

HARDMAN HOUSE 11-33 HARDMAN STREET LIVERPOOL

CONSERVATION STATEMENT



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**PETER DE FIGUEIREDO Dip Arch MA (Urban Design) RIBA IHBC
HISTORIC BUILDINGS ADVISER**

**1 Ingestre Road, Oxton, Wirral CH43 5TZ
T: 0151 652 1027 M: 0771 7291947
E: peter@defigueiredo.co.uk W: www.defigueiredo.co.uk**

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Hardman House occupies a substantial plot of land at the corner of Hardman Street and South Hunter Street. It borders Back Maryland Street on the north side and is adjoined on the west side by the 'Fly in the Loaf', formerly Kirkland's Bakery.
- 1.2 In 1815-16 St Philip's Church was built on the site and is recorded in plan form on the OS map of 1848. It was one of three churches in Liverpool designed by Thomas Rickman and constructed by John Cragg, proprietor of the Mersey Iron Foundry, in which cast iron was used in new ways. The church was closed in 1882 and sold by auction to the Salvation Army. The site including the churchyard which surrounded the building was developed 1882-84, and has since had a number of uses.
- 1.3 Hardman House, which is in poor condition, is currently vacant and for sale. Preliminary consultations between the prospective purchaser and Liverpool City Council have suggested that a substantial part of the structure of the original church survives within the existing building, making it a unique heritage asset within the city, and that any planning application for the site should address matters set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) concerning conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.
- 1.4 Accordingly, this document provides a historical and architectural analysis of the existing building, and an assessment of its heritage significance so as to inform the process of design development. Its contribution to the significance of the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area, within which it is situated, is also considered.

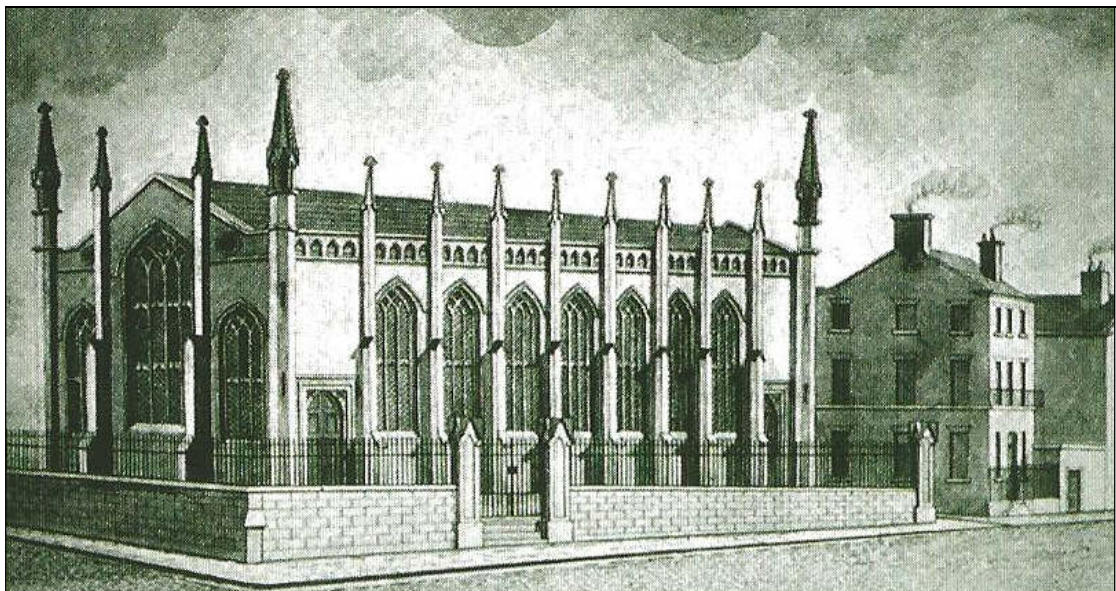


St Philip's Church, Hardman Street, OS map 1848

2 HISTORY OF HARDMAN HOUSE

Development of St Philip's Church

- 2.1 In the late 18th and early 19th century, development moved out of the port and commercial centre of Liverpool to the higher ground overlooking the River Mersey. Rodney Street was laid out in 1783-84 by William Roscoe and others, and was developed piecemeal until the 1820 with large houses for wealthy residents. Development of Upper Duke Street, Mount Street, Hardman Street, Maryland Street and Hope Street followed. Hardman Street took its name from the Hardman family who owned land in the area and had made money from the slave trade.¹
- 2.2 St Philip's Church was erected in 1815-16 to serve the new residents of the area. It was set back from the street line and surrounded by a small churchyard, bounded by a low stone wall with railings.



St Philip's Church, watercolour of c.1830

- 2.3 The church was erected by John Cragg (1767-1854), owner of the Mersey Iron Foundry in Tithebarn Street, and was one of three churches that he built in Liverpool to the design of Thomas Rickman. Cragg was born in Warrington in 1767 and is recorded as living at 1 St James Walk in 1805. His epitaph (he was buried in St James's cemetery) records 'He had a hobby for church building and introduced cast iron very largely into the construction of his churches'.²
- 2.4 Cragg's interest in church building is recorded from 1809, in which year he engaged the architect Joseph Gandy, who was in Liverpool for a brief period, to work with him on developing a suitable design for a church in Toxteth Park using iron prefabrication. In the same year he registered a patent for a new building technique involving cast iron structural roofing combined with panels of slate, which could be manufactured in Liverpool and exported for erection in the colonies.

¹ Gail Cameron and Stan Crooke, *Liverpool, Capital of the Slave Trade*, 1993

² www.ironchurch.weebly.com/architecture.html

- 2.5 The Toxteth Park church was never built, but In 1812 Cragg was appointed to build a church in Everton, investing £600 in shares for the project and being elected to the building committee. The church was erected in 1813-1814 with Rickman as architect.
- 2.6 Rickman (1776-1841) was born in Maidenhead and brought up as a Quaker. He came to Liverpool after an early business failure, working as a clerk in a mercantile office, and became interested in architecture. His opportunity came in 1812 when he met Cragg and together they built St George's, Everton, introducing cast iron for window tracery, buttress pinnacles (since removed) and the columns and roof trusses internally.³ This was followed in 1814-15 by the Church of St Michael-in-the-Hamlet, Aigburth, where the constructional techniques were more fully developed, reflecting a second patent that he had registered in 1813.⁴
- 2.7 This second patent was for 'Facing walls of Gothic or other structures with slates, secured by mouldings, grooves, and types of cast iron, so as to have [when sanded] the appearance of finely wrought stonework; also ceilings of the same materials; capping buttresses in Gothic architecture with pinnacles of cast iron; spiral-stair of cast iron for the interior of a tower, wall or turret'.⁵ It was illustrated with drawings of St Michael's, together with a description of how the intricacies of Gothic architecture could be easily replicated through casting. Since iron was light weight and durable, he was able to promote it as a cost effective alternative to stone. St Philip was the third church, built in 1815-16.



St George's Church, Everton, exterior and interior

- 2.8 Rickman had mixed feelings about the aesthetic qualities of the churches and wrote that 'His [Cragg's] ironwork is too stiff in his head to bend to any beauty'.⁶

³ Sarah Brown and Peter de Figueiredo, *Religion and Place: Liverpool's historic places of worship*, 2008

⁴ Patent No. 3761; Repository of Arts and Manufactures, 1825, p.75 The patent was noted in Germany by Dingler's Polytechnische Journal, 1825, p. 262

⁵ Turpin Bannister, 'The First Iron-Framed Buildings, *Architectural Review*, April, 1950, pp. 245-246

⁶ Thomas Miller Rickman (Rickman's son), *Notes on the Life of Thomas Rickman FSA*, quoted in Bannister *op cit*



St Michael-in-the-Hamlet, Toxteth, exterior and interior

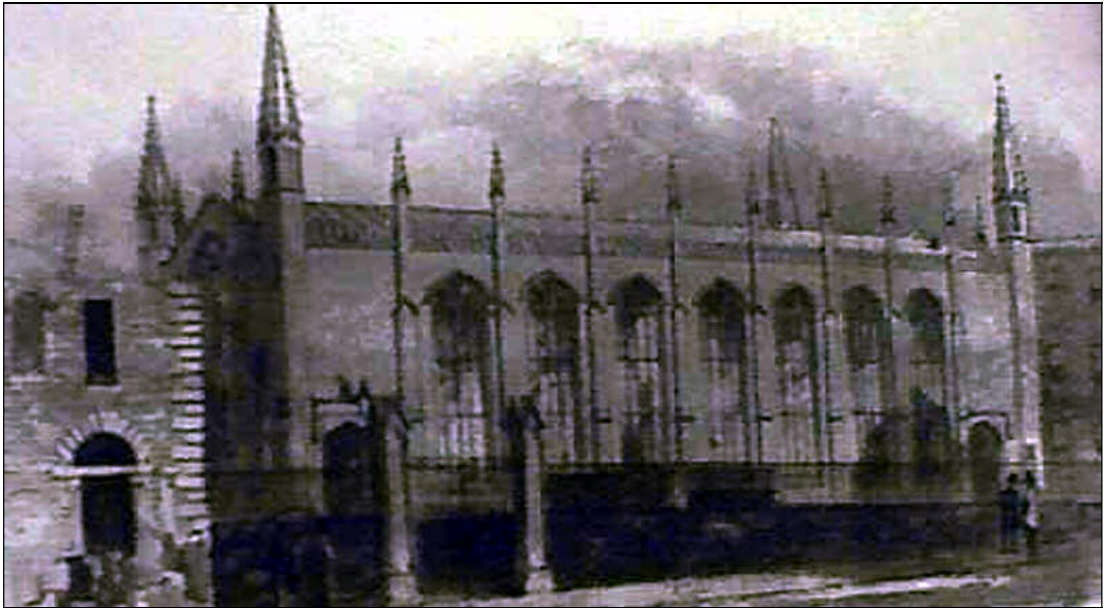
- 2.9 In 1817 Rickman opened an office in Liverpool and won the commission to build St Mary's Church, Birkenhead, alongside Birkenhead Priory. He went on to form a large ecclesiastical practice, and established a second office in Birmingham. He was a pioneer in the development of the Gothic Revival, and is well-known for his publication *An Attempt to discriminate the styles of English Architecture from the Conquest to the Reformation* (1817), which was the first systematic attempt to distinguish the various phases of Gothic architecture. His terms – Norman, Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular – remain in use today.

Description of St Philip's Church

- 2.10 St Philip's had a rectangular plan with a shallow chancel at the east end, flanked by small vestries. There were nine bays to Hardman Street, of which seven contained tall Gothic windows and the two outer ones had doors. Each of the bays was separated by a buttress with a finial. The west end was lit by a large central window, flanked two smaller windows. The church was described (somewhat disparagingly) by the architect James Picton in 1873 as follows:

Ascending the street [Hardman Street], the first object which strikes the eye is St Philip's Church, a Gothic building of rather peculiar structure. It was erected in 1816 by Mr John Cragg, at an expense of 12,000l. The material is brick, covered with a thin coat of compo, which scarcely hides the joints of the brickwork. The windows are of the depressed Tudor arch form, with slender cast iron tracery. Hollow octagonal turrets are carried up at the angles, crowned with spirets, ornamented with cast-iron crockets. The absence of any central or aspiring feature to carry the eye upwards is the great defect in the external design of this building, which is a sort of feeble imitation of King's College Chapel, Cambridge.⁷

⁷ J A Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool*, volume 2, 1873



St Philip's Church, drawing of c.1860, showing demolition of a house on the adjoining plot

- 2.11 Reading Picton's description, and looking at the two extant drawings of the building, reproduced in this report, it is recorded that the church was built of brick with a thin render coat to simulate stone, and that cast iron was used externally for the windows and hood moulds, the 'spirets' or finials, and possibly the pierced parapet. The roof, which formed a continuous pitch for the full length, was likely to have been slated. The gate piers, gates and railings would have been cast iron. No record of the interior has been found, but on the evidence of the 1848 map and taking account of the layout of St George and St Michael, it is likely that the church had north and south galleries supported on cast iron columns that continued up to support iron roof trusses. The plan show a pair of spiral staircases within the western bay of the north and south aisles, which would be given access to the galleries.
- 2.12 Picton describes St Philip's as a feeble imitation of King's College, Cambridge, and if Rickman intended any such likeness, it is hard to disagree with Picton's comparison. Yet in spite of Rickman's considerable knowledge of medieval architecture, he did not adopt an archaeological approach as did the later Gothic Revival architects. His churches continued to follow the standard preaching box plan and he was not driven by the zeal of A W N Pugin and the ecclesiologists in their desire to restore what they saw as traditional Christian values through their revival of 'true' Gothic architecture.



King's College Chapel, Cambridge

Later History of the Building

- 2.13 St Philip's was built to accommodate 1,200 people, and measured 120 feet by 53 feet externally.⁸ At first it appears to have been successful, but as other churches came to be built in the surrounding area, including St Luke, Bold Place (1811-31); St Michael, Upper Pitt Street (1816-1826); St Bride, Percy Street, 1829-30; St Catherine's, Abercromby Square (1829-31); and St Mary, the Church for the Blind, Hardman Street (1849-50), attendance at St Philip's declined.
- 2.14 173 burials are recorded in the churchyard, of which 143 took place before 1850. After this, the numbers declined, with the last interment taking place in 1876.⁹
- 2.15 In 1882 the church was closed, and the remaining congregation was temporarily re-established in Princes Avenue, before moving to a new church of St Philip in Sheil Road in 1890.¹⁰ The organ, pulpit, lectern, altar and much of the stained glass were moved from the old church.¹¹ The 1890 church in Sheil Road was in turn demolished in 1973 and replaced by a worship centre.
- 2.16 Following the closure of the Hardman Street church, on 25 July 1882 the site was sold by auction to the Salvation Army.¹² With the church left standing, the churchyard was developed on all four sides, thus enclosing the old building which was thereafter hidden from view. This arrangement can be seen on the 1909 and 1927 OS maps. In 1884 the former church was in use as a Salvation Army Barracks, and a number of traders had moved into the new premises fronting Hardman Street, including a homeopathic dispensary, a boot and shoe manufacturer, a music seller, a farm and dairy depot, an India rubber depot, a family wool repository, a commission agent and a confectioner.¹³
- 2.17 In 1892 the Salvation Army Barracks became the Liverpool Assembly Rooms, in which use it remained until 1921, when it became a Christian Science Church. In 1931 it was re-named the Second Church of Christ Scientist, and by 1941 it had become vacant. By 1949 it had been adapted by the Apostleship of the Sea, a Roman Catholic charity concerned with seamen's welfare, in whose guardianship it remained until at least 1970, when the Kelly Directories ceased to record the occupiers of premises in Liverpool.¹⁴ Since that time the building has been used as a dance hall, bars and clubs. Retailing, restaurants and take-away outlets have continued to trade on the ground floor until recently when the whole building has become wholly vacant.

⁸ Kelly Directory 1882.

⁹ Liverpool Church of England Graveyards, <http://www.liverpoolhistoryprojects.co.uk/deathinthepooloflife/graveyards/STPHILIP>

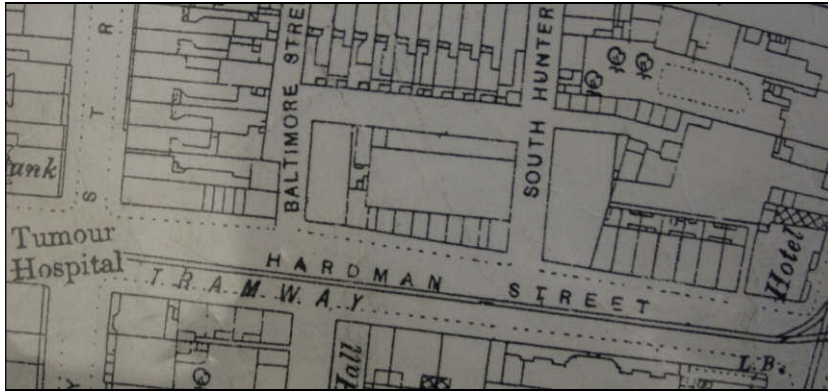
¹⁰ Kelly Directory 1883

¹¹ David Lewis, *The Churches of Liverpool*, 2001

¹² www.liverpoolhistoryprojects.co.uk

¹³ Kelly Directory 1884

¹⁴ Kelly Directories 1892, 1900, 1910, 1921, 1931, 1941, 1949, 1952, 1964, 1970



Hardman House, OS map 1909



Hardman House, OS map 1927

3 ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS OF HARDMAN HOUSE

- 3.1 In a report of 2011 prepared by Wendy Morgan of Liverpool City Council Planning Service, it was suggested that a high degree of surviving fabric of the original church remains within Hardman House. Architectural historical and structural analyses have been carried to investigate what remains of the church, and how the building was adapted following its closure in 1882. This is described below. The structural report by Connell Consulting Engineers is attached as an appendix to this report.
- 3.2 The development that was wrapped around the church in 1882 was three storeys high plus a basement. It provided a line of small shop units facing Hardman Street, possibly with living accommodation above for shopkeepers. The floor levels step down at intervals, following the slope of the street. The accommodation fronting South Hunter Street and Back Maryland Street appears to have been part of the Salvation Army Barracks which occupied the former church building, and later the Assembly Rooms and Christian Science Church.
- 3.3 The front elevation is faced in red pressed brick, with band courses of ornamental bricks and moulded brick architraves to the windows. A stone oriel window, possibly re-used from another building, is incorporated at first floor level at the corner with South Hunter Street. Each of the units had an arched doorway opening onto Hardman Street with a shopfront, but most have been altered or removed. The side and rear elevations are of pressed brick with common brick panels, and the windows are of simpler design with segmental arches. Three gabled roofs covered in blue slate extend the length of the building to South Hunter Street with valleys between.



View from Hardman Street



View from Hardman Street looking north west View from South Hunter Street looking south west

- 3.4 The two westernmost bays have been rebuilt since World War II at both the front and rear of the building. The rebuilt section of the front elevation is in a simplified style, reusing some original brickwork, but without the moulded specials. The rear elevation to Back Maryland Street is rebuilt with a flat roof and horizontal windows.



Rebuilt frontage to Hardman Street



Rebuilt rear facade

- 3.5 The interior of the building has been greatly altered at all three levels. By examining the current building fabric, together with the measured survey and the 19th century drawings of the church, it is possible to deduce what potentially remains of the original outer walls. This is shown in red on the survey plans below.



Existing ground floor plan showing possible sections of original walls



Existing first floor plan showing possible sections of original wall



Existing second floor plan showing possible sections of original wall

- 3.6 It is possible that more remains at basement level, but this cannot be determined with any accuracy, since the extent of the basements is not clear, and many areas appear to have been infilled. Nor is it known whether the church originally had a basement. The existing basement survey is reproduced below.



Existing basement plan

- 3.7 It is known that the original walls of the church were built of brick, and were faced in a thin render externally. The walls shown in red on the plans are of brick, but have been coated with a thick layer of plaster, so the original finish cannot be seen, except where it has been opened up. None of the external buttresses or the corner turrets remain. The spiral staircases have been removed, and no cast iron columns survive within the building.
- 3.8 The existing roof trusses have been examined in detail, and two forms exist, each of a differing pitch. The main part of the roof is of a steeper pitch and consists of a series of Queen Post timber trusses of late 19th century form and design. These span the full width of the original church, without intermediate supports. The east end of the roof has timber trusses of a shallower pitch, incorporating steel tie bars. The latter are either late 19th century or early 20th century in form, and also span the full width. The roof covering of slate is underlined with black painted MDF boarding (which superficially has the appearance of slate).
- 3.9 The east gable wall has been largely removed. The west gable, however, survives to a much greater extent. An open light well exists outside what was the main west window of the church, which can be seen in outline, although the cast iron tracery has been removed and infilled in brick. Two lancet windows, which subsequently replaced the iron window have also been removed and blocked up. The cast iron Tudor-arched hood mould is the only feature that remains of the original window.



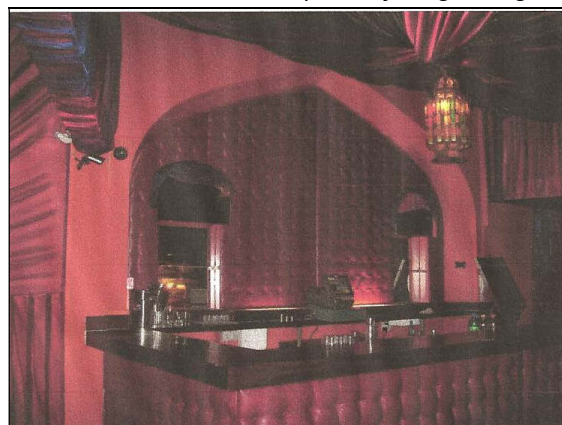
Timber roof trusses



Modern plaster facing to original walls of church



Original gable wall showing outline of west window and cast iron hood mould



Outline of west window seen from inside

- 3.10 The head of the west window can also be seen from inside the building at second floor level. This was latterly expressed as a bar fitting and was lined in a quilted pvc wall covering.
- 3.11 At ground level, a section of cast iron tracery has been installed within a modern opening in what was part of the south nave wall of the church. This appears to have been made up of different pieces of the west window and consists of six lights with trefoil heads and a sill. Apart from the hood mould over the blocked west window opening, it is the only cast iron feature of St Philip's Church that remains on the site.

4 INTERPRETATION OF ALTERATIONS

- 4.1 As described in Section 2, the users of the building and the dates associated with changes of use are known from Directories. These can be considered along with the evidence presented by the existing building fabric to draw some conclusions about the sequence of alterations.
- 4.2 The analysis in Section 3 shows that little remains of the original fabric, apart from two cast iron elements, an *in situ* hood mould and an element of *ex situ* made up window tracery, together with various sections of brick external walling, now largely coated in plaster, and without any decorative embellishment or special features.
- 4.3 The conversion of the building from a church to a Salvation Army Barracks in 1882-84 probably necessitated the removal of the internal cast iron columns, galleries and spiral staircases to create a large open space suitable for activities, as well as for meetings and functions. This would have led to re-roofing, and the form of the timber trusses now found within the building can be dated to the late 19th century.
- 4.4 The construction of the three storey perimeter range on the churchyard would have led to the removal of the parapet, the turrets and buttresses together with their cast iron finials, and the removal of all the cast iron windows. It is unclear how the Barracks would have been lit, except by a combination of the light well outside the west window and perhaps from roof lights, but when the building was later used as Assembly Rooms, natural lighting would not have been needed. It is possible that the west window was removed and bricked up at this time. The introduction of the two lancets may have been made when the building was converted back to a church for the Christian Scientists. The later use of the building for bars and clubs again did not need natural light, and these were then in turn blocked up.
- 4.5 The internal conversion of the building is confusing and less easy to interpret. The use of the church for Barracks, Assembly Rooms, Christian Science Church and Catholic Mission, would all have required a large open and flexible space. It is possible that some of these uses, in particular the Salvation Army Barracks and the Apostleship of the Sea involved shelter and temporary residential accommodation. This is reflected in the layout of small rooms around the north and west sides of the church, with windows looking out over South Hunter Street and Back Maryland

Street. The final leisure uses involved a mix of medium size areas for drinking and dancing, together with service spaces. It is clear that much of the building, particularly at the upper level was not used in recent years. Many of the alterations at ground and first floor levels appear to be recent and therefore associated with the leisure phase. However, it seems apparent that the major alterations to the church were made, along with the development of the churchyard in 1882-84, when St Philip's was closed and the use of the building changed for the first time.

5 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.1 The three cast iron churches erected by Cragg in Liverpool mark an extraordinary episode in church building, and are chiefly remarkable for their pioneering use of cast iron. Although cast iron was first used within a Liverpool church in 1772 at St Anne's Church to support the galleries, its development by Cragg as a prefabricated system was unprecedented. That it was used to promote the Gothic style is also of interest, as is the association with Rickman, whose scholarly understanding of Gothic was ahead of his time. How far Rickman influenced the appearance of the churches, however, is less clear, and his remark about Cragg's ironwork being too 'stiff in his head to bend to any beauty' suggests that Rickman was unhappy with the result.
- 5.2 57 church commissions are recorded in Colvin, of which 19 have been demolished.¹⁵ Of those that survive, three are listed at Grade I – St George, Everton, St Michael-in-the-Hamlet, and St Peter ad Vincula, Hampton Lucy, Warwickshire (1822-26). Five are listed Grade II* – St George, Chorley (1822-25), St Andrew, Ombersley, Worcestershire (1825-29), St John the Evangelist, Leeds (1827-29), All Saints, Stretton on Dunsmore, Warwickshire (1835-37) and St Martin, Horsley, Gloucestershire (1838-39). All the rest are listed Grade II.¹⁶
- 5.3 The significance of Rickman's Church of St Mary, Birkenhead, which adjoins the Priory and is listed Grade II, is seriously undermined by the demolition of the main body of the church in 1970. But the surviving tower and spire are a major landmark as well as retaining some elements of cast ironwork.
- 5.4 Much less survives at St Philip's. Were St Philip's to remain in its original state, it would probably be listed Grade II*. For although no impression of the interior survives to allow a definite judgement to be made, it is probably safe to say that the church would never have compared in terms either of innovation or aesthetic quality with St George or St Michael. What survives of St Philip's today, however, is so little that any significance it has is almost entirely historical. The only physical features of value are the fragmentary section of the west window (in a modern and inappropriate setting) and the *in situ* hood mould. These are features which would not lose what significance they have if they were removed and reset either on site or elsewhere.

¹⁵ Howard Colvin, *Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840*, 2008

¹⁶ Lloyd Evans Pritchard/AHP, *Birkenhead Priory: Conservation Management Plan*, 2011

- 5.5 Assessed against the methodology for assessment of cultural significance as set out in the English Heritage *Conservation Principles*, the following heritage values are identified:

Evidential Value:

- 5.6 The building was erected in 1815-16 by John Cragg with the input of the architect Thomas Rickman. It is one of three cast iron churches that Cragg built in Liverpool. Drawings show the appearance of the building and its plan can be roughly understood from the 1848 OS map. Before the erection of the church, the site had not previously been developed. Following the closure of the church in 1882, a series of changes of use, together with the development of the churchyard led to the total remodelling of the building.

Historic and Architectural Value:

- 5.7 The building is of historical interest for its associations with John Cragg, who pioneered the use of cast iron for church construction in the early 19th century, and with its architect Thomas Rickman, who was one of the most significant ecclesiastical architects and architectural writers of the time.
- 5.8 The existing building, however, is of very limited architectural interest because of the removal of almost all significant architectural features and the alterations that have left none of its original character intact or recognisable. Only two fragments of cast iron remain in the building, and one is *ex situ*.

Aesthetic Value:

- 5.9 The present character of Hardman House results from the extensions that were built to St Philip's Church in 1882-83, when the church was closed, and encased by development of the former churchyard. These extensions, which wrap around the former church, are architecturally inconsequential, and what character they have has been eroded by subsequent changes. These include the rebuilding of the two western bays and the crudely designed shopfronts that have been inserted on Hardman Street.
- 5.10 The aesthetic character of the building in its present state thus makes no positive contribution to the character of the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area.

Communal Value:

- 5.11 As a former church and a site of burials, Hardman House has communal value and interest, which should be recognised. This, however, is no longer manifested in the physical fabric of the building, which demeans its former uses and activities. The building stands in the Mount Pleasant Conservation Area, in a prime cultural and leisure quarter of the city, which is a source of local pride. The building currently detracts from the quality of the area, and in accordance with Policy 137 of the NPPF, potential refurbishment or redevelopment of the site may offer the opportunity to make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the conservation area, and enhance the character of the area.

6 RECORDING

- 6.1 A detailed photographic survey of the building should be undertaken for record purposes prior to commencement of any works on site. Copies of this should be lodged with the local archives centre, the local Historic Environment Record and the National Monuments Record.

7 INTERPRETATION

- 7.1 The history of St Philip's Church, and its place in the social and cultural history of the city are subjects of outstanding local interest. This would justify further research and the development of on-site interpretive displays and heritage education work.