

Heritage Statement

Application No: PP-14900904

Proposal: Repair and enhance perimeter wall with Lime Render, weep holes and brick repairs.

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Status: Applicant and owner

Site Details: Crescent Hall, Edmund St, Rochdale OL12 6QG
Previously known as Silver St Chapel, Silver St, Rochdale OL12 6QG

Purpose of Report: This report aims to explore the historical significance, cultural impact, architectural features, and current preservation efforts related to the Silver Street Chape(Crescent Hall), in Rochdale

1. DESCRIPTION

a. Heritage Assets affected by the application

Scheduled Ancient Monument	
Listed Building	?
Conservation Area	
Registered Historic Park and Garden	
Building of Local Interest	
Site of known archaeological remains	
Other non-designated Heritage Asset	

b. Character and appearance of heritage asset

The hall features classic early 19th-century architectural elements, including a simple yet elegant façade, large arched windows. Built as a Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in 1893, the hall is an example of Arts and Craft architecture, a prominent exponent of this being the architect Edgar Wood who designed this chapel. The architecture incorporates nature and trees in significant ways, such as a tree carving in the stonework above the main entrance, and a tree with doves painted into the masonry work just below the end gable roofline, above the main entrance.

c. The development site and its relationship with its surroundings

- i. Education & Community Hub: Edmund Street has historically served as a central hub for the local community, hosting markets, social gatherings, and public events. The community field known as 'Lenny Barn' is to the side of the building as well as a Primary school and a High School, just at it's doorstep.
- ii. Cultural Heritage: The street and its surroundings reflect Rochdale's rich cultural heritage, including its industrial past and contributions to the cooperative movement. The original Lease Deeds to the building show the hall was built originally by the Royds family - Clement Royds (1785-1854) was a woollen merchant and a senior banker.

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

a. Research undertaken to understand the significance of the heritage asset.

Local Historic Environment Record	?
Record Office	

Historic Maps	
Historic England	?
Museum or Library	
Local Heritage Groups	?
Conservation Area Appraisal	
Other (please state)	

b. Summary of the history of the site/building

Summary Timeline:

Silver St Chapel (Crescent Hall) was originally built in the early 19th century as a place of worship for the growing Methodist community in Rochdale. The chapel served as an important religious and social center for the local population.

TimeLine:

- 1824: Construction of the original chapel.
- Mid-19th century: Expansion and renovation to accommodate a growing congregation. At times, used as community hall as part of the larger St. Clements Church congregation.
- 20th century: Changed hands between different denominations of church, with dwindling numbers over the years. Last used as a functioning church by the Bethel Christian Community in early 2018.

Historical Records of timeline:

The building is an example of a Wesleyan Methodist chapel from the Victorian era. The origins of local Wesleyans were based in the Union St Wesleyan Sunday School. Local canvassing was undertaken following falling numbers due to popularity of local Unitarian and Church of England Sunday Schools. Eventually, a local school room was established on the corner of Clarke's Lane and Spotland Rd on Christmas day in 1868. However, just two days later on 27th December 1868, the school roof was blown away resulting in multiple injuries and one casualty. A relief fund of over £22 was raised as well as a commitment to move nearby due to the unsafe condition of the current building. The group then moved to a 'shed' on Cinnamon St on 15th August 1869 as 'Silver St Methodists' and 'Spotland Rd Wesleyan Sunday School'. Following this, the corner stones of the present building on Silver St were laid on 17th December 1893 with an estimated building cost of £1,400. Further extensions were subsequently made such as 1903 extra classrooms (£250) and toilets, kitchen and store in 1931 (£250). **More interestingly, a perimeter wall was erected in 1927 at a cost of £150.**

Source: "The Story of Silver St Chapel" by Mr J Perry circa 1940

c. The importance of the affected heritage asset

The hall is a prime example of Arts and Craft architecture, notable for its tree and doves depiction on the main gable end wall.

It holds significant historical value as a longstanding place of worship and community hub in Rochdale, having witnessed numerous historical events and changes over the years.

As a central place of worship, the chapel has been a focal point for the local community, hosting religious services, community events, and social gatherings that have strengthened community bonds.

The chapel's design, with its green lawns and depiction of nature in its architecture, contributes to the aesthetic heritage of Spotland.

Silver Street Wesleyan Chapel, Rochdale (1893, listed Grade II), was conceptually similar to Temple Street Baptist Church but fashioned in the new style. Vernacular motifs from houses and farm buildings are not easily transferred to a church, and one notices Wood concentrating on materials, with a combination of traditional brick, stone, render and pargeting. Sloping buttresses are the only vernacular form used. The distinctive rounded church window with seven lancets can be traced to a sixteenth-century east window at Middleton Parish Church (listed Grade I).

Source: 'Here, by experiment': Edgar Wood in Middleton, by David Morris. (2012)

3. DESIGN CONCEPT

a. Description of the proposed development

- Objective
 - Security - To provide a secure perimeter around the hall to protect against vandalism, trespassing, and theft.
 - Aesthetic Improvement - To enhance the visual appeal of the premises grounds, complementing the historic architecture.
 - Boundary Definition - To clearly demarcate the property boundaries of the chapel, providing a sense of enclosure and privacy.
- Fence Design and Specifications

- Materials: Green metal mesh, chosen for its durability, historical appropriateness, and aesthetic compatibility with the chapel's architecture.
- Secondary Materials: Red brick for fence posts and base walls, matching the materials used in the chapel building.
- Height and Dimensions:
 - Height: The fence will be approximately 1.2 meters (3 ¼ feet) high, balancing security needs with visual unobtrusiveness.
 - Spacing: Fence posts will be spaced at regular intervals of 2 meters (6.5 feet).
 - Gates: Two main gates will be installed at the primary entrances, designed to match the fence style, with secure locking mechanisms.
- Location and Layout
 - Perimeter Coverage: The fence will run along the entire perimeter of the chapel property, enclosing the front and sides (rear is adjacent to neighboring property).
 - Entrance Gates: Main gates will be located at the front entrance on Silver Street and a secondary entrance at the rear, providing rear door access and yard area.
- Considerations
 - Visibility: The fence design will ensure that it does not obstruct views of the hall from the street, maintaining the visual accessibility of the heritage site.
 - Accessibility: Gates will be wide enough to allow easy access for pedestrians, and a separate access point will be provided for maintenance vehicles.

4. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT AND ANY MITIGATION

- Historical Impact
 - Compatibility: The design and materials have been selected to complement and enhance the historic character of Silver Street Chapel.
 - Reversibility: The fence will be constructed in a manner that allows for future removal without damaging the historic fabric of the chapel property.
- Environmental Impact:
 - Minimal Disturbance: The construction process will involve minimal ground disturbance, preserving the surrounding landscape.
 - Sustainability: The use of durable and low-maintenance materials ensures long-term sustainability with minimal environmental impact.

- Community Impact:
 - Security: Improved security for the nursery will benefit the local community by reducing the risk of vandalism and unauthorized access.
 - Aesthetic Enhancement: The enhanced appearance of the nursery grounds will contribute positively to the local streetscape and community pride. It will match the boundary fence of the school across the street from our premises.
- Conserving the significance of the heritage asset
 - Use for the community. Having a boundary fence will enable the building to be even more equipped to cater for children's use, as well as community use, for example for community functions.
 - With more use, there will hopefully be more interest in the heritage of the building, thereby building further civic and heritage pride to the area.

5. AUTHOR'S CREDENTIALS.

As the current owner of 'Silver St Chapel', I feel a privilege as well as a responsibility, to continue the heritage of the building with its original purpose, ie as a communal space to be enjoyed by the local community. By enhancing the building to ensure it is maintained to a high standard and meets the needs of modern health and safety requirements, I feel that the building will be made use of a lot more by the local community. As a member of the Edgar Wood Society, I have taken advice from members, who have also visited the premises and understand the value of this 'local treasure', tucked away in the back streets of Spotland.

Author:

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Trustee, The Oral History Society (based at the British Library)

Building owner, Nursery proprietor and school consultant including ex Ofsted Inspector.