# HERITAGE STATEMENT

## Alterations and extension to Milward Community Hall in association with its Use for Residential Apartments

## Salisbury Street, Leek, ST13 5EE

## For: Charles Wainwright Developments Ltd

**Prepared by Stephen Bradwell, MA MRTPI IHBC**

**Date: June 2017**

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RTPI mediation of space · making of place

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This heritage statement has been prepared by Stephen Bradwell, MA RTPI IHBC of Trigpoint Conservation & Planning Ltd to inform and support proposals for alterations and extensions to Milward Community Hall in Salisbury Street, Leek in association with its conversion to residential apartments.

1.2 Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires applicants to provide an assessment of the impact of new development on the significance of heritage assets that is *'proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset…sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'*.

1.3 This statement therefore seeks to identify any designated heritage assets that may be affected by these proposals and to consider the potential impact on their significance and setting, having regard to the statutory duties and other relevant national and local planning policies.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 The following sources of information have been used to identify the designated heritage assets within the locality:

- the historic mapping record,
- relevant designation records from Historic England's *Heritage List for England*,
- information on Conservation Areas obtained from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council's web site.

2.2 A site visit was undertaken on 22 March 2017 to survey the application site and its relationship with the neighbouring designated heritage assets.

## 3.0 SUMMARY OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

3.1 In summary these proposals relate to a redevelopment of the existing Milward Community Hall, along with an extension to the right side (north-facing) gable and a new pitched mansard roof structure to provide an additional internal floor, to form 16 residential flats over four floors.

3.2 Overall the proposed works will retain the external form and appearance of the existing building, while the interiors, which were built specifically for educational purposes (see para. 4.9 below) will be extensively remodelled to provide the new residential accommodation.

3.3 A parking area will be provided at the northern end of the site, with a new access to Salisbury Street.

## 4.0 SITE APPRAISAL

*Physical Context*

4.1 The application site is located on the western edge of Leek town centre, within an area that has a mix of residential and commercial uses and it is a largely rectangular parcel of land, with a long frontage to Salisbury Street. The site also adjoins terraced houses on Strangman Street and Gladstone Street to the south and west.

4.2 The site is occupied by Milward Community Hall, a two storey detached building, built of red brick, with a hipped tile roof with a parking area at the northern end of the site served by an access to Salisbury Street. The building is built in a 'pier and panel' style of construction, with a regular arrangement of white UPVC framed windows at ground and first floor level, set between projecting brick piers, together these features provide a strong vertical emphasis to the building (Photo 1).

4.3 As a result of this style of construction the front elevation of the building, which is particularly prominent in Salisbury Street, has a uniform appearance and a distinct vertical emphasis, that together contributes to the overall character of the building. The rear elevation is of less visual interest although it maintains the uniformity and verticality of the pier and panel construction seen in the front elevation, but it can only be glimpsed from the neighbouring Gladstone Street (Photos 7 & 8).

4.4 The north-facing gable which overlooks the car parking area at the northern end of the site, is more utilitarian with a mix of window types and styles and various soil pipes (Photo 4). The south-facing gable is well screened by the neighbouring terraced houses on Strangman Street.

4.5 Internally the building consists of a range of separate ground floor rooms, while the first floor is largely given over to a single hall (Photo 9), reflecting the historic use of the building (see para. 4.9 below). At the rear is a 1.8m high brick wall to the properties on Gladstone Street.

4.6 The front boundary to Salisbury Street is defined by a low brick wall with simple metal railings above, while the car park at the upper end of the site has a 1.6m high stone wall (Photos 1 & 6).

*Historical Development*[1]

4.7 The site of Milward Community Hall was first developed in the first half of the 20th century. Up until the mid-19th century the site of Milward Community Hall stood within a larger, rectangular parcel of open land in the centre of Leek to the north of the Wellington silk mill (Map 1).

4.8 However by the end of the 19th century this land had been developed for the terraced houses on Gladstone Street and Chorley Street, and a National school for boys had also been built at the northern end of the site at the junction of Gladstone Street with Britannia Street, dated to 1886 (Map 2). The site of Milward Community Hall appears to have been situated within the overall school site, although Salisbury Street was not laid out as part of this earlier Victorian development, but had been laid out by 1925 (Map 3).

4.9 In 1931 Britannia Street school became a senior mixed school and alterations to the school in 1932 provided additional classrooms and subsequently a new building, Milward Hall, was added on the Salisbury Street frontage. The VCH suggests a date of 1939, but Millward Hall is shown on the 1937 Ordnance Survey (OS) map (Map 4). This building originally provided housecraft and handicraft rooms on the ground floor with an assembly hall, which was also used as a gymnasium, on the first floor.

4.10 The school became an aided secondary modern school under the 1944 Act, and it is shown on the OS map as the Leek Parish Church Secondary Modern School (Map 5).

4.11 In 1950 a Government inspector remarked unfavourably on the school's cramped town-centre site and considered the buildings inadequate, although the school was not closed until 1965, with pupils transferring to a secondary school built in Westwood Park Road.

4.12 The Britannia Street building and Milward Hall were then sold and a youth centre was opened in 1971 in Milward Hall, as notated on the OS 1974 map (Map 6) and by 1992 it was a youth and community centre used by all age groups.

4.13 More recently the building was vacated by the County Council and sold at auction in 2016, suggesting that it is no longer required for community use.

## 5.0 SUMMARY OF LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS

5.1 The application site is located within the Leek Conservation Area, and there are a number

[1] Historical information was obtained from the Victorian County History: A History of the County of Stafford: Volume 7, Leek and the Moorlands (accessed at: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/staffs/vol7/pp84-169)

of listed buildings within its vicinity, these include:

*Listed Buildings*

5.2 There are five Grade II listed buildings within the vicinity of the site, these include:

- Wellington Mill - Strangman Street;
- Society of Friends Meeting House - Overton Street;
- Boundary wall to Society of Friends Meeting House - Overton Street/Salisbury Street;
- 9-12 Overton Bank;
- Public Conveniences, Mill Street.

*Scheduled Monuments and Registered Historic Parks and Gardens*

5.3 There are no Scheduled Monuments or Registered Historic Parks and Gardens within the vicinity of the site.

*Leek Conservation Area*

5.4 The application site is located within the Leek Conservation Area, although there is currently no appraisal available for this Conservation Area.

## 6.0 POLICY BACKGROUND

*Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*

6.1 This Act requires Councils to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings (section 66) and to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas '*with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area*' (section 72).

*National Planning Policy Framework*

6.2 The NPPF recognises that the protection and enhancement of the built and historic environment is one of three principal dimensions of sustainable development [para. 7] and consequently heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance [para. 17]. However the NPPF also recognises that the significance of a designated heritage asset can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the asset or by development within its setting [para. 132], where setting is defined as the surroundings in which a heritage asset can be experienced.

6.3 The NPPF also accepts that not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance [para. 138] and it encourages local planning authorities to look for development opportunities in conservation areas [para. 137]. However it advises that the loss of a building, or other element which makes a positive contribution to the

significance of a conservation area, should be treated either as substantial harm or less than substantial harm, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the conservation area [para. 138].

*Development Plan Policies: Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy*

6.4 Policy DC2: *The Historic Environment* seeks to safeguard and where possible enhance the historic environment, including conservation areas, by

- resisting development which would harm or be detrimental to the special character and historic heritage;
- promoting development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which contribute to the character or heritage of an area;
- preventing the loss of buildings and features which make a positive contribution to the character or heritage of an area.

6.5 In addition, Policy SD1: *Sustainable Use of Resources* seeks to encourage development on previously developed land that secures the future conservation of a heritage asset.

## 7.0 POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

*Listed Buildings*.

7.1 The listed buildings identified within the vicinity of the application site are generally situated within the existing commercial and residential areas to the north and south of the site, such that their overall significance relates to the historical development of Leek and their setting relates primarily to their visual presence within the immediate street scene.

7.2 Given the limited alterations being proposed to the property and the relative distance between the site and these listed buildings, and the screening provided by the intervening built development, none of these listed buildings are considered to be sensitive to the development proposed. Consequently the proposed development will have no impact on the setting or overall significance of these listed buildings.

*Leek Conservation Area*

7.3 The application site falls within the boundaries of the Conservation Area, and therefore some consideration needs to be given as to whether the development of this land would harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and its overall significance.

7.4 Whilst there is no published character appraisal, it is clear that the property is a relative late-comer to this Conservation Area, which was largely developed before the construction of this building in 1937/9, and it now sits within a mixed commercial-

residential area, between the main town centre and the predominantly residential areas to the west, with a range of building types. There is therefore no uniform character to this part of the Conservation Area.

7.5 As noted above the building was first built for an educational use (see para. 4.9) and it has some local architectural and historical interest, particularly its front elevation which is particularly prominent in the street scene, and it therefore makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

7.6 There are four distinct elements to this proposal and the main heritage issues would appear to relate to the potential impact of the proposed development on the character or appearance of the Leek Conservation Area.

*New Glazing System*

7.7 To reflect the internal alterations to construct the additional floors (for which consent is not required) it is proposed to replace the existing window system with a new glazing system within the front and rear elevations. The rear elevation is of less importance given its simpler architectural style and the limited views of this elevation from the surrounding streets (Photos 7 & 8), however the front elevation is more prominent within Salisbury Street and it makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area (Photos 3 & 5).

7.8 The new window system sits between the existing brick piers and will emphasise the verticality of the building. As such these alterations will reflect the design and appearance of the existing building and will preserve its contribution to the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

*New Mansard Roof*

7.9 It is proposed to replace the existing roof with a new shallow pitched mansard roof to provide an additional floor within the building.

7.10 The existing roof is a relatively distinctive feature within the street scene and it contributes to the overall appearance of the building. However, the replacement mansard roof reflects the scale and appearance of the existing roof, and it will also appear as a distinctive feature in the street scene, particularly with the use of a standing seam zinc roof, in an area that is already defined by a range of roofing styles. Furthermore the addition of windows in the mansard roof repeat the arrangement of the windows within the principal elevation and emphasise the building's verticality.

7.11 As such the new mansard roof is a sympathetic addition to the existing building that compliments its scale, architectural style and appearance and it will preserve its contribution to the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

*Extension to North-Facing Gable*

7.12 It is proposed to add an extension to the north-facing (right) gable, utilising land that presently falls within the car parking area.

7.13 The existing north-facing gable is of no architectural merit and it makes little contribution to the Conservation Area (Photo 4). The design of the proposed extension will reflect the overall 'pier and panel' design of the existing building and it will also balance the appearance of the front elevation by mirroring the layout at the opposite end of the building.

7.14 As such this extension will reflect the design and appearance of the existing building and will preserve its contribution to the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

*Car Park & Access*

7.15 It is proposed to provide a car parking area at the northern end of the site, but to service this car park a new access has to be formed through the existing stone wall along the street frontage. This work requires a relatively modest alteration to the existing wall, and with the re-use of the stone to infill the gap left by the existing redundant access in front of the proposed extension, the almost continuous boundary wall along the site frontage to Salisbury Street will be maintained without harming the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

7.16 The NPPF advises local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and this building would appear to be a suitable opportunity for the proposed development. It is considered that these proposed alterations will be largely neutral in their overall impact on the present appearance of the building and will not diminish its contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

## 8.0 CONCLUSION

8.1 This Heritage Statement provides a proportionate assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on the designated heritage assets within the vicinity of the site. For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposed development will not

harm the setting or overall significance of any of the listed buildings within the vicinity of the site and will preserve the character and appearance of the Leek Conservation Area

8.2 Consequently the proposed development accords with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act and the objectives of the NPPF, that supports new development in conservation areas, and Core Strategy Policy DC2, which seeks to resist development that is harmful or detrimental to the area's special character and historic heritage and to promote development which sustains, respects or enhances buildings and features which contribute to the character or heritage of an area.

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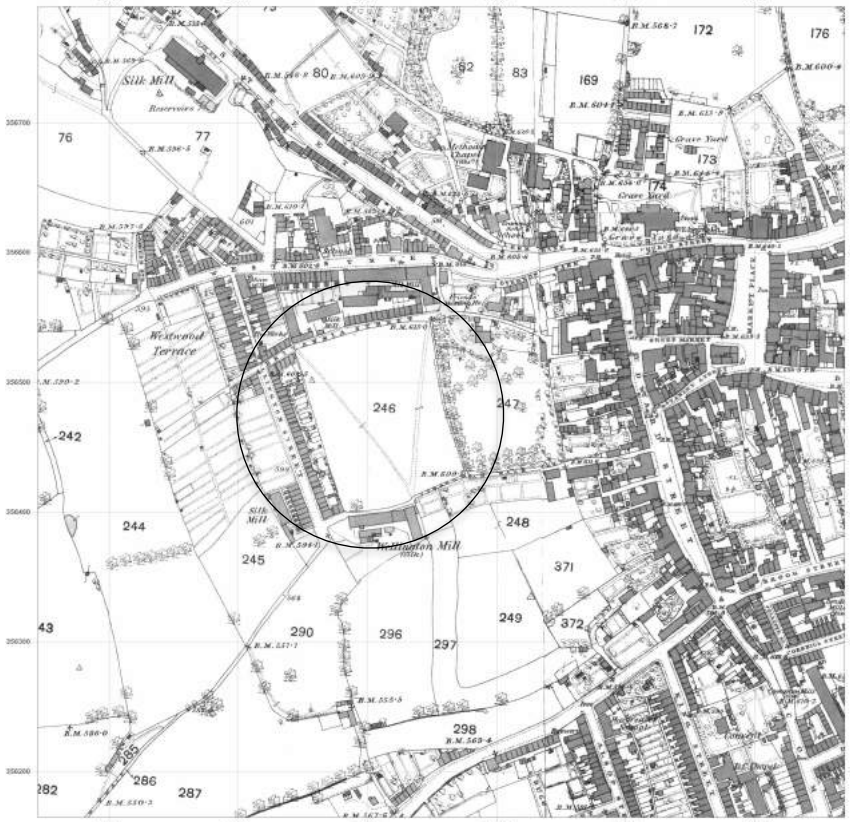
**STEPHEN BRADWELL, MA MRTPI IHBC**
**20 June 2017**

**Map 1:** Ordnance Survey Map c. 1879




Groundsure INSIGHTS

**Site Details:**

MILWARD HALL, SALISBURY STREET, LEEK, ST13 5EE

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**Grid Ref:** 398157, 356477

**Map Name:** County Series
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**Printed at:** 1:2,500

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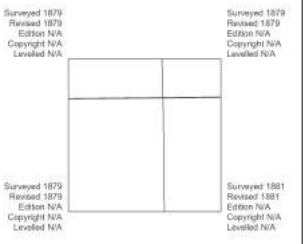


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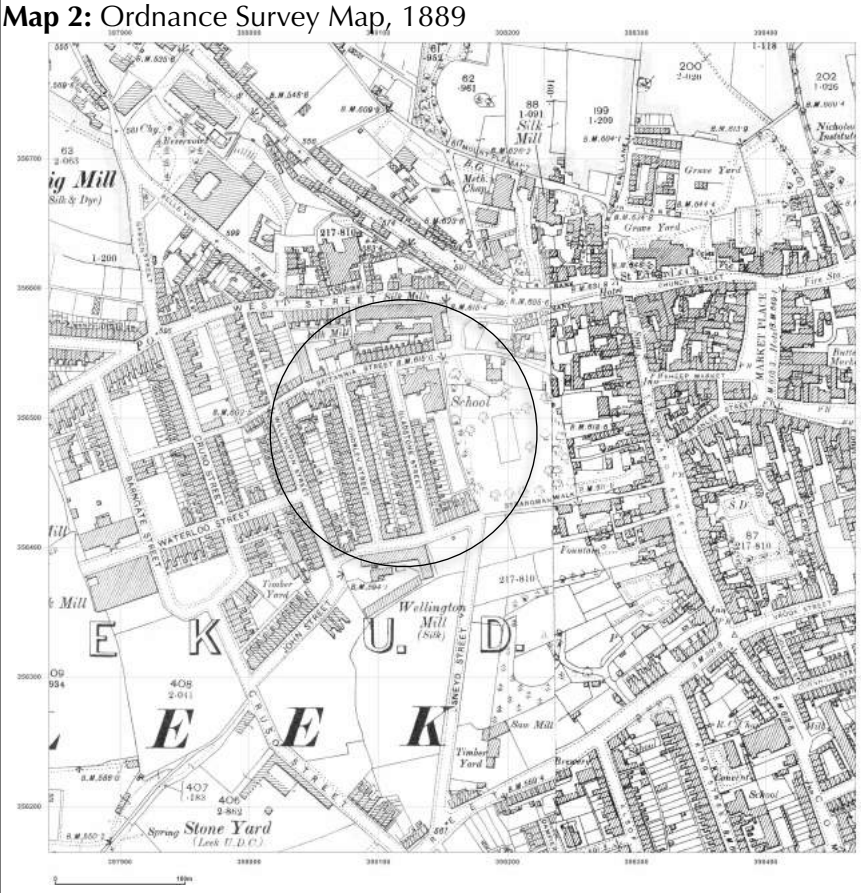
**Map 2:** Ordnance Survey Map, 1889

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**Site Details:**

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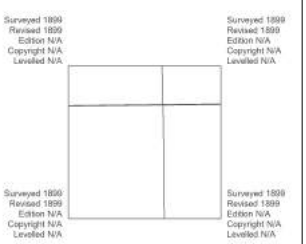


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**Map 3:** Ordnance Survey Map, 1925




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**Report Ref:** GS-3898696
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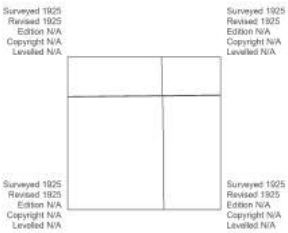


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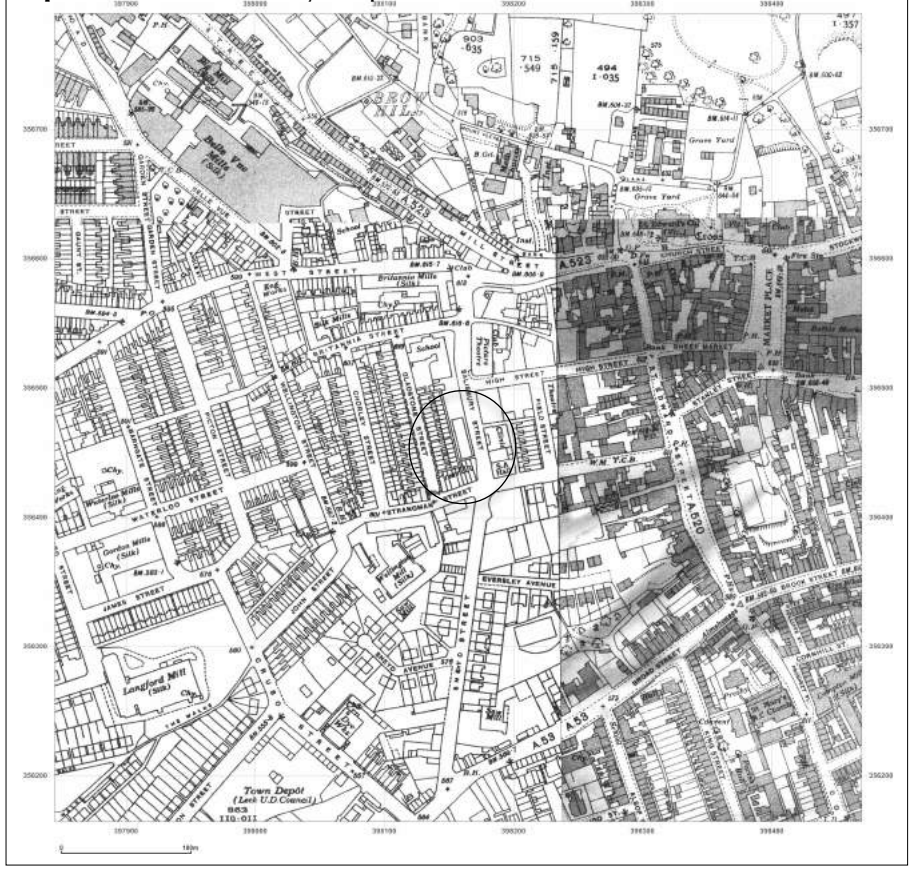
**Map 4:** Ordnance Survey Map, 1937

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**Site Details:**

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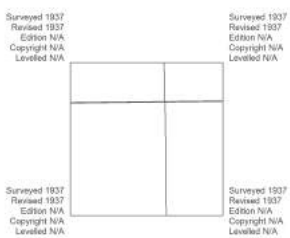


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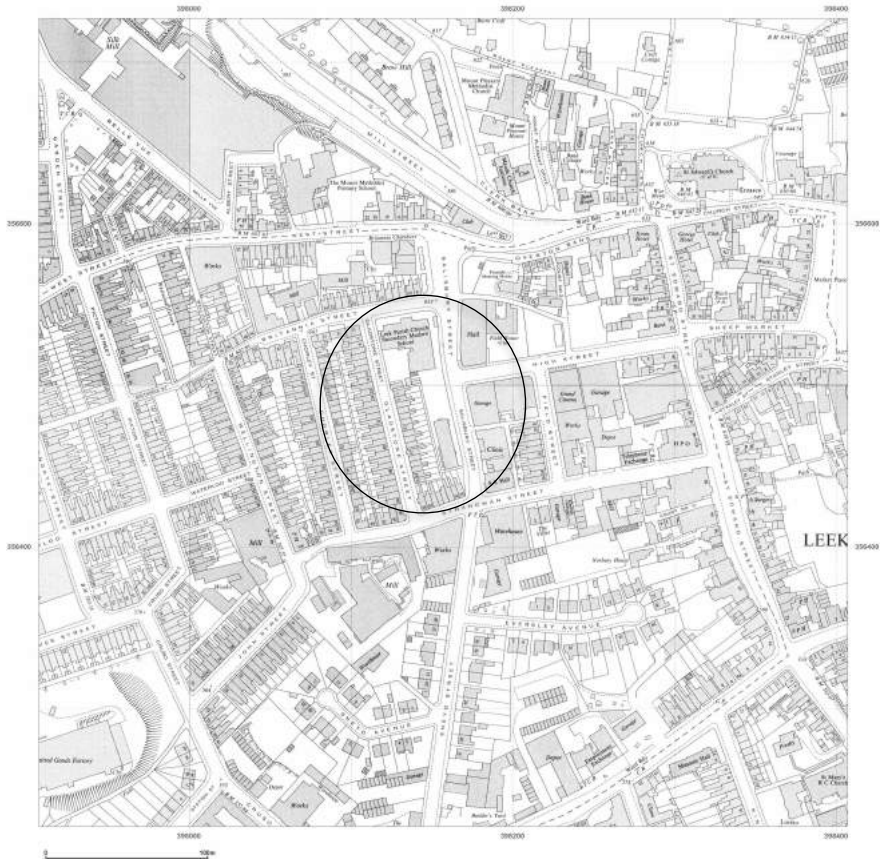
**Map 5:** Ordnance Survey Map, 1965

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**Site Details:**

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**Report Ref:** GS-3898696
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**Map Name:** National Grid
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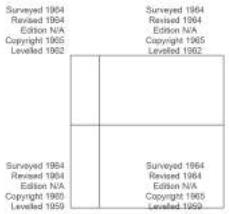


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**Map 6:** Ordnance Survey Map, 1974




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**Photo 1:** Front elevation of Milward Hall to Salisbury Street




**Photo 2:** View south along Salisbury Street showing relationship of Milward Hall to the former school buildings



**Photo 3:** View south along Salisbury Street to gable wall to be extended






**Photo 4:** View of north facing gable to be extended



**Photo 5:** View of Milward Hall toking north along Salisbury Street




**Photo 6:** View of existing car park and boundary wall to Salisbury Street



**Photo 7:** View of Milward Hall from Gladstone Street with former school buildings in the foreground



**Photo 8:** View of Milward Hall through gap in terraced houses on Gladstone Street



**Photo 9:** View of large hall on first floor of Milward Hall