

Heritage Statement & Statement of Significance:
Cheltenham House and Cheltenham Minster
Church Street
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 3HA
National Grid Reference: SO 94832 22544

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Heritage Statement & Statement of Significance: Cheltenham House
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Version Control

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Version No	Draft	Content Added/Omitted	Date
0.5	Client Draft		
0.7		Client Comments	17/Jun/2016
1	Issued Report		21/Jun/2016

1. Summary

This Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with the planning application. The proposal is for:

“conversion of the two existing retail units in Cheltenham House (use class A1) into three restaurant/bar units (use class A3/A4), associated roof plant and flues, alterations to the ground floor level, relocation of the office entrance, creation of a terrace area in the churchyard for use by restaurant/bar unit 2, relocation of grave markers and provision of a layby for use by the church.”

There are three distinct proposals which affect the Churchyard:

1. The construction of a sitting out area to serve a restaurant/bar 132m² in size..
2. Enlargement of the Tarmac Area to create a layby to serve the Church.
3. Provision of windows on the Ground Floor of Cheltenham House

These proposals should be viewed in terms of the comments in the Conservation Area Appraisal

13 St Mary's Churchyard

The setting of St Mary's Church is very important, with the Church being the heart of the ancient High Street. At present, a combination of al-fresco drinking in the churchyard; evidence of graffiti and unattractive rear facades of buildings backing onto the churchyard contribute to providing the church with a poor setting.

ACTION OT13: The Council will continue to support the working of St Mary's Churchyard Initiative, which aims to enhance the area through proposals including maintaining existing through routes and desire lines and enhancing points of entry; encouraging interaction with the surrounding properties; encouraging increased public use; improving and enhancing the setting of the Church and strengthening the current identities of the Church and Churchyard.

It is suggested that the introduction of areas of hard standing is a common alteration to Churchyards and has minimal impact on the settings of Parish Churches. Views of the Church will be essentially unaltered. At present this part of the Churchyard is obscured by vegetation.

There are many positive outcomes from introducing another regular use of the Churchyard. These include:

1. Revenue – The parish currently has a deficit in its budget and the income generated will help ensure the long term use of the building thus reducing the risk of redundancy.
2. Passive surveillance - the regular use of part of the Church will act as a deterrent to negative uses.
3. Increasing the number of people who use this historic location.

¹ Dr Peter Wardle has 41 years' experience of working in the Historic Environment. He has run the Historic Environment Consultancy for 25 years. Notable work includes the Heritage Master Planning for the 2012 Olympic Games and his work for the Church of England on redundant Churches for which he was awarded membership of the Association of Diocesan and Cathedral Archaeologists for his notable work on Church Archaeology at St Nicholas Ipswich. He has recorded over 2010 Parish Churches. (see www.theparishchurch.co.uk) A full CV and examples of his work can be found on www.historicenvironment.co.uk.

4. Removing shrubs which harbour rubbish and damage both burials and grave markers

The Introduction of Windows to the rear façade of Cheltenham House will mean there will be a softening of a solid brick wall. In addition it will create new views of the Minster, the Churchyard and associated historic features.

The layby is to provide a parking and turning area for wedding cars and hearses. At present turning and parking often leads to muddy patches which are both unattractive and slippery. Virtually every Church has nearby parking for a hearse to be unloaded.

The selection of wedding venues is a highly competitive market and thus having a proper surface on to which brides can exit from a car is an important requirement.

The paved area will cut into the ground by a depth of 250mm. At this depth it is very unlikely that any articulated human burials will be disturbed given that the base of the topsoil is unlikely to be breached.

It is suggested that this is confirmed by the excavation of archaeological test pits. All works in the graveyard will follow the procedures in the joint Church of England and English Heritage document:

Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated From Christian Burial Grounds in England 2005

It is proposed to relocate four horizontal grave markers which are located within the area of the proposed paving. The Guide book for St Mary's Minster notes that some of the grave markers in the Churchyard have already been moved to different locations. The density of grave markers present suggests that most have already been cleared. It is likely but not certain that they have always been horizontal. These grave markers are all nineteenth century in date although the inscriptions are only partially legible. They are all hidden from view by vegetation.

Before being relocated they will be exposed and recorded using the methods described in Wardle (2008). This is based upon the CBA system. It includes rectified photographs of the grave markers.

The Heritage Benefits of relocating these grave markers is that:

1. They will be recorded before they are weathered further
2. They will be visible in the Churchyard
3. They will be far less likely to be vandalised.

If the grave markers are not moved the ground would have to be raised circa 400mm thus preventing level access from the building.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Client

This report was commissioned by Raymond Christie of TP Bennett for and on behalf of Dendra Holdings Ltd and the Parish of Cheltenham Minster with St Mathews who are the building's owners and Churchyard owners respectively.

2.2 Confidentiality and Copyright

This document is to remain confidential for a period of 12 months or until it forms part of a formal planning application or until otherwise indicated by the client. The copyright of this report belongs to the Historic Environment Consultancy. No liability to third parties is accepted for advice and statements made in this report.

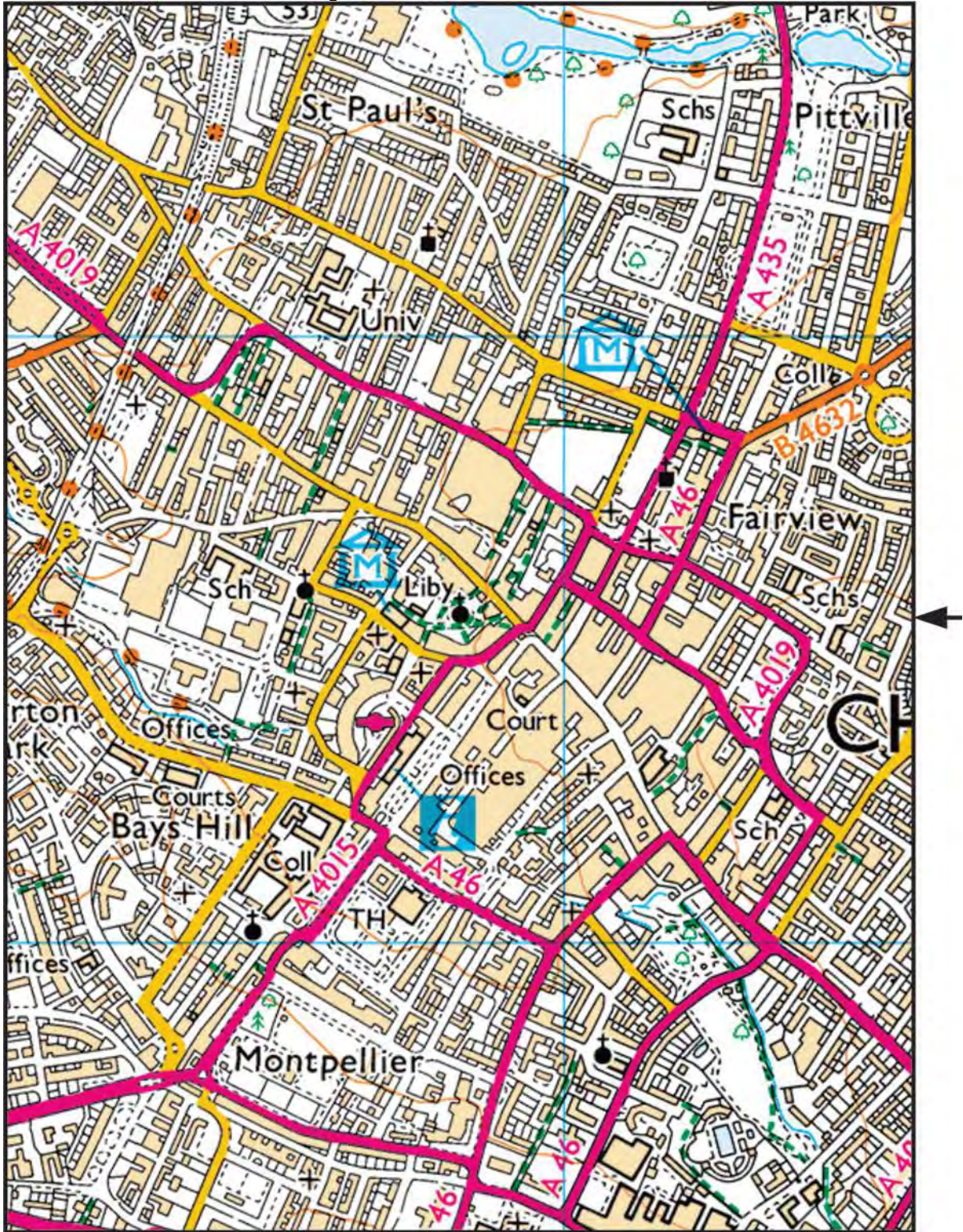
2.3 Location

Site Address:	Cheltenham House Church Street Cheltenham Gloucestershire
Post Code	GL50 3HA
Grid Reference:	SO 94832 22544

The general location is shown in Figure 1 and the detailed location in Figure 2.

2.4 Site Visit

The Land was visited by Dr Peter Wardle on 30/May/2016.



0

1 km

Metres 1:10,000 @ A4

Figure 1 General Location Plan. Scale 1:50,000

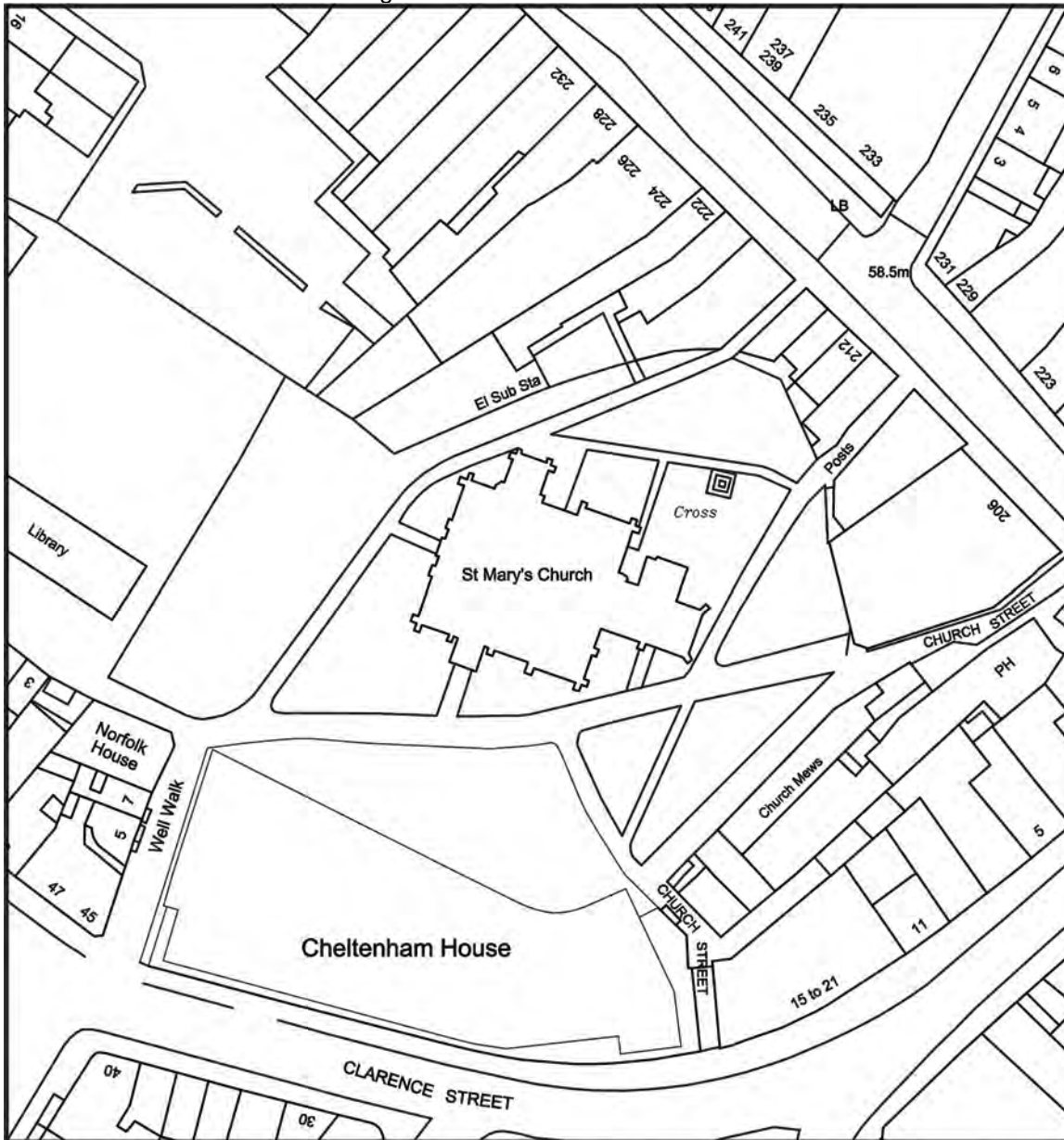


Figure 2 Detailed Location Plan. Scale 1:1000

3. The Historic Context

At the time of Domesday Cheltenham was a “large” village held by the King and paid £20 compared to Gloucester’s £60.

The Conservation Area Appraisal summarises the development of Cheltenham as follows:

King Henry III granted the town the right to hold a market each Thursday, which is still held today on the High Street. Its role as a market town was a vital factor in its prosperity at this time. The town broadened its economy through the introduction of malting and brewing in the late 16th century and during the 17th century, by the cultivation of tobacco. The assessed population statistic for the year 1650 was 1575 persons.

Between the 13th to mid 18th centuries, the town consisted of one long street, the present High Street, with linear development in the form of narrow burgage plots and lanes leading out of it on either side, into the adjoining fields and orchards. Lanes running off the High Street included Winchcombe Street (originally named Bell Lane), North Street (originally named Greyhound Lane), St. George’s Place (originally named Still’s Lane), Henrietta Street (originally named Fleece Lane) and New Street, which were in evidence by the end of the 17th century.

Cottages sited along the High Street were of one or two storeys, some with dormer windows positioned in their roof slopes. Around this time, market buildings were erected in the High Street, with a Grammar School, Almshouses and the Plough Inn. By the early decades of the 18th century, several small chapels had been erected in the adjacent lanes.

The ancient borough remains the core of the present town, and the original road layout and development pattern has, to a large extent, determined the form and arrangement of the present town.

Development of Cheltenham during the Georgian & Regency period

Mineral springs were discovered in Cheltenham in 1716. After King George III’s visit to Cheltenham in 1788 to ‘take the waters’, which were famed for their medicinal values, the town’s popularity as a spa resort grew. In the early 18th century, Henry Skillicorne developed Cheltenham’s first spa, namely the Royal Old Well. The early 19th century saw the town expand rapidly from a market town into one of the largest and most elegant spa towns in England. The majority of spas were positioned in the Montpellier Character Area and are further elaborated on within the Montpellier Character Area Appraisal.

In 1786 the Town Commissioners arranged the demolition of important old structures in the character area, including the 1655 Market House and the High Cross which stood at ‘Boots Corner’.

From the early years of the 19th Century, piecemeal development occurred on the gardens and orchards at the rear of the High Street and in the narrow lanes which led into the fields. The Enclosure Act of 1801 freed up land north of Albion Street, North Street and St Margaret’s Road for development.

Houses constructed on the High Street at the end of the 18th century varied greatly in height, form and description – low thatched cottages adjoined four storey houses. The High Street was extended in an easterly direction towards the Cotswolds and many houses were either re-faced or re-built. Generally however, there was relatively little new building until the start of the 19th century, partly due to factors such as poor transport for building materials.

In the early 19th century, with the development of spas and improved transport, much building took place, and more houses were completed in St. George’s Place. Incidentally, St. George’s Place was the only vehicular thoroughfare on the southern side of the High

Heritage Statement Cheltenham House Cheltenham
Street until the 19th century, and was loosely known as “the coach road”. The Colonnade, at the entrance to the future Promenade, opened in 1791 with six shops.

During the Regency period in the first half of the 19th century, the town expanded on either side of the High Street with the erection of pump rooms, formal walks and gardens and cultural buildings such as the theatre and libraries. These buildings were often in the then fashionable Regency style. These developments played an important role in shaping the appearance and layout of the town and influenced the present street plan.

The peak decades for both population growth and house building were the 1820s and 1830s. The population of Cheltenham rose dramatically, from 3076 persons in 1801, to 20,000 persons by 1826.

Development by the end of the 19th century

During the 1820s and 1830s, in the heyday of the spas, the pace of change was rapid. Extensive building estates accommodating several hundred houses were planned and executed, sometimes only in part. Many new streets were established.

The growing population associated with this development, required the introduction of public services into the town, including health services, which commenced in 1813, with the opening of the Cheltenham Medical Dispensary in Lower High Street.

Improving transport links enabled industry to be brought into the town centre. The arrival of the railway station at Lansdown in 1840 and at St. James’ Square in 1847, facilitated the establishment of manufacturing in the town, and by 1850 Shackleford’s Carriage Works was established in Albion Street. These works produced railway carriages, trucks and horse boxes for the Great Western Railway.

The popularity of the spas waned and the number of visitors declined from the middle of the 19th century, partly due to an increase in travel overseas, in particular to Continental spas following the end of the French Wars in 1815. The development of sea-side resorts and growing popularity of sea-bathing also contributed to a decline in visitors during this period. However, Cheltenham’s role as a resort was supported by attractions such as walks and rides around the spas, assemblies, the theatre and the races.

From the mid 19th century, Cheltenham also began to develop its role as an educational and religious town and its popularity grew among the retired military. Its role as an educational centre of national reputation was based on the town’s three public schools, its private schools, its teacher training colleges and its Grammar School. Many families sent their children to Cheltenham as boarders or settled in the town themselves, thus assisting in the occupation of houses and employment of servants. Many churches and chapels were established from the mid 19th century.

Development in the 20th – 21st centuries

The town’s popularity continued to grow from the latter half of the 19th century and into the 20th century. The establishment of many churches, chapels and specialist shops attracted visitors, many of whom chose to reside in Cheltenham.

Several recreation grounds and parks were established in the early – mid 20th century, including, in 1902, the opening of the former Hampton’s Gardens in Albion Street as an Athletic Ground.

World War I and World War II assisted in the development of the town during the early-mid 20th century. During both wars, many of the town’s then empty houses were taken over by an arrival of temporary residents e.g. refugees and wounded soldiers. Wartime production of aircraft components stimulated the town’s industrial development. During these years, light industry began to increase the town’s economic base as well as exclusive shops and fine

Heritage Statement Cheltenham House Cheltenham
houses, its gardens, races and position as an inland resort. Today, Cheltenham has retained many of these attractions.

In the second half of the 20th century, new economies have been added in the form of offices, administration and conference facilities.

The festivals of Folk, Jazz, Music, Science and Literature, the Cheltenham Races, the National Hunt Meeting and the Cheltenham Gold Cup have international fame and attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to Cheltenham annually.

4. Conservation Area

4.1 Conservation Area Appraisal

The development area is located within the Cheltenham Conservation Area and the Old Town Character Area. The document *Central Conservation Area The Old Town character area appraisal and management plan* was published in 2007 by Cheltenham Borough Council.

4.2 The Special Character of the Conservation Area

The Conservation Area appraisal summarises the Special Interest as follows:

Summary of special interest

1.11 This Old Town is special because:

- a. Cheltenham's historic layout and street pattern is displayed;
- b. Much of the ancient High Street is within this area;
- c. This was the only main street in Cheltenham for centuries, indeed, the settlement was known in medieval times as Cheltenham Street;
- d. Traditional burgage plots were developed from either side of the High Street, many of which are traceable today.

1.12 The Grade I listed St Mary's Church is the oldest building in Cheltenham, with Norman origins. It is located in this area and significantly contributes to its character.

1.13 The area contains the sites of several notable lost buildings including the Assembly Rooms and the Plough Inn, both formerly on the High Street.

1.14 This character area encompasses a variety of architectural styles and ages, which have warranted the listing of many buildings. The architecture contributes significantly to the character and appearance of the area.

4.3 Conservation Area Appraisal Comments on Cheltenham Minster

Summary of special interest

1.12 The Grade I listed St Mary's Church is the oldest building in Cheltenham, with Norman origins. It is located in this area and significantly contributes to its character.

Wider landscape setting

2.4 A number of landmark structures with varying heights are present. These include the churches of St Mary and St Gregory and in particular their spires, which are attractive elements of the skyline both within and from outside the character area. These structures reinforce the historic character of the area and create a sense of place.

Spatial Analysis

4.7 St Mary's churchyard is an important space within the town centre. The churchyard is surrounded by high buildings with a sense of enclosure and is a potentially tranquil space. Lime and London Plane trees around the edges of the churchyard provide enclosure.

Some local details

5.26 There is a memorial to Henry Skillicorne in St Mary's Church. Skillicorne was a particularly important local figure in the development of Cheltenham. As well as other enterprises, he turned the Bayshill spring into an attraction.

Street furniture

5.38 The design of street lamps varies within the area. Traditional and elegantly designed street lamps can be found in the High Street, around St Mary's churchyard, Henrietta Street and Cambray Place. Decorative wrought iron railings around buildings enhance the area. The plain appearance of lamp posts in St James' Square, St John's Avenue, Ambrose Street and St Margaret's Road reflects the age of these streets.

Contribution of trees and green spaces

The open space within St Mary's churchyard creates an attractive setting for the fine mediaeval church. Lime and London Plane trees in the churchyard help to conceal the Church from outside, adding to the tranquillity of the space. They also shield noise from the High Street creating a peaceful atmosphere which attracts wildlife. Unfortunately, the churchyard has become an area for al fresco drinking and has an attendant maintenance problem.

13 St Mary's Churchyard

The setting of St Mary's Church is very important, with the Church being the heart of the ancient High Street. At present, a combination of al-fresco drinking in the churchyard; evidence of graffiti and unattractive rear facades of buildings backing onto the churchyard contribute to providing the church with a poor setting.

ACTION OT13: The Council will continue to support the working of St Mary's Churchyard Initiative, which aims to enhance the area through proposals including maintaining existing through routes and desire lines and enhancing points of entry; encouraging interaction with the surrounding properties; encouraging increased public use; improving and enhancing the setting of the Church and strengthening the current identities of the Church and Churchyard.

A site to the west of the churchyard, just north of the Children's Library will probably be developed for residential and commercial use. The Council will ensure that any development fully addresses the issues surrounding the churchyard as highlighted above, in particular addressing issues of passive surveillance and calm activity.

The area of St Mary's Church and churchyard is likely to be considered by the Civic Pride project.

5. The Parish Church

5.1 Listed Building Description

Summary of Building

Minster church, formerly parish church, of mid-C12 origins, with mid-C13 lower stage to tower, with C14 rebuilding, enlargement and spire. It is otherwise of the early C14, with a late-C15 north porch. Restorations took place in 1859-61, 1866 and 1875-77. The south porch was added in 1890 and the interior was reordered in the C20 and 2012.

Reasons for Designation

Cheltenham Minster, formerly the parish church of St Mary, of mid-C12 origins, with later alterations and additions, is listed at Grade I for the following principal reasons:

- * Architectural interest: it retains extensive medieval fabric and is an architectural expression of liturgical evolution up to the Victorian period. Of particular note is the high quality Decorated tracery which, in some cases, fills an exceptionally high proportion of the windows;
- * Architect: the late-C19 restoration was carried out by Ewan Christian, one of the leading Victorian church restorers;
- * Stained glass: it retains a notable collection of Victorian stained glass by many notable national practitioners of the era, illustrating their expert response to the high quality tracery;
- * Fixtures and fittings: the C13 piscina and mid-C14 canopied piscina, one of the largest in England, are important surviving medieval fixtures and the early-C20 reredos, communion rail and wall panelling display high quality design and craftsmanship;
- * Date: it is Cheltenham's only surviving medieval building;
- * Group Value: it forms a strong group with the churchyard cross (Scheduled), the churchyard wall, piers and railings (Grade II), the 'Dragon and Onion' lamp posts to the south and west of the church (Grade II), and a late-C17 chest tomb and headstone (both Grade II).

History

Cheltenham Minster, formerly the parish church of St Mary, is believed to stand on the site of an Anglo-Saxon minster. In 773 a monastery is documented at Cheltenham whilst a church synod of 803 referred to a priory in the town. A synod held in Gloucester in 1086 mentions 'a church with chapels' whilst the Domesday Book records that the church at Cheltenham was held by Reinbald, Dean of the Canons of Cirencester Abbey. In 1133, Henry I formally granted 'the church of Cheltenham' to Cirencester Abbey and soon after this the Augustinian Canons built the present church. Although the church retains some C12 fabric, with some mid C13 work, it was mainly built during the early C14, with the north porch added in the C15. Following the Dissolution the church was leased to a succession of laymen, who were responsible for employing curates to serve the Church and parish.

In the early C17 the church underwent a number of alterations, including the repair of the ashlar facing to the tower in 1622. A gallery was built at the west end in 1628, but was taken down in 1813, along with several galleries constructed in the C18, in order to make room for more pews in the nave. In the mid C17 the advowson passed to Jesus College, Oxford, on condition that they only appointed bachelors who held no other living. At the start of the C19, when Cheltenham was developing as a spa town, the advowson was secured by the property developer, Joseph Pitt MP. Pitt, in turn, sold the advowson in 1816 to the Revd Charles Simeon, vicar of Holy Trinity in Cambridge, for £3000. In 1826, Simeon appointed Cheltenham's most famous and controversial incumbent, Francis Close

(1797-1882) and he remained here until he was appointed Dean of Carlisle in 1856. Close, as an uncompromising champion of the Evangelical cause, erected four district churches, each with an infant and national school. He established teacher training colleges and was one of the co-founders of the Church of England Education Society. He also preached against Cheltenham's annual horse racing festival and against drama, trying to prevent the reconstruction of Cheltenham's theatre after it was destroyed by fire in 1839. However, his appointment of evangelicals as curates, as incumbents to the district churches, and as members of staff in educational establishments, brought a critical response, particularly from Lord Alfred Tennyson, who called Close a parish pope.

Cheltenham's rapid population growth at the start of the C19 placed considerable strain on St Mary's which, until Holy Trinity was built in the 1820s, was the only church serving the town. Although the building of eight new Anglican churches between 1820 and 1854 eased this pressure, St Mary's was by then suffering from many structural problems, with the piecemeal alterations undertaken to increase its capacity having been done at the expense of fabric repairs. In 1859, Daniel James Humphris, a local architect, began restoration work at the church. His removal of some of the pews exposed rotting floorboards and in turn the crumbling vaults beneath. The church was immediately closed and remained closed from July of that year until March 1861 when the restoration work took place and the crypt was concreted over. The congregation was provisionally housed in a temporary iron church, built between August and November of 1859, on the north side of Clarence Street. Following the reopening of St Mary's, the temporary church remained in use as the congregation was too large to be housed in St Mary's alone. In a bid to unite the two congregations, an architectural competition was held to enlarge St Mary's to seat at least 2,000 parishioners. The only stipulation placed on entrants was that the tower and spire should be retained. However, despite thirty-four plans being submitted, local opposition to the church's demolition, coupled with a lack of funds, halted the scheme. In 1873, Ewan Christian (1814-1895), the architect responsible for the restoration of St Mary's spire in 1866, undertook a survey on the condition of the church's fabric. His report for the Parish Church Restoration and Enlargement Committee resulted in the decision to restore St Mary's and build a new church dedicated to St Matthew, with Christian being appointed as architect for both projects.

In April 1875, St Mary's was closed once more whilst the builder Albert Estcourt of Gloucester began work on removing the galleries and restoring the nave and aisles. In December 1875 part of the church was re-opened and by January 1877 the church's restoration was complete. In 1890 the south porch was added by Middleton, Prothero and Phillott, who also converted the north porch into a baptistery. The stained glass was inserted between 1876 and 1893.

Minor alterations were made to church's layout in the C20, including the addition of a prayer chapel in the south transept. A further reordering took place in 2012 when the prayer chapel was moved to the north transept, the font was moved to the south entrance from the baptistery and toilets and other facilities were installed in the south transept.

In 2013 St Mary's was designated Cheltenham Minster.

Details

Minster church, formerly parish church, of mid-C12 origins, with mid-C13 lower stage to tower, with C14 rebuilding, enlargement and spire. It is otherwise of the early C14, with a late-C15 north porch. Restorations were undertaken in 1859-61 by DJ Humphris, with the spire being restored in 1866 by Ewan Christian. A much more thorough restoration was undertaken by Christian in 1875-77. In 1890 the south porch was added by Middleton, Prothero and Pillott, who also converted the north porch into a baptistery. A vestry was

added in the late C19 and the stained glass was inserted between 1876 and 1893. The interior was reordered in the C20 and 2012.

MATERIALS: it is constructed from limestone ashlar with a stone slate roof.

PLAN: the church is orientated north-west to south-east, though liturgical compass points are used throughout this description. It is cruciform on plan with a four-bay, aisled nave with north and south porches, transepts, a three-bay chancel and a central tower with a spire.

EXTERIOR: it is almost entirely in the Decorated style, though the presence of mullions in the south aisle west window, the east window and south transept south window presages the Perpendicular style. It has a chamfered plinth and lateral buttresses and angle buttresses, both with offsets. The window and door openings are pointed with hoodmoulds with either label or animal or human-head stops. All gables are stone coped.

The south face has a gabled porch of 1890 with a pointed, moulded doorway. Its spandrels are carved with a foliage motif within which are set quatrefoils with floral carvings. Over the doorway is a hoodmould with stops carved with the crests of the Diocese of Gloucester and of the Borough of Cheltenham. To the gable there is a recessed plaque which contains a pair of blind lancets with trefoil heads and quatrefoil-traceried lights set above a shield bearing the inscription IHS. Inside the porch, over the church door, there is the blocked head of a C14 window. The porch is flanked by a single window on the left hand side and three, stepped, windows on the right hand side. All are of two-lights with trefoil-cusped ogee lights and reticulated tracery with quatrefoils. The south wall of the gabled south transept has a large, five-light window with reticulated tracery emphasised by the use of mullions. An oculus with quatrefoil tracery sits within the apex and below the right-hand springing stone there is a mass dial. The transept's right-hand return has two, three-light windows with trefoil-cusped pointed lights and geometrical tracery. To the south face of the chancel there are three, two-light windows with trefoil-cusped ogee lights and reticulated tracery with quatrefoils.

The west end has a 5-light window with reticulated tracery emphasised by the use of major and minor mullions in the head and a broad horizontal band of large quatrefoils.

The south face of the chancel has a gabled vestry flanked by two-light windows with trefoil-cusped ogee lights and reticulated tracery with quatrefoils; the vestry has a similar, but narrower, window. In the angle between the chancel and the south transept there is a narrow stair turret with arrow-slit windows and a pointed doorway. Above the stair tower is a small section of the earlier chancel roof which sits above the ridge line of the present chancel roof. The east wall of the gabled south transept has a large rose window with flowing, cusped, tracery whilst its north face has a large, five-light window with curvilinear tracery. Above this is an oculus with tracery comprised of three, cusped, spherical triangles. To the right-hand side of the transept, the north aisle has two, two-light windows of differing sizes with trefoil-cusped ogee lights and reticulated tracery with quatrefoils. To the right again, the left-hand return of the gabled north porch has a quatrefoil whilst its north face has a blocked-up, ogee-arched, doorway with the head containing a late-C19, stepped, five-light window. Its first floor has a three-light window and the right-hand return has a two-light window, both late-C19, with trefoil-cusped lights and perpendicular tracery. In the angle between the porch's right-hand return and the north aisle there is a polygonal stair turret with a pointed doorway accessed via a short flight of stone steps. The north aisle has a two-light window with trefoil-cusped ogee lights and reticulated tracery with quatrefoils.

The west end is comprised of three gabled ranges of which the central chancel range is set at a higher ridge line than the flanking aisle ranges. Each range has a tall, five-light window with a variety of tracery: the north aisle with reticulated tracery, the chancel with intersecting tracery rising to a pointed quatrefoil and the south aisle with reticulated tracery with major and minor mullions in the head and a broad horizontal band of large quatrefoils. The chancel range is set between C12, lateral buttresses with offsets and has a mid-C19 ashlar-faced door surround with boarded double doors and a cornice ornamented with four-leaf flower carving. Flanking the doorway, at the level of the cornice, is a much worn, C12, stringcourse with billet moulding.

The central tower has mid-C13 lancets linked by hoodmoulds to each face of the lowest stage whilst the upper stage has two-light, belfry windows with louvers. It is surmounted by a ribbed, broach spire with two tiers of trefoil-headed lucarnes.

INTERIOR: the C14 nave arcade is of four bays with pointed, double chamfered arches carried on tall, octagonal piers with moulded octagonal capitals and abaci. Above is a clerestory, mainly of paired, two-light windows, but with two circular windows at the east end of the north aisle, all with deep splays. The lower stages of the double chamfered arches to the crossing are of the mid-C13, with the western arch having roll-moulded piers and trumpet-scalloped and foliate capitals whilst the northern arch has a reused, stiff-leaf capital. The ceiling of the crossing is rib vaulted. The chancel arch has a double chamfered east face and a moulded west face, the latter carried on roll-moulded piers with stylised foliate capitals, including a bishop's head to the south side. At the west end of the north wall there is a moulded doorway to the former north porch, now a baptistery. It has a lierne vaulted ceiling with bosses carved with roses. To the right-hand side of the doorway there is a small, blocked, ogee-headed doorway which originally gave access to the gallery above the north porch. Altered in the late C19, the gallery now has a pointed, chamfered surround and a pierced quatrefoil balustrade. The arched-braced roof is of the C19 with ribs carried on stone corbels carved with a foliage motif and intermediate ribs carried on wooden, eaves corbels. It probably conceals earlier fabric. PRINCIPAL FITTINGS: the chancel contains a mid-C14 piscina, along with an elaborate reredos, communion rails and wall panelling, installed in 1915-16 to the designs of Healing and Overbury and carved by RL Boulton and Sons. In the south transept there is a C13 piscina and aumbry cupboard. In the north wall there are two, cusped, tomb recesses with ballflower ornamentation. The eagle lectern, pulpit, pews and choir stalls are all of oak and were installed in the late C19. The octagonal, stone font was installed in 1890.

The church contains an extensive collection of C17, C18 and C19 wall memorials. Notable examples include: an inscription by John English to his wife (d.1643); very large monument to Sir William Myers (d.1811), by Oldfield and Turner; a monument to Thomas Gray (d.1835), one of many in the church by G Lewis; a late C18 tablet to the Skillicorne family with a 53-line epitaph; Adam style monuments include those to Elizabeth Hughes (d.1786) and Anne Dewes (d. 1780); a monument to Katherine A'Court (d.1776), by James Wyatt and R. Westmacott (the tablet records her infamous murder by poison administered by livery servant Joseph Armstrong who was executed at Gloucester and hanged from a gibbet in line with Henrietta Street); a brass to the architect DJ Humphris (d. 1879) and a brass to William Greville (Justice of Common Pleas) (d.1513), his wife and children.

STAINED GLASS: the upper porch north window of 1858, by Joseph Bell of Bristol, was moved here in 1889. The other twenty-six windows have stained glass which was installed between 1876 and 1893. Depicting over fifty scenes, mainly biblical, fourteen windows are by Lavers, Barraud and Westlake, with others by, Clayton and Bell; Heaton, Butler and Bayne; Hardman; Joseph Bell; Burlison and Grylls; and William Wailes.

Selected Sources

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National Grid Reference: SO9483222544

5.2 Photographs of Cheltenham Minster



Plate 1 Cheltenham Minster looking east from the Chester Walk Car Park



Plate 2 Cheltenham Minster from the Well Walk entrance



Plate 3 Cheltenham Minster South Elevation



Plate 4 Cheltenham Minster from the South East



Plate 5 Cheltenham Minster from the North East



Plate 6 Cheltenham Minster from the North



Plate 7 Cheltenham Minster From the North west



Plate 8 Cheltenham Minster from the East



Plate 9 Carved window stop



Plate 10 Carved window stop



Plate 11 The Nave



Plate 12 The Chancel



Plate 13 The Chancel



Plate 14 The Chancel Looking towards the Nave



Plate 15 The South Aisle



Plate 16 The South Aisle and Nave



Plate 17 The North Aisle



Plate 18 The Reredos



Plate 19 The Nave Roof

5.3 The Importance of The Parish Church

The Parish Church is listed at Grade I which is the highest grade. While only 2.5% of listed buildings are listed at Grade 1, that is 8,915 buildings in total, 48% of these are Parish Churches. It must be recalled that Parish Churches are virtually the only Saxon Buildings that survive and account for 31% of all Medieval Buildings. In many locations the Parish Church is the oldest Building. There are in total 8,887 Medieval Parish Churches most of which, 87%, are listed at Grade I or II*. There are 13,339 Listed Parish Churches.

Often Parish Churches are listed for the artistic merit of their interiors or are given a higher grade for this reason. The most extreme example is Christchurch Southwark built in 1956 and listed because of the artistic merit of the stained glass in it (see <http://www.christchurchsouthwark.org.uk/index.html>), but the exterior has a much lower value.

In fact Parish Churches make 48% of all Grade I listed buildings and 21% of all Grade 2* listed buildings.

For this reason The Church of England has adopted the following grading system for the importance of Churches. There are five levels of importance for Parish Churches (see the document *Guidance Note Statements of Significance 2014* published by ChurchCare website)

High – important at national to international levels

Moderate-High - important at regional or sometimes higher levels

Moderate – usually of local value but of regional significance for group or other value (e.g. vernacular architecture)

Low-Moderate – of local value

Low – adds little or nothing to the value of a site or detracts from it.

In this report the following discriminators of level of importance are used:

Importance	Designation	Other Indicator
High	World Heritage Site designated for Heritage reasons Grade 1 or Grade 2* Listed	
		Included in Simon Jenkins 1000 Best Churches
		Early Introduction of Architectural Styles pre Victorian period
Moderate to High	Grade 2* or 2 sometimes Grade I	
		Pre Georgian single phase buildings
		All Saxon Fabric
		Pre Victorian Gothic Revival Style
Moderate	Grade 2* or Grade 2 rarely Grade I	Has a key feature which is not common in that particular area ie an Octagonal Tower outside of Norfolk
Low-Moderate	Grade 2* or Grade 2	
Low	Locally Listed Mentioned as a key building in a conservation area appraisal	

Similarly it has to be accepted that in many cases the degree of alteration means that the building is more Victorian than Medieval. It also has to be accepted that different phases of construction can have a different importance.

Thus it is suggested that this Church has a High Importance. Key Factors are:

- It is a Minster Church - an uncommon type of Church
- It is a cruciform Church with a central spire

5.4 The Setting of Parish Churches

Thus when considering the setting of a Parish Church consideration has to be given to the importance of the external form of the building, however this is not necessarily the reason for listing or being listed at a particular grade. Often Parish Churches are listed for example for the Artistic Merit of the Stained Glass.

In this case the external form of the building is a key contributor to its importance.

The settings of all rural Parish Churches have a number of things in common not least:

1. The building is looked at frequently and visited by many members of the community. While about 20% of the population regularly attend services, many members of the community will attend events such as weddings, funerals and christenings as well as displays, flower festivals, concerts and similar. In one case 70,000 people visit the Church precinct in a single weekend
2. Virtually all Parish Churches receive visitors from near and far.
3. Parish Churches are a key part of the character of any village or town.
4. Often the only part of the Church visible from a distance is the Steeple.
5. Trees, particularly yew trees, are a key part of a Churchyard and can be considered to be permanent features – some trees have been present for a thousand years.

5.5 Who Experiences The Building

The “settings” of Parish Churches have to be considered from a number of points of view these are:

1. The congregation who draw spiritual inspiration from the building and attend social events at the Church (Christian services are often followed by the serving of Tea and Coffee which can be a key part of attending)
2. Attending celebratory rituals such as weddings and christenings
3. Attending Acts of Remembrance such as Remembrance Day or funerals where the Church is a solemn backdrop
4. Learned Visitors whose ability to “Read” the Church is a key part of the experience
5. Non Learned visitors whose experience is an aesthetic one
6. Local Residents who experience the Church as a local focus point and as a symbol of permanence and longevity.
7. As a backdrop to other events and uses

5.6 Views from the Church and Churchyard Towards the Application Area



Plate 10 Looking towards the Application Area



Plate 11 Looking towards the Application Area



Plate 12 Looking towards the Application Area

6. Heritage Assets Baseline Survey

6.1 Designated Heritage Assets

The impact of the proposals on the following nearby Designated Heritage Assets is considered:

Plan No	Asset	Type	Status Listing Grade	Visible from Application Area
	Church of St Mary	Building	I	Y
1	Churchyard Cross	Structure	II	N
2	Table Tomb & Head Stone of Robert Eckly	Grave marker	II	Y
3	Table Tomb	Grave marker	II	Y
4	Head Stone William ?1675	Grave marker	II	N
5	Churchyard Walls & Railings	Wall	II	Y
6	210 - 216 High St Railing, Gate Piers & entrances	Building and walls	II	N
7	Three Lamp posts	Lamp post	II	Y
8	Two Lamp posts	Lamp post	II	Y
9	Norfolk House	Building	II	Y

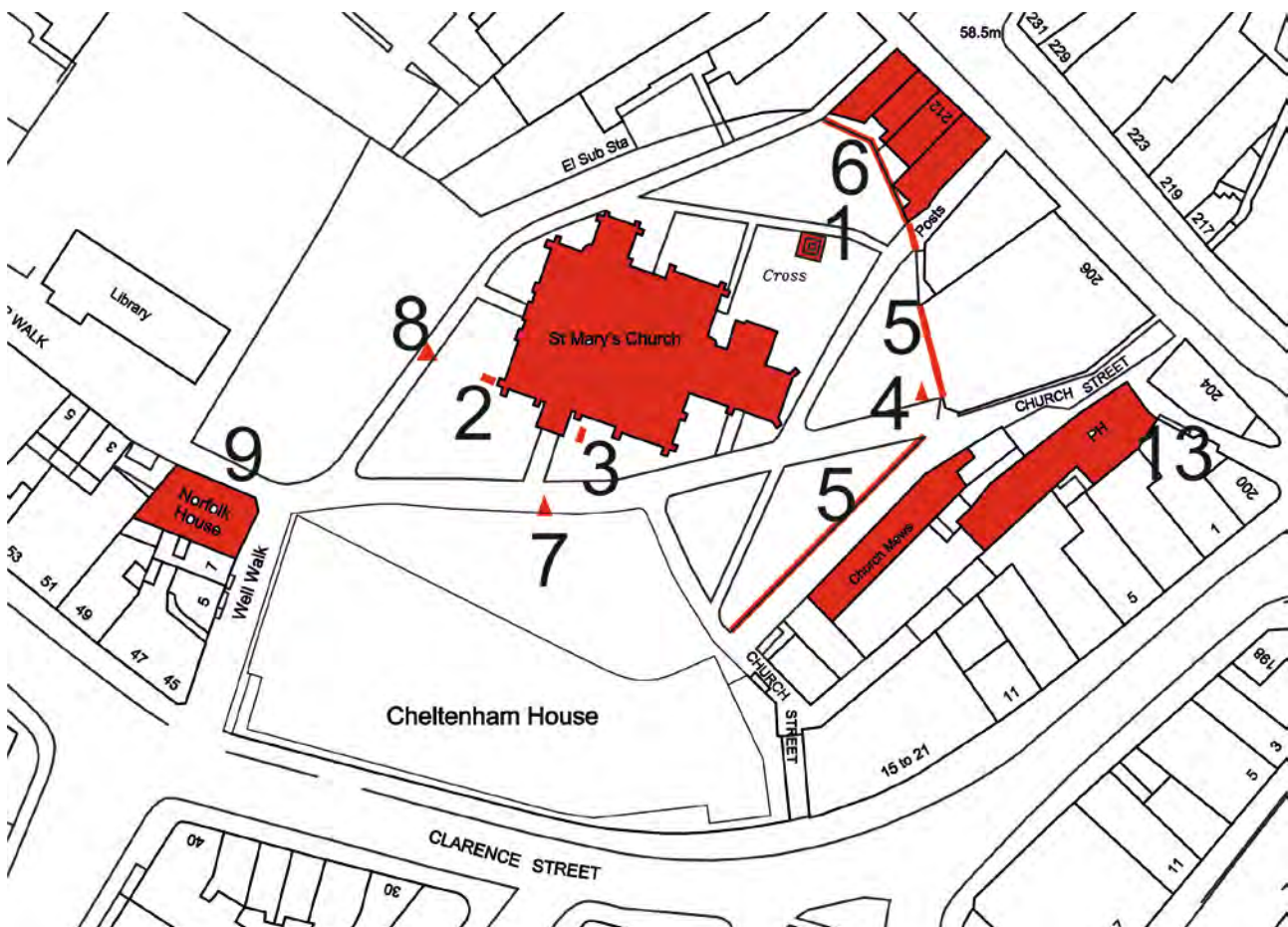


Figure 3 The Location of Nearby Designated Heritage Assets

Taken from <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/mapsearch.aspx> on 17/06/2016.

7. The Designated Heritage Assets

7.1 The Church Yard Cross

The listing description is as follows:

SO9422NE CHURCH STREET 630-1/9/249 Churchyard cross approximately 4
14/12/83 metres north of chancel to Church of St Mary
GV II

Churchyard cross. Probably C15. Stone. Four steps to octagonal square plinth,
shaft survives to about 2m.

Listing NGR: SO9485522556



Plate 20 The Churchyard Cross

7.2 Table Tomb & Head Stone of Robert Eckly

The listing description is as follows:

SO9422NE CHURCH STREET 630-1/9/247 Tomb chest and headstone approx 1m to S of SW corner of Church of St Mary. GV II

Late C17 tomb chest and a headstone to Robert Eckly d.1624. Stone. Tomb chest is rectangular on plan with heavy capping and scrolled ends. Cartouche to west end, eroded inscription panels. Headstone has scalloped edges.



Plate 21 C17 Table Tomb of Robert Eckly



Plate 22 Grave Marker for Robert Eckly



Plate 23 Looking towards Cheltenham House

7.3 Table Tomb of Thomas Gardener

The listing description is as follows:

SO9422NE CHURCH STREET 630-1/9/248 Tomb chest to Gardner Family approx 1m east of south porch of Church of St Mary GV II

Tomb chest. c1790. To Thomas Gardner (d.1786), his wife Elizabeth (d.1790) and their children (d.1749-1826). Ashlar. Neo-Classical. Rectangular chest, indented to angles, with fielded inscription panels and hipped capping



Plate 24 Thomas Gardener Table Tomb Looking towards Cheltenham House

7.4 Head Stone William ?1675

The listing description is as follows:

CHELtenham

SO9422NE CHURCH STREET 630-1/9/251 Headstone approximately 15 metres north-east of east end of Church of St Mary

GV II

Late C17 headstone to William ? d.1675. Ashlar. Headstone has foliate decoration to sides and broken scrolled segmental pediment with central shell motif.

No in situ grave marker was located in the location shown on the Listed Building Description. A grave marker which was not in situ was observed nearby by.



Plate 25 Displaced Headstone

7.5 Churchyard Walls & Railings

The listing description is as follows:

CHELtenham

SO9422NE CHURCH STREET 630-1/9/250 Churchyard wall, piers and railings 14/12/83 to east of Church of St Mary (Formerly Listed as: CHURCH STREET Churchyard wall to south-east of Parish Church of St Mary) GV II

Churchyard wall, entrance piers, end pier and railings. Mid C19. Wall to south-east of Church approx 1.5m high; coursed rubble with flat coping stones, about 35m long. End piers, square on plan, approx 2m high, with crowning frieze, moulded cornice and raised caps. Further similar pier to west forms entrance, then spearhead railings to north-east for approx 10m on low wall. Forms a significant part of the setting of Church of St Mary (qv), the railings abut walls and piers at rear of Nos 210-216 High Street (qv).

Listing NGR: SO9485822516



Plate 26 Gate Pier Church St



Plate 27 Church Walls and Railings



Plate 28 Churchyard wall



Plate 29 Gate Pier Church St South

7.6 210 216 High St Railing Gate piers & entrances

The listing description is as follows:

CHELtenham

SO9422NE HIGH STREET 630-1/9/411 (South West side) Nos.210-216 (Even) and attached railings, gate piers and overthrows to two churchyard entrances to

GV II

4 terraced houses, now shops, with attached walls and railings and 2 sets of gate piers with overthrows at rear. c1820-50, with later additions and alterations, including c1970s ground-floor shop fronts. Houses have Cotswold stone at rear to 2 centre houses and stucco over brick to front facades, with red brick to returns; slate roof, hipped to ends and brick party-wall stacks; ashlar piers and cast- and wrought-iron overthrows and railings. EXTERIOR: houses: 3 storeys with attics to 3 at left, 8+1 first-floor windows. The right house is lower and the right end is curved on plan. First floor has 6/6 sashes where original, curved on plan to right. Second floor has 3/3 sashes. All windows in plain reveals and with sills. Attic roof dormers partly concealed by low parapet. Ground floor has glazed shop fronts and doors. Rear retains 6/6 and 8/8 sashes. INTERIOR: not inspected.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: to rear at east are 2 piers, square on plan, with plinths and crowning moulded band, frieze and moulded caps surmounted by overthrow with scroll motif and central lamp bracket; short stretch of spearhead railings to west pier abut No.210 at rear; abutting easternmost gate pier a short stretch of brick wall approx 1.5m high. One and a half gate piers at west, similar; overthrow has scrolls and central lamp bracket; adjoining spearhead railings and gate abut No.216 at rear. The rear overlooks St Mary's Church, Church Street (qv) and forms an important part of the setting to the Churchyard. The wall abutting easternmost pier adjoins Churchyard walls, piers and railings to east of Church of St Mary (qv).



Plate 30 Churchyard Entance adjacent to 210 High St



Plate 31 ChurchYard Railings to the south 210-216 High Street

7.7 Three Lamp posts

The listing description is as follows:

SO9422NE CHURCH STREET 630-1/9/246 Three 'Dragon and Onion' lamp posts 14/12/83 to south of Church of St Mary (Formerly Listed as: CHURCH STREET 3 Dragon and Onion lamp-posts to south of St Mary's Church)

GV II

3 lamp posts. First lit 6th February 1897. Designed by Borough Engineer, Joseph Hall and cast by Messrs McDowall, Stevens and Company Ltd, London and Glasgow. Cast-iron. Bollard with half-bollards with shields and the town's motto "Salubritas et Eruditio". Surmounting arched lamp-holder and dragon infill with crowning onion finial. Intended for electricity, and thus an early and remarkably elaborate example of its type. HISTORICAL NOTE: Cost »9.15.0d. The motif is taken from the coat of arms of the borough, granted to the town 11 years after its incorporation. Removed to its present position, probably from the High Street. Forms a group with 2 'Dragon and Onion' lamp posts to west of Church of St Mary. There are other examples in Cambray Place (qv) and Trafalgar Street. (qv). (Sampson A and Blake S: *A Cheltenham Companion*: Cheltenham: 1993-: 7; Chatwin A: *Cheltenham's Ornamental Ironwork*: Cheltenham: 1975-1984: 67).



Plate 32 Victorian Lamp Post



Plate 33 Victorian Lamp Post Looking towards Cheltenham House

7.8 Two Lamp Posts

The listing description is as follows:

SO9422NE CHURCH STREET 630-1/9/245 Two 'Dragon and Onion' lamp posts to 14/12/83 west of Church of St Mary (Formerly Listed as: CHURCH STREET Dragon and Onion lamp post about 5 yards north-west of St Mary's Church)

GV II

2 lamp posts. First lit 6th February 1897. Probably designed by the Borough Engineer, Joseph Hall and cast by Messrs McDowall, Stevens and Company Ltd, London and Glasgow. Cast-iron. Bollard with half-bollards with shield and the town's motto 'Salubritas and Eruditio'. Arched lamp-holder and dragon infill with crowning onion finial. Intended for electricity, and thus an early and remarkably elaborate example of its type. HISTORICAL NOTE: Cost »9.15s.0d. The motif is taken from the coat of arms of the borough, granted to the town 11 years after its incorporation in 1876. Moved to present position, probably from the High Street. Forms a group with 3 'Dragon and Onion' lamp-posts to south of Church of St Mary. There are other examples in Cambray Place (qv) and Trafalgar Street (qv). (Sampson A and Blake S: A Cheltenham Companion: Cheltenham: 1993-: 7; Chatwin A: Cheltenham's Ornamental Ironwork: Cheltenham: 1975-1984: 67).

Listing NGR: SO9480022537



Plate 34 Victorian Lamp Post



Plate 35 Looking towards Cheltenham House from a Victorian Lamp Post

7.9 Norfolk House

The listing description is as follows:

CHELTENHAM

SO9422NE WELL WALK 630-1/9/982 (West side) 14/12/83 No.8 Norfolk House

GV II

Also known as: Norfolk House CHESTER WALK. House, now restaurant. 1830s with later alterations, including c1970s ground-floor shop fronts. Stucco over brick with concealed roof. EXTERIOR: 4 storeys, 2+1 first-floor windows, that to right at angle and curved on plan and lower 4-storey, single-bay service range to rear at right. Stucco detailing includes frieze and cornice over ground floor; crowning low parapet with copings. First and second floors have 6/6 sashes, taller to first floor, third floor has 3/3 sashes, where original; all in plain reveals and with sills; windows to angle curved on section. Entrance to angle, 3 steps to C20 multi-pane glazed door. Further entrance to left, steps to C20 glazed door with overlight. Ground floor has plinth; multi-pane window and continuous frieze with cornice. Right return has 2 + 1 first-floor windows; stucco detailing continues to main range. First floor has blind opening at left, otherwise 6/6 sashes; second floor has two 6/6 sashes and 3/6 sash; third floor has 3/3 sashes. Similar ground-floor shop fronts. INTERIOR: not inspected.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Well Walk (or Old Well Walk as it was known in the C19) was laid out by Andrews (the town surveyor) in 1743 to designs supplied by Norborne Berkeley, as a long avenue of elms extending for over 900 yards past Henry Skillicorne's original Pump Room and Well to the lower part of what is now Bayshill Road. As such, this Walk is an important survival of the C18 spa town development and frames one of the entrance ways to the parish Church of St Mary, Church Street (qv). (Little B: Cheltenham: London: 1952-: 34). Listing NGR: SO9476322518



Plate 36 Norfolk House



Plate 37 Looking East towards Cheltenham House and Norfolk House

8. Churchyards

8.1 The History of Churchyards

Most Parish Churches are surrounded by a Churchyard, an area of ground usually an acre in size often used for burial. It has often been suggested that Churches and Christian burial grounds were often sited on pre-Christian burial grounds or earlier sacred spaces. (See Friar 1996) Association of Parish Churches with prehistoric ritual sites is extremely rare and restricted to a handful of locations such as Rudston, Yorkshire where a standing stone is located in the Churchyard; or Knowlton and Avebury where Parish Churches are sited within Henge Monuments. (See Rodwell 1989). Non Christian burials in Saxon and later Christian burial grounds are exceptionally rare. In the main where cemeteries have been excavated, eg Wharrem Percy, the earliest burials are contemporary with the foundation of the settlement. This in turn is related to the fact that most villages were founded in the eighth century. (See Arnold and Wardle 1981).

In Roman towns the location of Saxon burials is more complex but it is noted that the Roman custom of burial was outside of the town. In short in the vast majority of cases Churches and Churchyards are contemporary with the establishment of the settlement.

Parishioners of a particular Parish had a right of burial in the Parish Church's Churchyard. There was no such right for Chapels of Ease or Chapels. With wooden grave markers the presence of a grave was forgotten after a relatively short space of time and the land was reused with disturbed bone being re-buried or moved to an ossuary.

With the introduction of stone grave markers in the seventeenth century the opportunities for non burial activities started to decline. Equally the presence of grave markers which survived a long time meant space in graveyards became more precious and fixed. The maintenance of the Churchyard was the responsibility of the Parochial Church Council.

In the mid seventeenth century non conformist and other, for example Jewish, burial grounds were established in London.

“Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries there was increasing criticism of burials in Church of England graveyards and vaults in urban areas. Churchyards were full to overflowing which gave rise to unsanitary conditions and caused disease to spread. From the mid-17th century onwards, people like Sir Christopher Wren, John Evelyn and Sir John Vanbrugh revived the ancient Roman idea of burials and the siting of cemeteries on the outskirts of towns. The first such burial ground, St George's Garden, was opened in Bloomsbury in 1714 and it still exists as a park. (White & Hodson 2007 Paradise Preserved)

In 1713 the first graveyard not associated with a Parish Church was opened at St George's Garden (<http://www.friendsofstgeorgesgardens.org.uk/>).

By 1850, most major towns in the United Kingdom had a cemetery financed through joint-stock companies. Urban churchyards had had their day – overfull, exclusively Anglican, and suspected of being sinks of contamination.

Thus many urban Churchyards were closed for burial.

8.2 Historic Non Burial Functions of Churchyards

While Churchyards associated with Parish Churches had a function of burial of the dead and commemoration of the dead this was not the only function. As Friars 1996 puts it:

SECULAR ACTIVITIES

The churchyard was often the venue for village festivities and social gatherings, for dancing. Games and commercial transactions: much to the consternation of the ecclesiastical establishment. In many parishes, the unconsecrated north side of the churchyard was effectively the village recreation field. Quoits, ninepins, marbles, wrestling, hammer-throwing and football may have incurred the displeasure of the diocesan authorities, but many a country parson enthusiastically participated in these events and churchwardens' accounts from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sometimes provide details of the amenities (such as benches) which were provided for participants and spectators.

Even the church building was used for games, and external section of wall between two buttresses (with the windows shuttered) being ideally suited to the game of fives which (the records suggest) was the most popular of churchyard sports. Parson Woodforde, writing in 1764, tells us that his ' ..guests plaid at Fives in the churchyard this evening and I lost there at betting 0.1.6. -

In several churches the iron hinges and stays for the shutters have survived, though rarely the shutters themselves, while at Craswall in Herefordshire the rectangular outline of a level 'court' may still be seen in the ground to the north of the chancel.

The increasing influence of Puritanism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries appears to have caused little more than a sporadic reaction to such activities and, in some areas, churchyard games continued well into the nineteenth century. Never the less. by the mid-eighteenth century, Methodism was already influencing opinion: at Nantwich in Cheshire, for example, where in 1776 the playing of fives was specifically forbidden, and at Llanfair Discoed in Gwent where the following inscription may still be seen in the church porch:

*Whoever hear on Sunday
Will Practis Playing at Ball
it May Be before Monday
The Devil Will Have you All.*

Another popular churchyard 'sport' was cockfighting which, like fives, provided an opportunity for gambling. Henry VIII was especially enthusiastic and, as a result, cockfighting came to be known as the 'royal diversion'. In later Stuart times the cock-fight was the most popular sport of all, on which all classes staked their money even more than upon horse racing.

There can be little doubt that, in most parishes during the seventeenth century, the churchyard was used for this purpose and there are even recorded cases of cock-fights being held in church naves. Behind St Mary's church at Craswell in Herefordshire is a grassy hollow where local men gathered to watch the cockfighting and, in the north wall of the church, the projecting beam-ends to which spectators tethered their horses.

Cockfighting was prohibited by Parliament in 1849 as was cockthreshing a notably unruly entertainment by which a cockerel was tethered by one leg and bombarded with missiles.

At Londy Glascwm in Powys. the church porch was once used as one of the 'goals' for an annual inter-village football match the other being over four miles away, across the hills, at the church at Disserseth. Such games were a regular feature of life in many parishes and because there was no restriction on the number of participants, they were singularly unruly affairs: 'The lads and young men by the hundreds kicking the football in all their pants and shirts and belabouring each other more like dogs fighting for a bone than men bearing the name of Christian. The old men acting as spectators, encouraging and urging on every man his party; sticks in hand, they shouted and swore in a manner which made them look hideous. The women in scores contended and yelled at the tops of their voices: in their excitement and wild rage they would cast off their shawls, their hats and caps more formidable in aspect than hags.'

The same account, written in Anglesey in 1799, tells us that 'The common people delighted in nothing but empty sport and carnal pleasure playing with dice and cards, dancing and singing with the harp, playing football. Tennis, mock -trials and hostages and many other sinful sports too numerous to be mentioned. They used the Sunday like a market day to gratify every wicked whim and passion: old and young they flocked in crowds to the parish churches on Sunday morning; not to listen to the word of God but to entice each other to drink at the wash-brew house of the devil's market.

It was the influence of Methodism which led finally to a significant decline in such excesses. But while there can be little doubt that standards of conduct and morality improved, as a result the poor were also deprived of many simple and harmless pleasures which served to relieve the harshness of everyday life.

8.3 Closed Churchyards

Once a Churchyard is closed for burial its maintenance is transferred to the Local Authorities. The problems with closed Churchyards are many and varied. It has to be accepted that as time goes on fewer and fewer graves will be actively tended as people move away from an area or they themselves die. This is particularly so in urban areas where the modern population is largely totally unconnected with the population 170 years ago.

It also has to be accepted that the high density of stone grave markers, particularly with foot stones and edging, makes even mowing grass difficult and thus time consuming. Equally the grave markers can become unsafe over time. Thus there has been a pressure to clear grave markers. Equally tree and shrub planting can be counter productive.

Closed Graveyards were the subject of a House of Commons Select Committee in 2001 whose report stated that:

'unsafe, littered, vandalised and unkempt cemeteries ... shame all society in their lack of respect for the dead and bereaved'; 'the almost complete failure on the part of public authorities to take the action necessary to address the problems faced by cemeteries is inexcusable'.

A review of progress in 2011 in the conservation bulletin by advisors to the Select Committee suggested that little has changed since then. Cemeteries that have become inactive face an uncertain future. It is hard to imagine a park being abandoned to nature but that is what has happened to many cemeteries, sometimes, under the banner of nature conservation, where it translates as either a managed or, at worst, a headlong retreat.

Such neglect is not benign. Although woody plants can be of value in their own right, as well as providing habitat for other species, unchecked, these plants and other invasive

species can erode the landscape design, damage or destabilise memorials, and encroach upon other valuable habitats.

Cemetery landscape character is shaped by the memorials and the massing of them. When the memorials were designed and installed, little thought would have been given to their long-term maintenance and repair. As monuments age, they are more likely to need attention – iron and metal fixtures rust and corrode, stone cracks, earth settles, and all these can cause a memorial to become unstable and hence a danger. Concerns about the safety of memorials has led to many local authorities dismantling monuments and cordoning off areas within cemeteries with detrimental consequences for the landscape.

Often closed Churchyards are the subject of “Anti Social” behaviour. The account of improving the Church Yard at St Mary Moseley Birmingham states:

St Mary's is in the centre of Moseley, Birmingham but had become forgotten. It was overgrown, with monuments in need of repair and serious anti-social behaviour taking place. Through hard work and a Heritage Lottery Fund Grant, the churchyard has once again become a shared, community space.

(see <http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/index.php/case-studies/reviving-interest-and-restoring-sites/improving-a-churchyard-through-a-heritage-lottery-fund-grant-st-mary-s-moseley.html>)

It has to be accepted that Churchyards in Urban Areas often have a secular function either informally or formally. It also has to be accepted that that this secular function is not always desirable. In fact urban Churchyards range from the desirable to the neutral to attractive places enjoyed by many for non religious purposes.

Urban Churchyards are also often used by homeless people (rough sleepers eg St Mary Kennington).



Plate 38 St Mary Kennington

8.4 Positive Uses For Urban Churchyards

This has to be contrasted with desirable uses where they serve as open Green Space, for example Christchurch, Southwark or St Pauls, The Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham and are attractive places enjoyed by many for non religious purposes.

There are some notable uses of Churchyards both occasional and continuous. The Nantwich Food Festival is largely staged on the former Churchyard. It is attended by 40,000 people and is thought to be one of the largest free festivals in the Country.



Plate 39 Food Festival at St Mary Nantwich

In some cases formal parks have been created from Churchyards, in particular when the churches have been damaged as at St Thomas Bath Row Birmingham where a peace Garden has been created, or a park at St Nicholas Whitehaven. In the case of Christchurch Southwark the Churchyard has been acquired by the Borough Council and turned into a park.

Most Cathedrals and some larger well visited Churches (eg St Mary Bridlington, St Mary Scarborough and All Saints Bakewell) provide some outside seating. Many Churches use the Churchyard to serve food and drink in association with other events. At the annual Ride and Stride fund raising event (which coincides with the Heritage Open Day event) most Parish Churches serve refreshments in the Churchyard.

At St Marys Aylesbury a café operates on every day except Sunday with tables and chairs being placed outside.

The St Nicholas Centre Ipswich includes a restaurant with an outside seating area. The restaurant is a commercial secular venture; it is also licensed. The current function of the Churchyard as an open space is to be contrasted with its use prior to the conversion of St Nicholas when it was commonly and regularly used by drug users who would discard their needles.



Plate 40 The St Nicholas Centre outside eating and drinking area.



Plate 41 St Mary Aylesbury Café and area of paving used for outside eating



Plate 42 Christchurch, Southwark Informal Park Use



Plate 43 St Pauls, The Jewellery Quarter,

8.5 Informal Uses



Plate 44 St Mary Old Basing

Churchyards are often used for photoshoots and sketching and painting



Plate 45 St Mary Aylesbury Churchyards are often used as informal play areas

9. St Marys Churchyard

9.1 Memorial Function

It is noted that the memorial function of the Churchyard has ceased (ie no graves appear to be tended) due to the fact that the Churchyard has been closed in the nineteenth century and most of the grave markers have been cleared.

9.2 Current Function

It has to be recognised that the current function of the Churchyard of St Mary is as follows:

1. Used for solemn ceremonies such as funerals (about 3-4 times a year).
2. Used for joyous ceremonies such as weddings and christenings
3. As a historic area enjoyed by the small number of Visitors
4. As a thoroughfare
5. As an area of Urban Open Space (It is noted that the Local Authority pay for the maintenance of the Churchyard)
6. As a place used by rough sleepers
7. As a place used by people with addiction issues
8. As a place for informal free parking
9. The Churchyard is a target for Tagging and Graffiti
10. As a place where anti-social behaviour takes place ie using the Churchyard as a toilet.

It must be noted that used hypodermic syringes are often discarded in the Churchyard

9.3 Positive

There are a number of positive aspects and ancillary activities in the Churchyard. The Church is open to visitors on a daily basis which is unusual in the centre of a large town. The lamp posts are an unusual feature. The Jacobean Grave Marker is rare.



Plate 46 An artist sketching Cheltenham Minster



Plate 47 Wild Life is present

9.4 Negative Aspects to the Churchyard

There are a number of negative aspects to the Churchyard documented in the following photographs.



Plate 48 Informal Parking when the Church is Closed



Plate 49 Informal Parking when the Church is Closed



Plate 50 Informal Parking when the Church is Closed



Plate 51 Worn Grass and Graffiti



Plate 52 Damage to Trees



Plate 53 Damaged Grave Markers



Plate 54 Damage to a Table Tomb



Plate 55 Graffiti



Plate 56 Graffiti



Plate 57 Tagging



Plate 58 Graffiti



Plate 59 Accumulations of Rubbish



Plate 60 Overgrown Shrubs

10. The Proposals

10.1 The Proposals

The proposal is for:

“conversion of the two existing retail units in Cheltenham House (use class A1) into three restaurant/bar units (use class A3/A4), associated roof plant and flues, alterations to the ground floor level, relocation of the office entrance, creation of a terrace area in the churchyard for use by restaurant/bar unit 2, relocation of gravemarkers and provision of a layby for use by the church.”

There are three distinct proposals which affect the Churchyard:

1. The construction of a sitting out area to serve a restaurant/bar 132m² in size.
2. Enlargement of the Tarmac Area to create a layby to serve the Church.
3. Provision of windows on the Ground Floor of Cheltenham House

These proposals should be viewed in terms of the comments in the Conservation Area Appraisal:

13 St Mary's Churchyard

The setting of St Mary's Church is very important, with the Church being the heart of the ancient High Street. At present, a combination of al-fresco drinking in the churchyard; evidence of graffiti and unattractive rear facades of buildings backing onto the churchyard contribute to providing the church with a poor setting.

ACTION OT13: The Council will continue to support the working of St Mary's Churchyard Initiative, which aims to enhance the area through proposals including maintaining existing through routes and desire lines and enhancing points of entry; encouraging interaction with the surrounding properties; encouraging increased public use; improving and enhancing the setting of the Church and strengthening the current identities of the Church and Churchyard.

10.2 Impact of the Sitting Out Area.

It is suggested that the introduction of areas of hard standing is a common alteration to Churchyards and has minimal impact on the settings of Parish Churches. Views of the Church will be essentially unaltered. At present this part of the Churchyard is obscured by vegetation. There are many positive outcomes from introducing another regular use of the Churchyard. These include:

1. Revenue – The parish currently has a deficit in its budget and the income generated will help ensure the long term use of the building thus reducing the risk of redundancy.
2. Passive surveillance - the regular use of part of the Church will act as a deterrent to negative uses.
3. Increasing the number of people who use this historic location.
4. Removing shrubs which harbour rubbish and damage both burials and grave markers

10.3 Impact of Changes to the Façade of Cheltenham House

The Introduction of Windows to the rear façade of Cheltenham House will mean there will be a softening of a solid brick wall. In addition it will create new views of the Minster, the Churchyard and associated historic features.

10.4 “The Layby”

The layby is to provide a parking and turning area for wedding cars and hearses. At present turning and parking often leads to muddy patches which are both unattractive and slippery. Virtually every Church has nearby parking for a hearse to be unloaded. The

selection of wedding venues is a highly competitive market and thus having a proper surface on to which brides can exit from a car is an important requirement.

11. Archaeological Impact

The paved area will cut into the ground by a depth of 250mm. At this depth it is very unlikely that any articulated human burials will be disturbed given that the base of the topsoil is unlikely to be breached.

It is suggested that this is confirmed by the excavation of archaeological test pits. All works in the graveyard will follow the procedures in the joint Church of England and English Heritage document:

Guidance for Best Practice for Treatment of Human Remains Excavated From Christian Burial Grounds in England 2005

It is proposed to relocate four horizontal grave markers which are located within the area of the proposed paving. The Guide book for St Mary's Minster notes that some of the grave markers in the Churchyard have already been moved to different locations. The density of grave markers present suggests that most have already been cleared. It is likely but not certain that they have always been horizontal. These grave markers are all nineteenth century in date although the inscriptions are only partially legible. They are all hidden from view by vegetation.

Before being relocated they will be exposed and recorded using the methods described in Wardle (2008). This is based upon the CBA system. It includes rectified photographs of the grave markers.

The Heritage Benefits of relocating these grave markers is that:

1. They will be recorded before they are weathered further
2. They will be visible in the Churchyard
3. They will be far less likely to be vandalised.

If the grave markers are not moved the ground would have to be raised circa 400mm thus preventing level access from the building.



Plate 61 Vegetation obscuring Grave markers



Plate 62 Grave marker



Plate 63 Grave marker



Plate 64 Grave marker



Plate 65 Grave markers of John Shenton 1802

12. Conclusions

It is suggested that while the proposals are unusual for a Churchyard they have been achieved elsewhere at Aylesbury and Ipswich.

It is concluded that the benefits which are many of the proposals far outweigh any dis-benefits.

13. Bibliography

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14. Map Regression Analysis

14.1 1885 Ordnance Survey

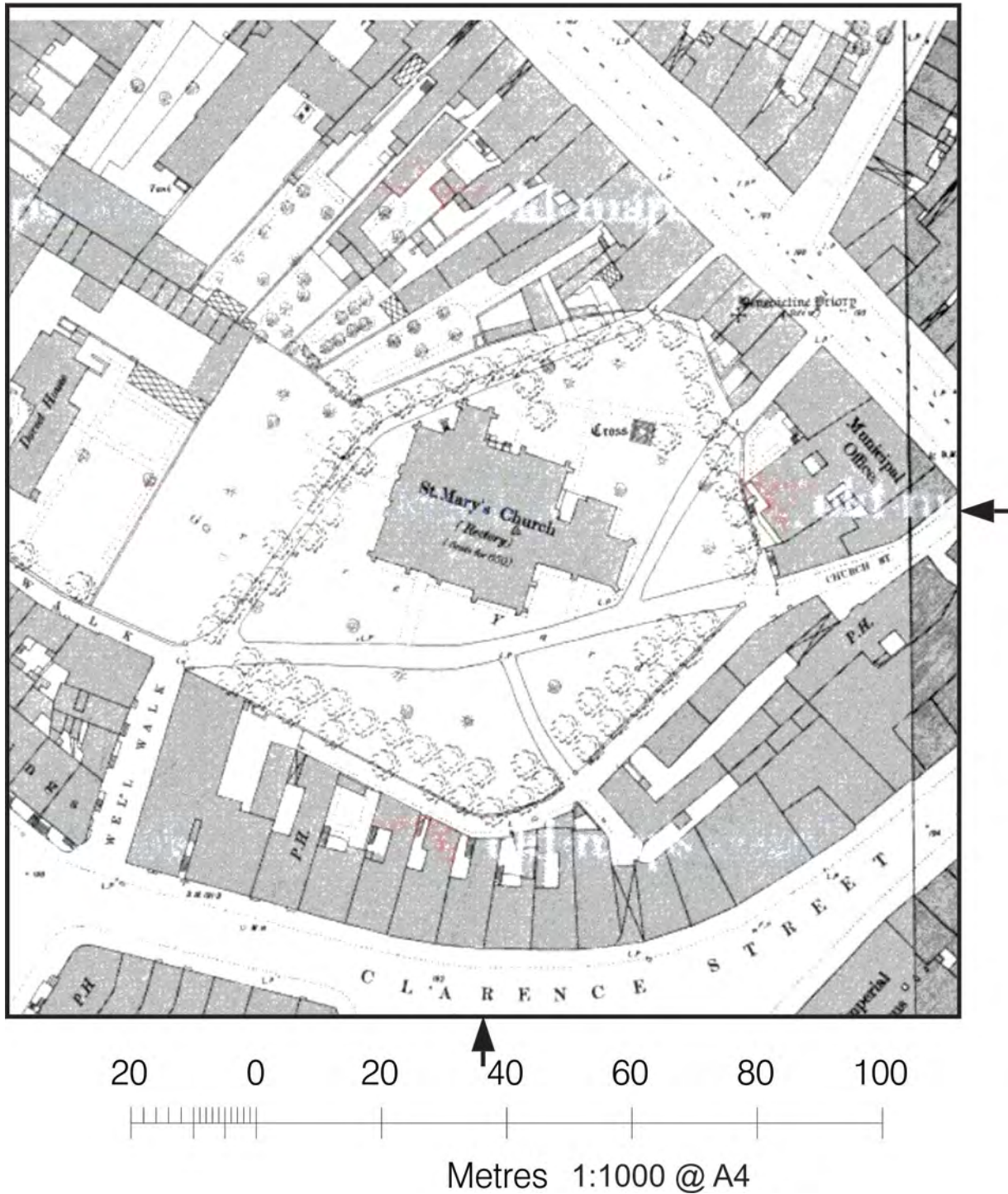
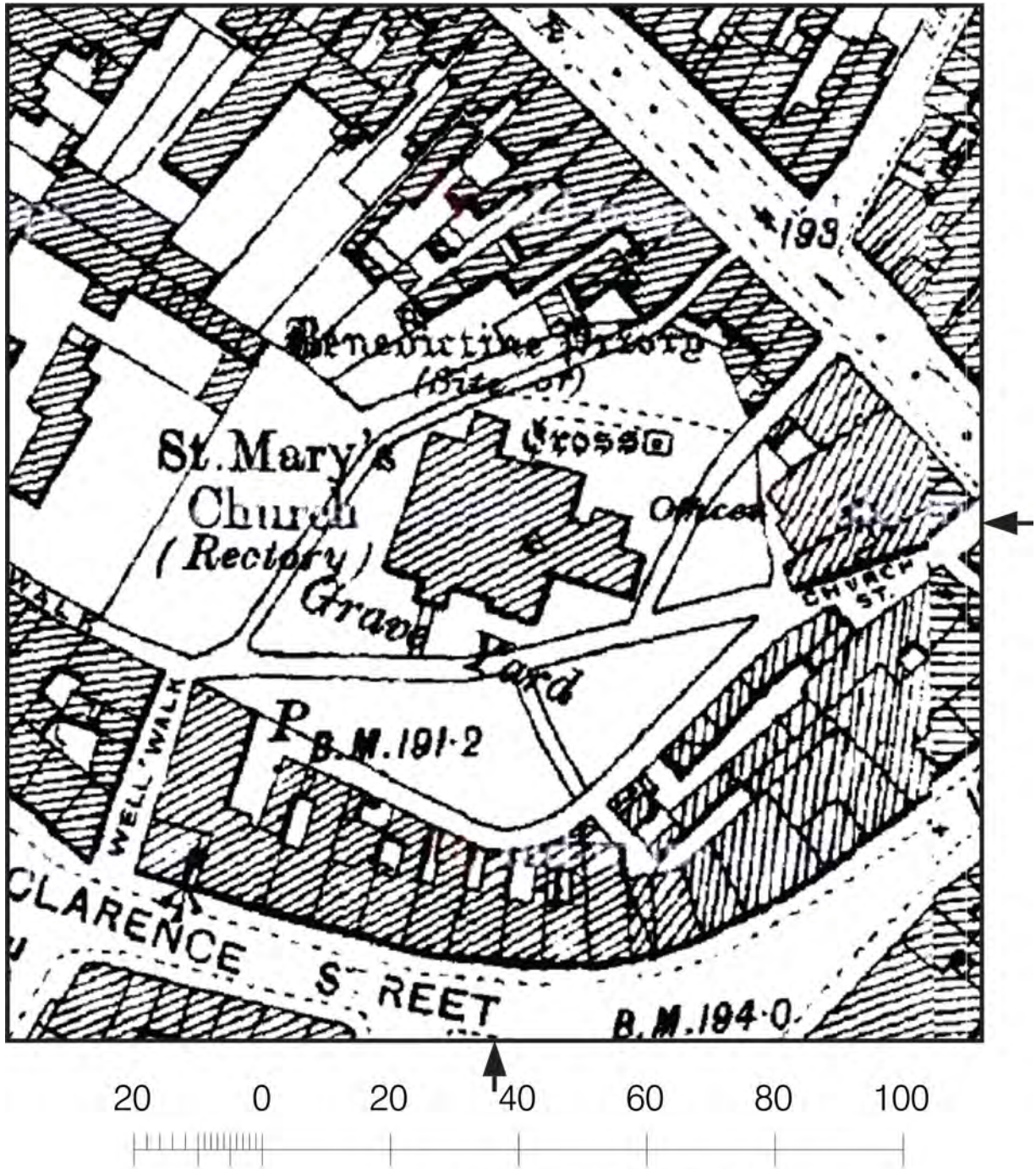


Figure 4: 1885 Ordnance Survey 1:500 plan, reproduced at 1:1000

14.2 1903 Ordnance Survey



Metres 1:1000 @ A4

Figure 5: 1903 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 plan, reproduced at 1:1000

14.3 1923 Ordnance Survey

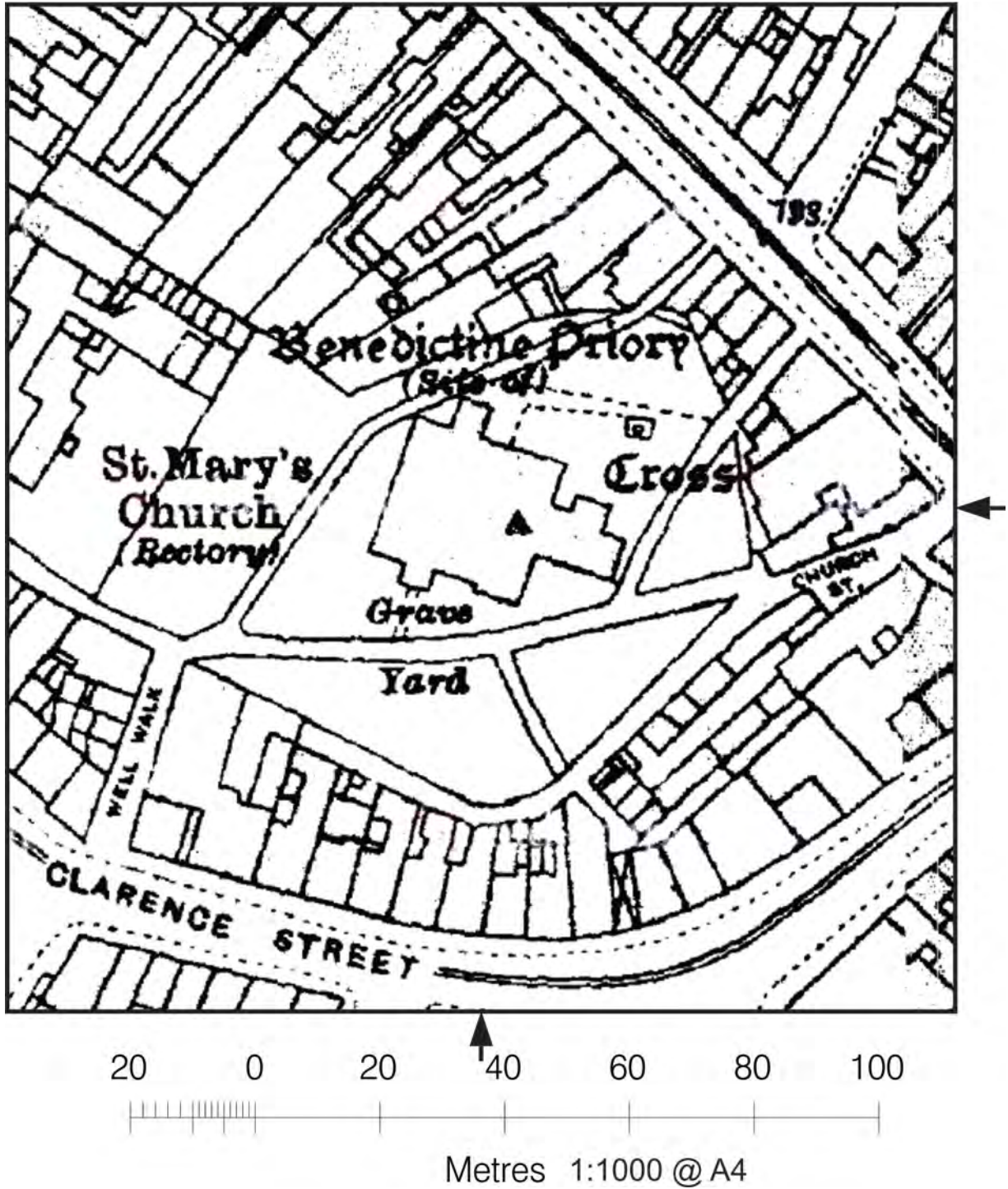


Figure 6: 1923 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 plan, reproduced at 1:1000

14.4 1932 Ordnance Survey

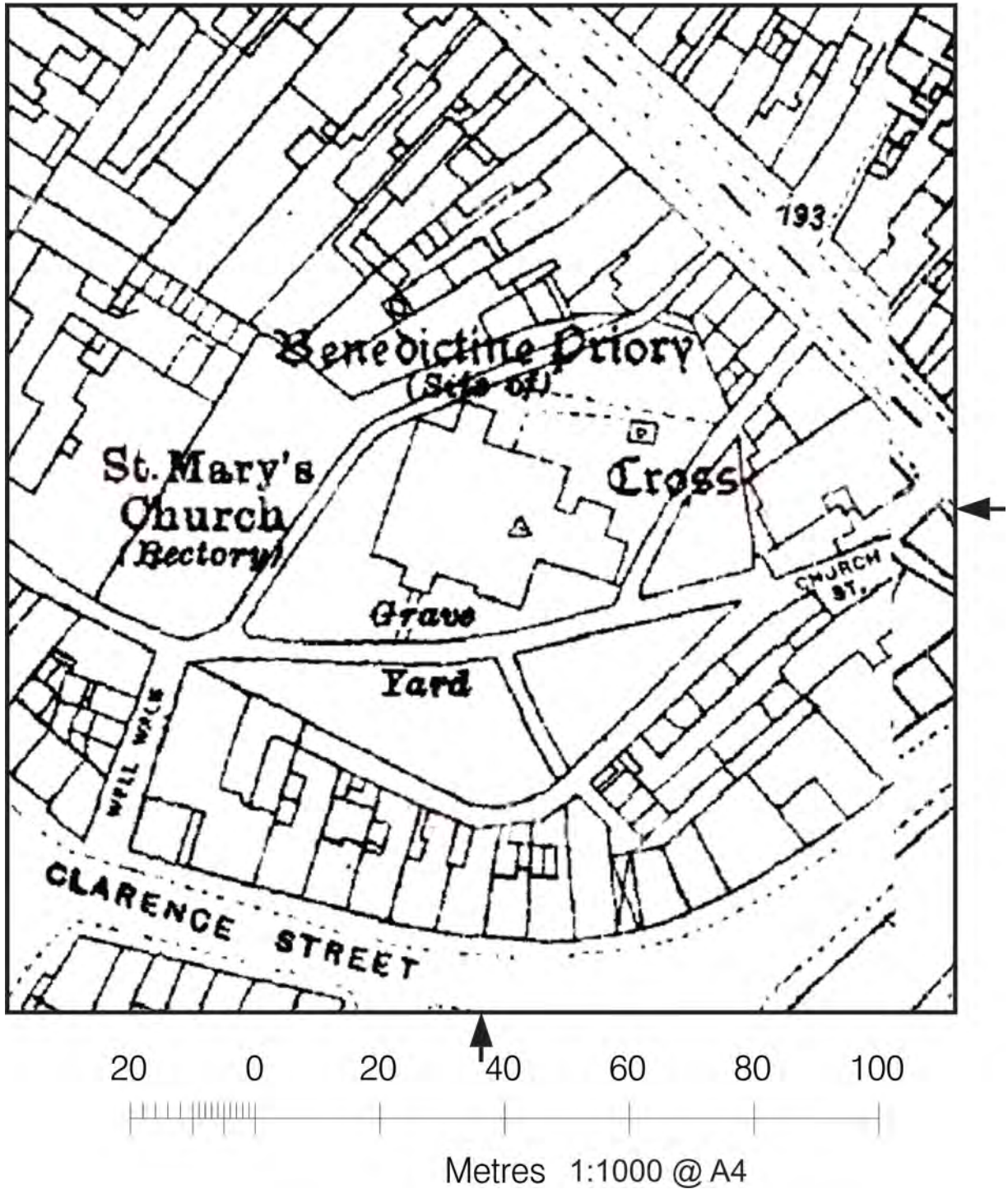


Figure 7: 1932 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 plan, reproduced at 1:1000

14.5 1954 Ordnance Survey

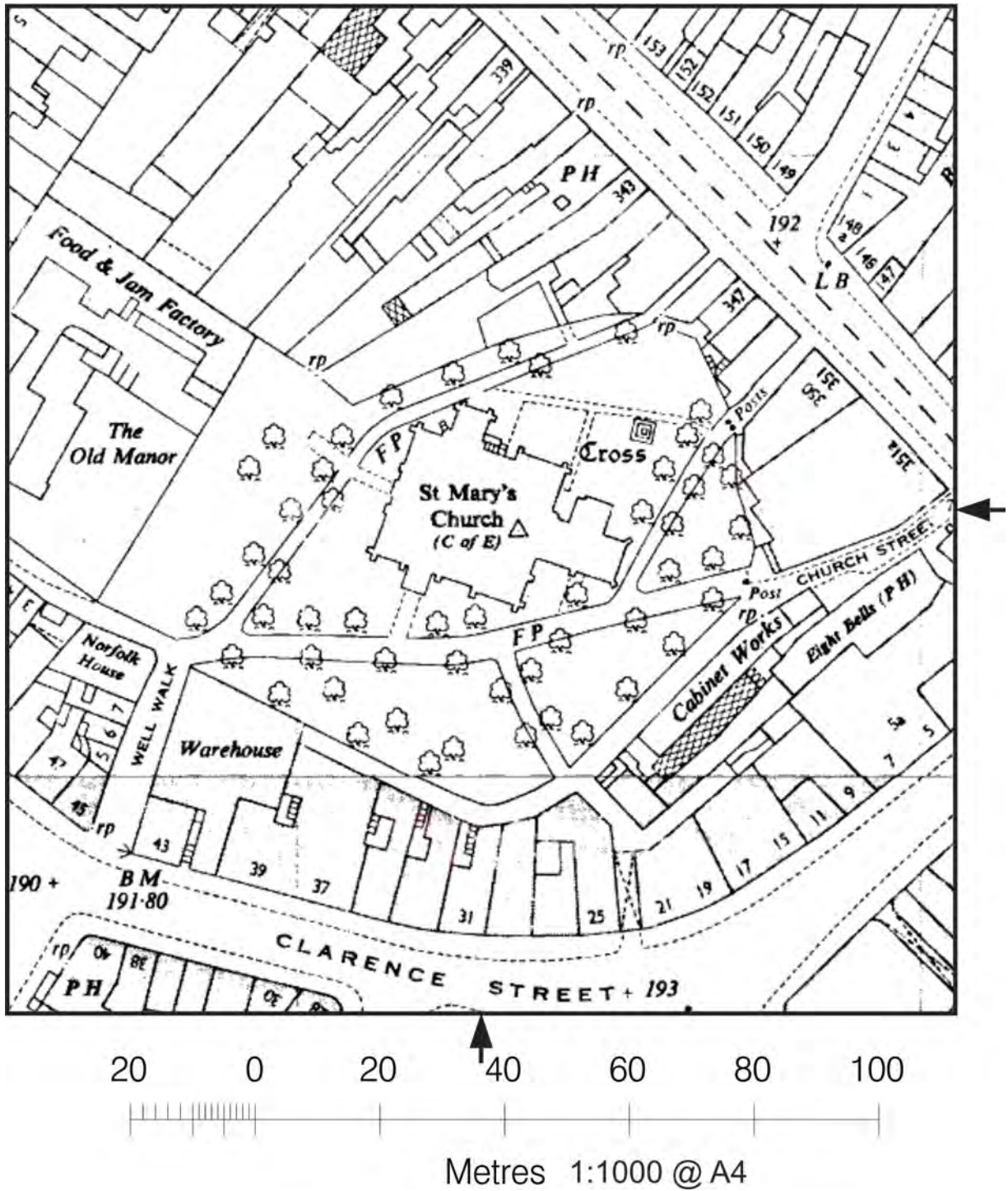
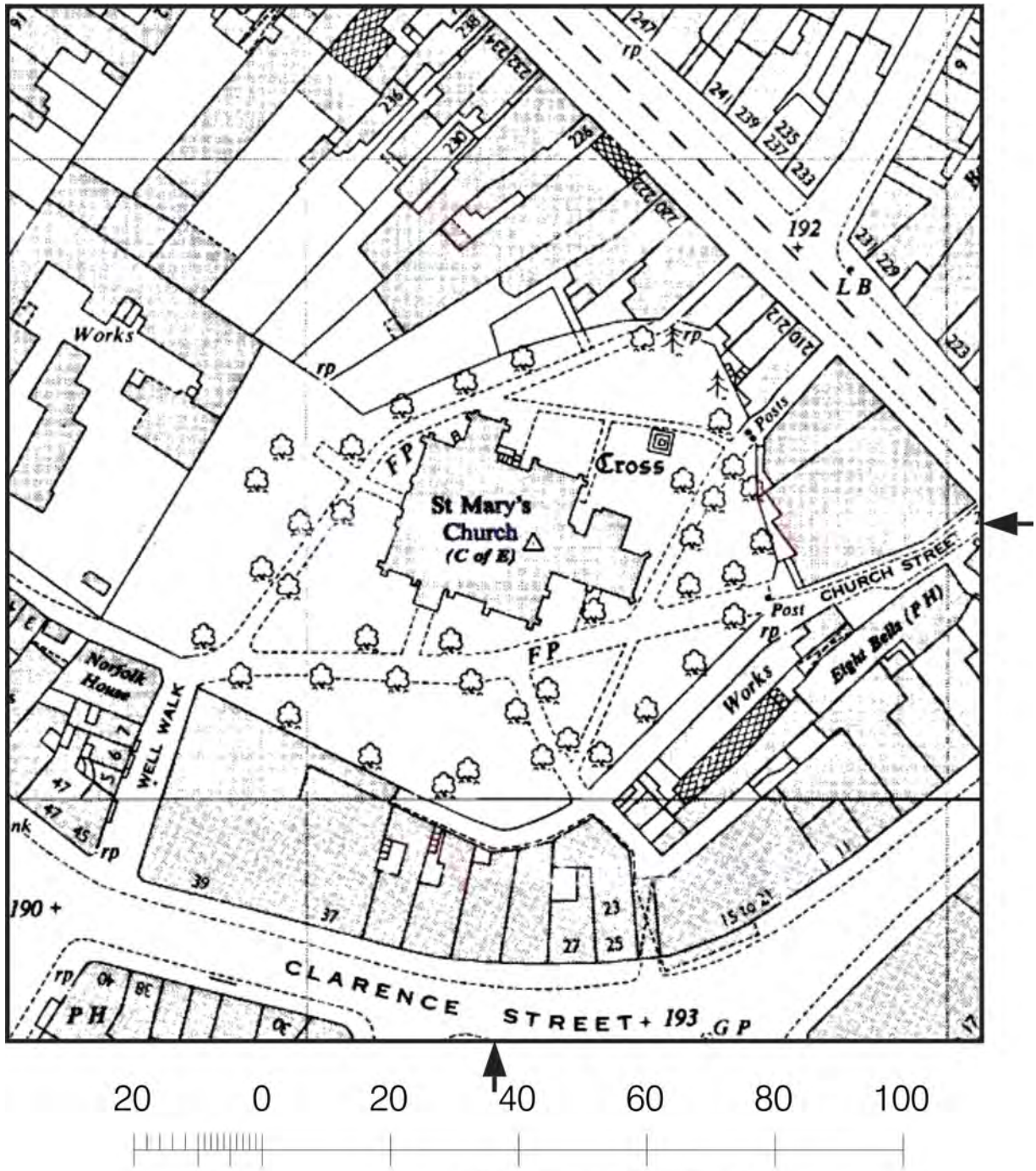


Figure 8: 1954 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 plan, reproduced at 1:1000

14.6 1963-8 Ordnance Survey



Metres 1:1000 @ A4

Figure 9: 1963-8 Ordnance Survey 1:1250 plan, reproduced at 1:1000

14.7 1973-7 Ordnance Survey

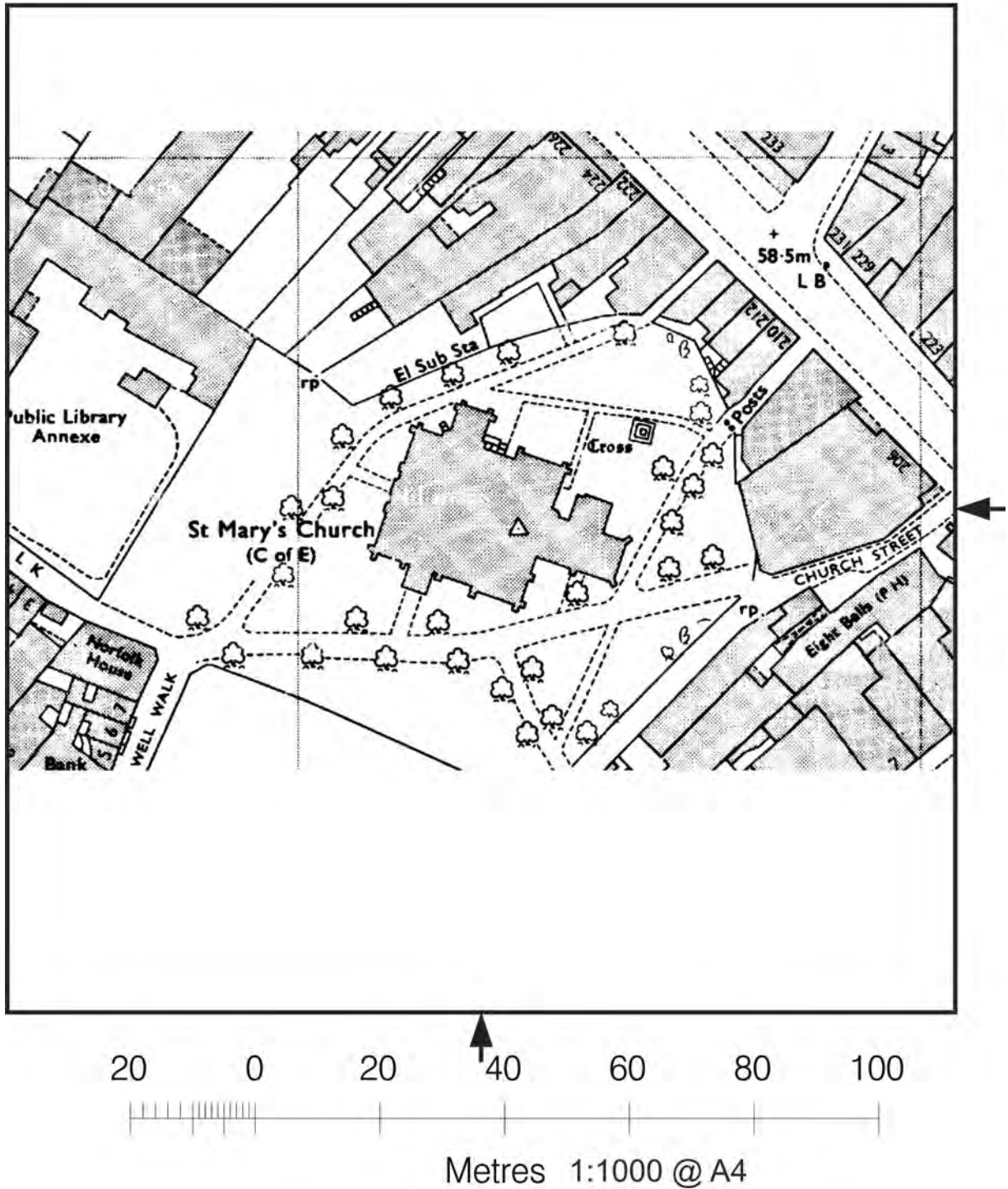


Figure 10: 1973-7 Ordnance Survey 1:1250 plan, reproduced at 1:1000

14.8 Modern Ordnance Survey

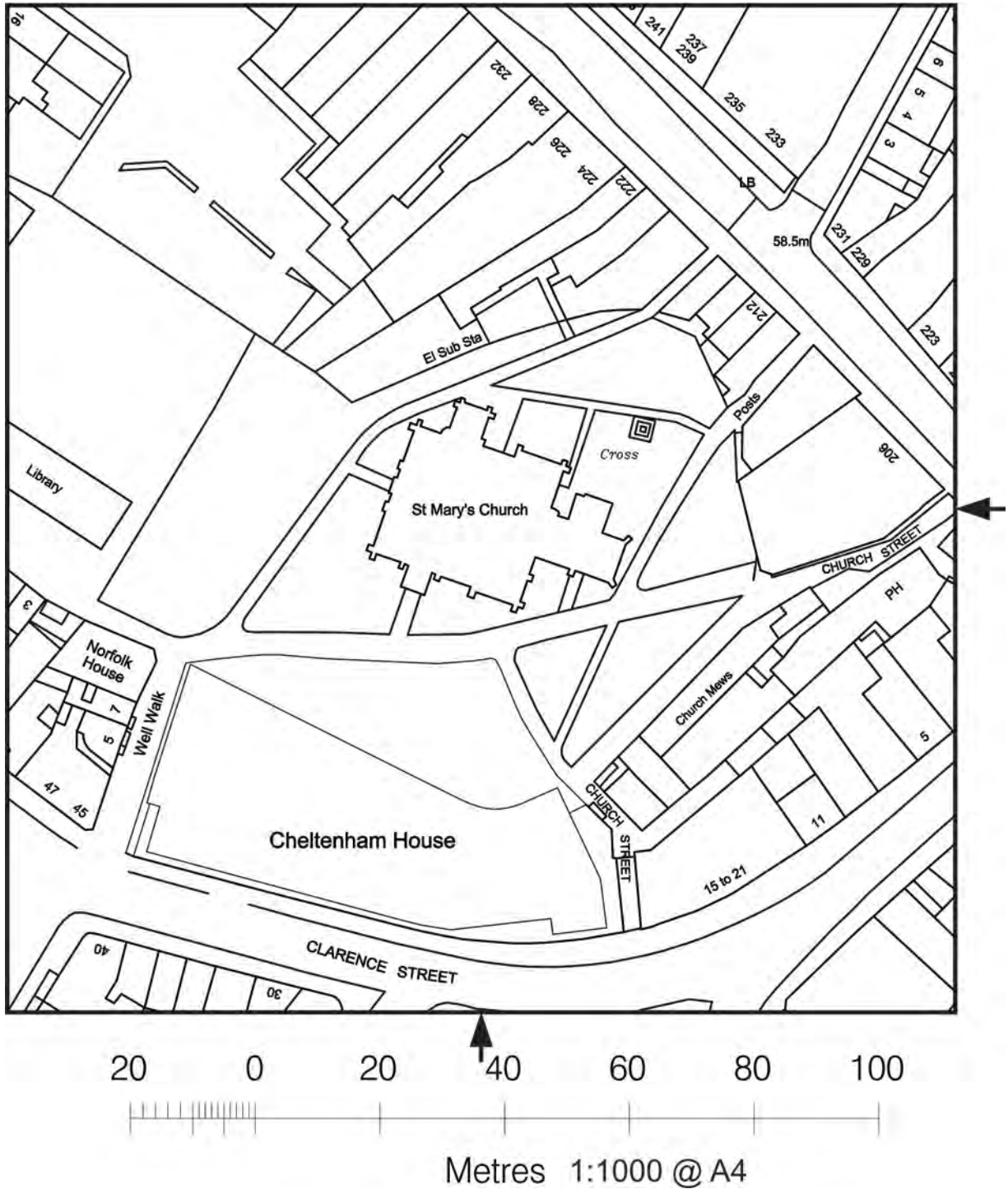


Figure 11: Modern Ordnance Survey 1:2500 plan, reproduced at 1:1000