

St Paul's Church Forton Lancashire



Building Investigation



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SUMMARY

Oxford Archaeology North (formerly Lancaster University Archaeological Unit) undertook an archaeological building investigation of St Paul's Church, Stony Lane, Shireshead, Forton, Lancashire (NGR SD 3502 4512), in August 2001, on behalf of Low Fold Professional Audio. The survey was a condition of planning consent, and was undertaken in advance of the conversion of the building into a recording studio. The aim of the survey was to analyse the plan, form, function, age, and development of the church.

The church was built in 1805 on the site of an earlier church which was in existence by 1562. The 1805 church comprised an open nave, with a chancel against the northern wall. This went through several phases of enlargement, not least an extension of the east end and the addition of a gallery. An outshut was added some time later to the north side of the church, probably in conjunction with the installation of a boiler in 1930, and most recently the building was used for Venture Scout meetings, which resulted in the addition of several cinder brick partitions in the nave and chancel to form store rooms, offices and toilets.

Present within the church was a series of inscriptions which recorded all the major episodes in the construction and alteration of the church. It is recommended that these should be preserved, either by being incorporated into the proposed conversion, or passed to an appropriate museum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Martin Hughes of Low Fold Professional Audio who commissioned the work and to Mr Keith Holmes for his assistance on site. OAN would also like to thank Peter McCrone and Peter Iles of Lancashire County Archaeology Service for assistance and for the provision of SMR details.

Daniel Elsworth and Chris Wild undertook the building investigation, Daniel Elsworth also compiling this report, whilst Emma Carter produced the drawings. The report was edited by Jamie Quartermaine and Rachel Newman, the project being managed by Jamie Quartermaine.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTRACT BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1 During August 2001, in accordance with a verbal brief from Lancashire County Archaeology Service, an archaeological building investigation was undertaken by Oxford Archaeology North (OAN) (formerly Lancaster University Archaeological Unit) of St Paul's Church, Shireshead, Forton, Lancashire (NGR SD 3502 4512; Fig 1), on behalf of Low Fold Professional Audio. The investigation was commissioned in advance of the conversion of the building into a recording studio.
- 1.1.2 The church is a grade II Listed Building, constructed in 1805 on the site of an earlier church, which was documented as being in existence in 1562 (Farrer and Brownbill 1911, 108-9). The work was undertaken in accordance with a project design (*Appendix 1*) which was prepared by OAN, in response to a verbal brief by Peter McCrone of Lancashire County Archaeology Service.
- 1.1.3 The objectives of the building survey were to provide a drawn and textual record of the church, whilst offering an outline analysis of the historic development of the site. The survey involved a visual inspection of the church, and was undertaken to Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (England) (RCHM(E)) Level 2-type standards. This is a largely descriptive level, providing for an outline analysis, and comprises measured hand survey, production of plans, photographs and written descriptive records. In addition, the gallery, which was to be removed as part of the development, was recorded to RCHM(E) Level 3 standard, which comprised the production of a cross-section through each axis of the building.
- 1.1.4 This report sets out the results of the work in the form of a short document which outlines the findings, followed by a statement of the archaeological potential of the building.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 PROJECT DESIGN

- 2.1.1 A project design (*Appendix 1*) was submitted by OAN in response to a request from Low Fold Professional Audio, for a fabric survey of St Paul's Church, Forton, in accordance with a verbal brief by Peter McCrone of Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS). OAN was commissioned by the client to undertake the work and the project design was adhered to in full. The work was consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and generally accepted best practice.

2.2 FABRIC SURVEY

- 2.2.1 Fabric and photographic surveys were undertaken in August 2001. The aim of this work was to produce a drawn and photographic record of the interior and exterior of the church, in conjunction with analysis of the sequence of development of the building.
- 2.2.2 **Drawn Record:** plans were produced of the ground floor and gallery/ roof space by a combination of manual survey and reflectorless total station survey; cross-sections through the east/west and north/south axes of the church were produced largely by reflectorless total station survey, but were completed by manual survey. The plans were compiled so as to show the form and location of significant structural features and details, whilst the cross-section shows the detail of wall heights, floor heights and trusses. The field drawings were produced at 1:100, and were digitised into an industry standard CAD package (Autocad Release 14) in order to produce the final drawings.
- 2.2.3 **Photography:** the photographic survey consisted of general oblique coverage of the site on 35mm black and white and colour print film. Photography was also undertaken using a digital camera. Additional photographs were taken of noteworthy architectural details and internal views of rooms where accessible.
- 2.2.4 **Analysis:** a visual inspection of the site was undertaken and a general descriptive record was maintained of the structure, utilising appropriate OAN *pro-forma* record sheets to the RCHM(E) level 2 standard. It involved the internal and external examination of the extant fabric, where health and safety guidelines allowed, and resulted in a description and assessment of the period, character and development of the buildings.

2.3 ARCHIVE

- 2.3.1 A full archive of the building survey has been produced to a professional standard in accordance with current IFA and English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 1991). The archive will be deposited in the Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record. An archaeological fieldwork record form, as recommended by SCAUM, will be forwarded for deposition to the National Monuments Record.

3. BUILDING SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 ST PAUL'S CHURCH: LOCATION AND PLAN

- 3.1.1 **Location:** the church is situated at the centre of the hamlet of Shireshead, an area of dispersed settlement to the east of Forton. The church is just over 1km to the east of Forton, between the M6 to the east and the A6 and the railway to the west (Fig 1); the nearest farm, Hodgsons, is approximately 100m to the south of the church.
- 3.1.2 The church is shown on the Ordnance Survey (OS) 1st edition map (1849), where it is labelled Shireshead Church (Per Curacy); nearby, some 50m to the south, was the local school (Shireshead School). In general there has been remarkably little change in the arrangement of the buildings and layout of the fields between the production of this map and the modern OS mapping. The church and school clearly formed the rather arbitrarily defined centre of a dispersed community, with its component farms up to 1.5km away.
- 3.1.2 **Church Plan:** the church is aligned east/west (Fig 2) and consists of a nave, with, unusually, a chancel on the north side of the nave, and an outshut on the east side of the chancel. Extending along the western side, and two-thirds of the southern side of the nave was a first floor gallery, with small ancillary rooms beneath. Both galleries are supported on pillars with partition walls added to form rooms beneath. The main entrance to the church was from the west, via two entrances, one at either side of the principal facade; these led through short corridors, beneath the gallery, and in between the ancillary rooms (Rooms 3 and 4), to provide access to the nave.
- 3.1.3 Several inscriptions, found both loose within the church and incorporated into the fabric, were recorded and are listed in *Appendix 2*; these detail the principal constructional episodes in the building's life.

3.2 EXTERNAL ELEVATIONS OF THE NAVE

- 3.2.1 **Fabric:** the external elevations are built of roughly coursed, irregularly sized, of yellowish-orange sandstone throughout, except for the eastern two bays and the east elevation which are of yellowish-grey limestone with some yellowish-orange sandstone. There are large, alternate, chamfered ashlar quoins in relief at the corners. At the base of the walls is an ashlar plinth of sandstone slabs, 0.6m high, which projects 0.05m from the plane of the wall and forms a plinth above the foundations; this extends around the whole of the nave and joins that of the chancel. The roof is slate throughout with sandstone coping at the gable ends, which is supported by kneelers at the corners (Cocke *et al* 1984).
- 3.2.2 **External West Elevation:** the west external elevation incorporates the main access to the nave through two pedestrian doors, either side of the centre of the elevation. These have well-dressed sandstone jambs and each has a two-centred arch. Above each door is a large slab, up to 0.8m long and 0.3m wide, and now have electric light fittings attached to them. There has been some repointing across the elevation, particularly above and between the doors, and immediately below the roof.

- 3.2.3 At the base of the elevation is a stringcourse of large sandstone slabs, 0.6m high and projecting 0.05m from the wall, forming a plinth. Immediately above this, and partially supported by it, is a dedicatory slab (with burial dates of 1816 and 1841) attached to the wall with cement and bronze clasps. Approximately 5m above this is the scar of another, smaller slab, which is now missing. There is a plastic water pipe coming through the wall and running to a drain, which is just above the plinth and immediately to the south of the northern door. Above the roof is a double bellcote formed by two semicircular, chamfered arches below an open pediment (Cocke *et al* 1984); all are built in well-dressed ashlar sandstone. Some of the metal fittings for the bell remain in the northern arch.
- 3.2.4 **External South Elevation:** the external south elevation was constructed of the same yellowish-orange sandstone seen elsewhere in the church, although the easternmost c6.5m has been extended in yellowish-grey limestone with some fine-grained sandstone (Plate 8). There are three large, two-centred gothic arched windows; the western two have dark yellow sandstone jambs (made out of several pieces), sills and arches, with some of the smaller jamb blocks bonded into the wall masonry. The lower parts of all three windows have been blocked with a single skin of grey bricks to a height of 1.5m, and below the westernmost two windows the masonry has been repointed. The eastern window is of almost identical construction but is built of greyish-yellow sandstone, and none of the jambs are bonded into the walls, there is no repointing below the window and there is much less weathering. Decorative timber tracery remains in the upper section of all three windows.
- 3.2.5 **External East Elevation:** the east external elevation is dominated by a large window comprising two gothic arches sharing a central stone mullion, with a smaller, possibly inserted, segmental arch above (Plate 1). The window has dark yellow sandstone jambs, sills and arches throughout and decorative timber tracery survives in the upper sections. The central arch is constructed of more greyish-yellow sandstone. The window formerly extended down to the level of the plinth as there is a 1.75m high blocking with roughly coursed, dark orange-yellow sandstone between the window sill and the plinth. There has been some repointing below the roofline.
- 3.2.6 **External North Elevation:** the chancel largely covers the centre of the north elevation (Plate 9). Like the south elevation, the east end of the elevation has been extended from a point to the east of the chancel. There is a two-centred gothic arched window on either side of the chancel, identical to those in the south elevation, the easternmost window being within the extension. The western window has been blocked up to a height of 1m with modern timber boards and both windows retain their decorative timber tracery in the upper sections. There is a benchmark set into the lowest quoin at the south-west corner.

3.3 EXTERNAL ELEVATIONS OF THE CHANCEL AND OUTSHUT

- 3.3.1 The chancel has the same basic design characteristics as the west end of the nave, with a slate roof, large sandstone ashlar quoins, an ashlar sandstone plinth course, and kneelers at the east and west corners of the chancel.
- 3.3.2 **External West Elevation:** there is a single, depressed gothic arch over a pedestrian door on the south side, its southern jamb built into the north elevation of the nave, with sandstone jambs. The whole elevation is keyed into the nave.
- 3.3.3 **External North Elevation:** the north elevation is the gable end of the chancel (Plate 9) and it has a single gothic arched window in the centre, now partially boarded up, which retains some of its timber tracery in the upper section. The window has sandstone sills, jambs and arch and the smaller sill pieces are keyed into the chancel wall. There are kneelers supporting the roof at both sides of the gable, and there is some evidence of repair work below the roofline on the east side and some repointing below the roof on the west. There is an ashlar, sandstone plinth above the roof of the chancel, which is approximately 0.7m tall and 0.4m square and has the appearance of a chimney; however, there is no evidence for an internal fireplace or flue in the rooms below and it may therefore be a rather substantial finial.
- 3.3.4 **External East Elevation:** the eastern elevation is almost totally obscured by the outshut. The aluminium flue from the boiler in the outshut protrudes through the roof on this side.
- 3.3.5 **Outshut:** the outshut is built in roughly dressed orange-yellow sandstone, which is very roughly coursed, with thick mortar in the joints. The roof is a single pitch down to the east, and built in slate.
- 3.3.6 The external north elevation of the outshut butts onto the chancel at its west end. It has large, rough quoins at the corner and a small vent, no more than 0.3m square in the upper, west side. The external east elevation has a single pedestrian door at the south end where the elevation butts onto the nave.

3.4 INTERNAL DETAIL

- 3.4.1 The internal ground plan of the church is divided into seven rooms: Room 1 – the nave; Room 2 – the store; Room 3 – the kitchen; Room 4 – the cloak room; Room 5 – the gentlemen's toilets; Room 6 – the ladies toilets, and Room 7 – the gravedigger's store (Fig 3). Some of these room definitions are based on documents recovered from within the church for the Duchy Venture Scout group; these included a rough plan of the building relating to electrical work.
- 3.4.2 **Gallery:** the gallery is entirely within the nave, and is L-shaped, running along the whole of the west internal elevation of the nave, and the western three bays of the south elevation (Fig 2). It has a timber frame supported at the front by a single timber beam running east/west which joins a beam running north/south in the south-west corner of the nave; at the back the frame is built directly into the wall of the nave. The beams are covered by a thin panel of moulded timber, and are 0.14m wide and 0.2m deep in section. The galleries are supported by five timber posts at the front which have square bases, 0.13m by 0.13m and 1m tall, a round centre of 0.12m diameter with moulded decoration at the top and bottom, and a smaller square piece below the beam, only 0.04m thick (Plate 4). In the western

leg of the gallery a later cinder brick partition has been built around two of these posts, and the square bases have had the corners cut off, so that they are now octagonal, as is the westernmost of the three along the south elevation.

- 3.4.3 The beams in turn support a frame of roughly-worked joists, which create two levels of floorboards for the tiered seating above (Fig 3). The front level is 1.05m wide and extends out from the main beam, while the rear floorboard level is 0.26m higher and bonded to the wall. Below all of this is a series of larger, curved joists supporting the structure of the frame. A layer of lathe and plaster has been added to the base, with extra support from several small battens, to produce a smooth curve covering the frame (Plate 4). The floor of the gallery consists of floorboards placed over the frame. In the south-west corner a flight of stairs leads up into the gallery, from an access point beside the southern principal entrance; part way up the stairs turn at a right angle from north/south to east/west to facilitate access to the gallery. The lowest four steps are concrete, the remainder are of timber.
- 3.4.4 The gallery shares the same roof as the nave (*Section 3.4.6*) and on the south and west sides it is set into the walls of the nave. The north and east sides (ie the front of the gallery) are edged by a parapet of thin timber wainscot panels with raised, moulded, frames, and pilasters with moulded rails on both sides (Cocke *et al* 1984). These panels are no more than 0.04m thick and 1m high, with a flat rail (0.14m wide) across the top. They are divided into three frames between a pair of pilasters, with three such groups in the west arm and five in the south (Plates 2 and 3; Figs 2 and 3). The space between the top of the panels and the top rail was originally open, with a row of spindles filling the gap. There would originally have been 28 spindles to each three-frame section, but many are now missing, and the gap has been boarded over with hardboard throughout.
- 3.4.5 The floor of the west arm of the gallery has been altered at some point, and the area of the front row of pews has been built over. The putlock holes for the pews can be seen in the panel at the southern end of the gallery, and the end panel of the pews also survives at the southern end. The box pews survive almost totally intact in the southern arm of the gallery, in two, tiered rows (Plate 10). They are formed by benches, surrounded by timber panelling similar to that forming the gallery front, and were accessed on the south side along the nave wall. Smaller access passages run to the north, between the pews, and several small doors allowed access to the pews from these passages.
- 3.4.6 **Roof Structure:** the roof of the church has five machine-cut, timber trusses dividing it into six bays. The three westernmost trusses consist of a pair of queen posts attached with mortise and tenon joints to the tie beam, which is built into the wall head (Plate 7). Further large braces run between the queen posts and the tie beam, parallel to and butting the principal rafters, which overlap, north over south, below the ridge purlin; there they appear to be jointed and pegged. The purlins overlap at each truss, and there are three in each pitch. There are carpenters' marks on at least two of these trusses, in the form of Roman numerals (III and IIII).
- 3.4.7 There is a further collar at the west end, between the uppermost purlins on each pitch, which supports a short king post. This has presumably been added to provide extra support for the bellcote above; both purlins and the collar have had

metal reinforcing plates added very recently. The two eastern trusses consist of a king post, bolted to the tie beam, which is again built into the wall head, with inclined struts running between this and the principal rafters (Plate 6). The westernmost of these two has had a metal plate bolted to the tie beam, reinforcing a crack in the timber. A large number of joists have been nailed to the tie beams, which, at some point, supported a flat roof. The majority of these are orientated east/west, but in the most westerly bay they mostly run north/south around the point at which an access hatch has been added. Scaffold poles have also been fixed to the tie beams at this end, providing additional support.

- 3.4.8 **Room 1 – The Nave (Fig 4):** small, hard, wooden tiles, which have been painted to form a badminton court, cover the floor. Around the edges, the floor has been painted with a thicker, harder wearing, rubber indoor sports surface, obscuring any original flooring.
- 3.4.8 **Internal East Elevation:** the internal east elevation is built in roughly coursed and finished yellowish-grey limestone, although it is almost totally covered by plaster and paint. The north end has been deliberately exposed and the stonework has been repointed to serve as what appears to be a rock climbing wall. There is a central window comprising a pair of two-centred gothic arches with a smaller, segmental arch above. The central mullion between the larger arches has been clad with timber internally, and decorative timber tracery survives throughout, with a moulded dowel around the edge of the window. The window has been blocked below its current sill to ground level.
- 3.4.9 **Internal West Elevation:** the internal west elevation is now partially formed by cinder brick walls which have been added, below the gallery, in the western three bays of the room. There are two pedestrian doorways through the cinder brick wall giving access to the two entrance corridors (Rooms 1a and 1b). The rest of the elevation is stone built and covered with render and paint to the height of the ceiling. Above this the masonry is exposed, and it corbels out slightly at the top to provide support for the bellcote above.
- 3.4.10 **Internal North Elevation:** the northern elevation has been plastered and painted, although it is stone built beneath, and there is some painted decoration at the west end. There are two large, gothic arched windows, one at each end. The westernmost is partially obscured by the gallery and has been blocked to a height of 1m with timber boards. There is an alcove in the centre of the elevation, which is 0.45m wide and c2.4m high (Plate 5). It has an almost semicircular profile, 0.3m deep, and a rounded top with moulded plaster decoration; the base is of timber. Immediately to the west of this is a plain pedestrian doorway leading to the chancel (Rooms 5 and 6). There is a dedicatory plaque (dated to 1814) attached to the wall at the junction of the extension.
- 3.4.11 **Internal South Elevation:** as with the west elevation, the cinder brick partition walls below the gallery mostly cover the southern elevation. There are two doorways giving access to Room 2 and at the east end a section of the partition wall has been removed, exposing two of the timber pillars that support the gallery (Fig 2). The remainder of the elevation, above the gallery and at the east end, is stone built and covered in decaying render and paint. There are three windows, all with two-centred arches, with some floral decoration around them. The gallery half

obscures the eastern two, while the westernmost has been recently refurbished; all have timber tracery remaining.

- 3.4.12 **Room 1a:** Room 1a is a product of the enclosing of the lower part of the gallery and forms a corridor between Rooms 2 and 3. The gallery forms the ceiling and the floor is covered by a concrete skim. The north elevation consists of cinder bricks, built around a gallery post, with a small, open aperture supported by an iron lintel. The south elevation is also of cinder brick, with a hard board panel forming the section above 1.1m, and access to the stairs at the east end. The doorway leading outside occupies all of the west elevation, and is now surrounded by plywood panelling, forming a new frame, which obscures any other detail.
- 3.4.13 **Room 1b:** as with Room 1a, this room is a product of the enclosing of the lower part of the gallery, forming a corridor between Rooms 3 and 4 to provide access from the principal external doorway. It comprises cinder brick walls on the north, south and east sides, each with a single pedestrian doorway, with a ceiling formed by the floor of the gallery. The south elevation has been built around a gallery post while the doorway in the west elevation is one of the two main external doorways. The floor is a painted concrete skim.
- 3.4.14 **Room 2 – Stores:** this is a small but long room formed in the space below the southern gallery and has been created by the addition of cinder brick partition walls. The ceiling is formed by the floor of the gallery, which is covered by a curved layer of lathe and plaster, while the floor consists of sandstone flags with a concrete skim along the north elevation. The south elevation is of roughly-coursed sandstone, covered by decaying render and plaster. It includes the lower half of the two westernmost windows, which have been blocked with a single skin of bricks to a height of 1.56m. The east elevation has been entirely removed, exposing this end of the room to the rest of the nave. The north elevation consists of a single skin of cinder bricks, with two pedestrian doors leading into the nave. Three of the gallery posts are exposed adjacent to this wall. The west elevation consists of the area behind the stairs, which is formed by lathe and plaster covering the back of stairs, and brickwork making up the structure of the staircase.
- 3.4.15 **Room 3 – Kitchen:** a small room in the space below the gallery has been formed by the addition of cinder brick partition walls. The underside of the gallery forms the ceiling, while the floor is of flagstones. The north elevation is cinder brick with a pedestrian door, supported by an iron lintel, leading to Room 1b. The west elevation is of roughly-coursed sandstone covered by decayed render. There is a plastic water pipe projecting through this wall c0.5m from the floor. The south elevation is of cinder brick, with a small aperture, 0.7m wide by 0.69m high, supported by an iron lintel. There is a thicker step at the east side, which surrounds the gallery post visible from Room 1a. The east elevation is also of cinder brick, with a small aperture, 0.91m wide and 0.67m tall, supported by an iron lintel.
- 3.4.16 **Room 4 – Cloak Room:** a further small room has been formed below the gallery, in the north-west corner of the nave. The gallery forms its ceiling, and it has a concrete skim floor. The north elevation comprises roughly-coursed sandstone, covered by decayed render, although there is some cinder brick at the east end,

blocking part of the window. The beam supporting the gallery appears to have been inserted into this wall. The east elevation is of cinder brick, as is the south, and it has a single pedestrian door leading into Room 1b. The west elevation is of sandstone, with a thick layer of relatively modern render covering the lower part of it. There is a timber board fixed upright to this on the north side, and a fuse box attached on the south.

- 3.4.17 **Chancel:** the former chancel has been converted into toilets (Rooms 5 and 6), with the insertion of cinder brick partitions. A narrow passage has been left on the southern side of the former chancel to provide access into the toilets. The north elevation of this passage is formed by a cinder brick partition, with a single pedestrian doorway leading into Room 5, and the east elevation is of similar construction with a single pedestrian door leading into Room 6. The south elevation is stone built but plastered and painted, with a plain doorway into the nave. The west elevation is also of stone, and covered with plaster and paint, with a square arched doorway with a timber frame forming an ogee arch; this served as the original access to the chancel.
- 3.4.18 **Room 5 – Gentlemen's Toilets:** Room 5 forms the western half of the chancel. The ceiling is a flat, hard board construction, with an arched lathe and plaster roof above this. The floor comprises hard wooden tiles, like those in the nave. The north elevation is of stone, covered with plaster and paint and includes half of a two-centred gothic arched window, now divided by the partition wall to the east. The west elevation is of stone, also covered with plaster and paint, while the east elevation is a single skin of cinder bricks with a toilet, sink and urinal attached. The south elevation is also of cinder brick, with a single pedestrian door. The room is divided in half by a single skin cinder brick wall, orientated east/west, creating two cubicles.
- 3.4.19 **Room 6 – Ladies Toilets:** a similar room to Room 5 has been formed by the partition of the chancel, with a flat, hard board ceiling and an arched lathe and plaster roof above. There is a boiler with an aluminium flue protruding through the roof in the south-east corner. The north elevation is of stone, and covered with plaster and paint, and includes the other half of the arched window visible in Room 5. There are currently two toilets attached to this wall. The south elevation is also of plastered and painted stone. The east elevation is of stone, with an area of rebuild around the centre, 1.2m wide by 0.8m high. The west elevation is constructed of cinder brick, with a pedestrian door at the south end. This room is divided by a single skin of cinder brick, orientated east/west, with a dividing wall running north from this, forming two cubicles.
- 3.4.20 **Room 7 – gravedigger's store:** Room 7 is a small outshut added to the east side of the chancel. The outshut has a single pitch roof sloping down to the east from the chancel, and comprises two purlins and common rafters only, with plaster covering the underside of the slates. One of the purlins acts as a barge board, to which the rafters are attached. The north elevation is of roughly-coursed and roughly-finished sandstone, with large amounts of mortar. At the point at which it butts onto the west elevation there is a small ventilation opening, supported by a stone lintel, and there is some brick rebuild on the west side. It has a lowered concrete floor.

3.4.21 The west elevation is built in the same roughly-coursed sandstone as the rest of the building, and was the external wall of the chancel; it has a large plinth, and it is keyed into the south elevation. There has been some recent repointing around the centre and there are two metal bars fixed to the wall at the north end, along with an iron pipe, perhaps relating to the boiler in Room 6. Below the plinth is a 0.1m thick skim of concrete, from floor level to 0.9m high. At the far north end is a small iron grate above the concrete skim. The south elevation is of fairly well-coursed, rock-faced yellowish-grey limestone, as in the rest of the secondary build at the east end of the church. This has been recently repointed and it also has a thick concrete skim below the plinth, 0.13m deep. Two iron brackets project from the wall and a thin pipe runs along it, leading through the west elevation into Room 6. There is also a ceramic pipe coming through the wall in the courses below the plinth, which was apparently a later insertion. The east elevation is built in roughly-coursed, angular sandstone on a concrete foundation 0.89m high. The roof is built onto the top of this wall and there is a single pedestrian door at the south end with some rebuilding of the jambs, and above the lintel, in brick. Concrete steps lead through the door and up to ground level.

3.5 INSCRIPTIONS

3.5.1 A series of inscriptions carved into stone tablets were found loose in the nave of the church, and one was set into the church wall; they are individually described in *Appendix 2*. There are no fixing points on the walls (except for Inscription 6) and, with the exception of Inscription 6, their precise provenance is not known. The inscriptions generally refer to a church or chapel, and it is presumed that they belong to St Paul's Church, but it is not known if Inscription 1, which is relatively early, relates to an earlier church / chapel on the site.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 The inscriptions noted within the church (*Appendix 2*) give a surprisingly detailed history of the building. It appears to have been built in 1805 on the site of an earlier chapel; this earlier chapel was documented from 1562 (Farrer and Brownbill 1911, 108-9), and an inscription from 1757 indicates that it was 'augmented', presumably expanded, though to what extent is not explained. In 1830 the new church was extended, and between 1929 and 1931 it was repaired, and several modernising fittings were added, including a boiler. Most recently it was made redundant as a church, and was converted into a youth centre, with the addition of several partition walls to form toilets, stores and a kitchen. Some of these recorded phases can potentially be seen to correspond to visible changes in the building, while other alterations have no convenient visible reference. The building appears to have undergone several changes, the extension to the east end being the most significant, although it was probably originally built as a relatively simple building with a chancel, perhaps unusually to the north of the nave.

4.2 THE CHURCH

4.2.1 No trace of the earlier chapel remains on site, indicating that it was either completely demolished, or that it was not on exactly the same site. It is also clear that Inscription 1 has been moved to the present location.

4.2.2 The initial construction of the present church appears to have been a four-bay nave with a chancel on the north-east end. It would appear that the gallery was built while the church was this size because its south 'arm' respects the length of the western four bays, and does not extend into the eastern two. The fact that it partially covers the windows suggests that it was added after the initial construction of the church. In 1830 (Inscription 3) the church was extended at the east end by a further two bays, and the gallery was remodelled at the east end to correspond to this. Two additional windows were included in this extension, built in a very similar style to the rest, and the large east window was created, possibly reusing pieces from an earlier east window or windows. The church most likely retained this six-bay size for some time although, at some point, the large east window was significantly reduced in height. The restoration and replacement of fittings between 1929 and 1931 (Inscription 5) probably resulted in the creation of the present box pews, and the addition of the boiler in Room 6; this may have resulted in the creation of Room 7 as a service tool store or possible overflow tank. Room 7 appears to have gone on to be used as a gravedigger's store.

4.2.3 The change in use to a youth centre resulted in the addition of several cinder brick partition walls, which created Rooms 1a, 1b, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. The documents recovered from the church relating to the Duchy Venture Scout group (*Section 3.4.1*) give names to some of these rooms, which would otherwise be indistinguishable. During this time several of the north and south windows were partially blocked, and the floor of the nave was re-covered. A low roof was also added to the chancel, the spindles of the gallery wall were covered with hard board,

and new doors were added to the nave. The pews of the west 'arm' of the gallery may also have been removed at this time to facilitate part of the gallery becoming an office. Externally the building changed very little at this time, and most of the internal alterations were largely cosmetic. It would appear that the churchyard continued to be used for burials, however, until at least 1992 (Inscription 6).

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 THE CHURCH

- 5.1.1 The inscriptions inside the church should be retained, either within the building or in an appropriate museum, given that they form an important documentary record of the development of the church. If the inscriptions are retained within the building, and reinstated on the walls, it would be fitting to add a new one marking the current change in the use of the building and the alterations made, in order to bring the recorded history of the building up to date.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cocke, T, Findlay, D, Halsey, R and Williamson, E, 1984 *Recording a Church: an Illustrated Glossary*, 2nd edn, London

English Heritage, 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edn, London

Farrer, W, and Brownbill, J, 1911 *The Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*, **8**, London

Ordnance Survey (OS) 1st edition map (1849) 6" to 1 mile

APPENDIX 1

PROJECT DESIGN

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Lancaster City Council have approved planning permission for the conversion of St Paul's Church, Forton (SD 3502 4512) for a recording studio by Low Fold Professional Audio. The proposed development will affect the character and appearance of the church and will remove some of the original fabric of the building, which dates from the early nineteenth century.
- 1.2 Because of the impact on the historic interest of the building, Lancashire County Archaeology Service (LCAS) has recommended that the church be recorded before its conversion. This document has been written to comply with a verbal brief by the Development Control Officer at Lancashire County Archaeology Service.
- 1.3 The structure has a principal nave with a small chancel on the northern side. A gallery survives extending around the south and western sides. The eastern end of the building has been subject to alteration incorporating an extension.
- 1.4 The Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU) has considerable experience of the recording of historic buildings together with evaluation and excavation of sites of all periods, having undertaken a great number of small and large scale projects during the past 20 years. Fieldwork has taken place within the planning process and construction programmes, to fulfil the requirements of clients and planning authorities, to very rigorous timetables. LUAU has recently undertaken the recording of the outbarn at Stonehead Farm, Over Wyresdale, a barn at Ollerton Farm, Withnell, Hilltop Barn, Longridge, Higher Hills, Tockholes, the Old Post Office Barn near Burscough, Lower Alston Farm, and Ashton Hall Barn, all in Lancashire, as well as several other buildings further afield.
- 1.5 LUAU has the professional expertise and resource to undertake the project detailed below to a high level of quality and efficiency. LUAU and all its members of staff operate subject to the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct. LUAU is an IFA registered organisation, number 27.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of the building survey are to provide a drawn and textual record of the church, prior to conversion being carried out whilst offering an outline analysis of the historic development of the site.
- 2.2 To achieve the objectives outlined above the following listed specific aims are proposed:
 - (i) To provide an outline analysis of the plan, form, function, age and development of the church to RCHM(E) Level II type survey;
 - (ii) To provide a RCHM(E) Level III level type survey of the gallery
 - (ii) To relate the development of the building to its local setting.

3. WORK PROGRAMME

- 3.1 In line with the objectives and stages of the archaeological works stated above, the following work programme is submitted:
- 3.2 **Building Investigation:** to undertake a visual inspection of the church to Royal Commission on Historic Monuments England (RCHM(E)) level II type survey, and to undertake a level III survey of the gallery.
- 3.3 **Report and Archive:** a report will be produced for the client within eight weeks of completion of the fieldwork. A site archive will be produced to English Heritage guidelines (MAP 2) and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Building Survey

4.1.1 Photographic Archive: a photographic archive will be produced utilising a 35mm camera to produce both black and white contact prints and colour slides. The archive will comprise general shots of the agricultural buildings (both internal and external) and their surroundings and detailed coverage of architectural features.

4.1.2 Site Drawings: as architects drawings will not be provided by the client the drawn record will be created by manual survey and will include the following:

- (i) A dimensioned plan of the church annotated to show form and location of any structural features of historic significance and recording the form and location of any significant structural details.
- (ii) A sketched cross-section, dimensioned where access permits, to show detail of wall heights, floor heights and trusses.
- (iii) Cross sections and elevation drawings across and through the church incorporating the gallery to show its form and relationship with the main part of the church.

4.1.3 The drawings will usually be produced at a scale of either 1:50 or 1:100. The drawings will be digitised into an industry standard CAD package (Autocad Release 14) for the production of the final drawings.

4.1.4 **Interpretation and Analysis:** a visual inspection of the church will be undertaken utilising the LUAU buildings proforma sheets. An outline description will be maintained to RCHM(E) Level II type survey. This level of recording is descriptive and will produce an analysis of the development and use of the building but not discuss the evidence on which the analysis is based.

4.1.5 **Access and Attendances:** the client will be required to arrange access to the church.

5. REPORT

5.1 The assessment will be submitted in report format, illustrated with the relevant drawings. The report will include account of the buildings past and present use and attempt to relate these findings to its local setting.

5.2 One bound and one unbound copy of the report will be submitted to the client. The Lancashire Sites and Monuments Record and the County Archaeologist will also be sent a copy of the report, which will be provided both as paper copy and in a suitably digital form on 3.5" 'floppy' disk or CD. A copy of the report will also be supplied to the Local Planning Authority responsible for the planning decision. Any subsequent work arising from this survey will be subject to separate consideration in liaison with LCAS and the client.

5.3 The report will be in the same basic format as this project design. Copies of the brief (if applicable), project design project management records will be included. A copy of the report will be provided on 3.5" IBM compatible disk in either ASCII or windows format if required.

6. ARCHIVE

6.1 The results of the survey will form the basis of a full archive to professional standards, in accordance with current English Heritage guidelines (*Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition, 1991). The project archive represents the collation and indexing of all the data and material gathered during the course of the project. It will include summary processing and analysis of any features and finds recovered during fieldwork, in accordance with UKIC guidelines. The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the IFA.

6.2 The paper archive will be deposited with the County Record Office. A copy of the report will be deposited with the Lancashire SMR.

6.3 All finds will be treated in accordance with LUAU standard practice, which follows current IFA guidelines.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY

7.1 LUAU considers health and safety to be of paramount importance on all their projects. LUAU has considerable experience in applying modern health and safety practices in large and small-scale archaeological projects.

7.2 LUAU provides a Health and Safety Statement for all projects and maintains a Unit Safety policy. All site procedures are in accordance with the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Manual compiled by the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (1996 rev.). A written risk assessment will be undertaken in advance of project commencement and copies will be made available on request to all interested parties.

7.3 The client would be asked to determine the nature of the utility services to the property prior to any fieldwork being carried out.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 The report is designed as a document for the specific use of the Client, for the particular purpose as defined in the project brief and this project design, and should be treated as such; it is not suitable for publication, save as a note, without amendment or revision. Any requirement to revise or reorder the material for submission or presentation to third parties beyond the project brief and project design, or for any other explicit purpose, can be fulfilled, but will require separate discussion and funding.

8.2 Any proposed variations to the project design will be agreed with LCAS in co-ordination with the Client. LUAU will arrange a preliminary meeting, if required, and LCAS will be informed of the commencement of the project in writing.

9. TIMETABLE

9.1 LUAU could commence the survey within two weeks of receipt of written notification from the Client. LUAU would be able to submit the survey report to the client within six weeks of the completion of the fieldwork although a shorter deadline can be negotiated.

9.2 The project will be under the management of **Jamie Quartermaine** BA, Surv Dip, MIFA (LUAU Project Manager) to whom all correspondence should be addressed.

9.3 The project will be supervised in the field by a suitably qualified member of LUAU's staff to be determined when the start date is known in order to take in account of LUAU's already programmed commitments.

10. INSURANCE

10.1 LUAU has both professional indemnity and public liability insurance. Details will be sent if required.

APPENDIX 2

GAZETTEER OF INSCRIPTIONS WITHIN THE CHURCH

Inscription number 1
Form Inscribed stone, ?marble
Date 1757
Location Loose in Nave

Inscription

AD 1757 This C. of SHIRESHEAD was augm.d And A.D. 1758 Lands purch.d with 400L Whereof Given by

QN ANNE'S BOUNTY.....200

By Rt Hon.bl L.d A. HAMILTON.....100

By Exec.s of W.m STRATFORD L.L.D.....100

The Rev.d Jn. Braithwaite Curate

Inscription number 2
Form Inscribed stone, ?marble
Date 1805
Location Loose in Nave

Inscription

THIS CHAPEL of Shirehead Rebuilt A:D: 1805

Inscription number 3
Form Paint on timber boards with timber frame
Date 1830
Location Loose in Nave

Inscription

This chapel was enlarged in the year 1830, by which means 154 additional Sittings were obtained, and in consequence of a Grant from the Incorporated Society for promoting the enlargement, building and repairing of Churches and Chapels. 82 of that number are hereby declared to be free and unappropriated for ever, in addition to 303 sittings formerly existing, 121 of which are free

Minister

Chapel Warden

Chapel Warden

J:Driver M:U:

Rob: Phizackerley

John Herdman

Inscription number 4
Form Inscribed brass plate
Date 1929
Location Loose in Nave

Inscription

TO THE HONOUR AND GLORY OF GOD THE ALTAR, PULPIT, LECTURN, CHOIR-STALLS AND CHANCEL FITTINGS WERE ERECTED IN LOVING MEMORY OF ANNIE JOANNA BELL HILL CREST FORTON DIED 3rd APRIL 1929

Inscription number 5
Form Inscribed stone, ?marble
Date 1930
Location Loose in Nave

Inscription

The fabric of this Church was restored and the heating apparatus installed by the parishioners in 1930-31. The Bishop of Blackburn consecrated the ground and re-opened the Church for Service on July 27th 1931.

Inscription number 6

Form Inscribed sandstone

Date 1992

Location Churchyard wall

Inscription

THE GIFT OF RICHARD AND ALICE PRESTON 1989 CONSECRATED 5 JULY 1992 ALAN. BISHOP OF BLACKBURN

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: St Paul's Church, Forton: Location Map

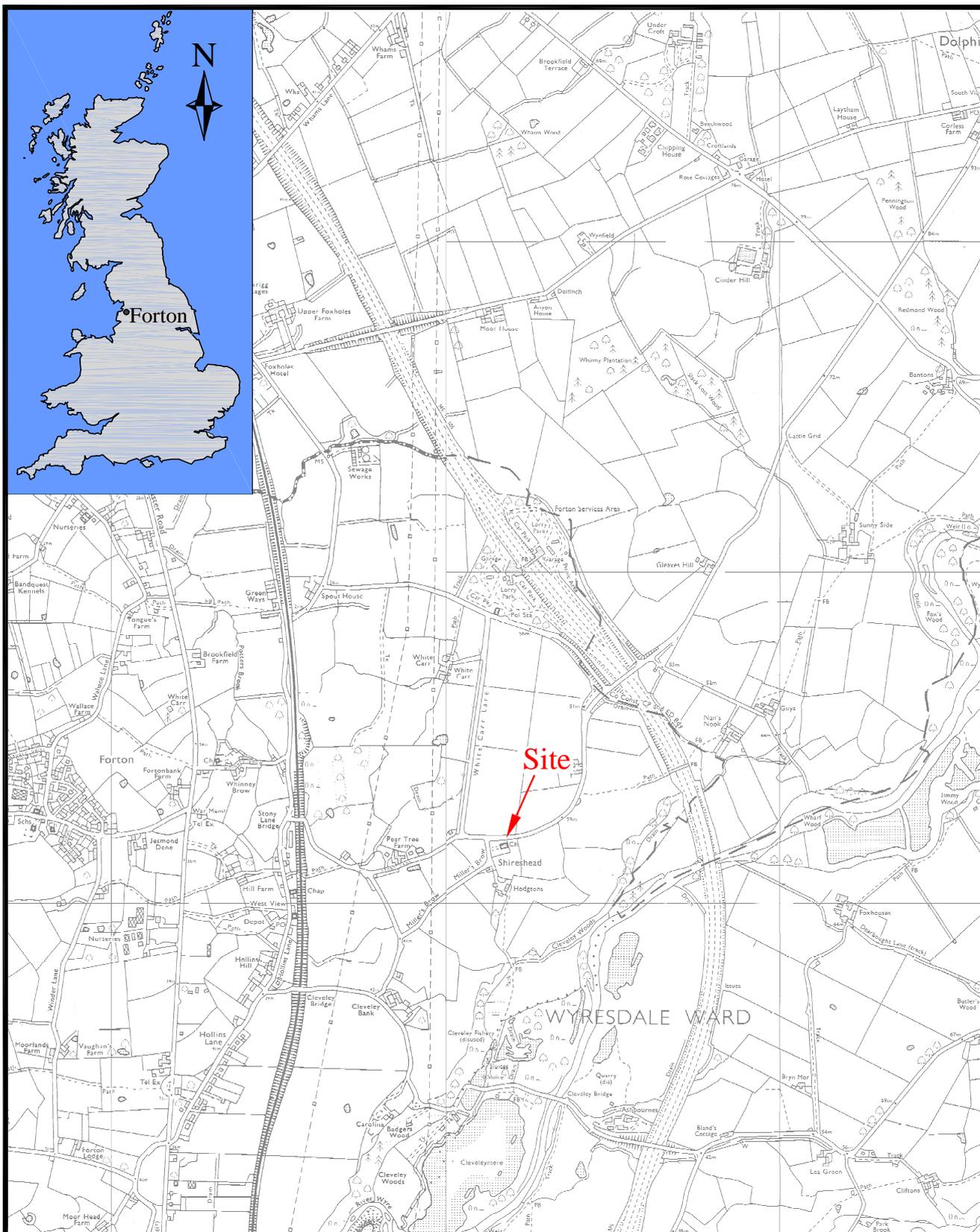
Figure 2: Long East / West Section through Church

Figure 3: North / South Cross-Section through Church

Figure 4: Ground Floor Plan and Roof Space/Gallery Plan

PLATES

- Plate 1: East window, external, showing partial blocking
- Plate 2: East-facing wall of the gallery
- Plate 3: North-facing wall of the gallery
- Plate 4: East end of the south side of the gallery
- Plate 5: South-facing internal elevation of the nave
- Plate 6: Roof Structure, facing east
- Plate 7: Roof Structure, facing west
- Plate 8: South-facing external elevation
- Plate 9: North-facing external elevation
- Plate 10: Detail of box pews, facing east



based upon the Ordnance Survey 1:10000
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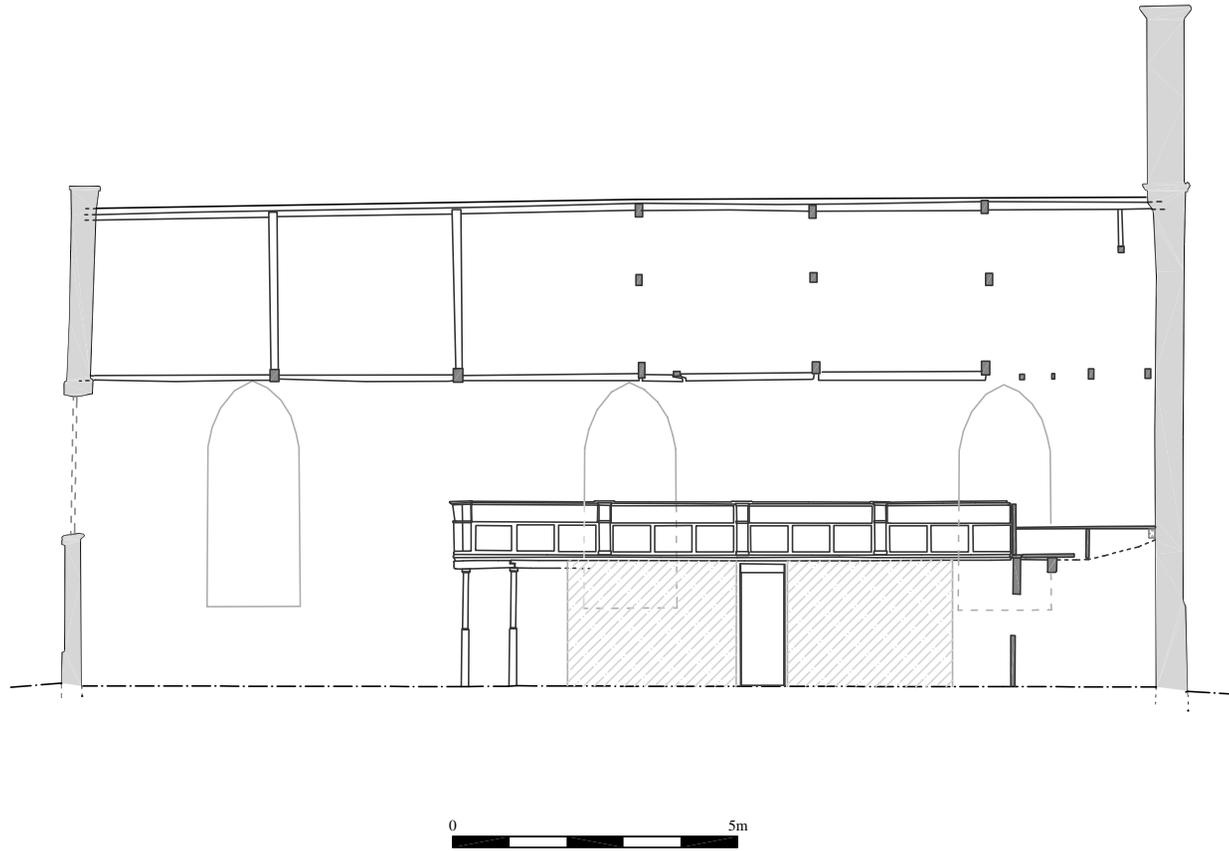


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 metres

Figure 1: St Paul's Church, Forton: Location Map

E

W



Oxford Archaeology North
 Storey Institute
 Meeting House Lane
 Lancaster
 LA1 1TF
 Tel 01524 848666
 Fax 01524 848606

PROJECT:

St Paul's Church
 Forton

DRAWING No:

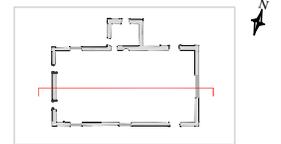
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Scale 1:100

DRAWN BY: ELC

DATE: August 2001

LOCATION:



KEY

- wall/stonework
- ▬ sectional stone
- timber
- ▬ sectional timber
- - - hidden timber
- ▨ brick/block work
- ▬ concrete
- iron work
- - - ground line

TITLE:

Long Section

COMMISSIONED BY:

Low Fold Professional Audio

Figure 2 : Long East/West Section through Church



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Fax 01524 848606

PROJECT:

St Paul's Church
Forton

DRAWING No:

3

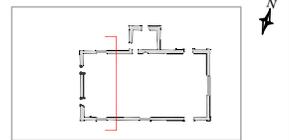


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DRAWN BY: ELC

DATE: August 2001

LOCATION:



KEY

- wall/stonework
- ▭ sectional stone
- timber
- ▭ sectional timber
- - - hidden timber
- ▨ brick/block work
- - - glass
- iron work
- - - ground line

TITLE:

Cross-Section

COMMISSIONED BY:

Low Fold Professional Audio

S

N

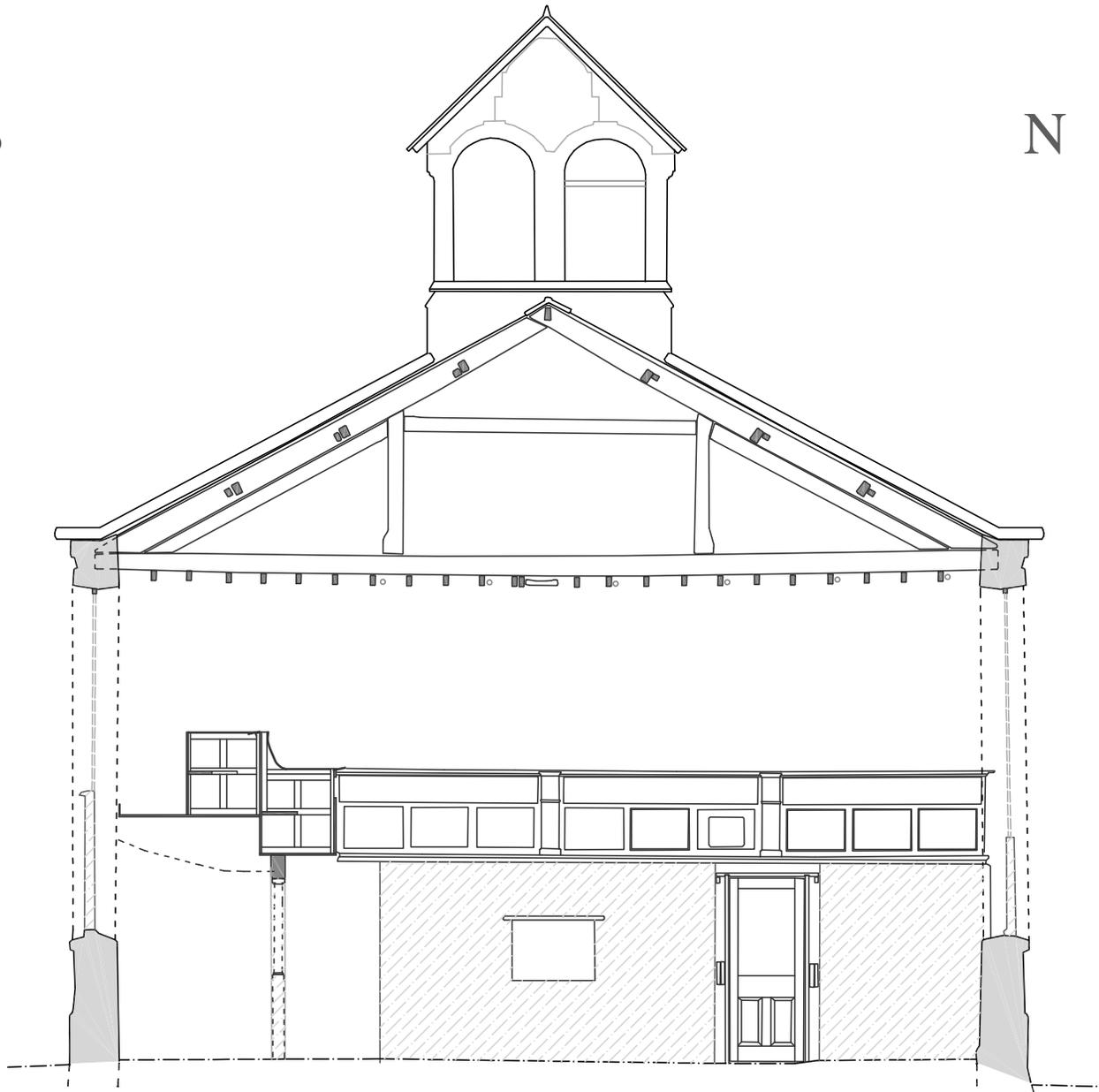


Figure 3 : North / South Cross-Section through Church



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PROJECT:

St Paul's Church,
 Forton

DRAWING No:

4



Scale 1:125

DRAWN BY: ELC

DATE: August 2001

LOCATION:



KEY

- wall/stonework
- sectional stone
- timber
- sectional timber
- hidden timber
- brick/block work
- concrete
- ground line
- roof trusses

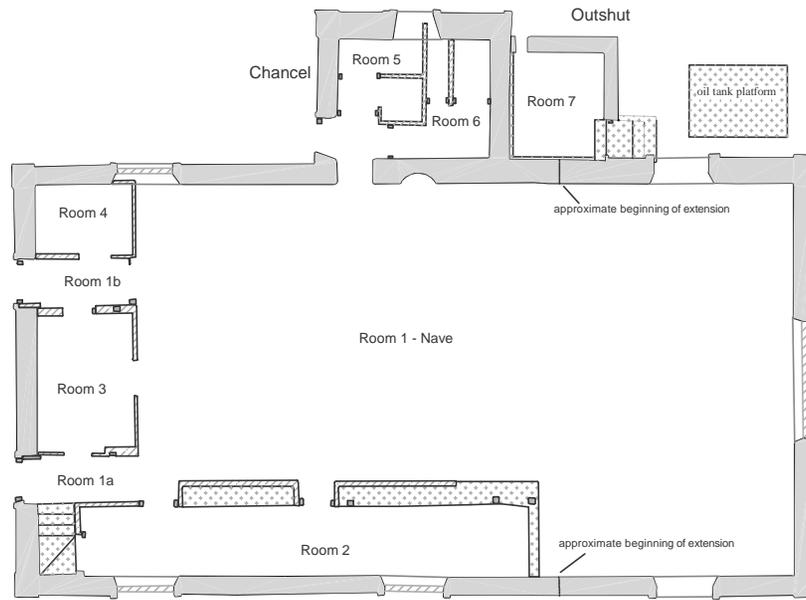
TITLE:

Ground Floor Plan
 and Gallery Plan

COMMISSIONED BY:

Low Fold Professional Audio

Ground Floor Plan



Roof Space and Gallery Plan

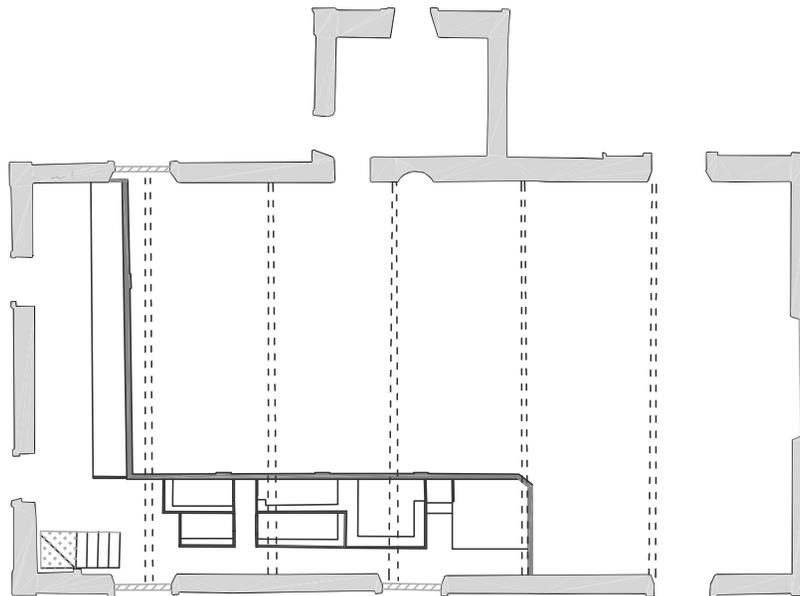


Figure 4 : Ground Floor Plan and Roof Space/Gallery Plan

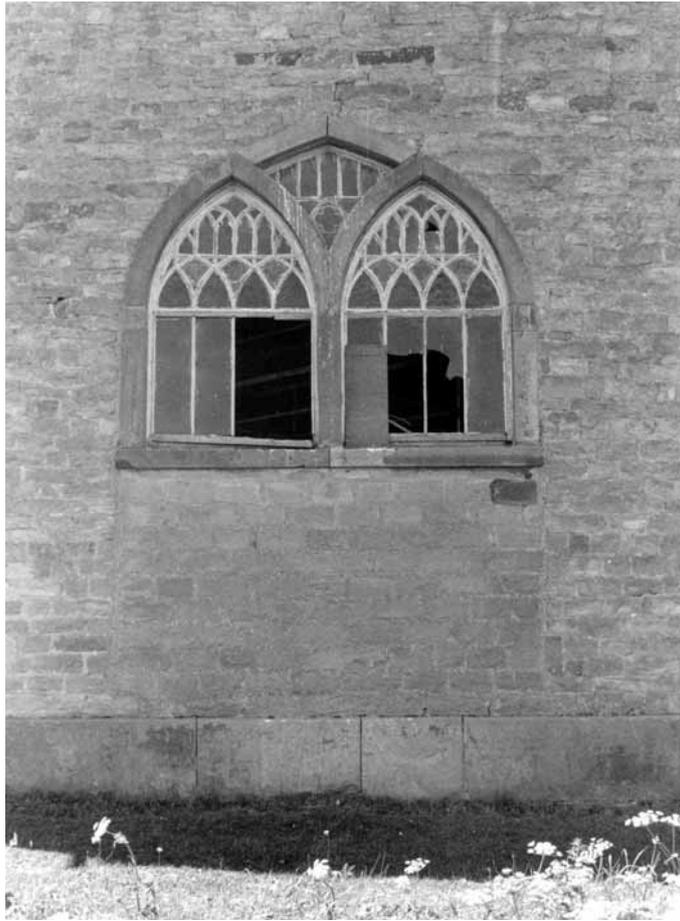


Plate 1: East window, external, showing partial blocking



Plate 2: East-facing wall of the gallery



Plate 3: North-facing wall of the gallery



Plate 4: East end of the south side of the gallery



Plate 5: South-facing internal elevation of the nave



Plate 6: Roof Structure, facing East



Plate 7: Roof Structure, facing West



Plate 8: South-facing external elevation



Plate 9: North-facing external elevation



Plate 10: Detail of box pews, facing east