

Heritage Statement June 2023

Hope Chapel, Hope Street, Rochdale, OL12 0PW

The application site comprises a Chapel, Hope Street Chapel, which is listed on the Statutory list as Grade II*. The significance and heritage assessment of the heritage asset is assessed under separate cover by Marion Barter Associates (MBA). MBA have given the applicant express permission to re-use the report for the purposes of this listed building application.

The site and setting are described by Marion Barter Associates in their 2019 report which is submitted with the listed building application along with various architectural plans provided by R. A. Fisk and Associates. This statement responds to the specifics of the current proposals.

The Chapel has been vacant for many years. Various considerations of re-use were discussed by previous owners of the Chapel however most alternative uses would have involved intervention that Conservation experts at Rochdale MBC would not support; such as conversion to residential involving the removal of the gallery. The applicant wishes to retain the use of the building as a Chapel and undertake modest alterations and essential repair work thereby retaining the historic and architectural significance.

The proposed works, as specified in this listed building application are described in full by the schedule of works drafted by R A Fisk and Associates Architects.

- Installation of a loft hatch at first floor level to allow entry for maintenance to the loft
- Undertaking of underpinning works to the internal vestibule wall as shown on plans 11477 – 001, 002, 003, 004 and 005 by Thomasons.

- Installation of new shaker style kitchenette within the entrance are to the north elevation
 - No change to existing openings or internal walls
 - Removal of existing radiator, stone plaque and timber beading to elevation b as shown on elevation and floor plan by R A Fisk and Associates
 - Relocation of stone plaque within the Chapel
 - Elevation B is shown in the photograph below
- Lime plastering to internal church walls – repair to bring back original wall covering.



The proposed development requires listed building consent for various internal alterations described above. The reasons for the proposed alterations to the Chapel are set out below.

The Chapel layout historically included an ancillary room for the Chapel above 21/23 Wilson Street – the adjoining property. The ancillary room was in effect floating above 21/23 Wilson Street and was accessed solely from the gallery (first floor) of the Chapel. This room had provided access to the roof space of the Chapel itself.

In 2019 Listed Building Consent (19/00578/LBC) was granted to convert the ancillary room to form part of residential conversion of 21/23 Wilson Street, the access to and from the Chapel was approved to be closed off. The conversion was correctly seen by both Conservation Officers at RMBC and Heritage England as a positive step for the reuse of the adjacent listed buildings at 21 and 23 Wilson Street.

The roof had previously suffered water damage as a result of theft of lead from the roof; if a leak occurred in the future access to fix and repair the roof from the inside would be essential. The loft hatch is proposed in order to facilitate future essential maintenance so that the future of the Chapel can be ensured. Likewise underpinning of the vestibule wall is required for future safeguarding of the building – it is an essential repair.

The kitchen is required for the day-to-day functioning of the Church community. As described by R A Fisk and Associates the installation of the kitchen requires minimal intervention. Without a kitchen the use of the Chapel would be limited. It is widely acknowledged that ensuring the viable use of listed buildings is the best way to ensure future maintenance.

The proposed lime plastering would complete a repair to the eastern wall which was partly undertaken several years ago following water ingress. The wet plaster was removed and is now a bare brick wall. Installing the plaster will ensure the building is maintained properly in a traditional method. As noted by R A Fisk and Associates the methodology is for traditional materials and practices to be used.

The alterations are within the existing plan form of the building and comprise wholly reversible alterations. There is some relocation of non-original aspects such as modern radiators and also relocation of a stone plaque.

The policy framework includes

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – July 2021

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

- SO1 To deliver a more prosperous economy
- SO3 To improve design, image and quality of place
- P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
- P3 Improving design of new development

Policy P2 of the adopted Core Strategy states that the Council will protect the Borough's heritage by conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings.

Policy P3 of the adopted Core Strategy requires all new developments, regardless of location in the borough, to adhere to high standards of design.

Assessment

The Grade II* listed Hope Street Chapel has a modest exterior but with an impressive galleried interior. The Chapel has in the past suffered deterioration as a result of being empty with water damage ensuing from vandalism and theft from lead on the roof.

The proposed loft hatch is sensitively design and placed to minimise the impact. The loft hatch is not of itself a positive addition to the heritage asset but it is essential for future maintenance that the loft hatch is installed. Relatively the loft hatch comprises limited intervention and can be considered to have a neutral impact upon the integrity of the listed building.

this essential loft hatch has limited intervention it can be considered to have a neutral impact upon the integrity of the listed building. The significant positive aspect for the introduction of the loft hatch is the future maintenance of the

roof which is clearly essential to the long-term stability of the structure. The same conclusion must also be applied to the underpinning of the vestibule wall.

Ensuring viable re-use as a place of worship is the ideal use for the heritage asset. To ensure reuse kitchen cupboards are designed to be simply fixed within the existing structure. The kitchen cupboards are to be fixed to the wall as described by R A Fisk and Associates; there is minimal intervention proposed. Whilst there is a small amount of harm caused by removing the plaque this is balanced by relocation within the Chapel. The proposal overall has a minimal impact especially as the proposals are reversible.

The proposal will ensure the underused Chapel is brought back into a viable use by ensuring meaningful use of a long vacant listed building. The heritage asset is assessed in the report by Marion Barter Associates. The proposal for the loft access and siting of kitchen cupboards and small kitchen would result in minimal intervention which would cause very minimal harm to the overall significance of the building.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out in section 16 that the local planning authority in considering whether or not to grant listed building consent shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 66 of the Act repeats the requirement for having “special regard” when considering whether to grant planning permission.

The Framework (NPPF) sets out that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. We are also told that great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The current application would sustain the significance of the asset and enable the building to be put to the most suitable use consistent with the conservation of the heritage asset. The proposal thereby also complying with the aims of policies of Rochdale MBC including policy P2.

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We would be happy to discuss the proposal with Council Officers if any points require clarification. We consider the proposal complies with the heritage planning framework as a whole and request that listed building consent be approved for the development as proposed.

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