

# **BUILDING SURVEY REPORT**

In respect of:

**Victoria Gardens  
Callington Road  
Saltash  
PL12 4DL**

carried out on behalf of:

**Saltash Town Council  
The Guildhall  
Lower Fore Street  
Saltash  
PL12 6JX**

**Prepared by:**

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March 2018

Saltash Town Council  
The Guildhall  
Lower Fore Street  
Saltash  
PL12 6JX

Dear Town Clerk

**RE: VICTORIA GARDENS, CALLINGTON ROAD, SALTASH**

**1.0 INSTRUCTIONS & SCOPE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 Instructions were received from you for an inspection of the Gardens and the survey was carried out on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018.
- 1.2 The weather on both days was dry and bright.
- 1.3 The report is confidential to the client and your professional advisors and therefore any liability to a third party is hereby disclaimed.

**1.4 Mining**

From records noted mining has not taken place in these areas.

**2.0 THE SITE**

Victoria Gardens is an ornamental garden area with selected trees, shrubs and other planting.

Within the Gardens there is the 'Maurice Huggins Room' which has been subject to a previous survey and therefore details of that building are not considered within this report.

There is also a monument and masonry 'bandstand' within the Gardens.

The Gardens are situated at the top of Fore Street, Saltash, and are bounded by Callington Road to the north and St Stephen's Road to the south, and by properties in Callington Road and St Stephen's Road to the west.

The site slopes up from Fore Street towards the western boundary but is relatively level between north and south boundaries.

### **3.0 DESCRIPTION OF PREMISES**

The masonry walls to the north and south of the site converge at the eastern corner of the Gardens at the top of Fore Street.

The boundary to the west is the masonry wall between Victoria Gardens and land belonging to nos 2 - 8 St Stephen's Road, and a masonry wall and bank between Victoria Gardens and Malvern House Residential Nursing Home also in St Stephen's Road. These sections of wall are approximately 2.0m high.

The walls forming the north and south boundaries to the Gardens are up to 1100mm in height and topped with a 950mm high decorative wrought iron balustrade. These walls are of random-coursed solid masonry with a mix of stone – primarily granite – and have either granite coping stones or cast in situ concrete copings.

The walls act as retaining walls to the Gardens with the ground level within the Gardens being close to the underside of the coping stones for the majority of the length of the walls. There is no evidence of weep-holes or drainage to permit water to drain from the Gardens and this will, no doubt, be contributing to the poor condition of mortar in places. However, the walls have been in place for more than 100 years and I see little point in expensive work excavating behind the walls to install form drainage and weep-holes at this time.

There are minor areas of pointing to various sections of the walls – see Appendix A – and these defects are encouraged by weed growth in the walls.

I recommend that weeds be removed, defective areas of pointing raked out and the masonry re-pointed with a lime-based mortar.

There are a number of areas where displacement of individual stones has taken place to masonry to the north boundary wall – see Appendix B.

This is most evidenced at the lower end of the north boundary where an *Araucaria Araucana* tree (commonly known as a 'Monkey Puzzle' tree) has been left to its own devices and has spread. These trees will grow to heights in excess of 12 metres with an 8 metre spread over a long period of time and it is likely that this particular specimen was planted when the Gardens were originally laid out.

The displacement will continue if the tree is to stay in-situ. To prevent further deterioration of the wall, without removal of the tree, I suggest stainless steel strapping of the wall.

There is evidence of settlement around the top gate off Callington Road and also some minor damage to the dwarf masonry walls leading towards the Maurice Huggins Room – see Appendix B. These areas require some very minor reconstruction work.

Coping stones, particularly to the south elevation, are poorly pointed and are misaligned in places. Most of the trees have been removed from this boundary but there are a number of mature shrubs that will be contributing to this damage. I recommend that coping stones be realigned, where possible, and defective joints re-pointed, again in lime based mortar.

Towards the upper end of the south boundary the wall is out of plumb with the wall leaning towards the footpath by up to 5 degrees over the height of the wall - see appendix B. This movement has occurred over a long period of time and cannot be prevented from continuing unless the back of the wall is excavated, pressure removed, and the wall taken down and rebuilt incorporating drainage and weep holes. I do not, however, consider this to be a priority at this time especially as masonry is in sound condition but regular monitoring is advised and should the wall deteriorate or become unstable rebuilding will have to be considered.

The wall forming the west boundary of the Gardens is of random-coursed solid masonry – likely to be from a local quarry.

The section of wall between Victoria Gardens and no 2 St Stephen's Road – see Appendix C – is covered in ivy and other vegetation and can only be seen clearly from the private garden to no. 2 St Stephen's Road. This is, in effect, a party structure between the Gardens and no. 2 St Stephen's Road. From the limited inspection possible the wall appears sound. There follows a length of hedge approximately 2m- 3m in front of the wall comprising a mix of shrubs but primarily *Salix*, *Bay*, *Blackthorn* and *Ivy* see appendix D

The wall then turns approximately 90 degrees and runs along behind properties numbered 2 - 8 St Stephen's Road and, as with the aforementioned mentioned length of wall is a party structure between the Gardens and nos 2 - 8 St Stephen's Road. For the majority of the length of the wall there is a tall hedgerow as before - comprising a mix of shrubs but primarily *Salix*, *Bay*, *Blackthorn* and *Ivy* (appendix D) – this restricts the possibility of accurate inspection but it is assumed that the owners of 2 - 8 St Stephen's Road will be monitoring the condition of the wall and will have raised any problems with Cornwall Council at a previous time should they consider the wall to require repair. It would be advisable for your legal people to check with Cornwall Council - the current owners of Victoria Gardens - whether there have been requests from persons with an interest in these sections of wall regarding repairs.

Behind the Gardens to no. 8 St Stephen's Road the wall is exposed for inspection and is part rendered. There is evidence of a former lean-to

building against this wall and the wall to Malvern House. There is loose masonry and this should be re-pointed.

From the rear of no. 8 St Stephen's Road the wall then turns another 90 degrees and becomes a party structure between Victoria Gardens and Malvern House. This is also of random-coursed solid masonry and forms a retaining wall for Victoria Gardens. Behind the Maurice Huggins Room the wall is hidden by hedgerow, similar to that on other boundaries, but the masonry is exposed to the north of the Maurice Huggins Room as far as the north boundary to the Gardens.

Here the wall is generally poor with loose stones and copings and I recommend all loose stones and copings be removed and parts of the wall be rebuilt to match the existing.

#### **4.0 BALUSTRADE & ENTRANCE GATES**

On the top of the north and south boundary walls is a 'bow topped' wrought iron railing – generally in sound condition although paintwork is beginning to deteriorate and this will lead to corrosion of the metalwork.

I recommend a complete preparation and redecoration of the balustrade.

There are, however, some parts of the balustrade where severe corrosion has taken place and repairs/replacement are required – see positions on Appendix E.

The lower gate on the north elevation does not operate and the lower hinge should be replaced to match that of the gates facing onto Fore Street.

The upper gate to the north elevation is slightly misaligned and some adjustment to the hinge/post is required so as to correct closing and locking.

Remaining entrance gates all require some minor adjustment. The decorative condition is the same as the railings and I recommend a full preparation and redecoration of all areas.

#### **5.0 PATHS, ETC**

There are granite steps above the monument and these areas are in acceptable condition.

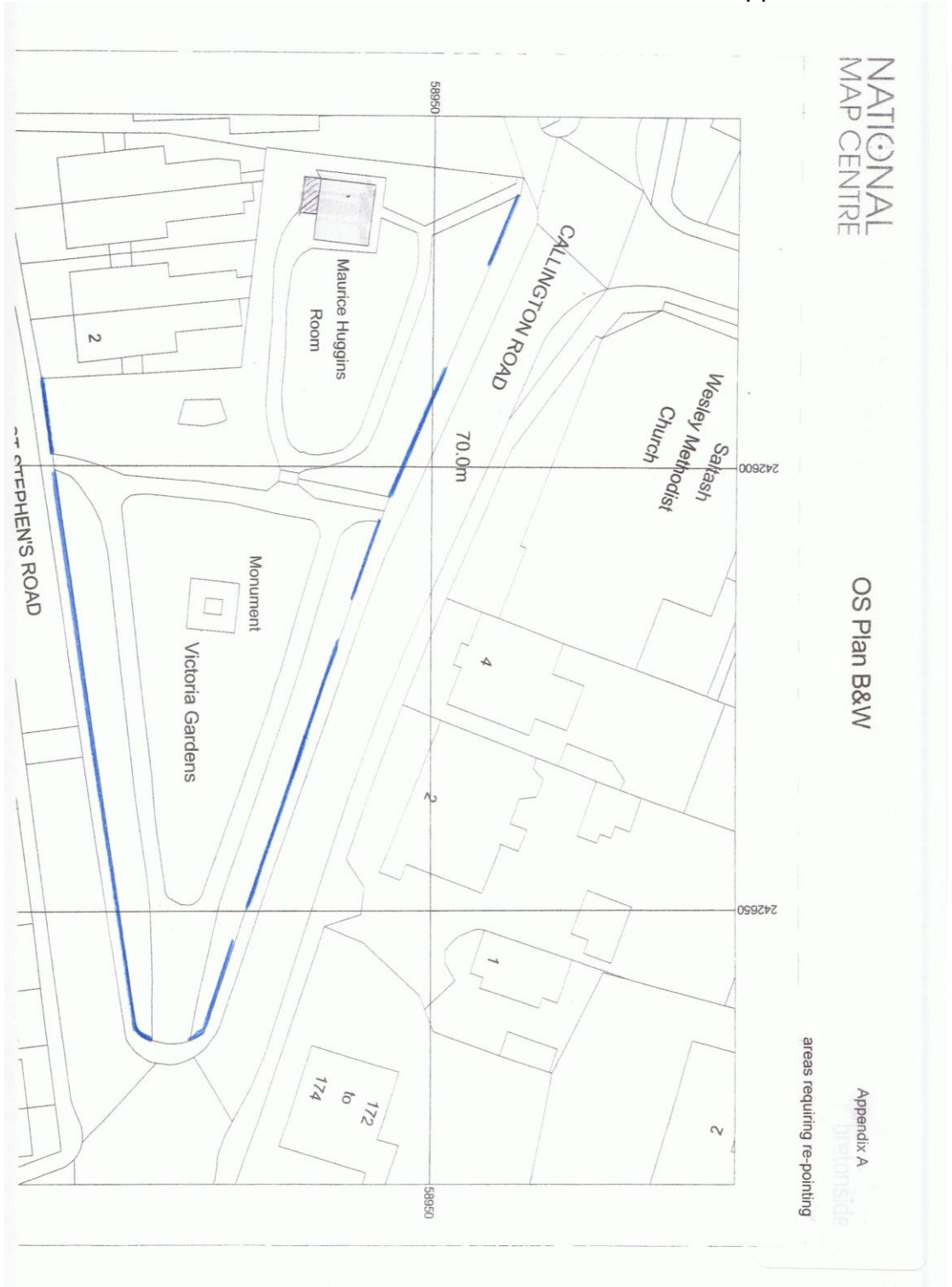
The monument itself requires some minor re-pointing to the stones forming the plinth to the monument.

The masonry wall forming the bandstand requires some minor re-pointing work, but is generally in acceptable condition.

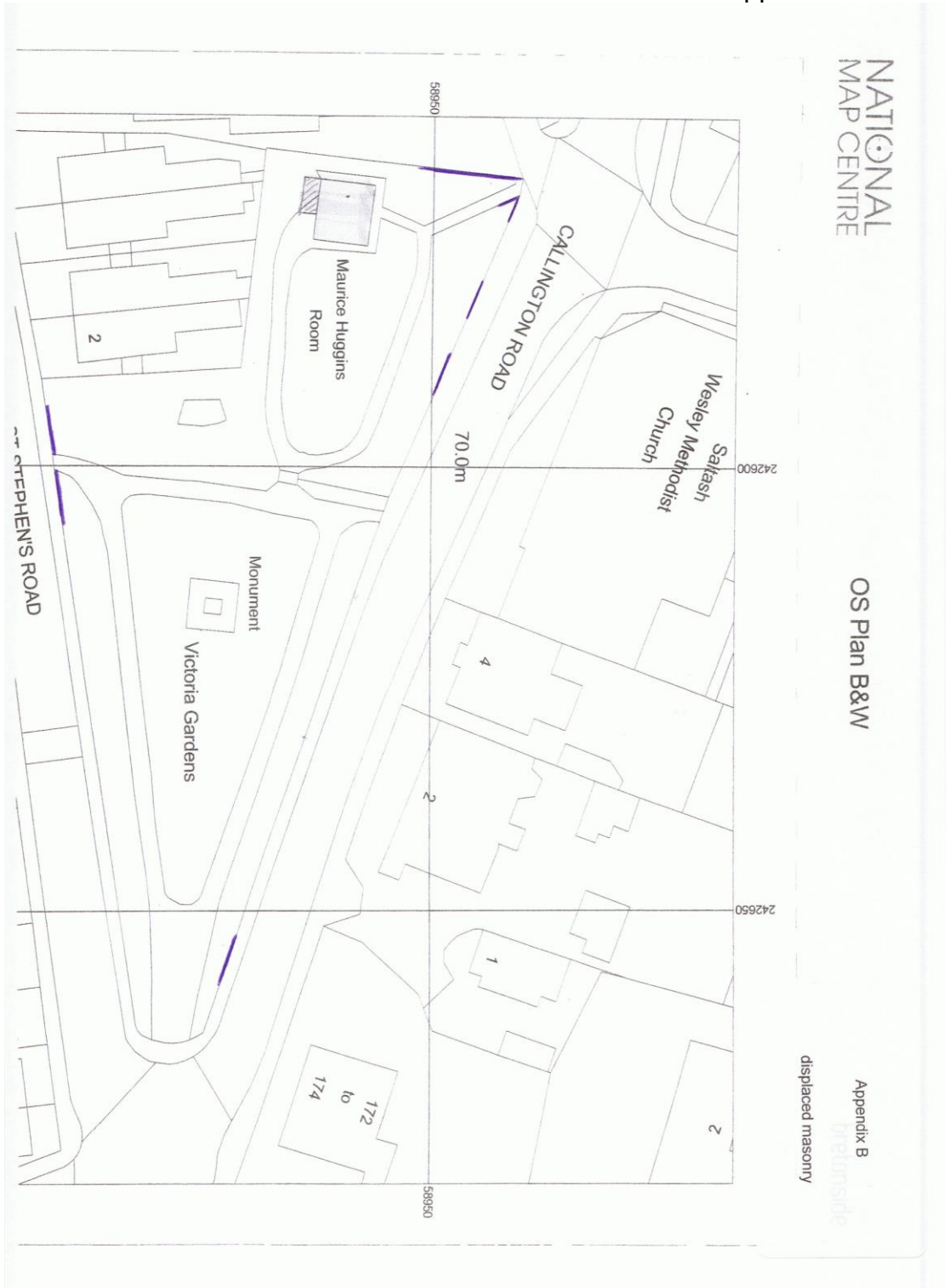
Hedgerows appear to have been recently trimmed and pruned and the gardens generally appear in acceptable condition for the time of year. Similarly, bench seats appear in acceptable condition.

Pathways are primarily finished with tarmac, although there are some minor areas of concrete, and generally are in reasonable condition. Exceptions are shown on Appendix F and these areas have been damaged because of tree roots. These areas require taking up and relaying.

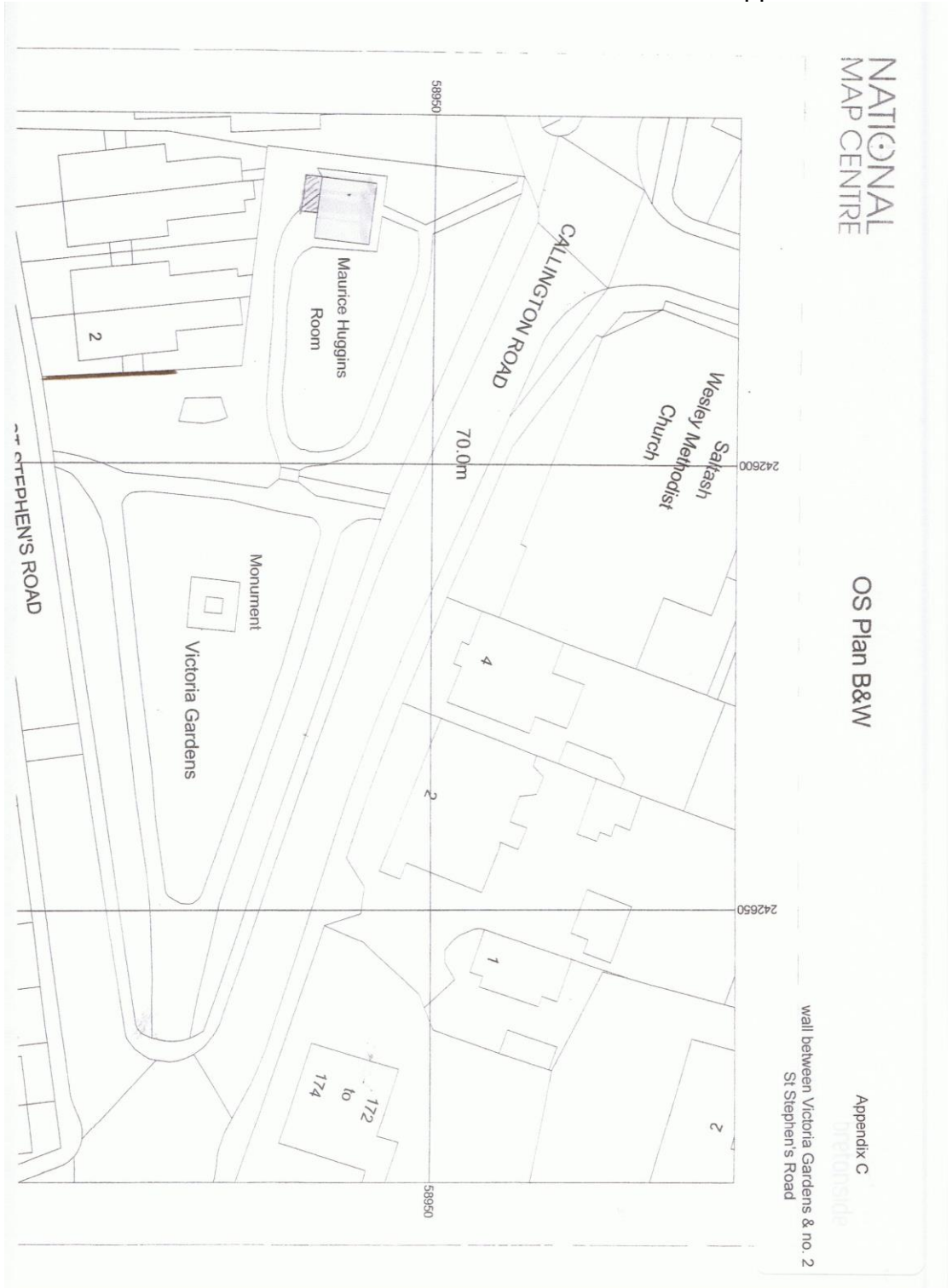
appendix A



appendix B

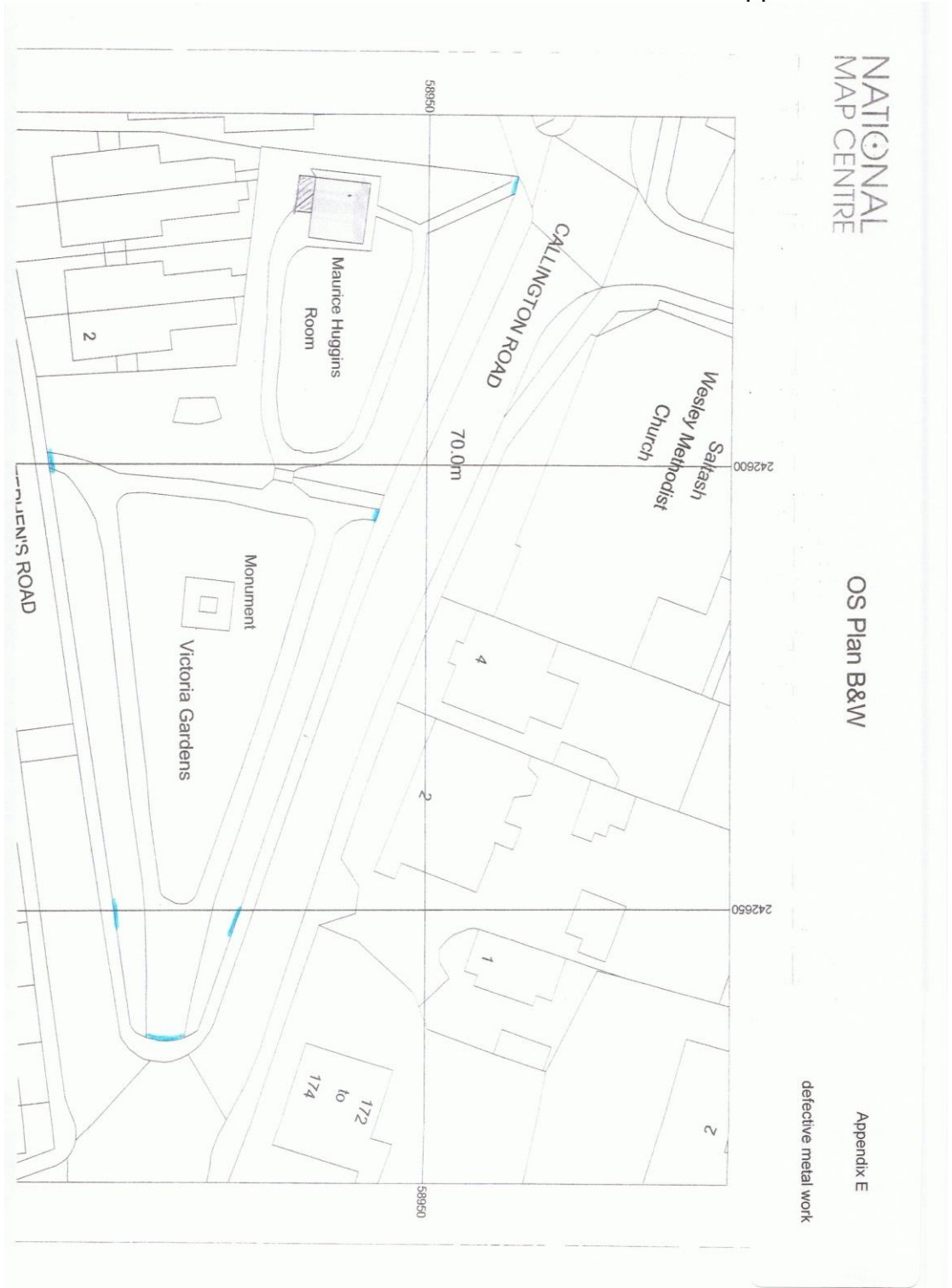








appendix E



appendix F





example of weed growth & defective pointing



example of weed growth & defective pointing



example of corrosion to metal railings



displaced masonry adjacent to *Araucaria Araucana* tree



corrosion to east gate



corroded newel post on southern boundary



railing and wall leaning into St Stephen's Road



wall between Victoria Gardens and Malvern House



settlement of wall adjacent to higher Callington Road entrance



displaced tarmac adjacent to *Araucaria Araucana* tree



displaced tarmac adjacent to fir tree