

Note: Pew history extracted from the *Historic Building Assessment* prepared by GHK

[North Aisle - Mid19C.]

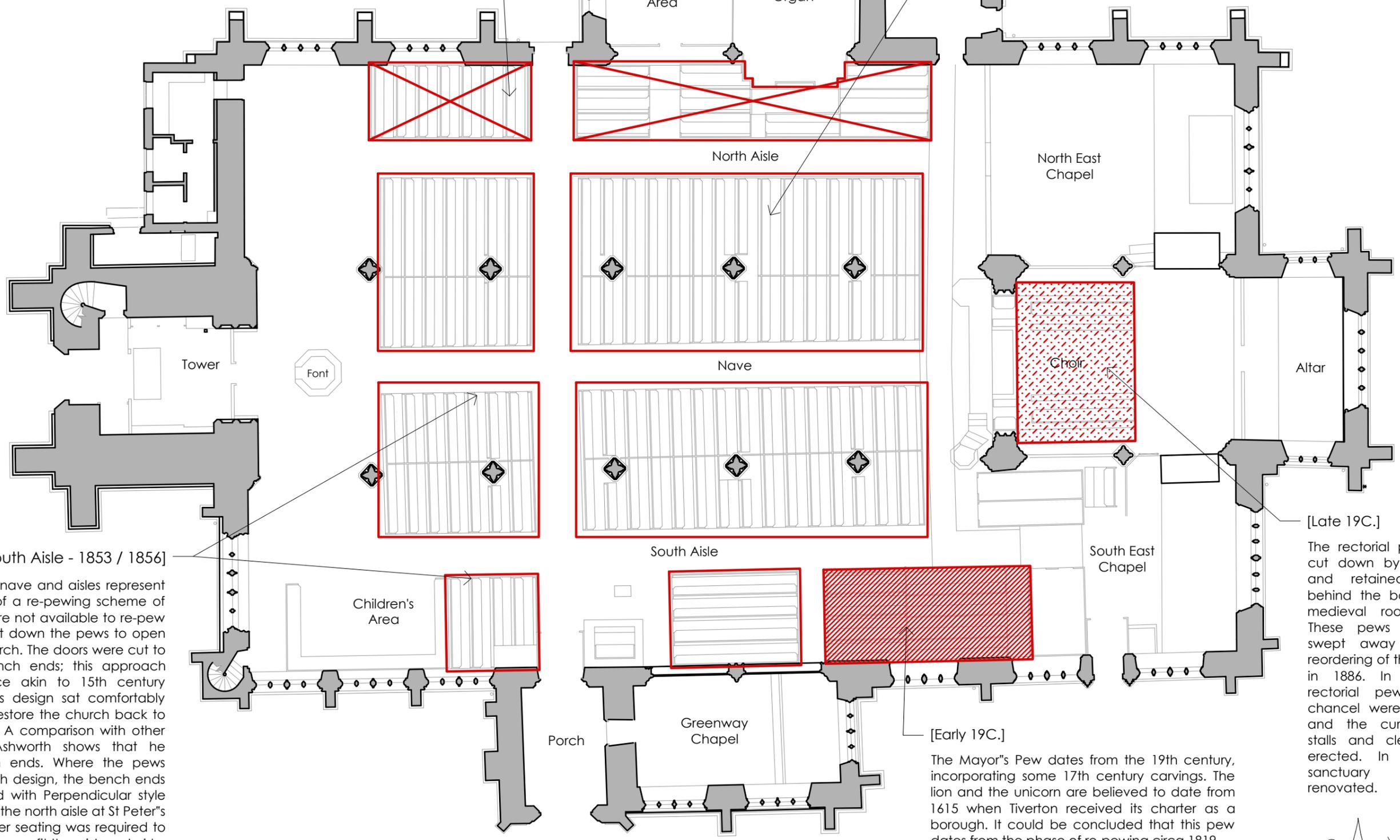
The *Builder* for 19 July 1856 describes the recently reopened church: "contracts were entered into in 1853 with Messrs Gath and Williams, builders, and Mr Parish, statuary, of Tiverton. The north aisle pews are of new wainscot oak.

As the north aisle had been doubled in width by Ashworth and therefore new pews were required. These were produced to the same design as the existing pews.

[Nave and South Aisle - 1853 / 1856]

Ashworth's reworking of an earlier re-pewing scheme circa 1819.

The nave and south aisle have the former seating cut down and arranged to a suitable height with increased substance. St Peter's was thus "thoroughly restored and re-seated in 1853-623.



[The Nave and South Aisle - 1853 / 1856]

The existing pews in the nave and aisles represent an Ashworth reworking of a re-pewing scheme of circa 1819. The funds were not available to re-pew the church. Ashworth cut down the pews to open up the interior of the church. The doors were cut to be lower than the bench ends; this approach created an appearance akin to 15th century square bench ends. This design sat comfortably with Ashworth's aim to restore the church back to its Perpendicular period. A comparison with other seating schemes by Ashworth shows that he favoured square bench ends. Where the pews were new to an Ashworth design, the bench ends were often richly carved with Perpendicular style tracery. Only the pews in the north aisle at St Peter's were new fabric as further seating was required to fit the widened aisle.

[Late 19C.]

The rectorial pews were cut down by Ashworth, and retained in situ behind the base of the medieval rood screen. These pews were not swept away until the reordering of the chancel in 1886. In 1886 the rectorial pews in the chancel were removed, and the current choir stalls and clergy desks erected. In 1894 the sanctuary was renovated.

[Early 19C.]

The Mayor's Pew dates from the 19th century, incorporating some 17th century carvings. The lion and the unicorn are believed to date from 1615 when Tiverton received its charter as a borough. It could be concluded that this pew dates from the phase of re-pewing circa 1819.

