

Heritage Statement

Proposed temporary children's room at Mills Hill Baptist Church, Middleton

Application ref. PP-13438347 - Full planning permission

1. Historical context of the site of the proposed temporary children's room:

- The church building of Mills Hill Baptist Church was constructed in 1849, on land south of Mills Hill House which had previously been the site of Cheetham's Farm. The site of Mills Hill House is now occupied by WJ Lewis (Builders Merchants) Ltd.
- The land surrounding the church building was designated as a graveyard for the church, and this continues to be its use. The site of the proposed temporary modular building is within the graveyard adjacent to the southern boundary. It would not obscure any existing gravestones.
- In 1981, the church building was gutted by fire through an arson attack. The external walls were reused as a shell, but all other external features of the building were replaced with new (i.e. all glazing, window frames and glass, roof and slates, fascia boards, soffits, rainwater gutters and downpipes). This reduced the heritage interest and sensitivity of the church building, although it is classed as a **non-designated heritage asset** (NDHA) by Rochdale MBC.

2. Assessment of the impact of the proposed temporary children's room on the historic setting and interest of the church building:

- **Impact on historic setting:**

The proposed temporary children's room would be sited 10.3 metres to the south of the church building, separated from it by a path which surrounds the church, set back 6.6 metres from the front/east elevation of the church and 18.5 metres distant from the adjacent pavement of Mills Hill Road.

When viewed from Mills Hill Road (east elevation), the temporary children's room would be viewed against the backdrop of the various adjacent industrial buildings to the west, clearly separated from the church building.

The photo below shows the context of the vinegar works buildings which form the backdrop to the site of the proposed temporary modular building from the east.



Views of the church building from the south are obscured by the adjacent factory and the tall hedge, so the proposed temporary modular building would have minimal to no impact on views from this direction.

In addition, the proposal is not for a permanent structure but for a temporary modular building.

The proposed temporary children's room would therefore not adversely impact the historic setting of the church building.

- **Impact on historic interest:**

The historic interest of the church building is based mainly around its continuing existence as a tangible link to the roots of the local community as it developed during the 19th century. This will be unaffected by the proposed temporary siting of the children's room in the graveyard.

The proposed temporary children's room would not therefore detract from any aspect of this historic interest of the church building.

3. Conclusion

Mills Hill Baptist Church is classed as a **non-designated heritage asset** (NDHA) by Rochdale MBC. The assessments above demonstrate that the church building's contribution to the local distinctiveness, settlement formation, traditional character or history of the borough will not be adversely impacted by the proposed temporary children's room.