Street, Charlton. A chapel was built in Peter Street in 1860. After the building of the new church in London Road, this chapel had a variety of use before being demolished after the Second World War.

The foundation stone for the Beacon Church was laid on the 6th of May, 1901. It accommodated 600 people and was extended in 1928. It was damaged in the Second World War and part of it had to be demolished.

On 31st August 2003, it was amalgamated with the Tower Hamlets Chapel and the United Reform Church to form the Beacon Centre, so called because of its location on the corner of London Road and Beaconsfield Avenue.

The location is not known for its archaeological remains but 70m to the west is the possible site of the medieval St Bartholomew's Hospital (TR 34 SW 71) whilst to 50m to the east in Granville Street prehistoric pottery, marine shells and burnt and struck flints were found (TR 34 SW 602).

The OS location of the Beacon Church is NGR 631230 142191 (Figure 2).

2.2 Setting

Beacon Church is located alongside London Road one of the main roads into Dover from the hinterland of Kent. To the east are early 19th century terraced houses whilst opposite is a car wash facility.

The OS height on site is about 9.10m aOD and the Bedrock Geology is said to be by the British Geological Survey to be Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation-Chalk. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 86 to 94 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. Local environment previously dominated by warm chalk seas. These sedimentary rocks are shallow marine in origin.

2.3 Statutory Designation

Beacon Church is not listed but adjacent properties are. To the west are two listed buildings- 298 and 302 London Road both good examples of c.19th century terraced housing.

2.4 Significance of the Building

The significance of the building lies in its contribution to the corpus of Christian churches and chapels in the London Road area of Dover.

2.5 Historic Background

A rapid map assessment of OS historic mapping shows that in 1871 Beaconsfield Road did not exist and the site of the future Beacon Church is open ground (MAP 1).

By 1897 Granville Road is established and Beaconsfield Road is an unnamed track and on the corner with London Road there is a small building but with the rest of the site undeveloped (MAP 2).

The OS map of 1938 shows the site fully developed (MAP 3).

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

3.1 Exterior

The building is a seven room double storey building and is entered in the centre from the north-west, where a lobby gives access to the church hall and at the far end two doors lead into the meeting room. To the left of the lobby are the male and female toilets and to the right through double swing doors are stairs to the upper levels and balcony (Figure 3). The overall length of the current building is 19.20m. The width of the building including the rear extension but not including the front porch is 11.65m. The overall height is about 14.00m and to the gutter 6.00m.

3.2 The building represents one principal phase of construction (Figure 1).

3.3 The north east frontage is faced with unpainted cement render and pierced by one doorway with two side windows all with lancet arches and a large window also with a lancet arch with three trefoil headed lights of which all are framed by four stepped buttress. All windows have had the glass removed and replaced with plastic sheeting (Plate 1. Figure 4).

The east facing side wall is cement render with three stepped buttress and to the north east a flat roofed double storey extension, again finished in a unpainted cement render and pierced by a rectangular mullioned window. For views of the exterior see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4x6Jw6orTEg>

4. INTERIOR

4.1 The interior of the building is of double storey height with a part exposed collar-braced or arch-braced hammer beam roof with ridge piece and collar beams. Most of the ancillary rooms are of 20th century construction and of little architectural merit. For views of the interior see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4x6Jw6orTEg>

5.0 DISCUSSION

5.1 A review of the proposed alterations to the building suggest the building works are going to impact on existing structure but as the building has been extensively stripped out there is very little of architectural merit left to either preserve or record.

The structure again has little architectural merit apart from a community memory which will be satisfied by this building recording and drone coverage

6.0 PARAMETERS

5.1 The photographic survey was conducted using digital photography and as the exterior of the building was available drone coverage of the exterior and

interior of the building was undertaken. The use of drones for capturing important buildings is now an acknowledged part of historic building recording. For drone footage of other building and archaeological sites recorded by SWAT Archaeology access here: www.swatarchaeology.co.uk and go to 'NEWS'.

5.2 This work did not include any investigation of below ground archaeology. Such work is administered separately by SWAT Archaeology to a WSI prepared for the Local Planning Authority.

5.3 The site survey took place on 11th February 2019 and photographs can be seen in the following Plates. For drone footage see: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4x6Jw6orTEg>

Paul Wilkinson PhD., MCIfA., FRSA

10/06/2019

6. References

Historic England, 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*

The National Heritage List for England (accessed 12th June 2019)

Chartered Institute for Archaeology. *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2014).

Pevsner Architectural Guide (*Kent, North East and East Kent* 2013)



Plate 1. Exterior (looking north-east)



Plate 2. Front and side elevation (looking east)



Plate 3. Close up view of front elevation



Plate 4. Side view of front elevation (toilets) dating from 1927



MAP/1 OS plan 1871



MAP/2 OS plan 1897



MAP/3 OS plan 1906



MAP/4 OS plan 1938

Appendix 1

HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY:

Summary Sheet

Property Name Beacon Church	Address London Road, Dover, Kent	Building Name Beacon Church
Property/ Building Reference	OS Grid Reference NGR 631230 142191	Surveyor/Date of Survey Paul Wilkinson 11 th February 2019
Category Church	Original Use Church	Current Use Church
Date(s) of Construction The building represents two phases of build, the original structure dates from 1901 and extensions from 1928	Statutory Designation (s) n/a	HER Reference n/a
Walling Materials Wall construction is of brick faced with cement render	Roofing Materials Slate	Flooring Materials timber
Description: The building was built as a Meeting Hall in 1901 with extensions dating from 1928 and did suffer damage during WWII		
Architectural/Historic Significance: The building is significant as a memory of worship throughout the 20 th century		Landscape Significance: The significance of the building is low
Notes/Qualifications Regarding Survey: The survey was undertaken whilst the building was empty and prior to development which enabled access to most parts of the building apart from the roof space.		
Additional Information Sources for this Building (s):		

Appendix 2

Shot No.	Camera Facing	Description
1	NE	General external view of the building
2	E	General view of the side of the building
3	S	Front elevation
4	S	View of attached toilet block

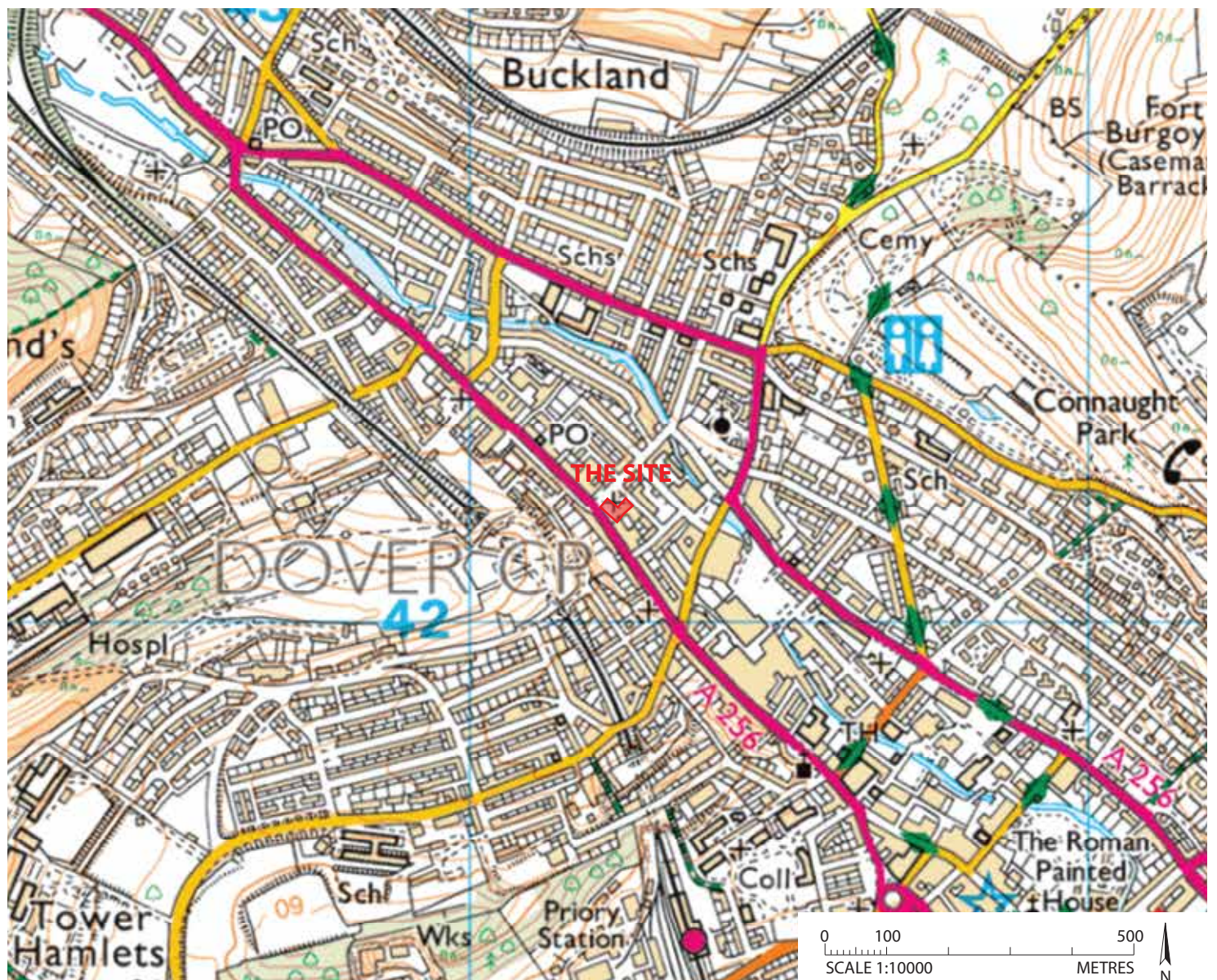


Figure 1: Site location map, scale 1:10000.

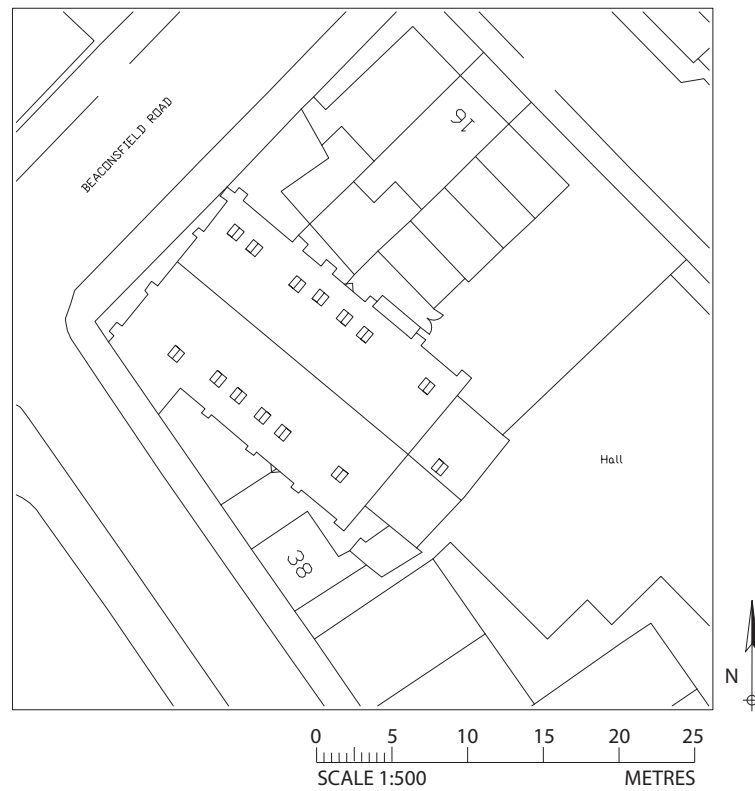
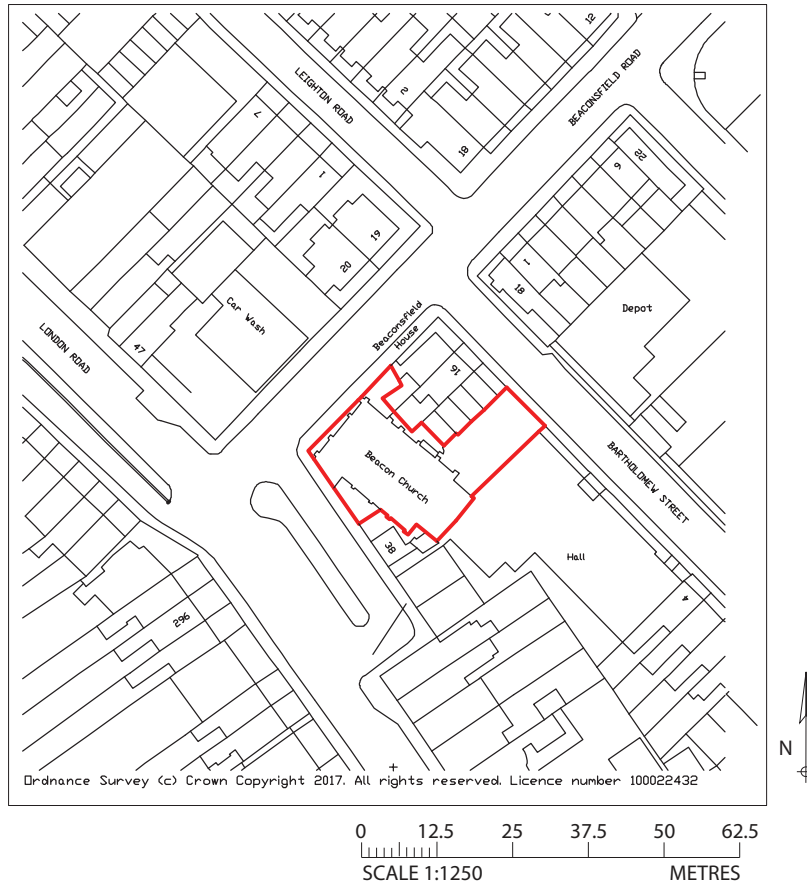
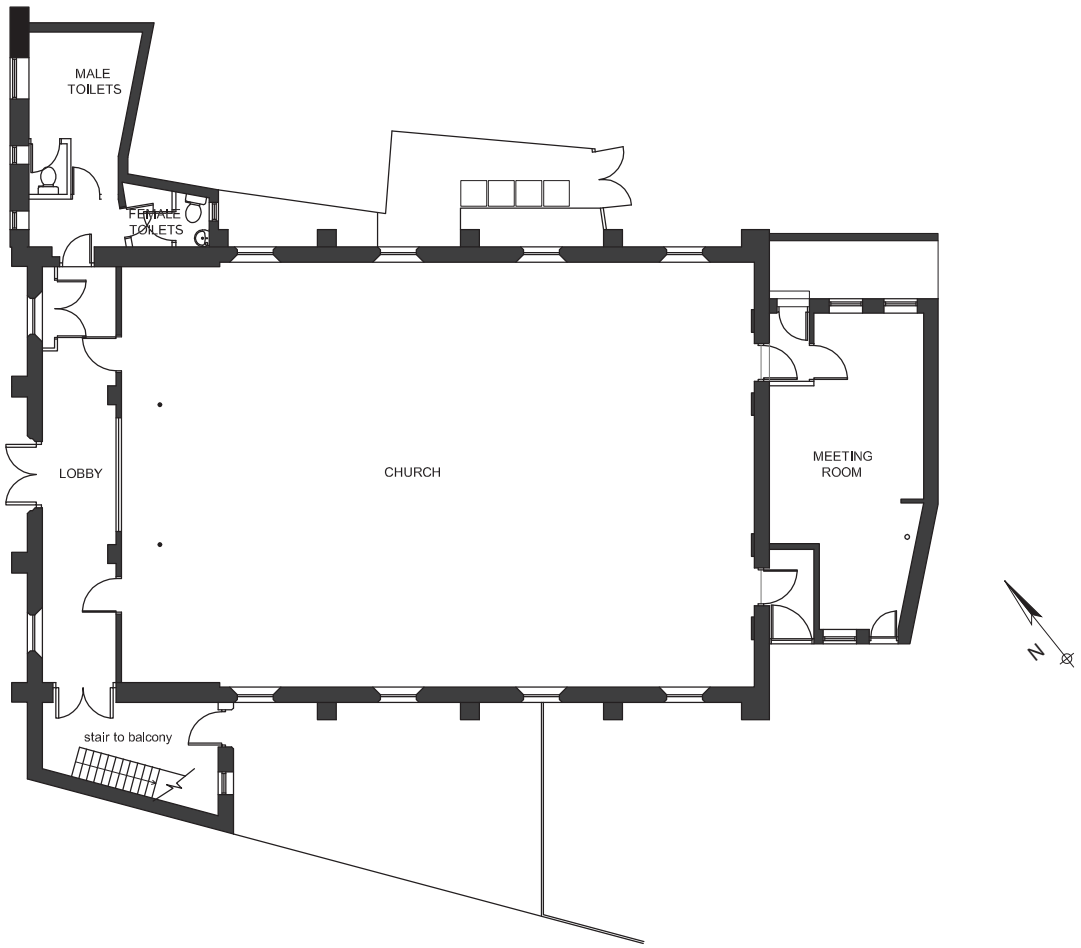
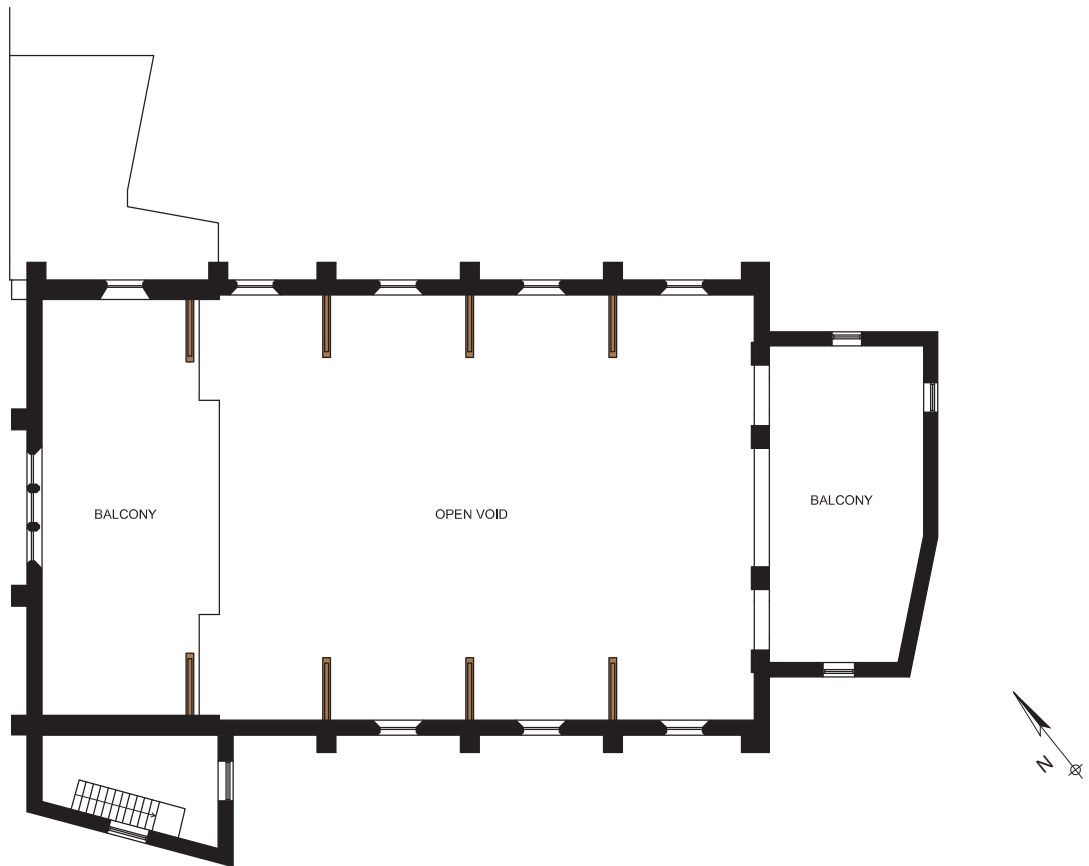


Figure 2: Church location.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

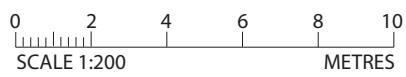
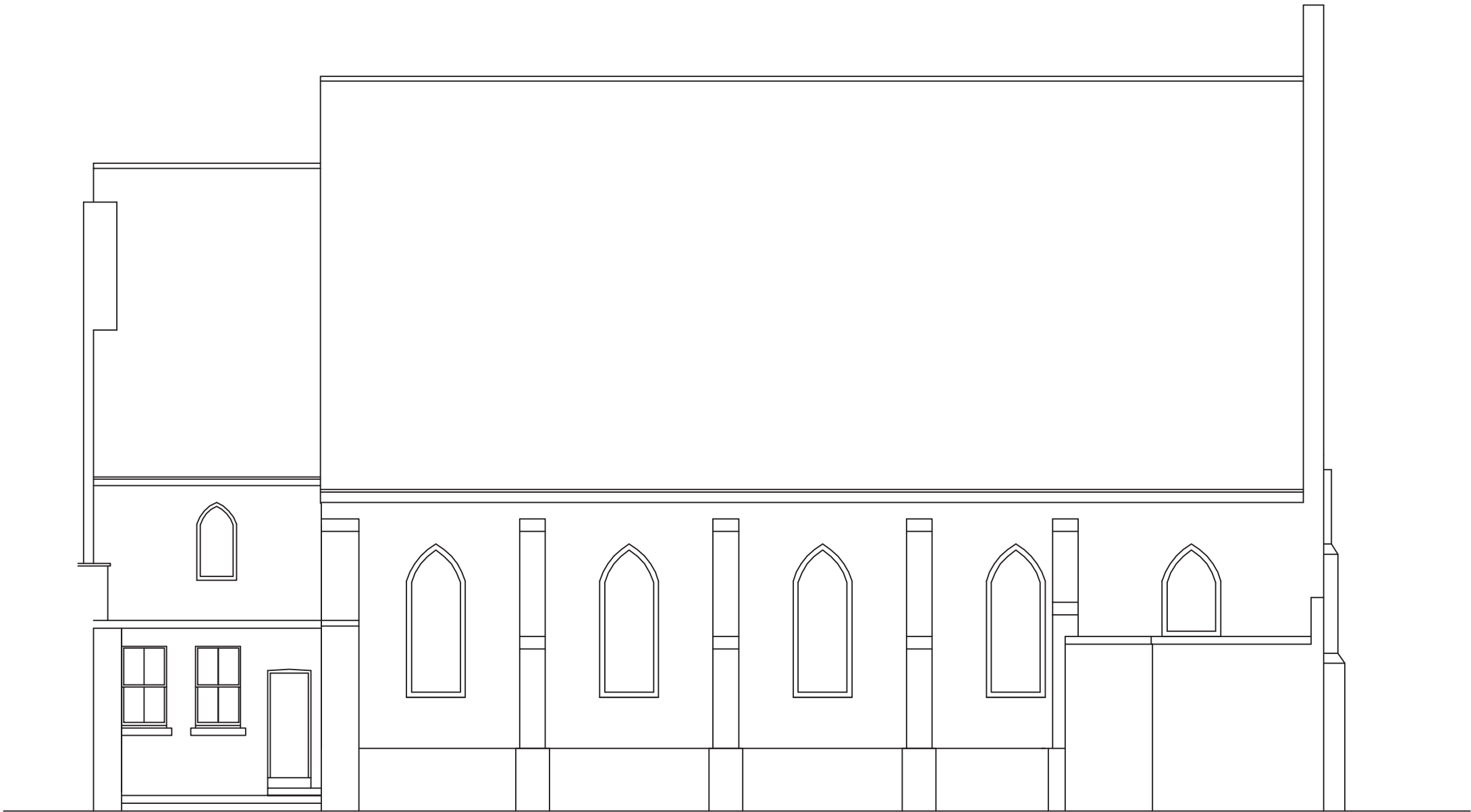


Figure 3: Floor plans.



0 1 2 3 4 5
SCALE 1:100 METRES

Figure 4: North west elevation



0 1 2 3 4 5
SCALE 1:100 METRES

Figure 5: North east elevation

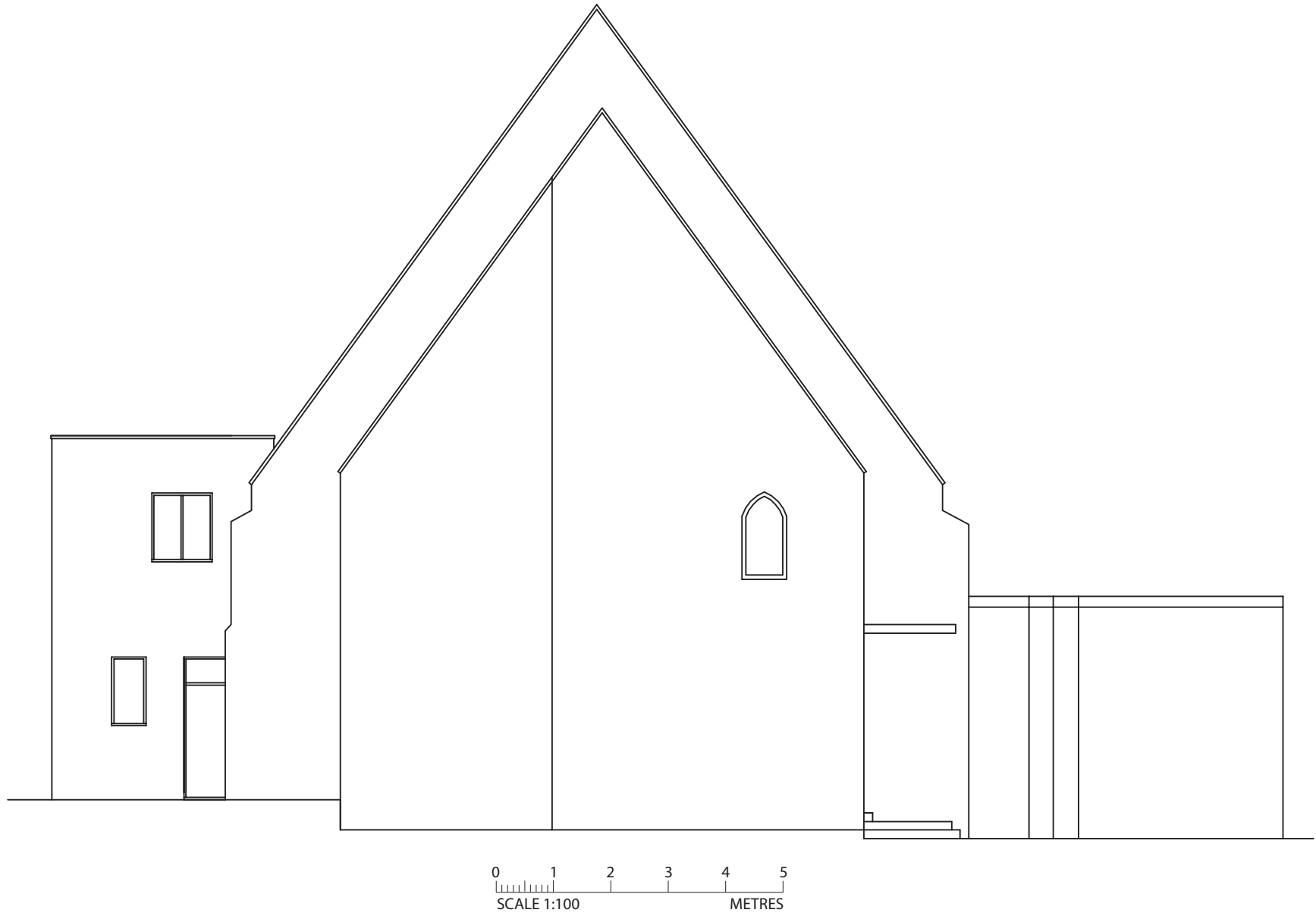
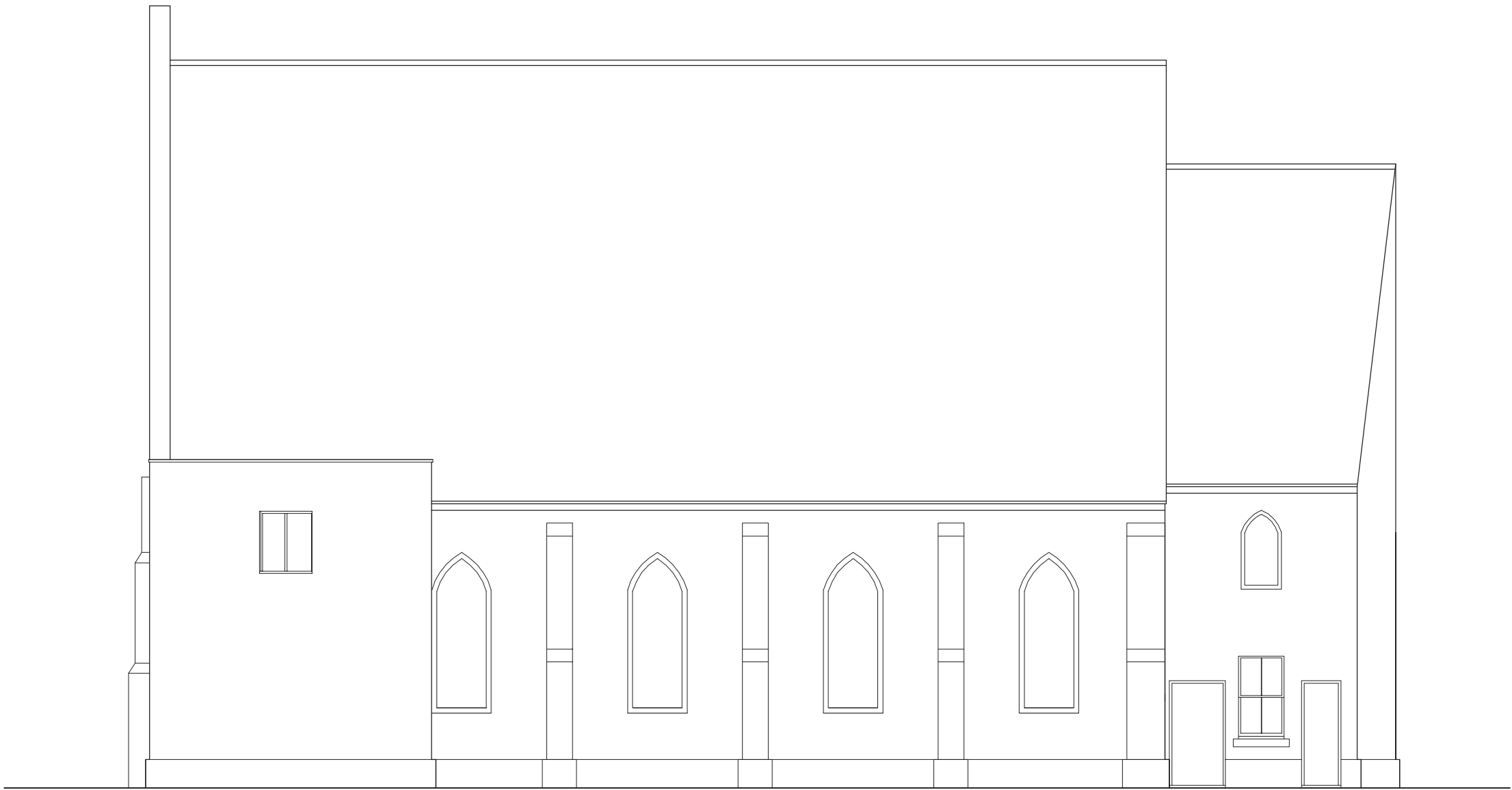


Figure 6: South east elevation



0 1 2 3 4 5
SCALE 1:100 METRES

Figure 7: South west elevation



Figure 8: Cross-section