The Chapel

Design & Access Statement + Heritage Assessment
Access Ladder
December 2023

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3	February 24	Issue	Rhiannon Williams I Architect	Additional text
2	December 23	Issue	Jenna Johnston I Associate Heritage Consultant	Planning LBC
1	November 23	Drafting	Freya Needham I Heritage Consultant	Draft

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1.0

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

This Design & Access Statement + Heritage Assessment has been prepared to support the application for Planning and Listed Building Consent for works to the Grade II* listed Welsh Baptist Chapel, also known as the Upper Brook Street Chapel, the Islamic Academy and the Unitarian Chapel, in Chorlton-on-Medlock, Manchester.

The Welsh Baptist Chapel was originally a Unitarian Chapel, built by Sir Charles Barry between 1837 and 1839. It is in the English Neo-Gothic style that was prevalent at the time, similar in style to Barry's close contemporary rebuilding of the Palace of Westminster in 1840-1870. The adjoining Sunday School was begun in 1887 by James William Beaumont, FRIBA.

The building is currently in use as student accomodation, following a significant conservation and repair works lead by Buttress in 2017. The building is ownded by Empiric Student Properties.

1.2 Designation

The Chapel is Grade II* listed. The full listing description for the asset can be found in 7.2 Appendix 2: Listing Description.

The site is not located within the proximity of any other designated or non-designated hertiage assets, and does not lie within the boundary of any conservation areas.

1.3 Authorship & Acknowledgement

This document has been prepared by Jenna Johnston MA (Hons) MSc IHBC, Associate Heritage Consultant at **Buttress,** with support from Freya Needham MA, Heritage Consultant and Rhiannon Williams, Architect at **Buttress**.

It has been heavily informed by and extracted from extensive previous work on the building's history and significance found in Latham's Former Welsh Chapel, Upper Brook Street, Manchester: Design and Access Statement (2013). Many references and citations are taken directly from the original document in order to maintain the chain of information.

1.4 Location

The Chapel is located on Upper Brook Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, Manchester (NGR: SJ847969). To the South-West is a multi-storey car park and the University of Manchester campus, including the Manchester Museum.

The immediately surrounding area is relatively industrial and the building is flanked to the north and south by car dealership lots and a show room immediately to the east.

'The surrounding area comprises a variety of different land uses, with residential and recreational open space to the east (Brunswick) and Higher Education campus (including student residences, teaching blocks and leisure facilities) to the west. The A34 Upper Brook Street is a major radial route, with the site being served by frequent public transport which links to the city centre, major rail and Metrolink networks, and road connections to the M60 orbital and national motorway network. These links give effective connectivity to universities and hospitals.'[1]



Figure 1 Location Plan - site boundary marked in red

2.0

Summary of Proposed Works

2.0 Summary of Proposed Work

2.1 Purpose

The northeast side of the property features a flat roof which is situated below a significant stained glass rose window. Unfortunately, there is currently no safe means of access to this roof, and therefore the roof, as well as the historic stained glass rose window are not currently accessible for the purpose of maintenance. It will be necessary to maintain a safe means of maintenance access to ensure that rooftop finishes, plant and rainwater outlets can be routinely inspected as well as carrying out cyclical maintenance to historic fabric, such as cleaning of stained glass and/or inspection of historic masonry.

2.2 Proposal

Due to the lack of safe access to this small flat-roofed portion of the building along the northeast elevation, it is proposed to install a permanent ladder access for the purpose of future maintenance.

The ladder will allow for the roof to be safely maintained for years to come. Alternative methods for access were also initially considered, however none of these were deemed feasible for the reasons listed below:

- Extendable ladder - unsafe at that height (over 8m), nothing to secure the ladder to the building, etc.
- MEWP - not feasible due to site topography and potential damage to retained burial stones which form part of the landscape.
- Ladder access on the NE elevation - would be outside of the ownership boundary and in the neighbouring ownership.
- Access to the roof via the NW - would involve accessing via the adjacent roofs to the Annexe, which would necessitate a greater degree of intervention (more intrusive) to ensure the access is safe. This would involve additional roof ladders, guardrails etc.

The aluminium ladder and cage will also be powder coated to match the RAL colour of the window frames and downpipe, helping to mitigate and minimise its visual impact on the elevation. The cage around the ladder provides basic fall protection, which is required on all ladders over 3m in compliance with the British Standards.

It also leads to where the existing lifeline system on the roof starts, meaning maintenance staff can attach directly the safety line. (Making other locations unsuitable).

The ladder is proposed to start at first floor level, avoiding the sandstone and ensuring the historic building fabric is not disturbed. A movable ladder will be used to access it and a cage door will also be fitted to ensure access is not possible to any unauthorised persons. It will be fixed to the wall with bolts into the masonry joints in the wall.

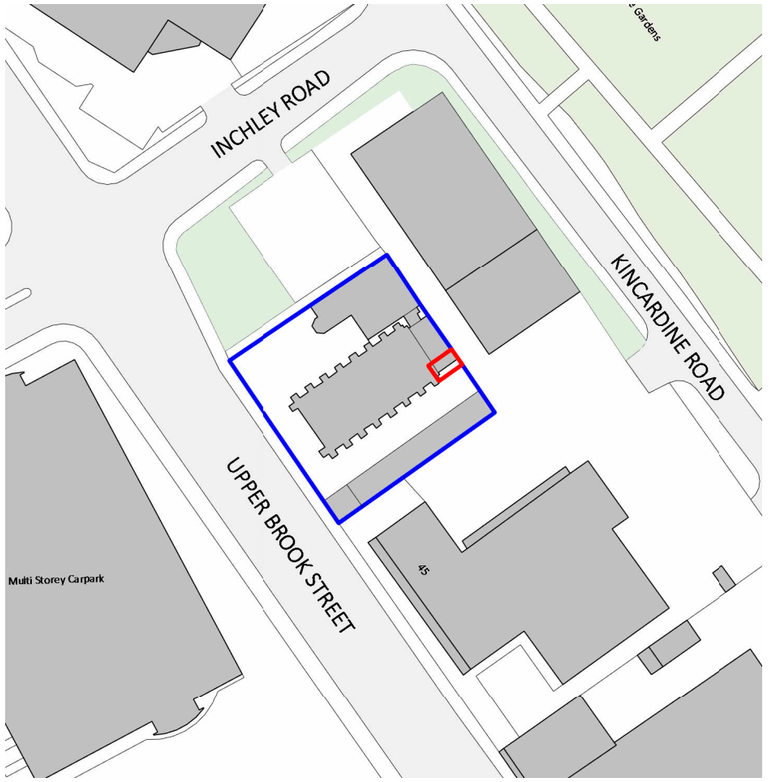
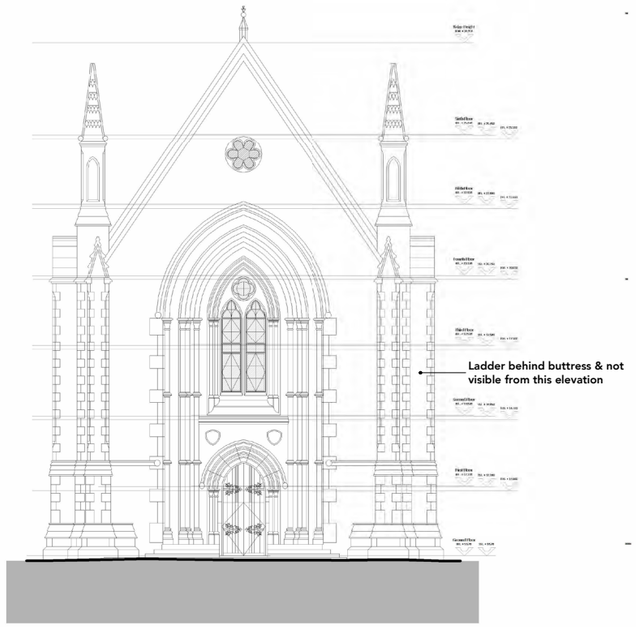


Figure 2 Location of proposed works



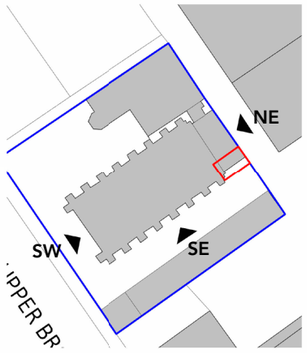
Proposed South West Elevation
1 : 100



Proposed South East Elevation
1 : 100



Proposed North East Elevation
1 : 100



1 0 1 2 3 4 5 m
SCALE 1:100

Note:
Do Not Scale from this drawing.
Dimensions are to be checked on site.
If in doubt please ask.

Refer to drawing 05002 for detailed proposed elevations

Rev	Date	Intls	Details
P01	22.12.23	RW	Access ladder application

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Project Title	Empiric Unitarian Chapel Support
Client	Empiric Student Property plc
Location	Upper Brook Street, Manchester
Drawing ref	Proposed GA Elevations
Date	22/12/2023 14:58:34
Scale	As indicated
Checker	GP
Size	A1
Job No:	9764
Status	S4 Suitable for Stage Approval

Project Origin Volume Level Type Role Number Rev
9764-BUT-EX-ZZ-DR-A-05001-P01

3.0

Description of the Heritage

3.0 Description of the Heritage

The Chapel comprises the former main chapel to the south, and adjoining former Sunday school to the north. The chapel is built of Millstone Grit Sandstone ashlar, with a Welsh slate roof. The Sunday School is built of a similar type of stone but likely comes from a different source.

3.1 Exterior

3.1.1 Chapel

The new Unitarian chapel was built from ashlar of Millstone Grit Sandstone of high quality, possibly brought in from Derbyshire, where several members of the Potter dynasty had interests in cotton mills.[2]

The side elevations are of seven lofty bays divided by buttresses. The latter spring from tall plinths and are treated almost like pilasters, terminating in gablets above a string course which runs above the fenestration and from which rises the coped parapet, level with the tops of the buttresses. The plinth band acts visually as a sill band and the fenestration, in Decorated style, rises from sloping ribbed sills under stopped hood moulds at the top. The roof was of Welsh slate. These buttresses conjoin at the angles to embrace the turrets of pinnacles at each angle, these being panelled, of square section and topped with conical caps.



Figure 4 Right: View of the Chapel, showing the former Sunday School to the left

Figure 5 Left: South-west Elevation of the Chapel

Figure 6 Right: South-east Elevation of the Chapel with ancillary new build to the right.



The E and W ends consist of a steep gable the former containing a fine rose window. The west end contains the well-shafted recessed entrance set beneath a moulded gothic arch containing quatrefoil above a cusped double lancet window above all within a deeply recessed double-recessed arch of three orders rising into the gable. The whole, Clare Hartwell suggests, was inspired by the W end of Peterborough Cathedral, and Rosemary Hill suggests that it is an element of Pugin's involvement.[3 4]

Adjoining the north-east elevation is a three-storey new build brick element with ashlar face at ground floor. This element replicates the form and openings of the former bay that formed part of the original church before it's structural decline. This can be seen in **Figure 16**.

Figure 7 South-east elevation showing rear extension.

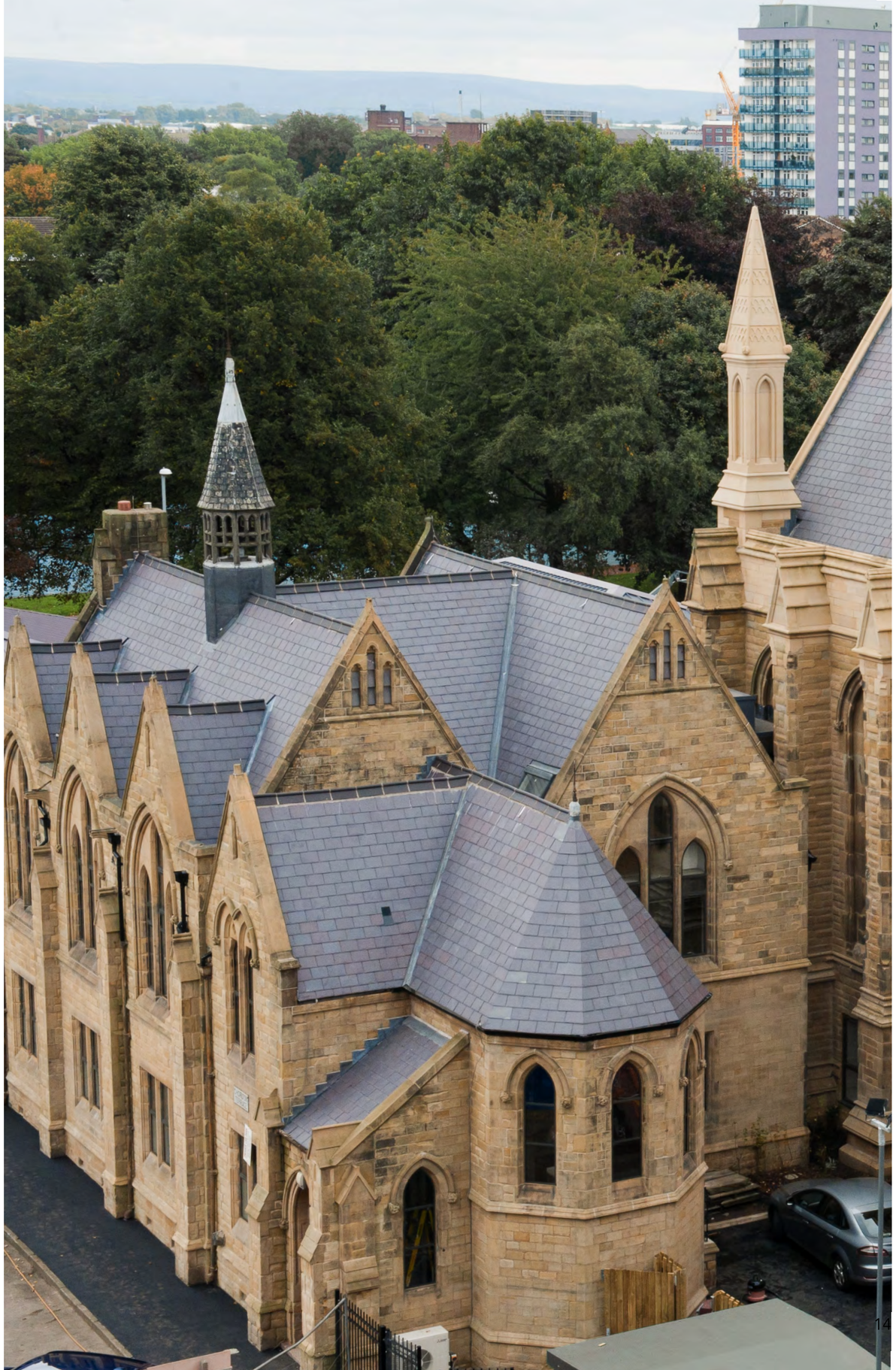
3.1.2 Sunday School

This was built of similar stone to the main chapel (although probably from a different source) and was more Ruskinian and fluent in its Early English Gothic. Whilst complimenting the main building it is, appropriately, less monumental and more domestic. The main school room has two storeys, with three similar gables on the north side, lit by stepped lancets set high within blind Gothic arches and between half-height buttresses, between which runs a string course, below which are rectangular three light mullioned windows.

The steep roof is surmounted by a louvered lantern topped by a conical cap. A further, smaller, gable terminates this range to the west with double rather than triple lancets and the lean-to entrance to its right is positioned in front of a tall canted apse also lit by lancets.

A similar range lies between that and the chapel with a stepped lancet west window and connected by a short cross range. It, in its turn, is connected to the chapel by a short single storey bridge link. It is possible that the eastern 2 storey extension of the church was constructed at the same time as the Sunday School.

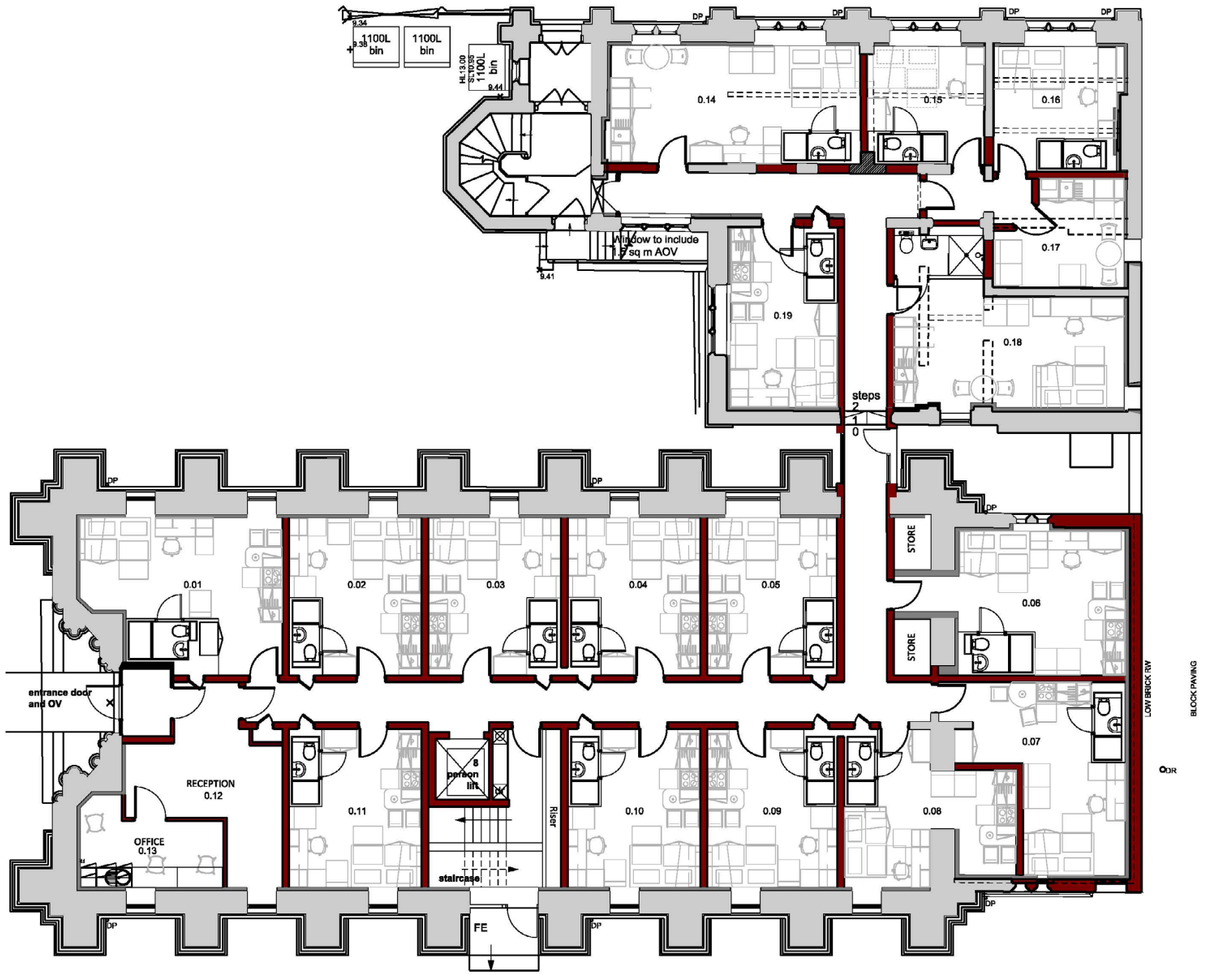
Figure 8 Former Sunday School Exterior



3.2 Interior

Following the completion of the conversion of the church to student housing, the interiors of both the chapel and sunday school have been subdivided to create an 87 bed scheme with a mix of room types and student communal spaces.

While the interiors of both the chapel and sunday school are now both largely modern, a number of original features remain within the building including the spiral stair in the sunday school and a number of stone corbels in the chapel.



Note:
Do not scale from this drawing.
Dimensions are to be checked on site.
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Proposed Walls

Existing Walls

Rev	Date/Intls	Details
A	03.12.2015	Minor Ammendments for Mechanical Engineers
-		

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Figure 9 Top: Plan showing the proposed ground floor layout from the planning application for the completed scheme.

Figure 10 Bottom: Group of images showing the interior of the chapel.

4.0

Assessment of Significance

4.0 Assessment of Significance

Due to the proportion of the application, the summary of History & Development has been included in 7.3 Appendix: 3 History & Development.

The full Assessment of Significance is included in 7.4 Appendix 4: Assessment of Significance. This summary section relates specifically to the areas of interest and consideration within this application.

The new ladder is proposed for installation on a new element of the building that was constructed in 2017-18. This building has no special architectural or historic interest that would contribute to the designation of the Chapel itself, therefore having **negligible significance.**

The overall significance of the Chapel is **high.**



Figure 11 Location of proposed ladder

5.0

Heritage Impact Assessment

5.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

5.1 General Principles

The Heritage Imapct Assessment will look at the impacts of the installation of the new ladder on the grade II* Chapel.

5.2 Methodology

The NPPF requires an understanding of the relative harm and benefit of proposals to the significance and special architectural and historic interest of an asset. The assessment approach outlined here is based on guidance from British Standards BS 7913, and the ICOMOS Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments. ICOMOS suggest a 9-point scale spectrum for defining the impacts of proposed changes, which is included here in **Figure 14**.

The methodology requires the understanding of the significance of the heritage, the scale of the proposed change, the relative associated impact. This should be weighted with discussion around approach, mitigation and justification to present a complete picture of potential heritage impacts.

VALUE OF HERITAGE ASSET	SCALE & SEVERITY OF CHANGE/IMPACT (EITHER ADVERSE OR BENEFICIAL)				
	No Change	Negligible Change	Minor Change	Moderate Change	Major Change
Very High	Neutral	Slight	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large	Very Large
High	Neutral	Slight	Moderate/ Slight	Moderate/ Large	Large/Very Large
Medium	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate/ Large
Low	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Slight/ Moderate
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/ Slight	Slight

Figure 12 Significance/Scale of Impacts Table

No Change	Negligible Change	Minor Change	Moderate Change	Major Change
No material change to the heritage asset or its setting.	A small change or alteration, but unimportant. Having no visual or indirect impacts on the asset or its setting. Slight changes to use or access.	A small change to an element of fabric or setting that results in a noticeable difference. Limited indirect impacts or changes to character.	Changes to an element, including replacement, or insertion of a new element, where the asset or its setting has clearly been modified. Noticeable indirect impacts.	A change of great extent, including the complete removal of an element. Changes to most or all of the asset or its setting. Total alteration of the asset. Extreme indirect impacts.

Figure 13 Definition of types of change

Major beneficial	Moderate beneficial	Minor beneficial	Negligible beneficial	Neutral	Negligible adverse	Minor adverse	Moderate adverse	Major adverse

Figure 14 9-point scale of impact

5.3 Direct Impacts on The Chapel

The proposed ladder will be installed into new fabric, constructed in 2017-18.

There is no direct interface with fabric that would be considered to contribute to the architectural and historic interest of The Chapel that is associated with its designation.

Therefore, the proposed ladder is of **no harm** to the Chapel.

5.4 Indirect Impacts on The Chapel

Due to the proposed location of the ladder, consideration is required for its potential visual impact.

The ladder is propsed for a RAL colour to match existing window frames, which will will tie it in to the contemporary scheme without adding an additional colour.

The ladder is obscured from view from the principal, most significant elevation, and access to this area is restricted. In the event it is viewed from the south, it is clearly part of the modern addition and does not affect the quality of the elevation of the Chapel.

In conclusion, the proposed ladder is a **negligible change** with **neutral** impact and **no harm**.

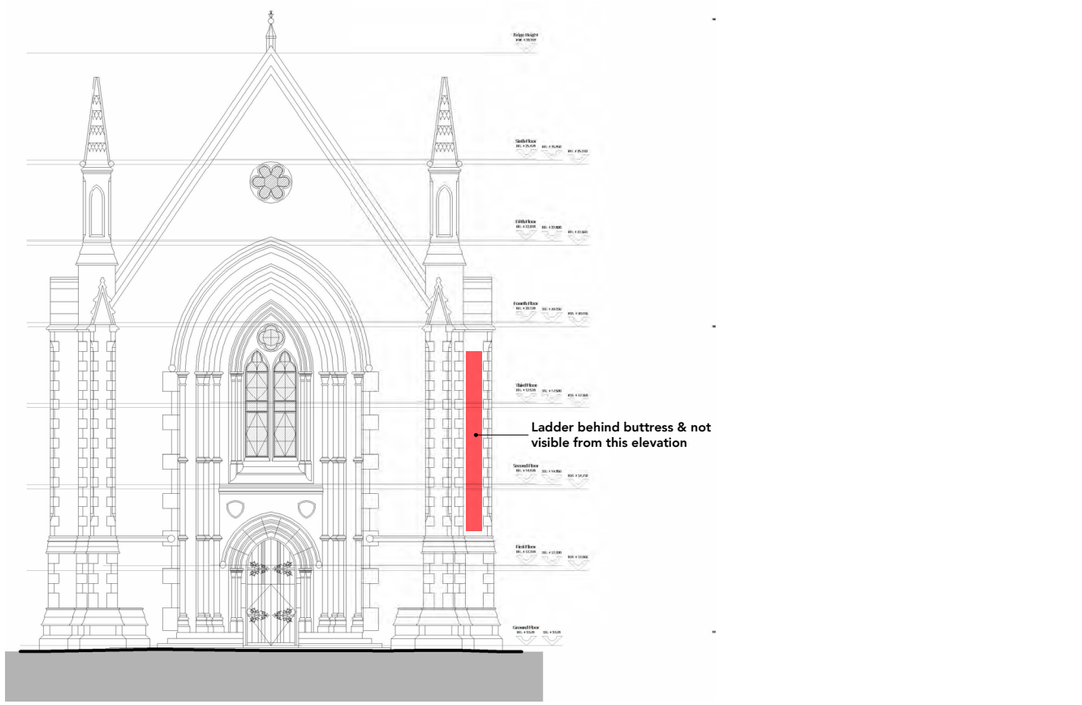


Figure 15 Location of proposed ladder

5.5 Justification

The ladder is required to facilitate safe access, and alternative solutions have been explored, with this proposal being the most effective in achieving the brief, and in impacts.

The proposed location for the ladder means it is concealed by the large buttress to the left hand side. It not visible from the street elevation or principal facade.

The ladder is a reversible intervention and could be removed at a later date if needed or if an alternative access solution became viable. As the ladder is fixed to the mortar joints of the new-build masonry this could be done with no damaged to the listed asset and the wall can be repointed following the ladder's removal. The RAL colour will help to mitigate the potential visual impact of its installation.

5.6 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 16

With respect to heritage impact in the context of the NPPF, the proposals within this application are geared towards the ongoing conservation and maintenance of the Grade II* listed heritage asset. The eastern end of the Chapel incorporates the original stained glass rose window, a key surviving feature of the original building that was retained as part of the redevelopment in 2017-18. Currently there is no safe access to the flat roof adjacent to this window, and as such its future maintenance is called into question without the proposed intervention.

The proposal seeks to sustain the significance of the designated heritage asset, by facilitating safe access for maintenance to a key historic feature. Furthermore, this flat roof also houses services equipment which contributes to the ongoing viable use of the heritage asset. By providing safe access to these elements, the asset will be able to be maintained in the longer term to a standard commensurate with its significance, while enabling the ongoing function of the building. The means of access have been proposed and detailed in such a way as to avoid disturbing original fabric, and also sustaining wider aesthetic values by locating the proposed ladder in an inconspicuous part of the building.

Given the Chapel was without a use and was considered 'at risk' for a considerable period prior to its redevelopment, it is essential that the building remains in a viable use. Previously it stood as a symbol of dereliction within its immediate context, and was not contributing to the wider vitality of the community. Its redevelopment, coupled with the wider ongoing work on the nearby university campus, has contributed to a much more vibrant community in recent years. The work proposed within this application is small in terms of scale and impact. However, it will have a beneficial impact on the heritage asset (and by extension the wider community) by ensuring that the Chapel can be maintained in an optimum condition, avoiding falling into disrepair.

As noted above, the proposal is a discrete one, and its overall impact on local character and distinctiveness will not be significant. The proposals will however contribute to sustaining the local character and distinctiveness by ensuring the meaningful conservation and maintenance of a key heritage asset. By siting the ladder in its proposed location, the contribution of the Chapel to the wider context and local character is not affected. The building will remain a focal point and an illustration of how historic buildings can be successfully conserved and integrated within a vibrant modern streetscape.

6.0

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6.0 Bibliography & Sources

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7.0

Appendices

7.0 Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1: Endnotes

1 Lathams, 4.
2 Glover (1833) loc.cit.
3 Hartwell, C. Pevsner Architectural Guides Manchester (Newhaven & London 2002) 128; Hill (2007) 511.
4 Lathams, 28.
.
5 Lathams, 3.
6 Church Register List, Chorlton on Medlock to Claughton, Manchester Archives 464, 14.
7 Papers of the Unitarian Colege, Manchester, John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, Home Mission sub-committee minute books 1892-1917 (UCC/1/15/28). I am indebted to Mr. Graham Johnson the assistant archivist at John Rylands Library for his help in this matter
8 Mickelwright (1943) 216. The style Jehovah's Witnesses was adopted in 1931, with a presence in Manchester since c. 1889
9 Historic England. Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019.
10 Historic England. Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019.
11 Report 2006.
12 Report. 2006.
13 Lathams.
14 Lathams.
15 Historic England. Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019.
16 Lathams, 26.
17 Historic England. Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019.
18 Historic England. Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019.

7.2 Appendix 2: Listing Description

7.2.1 Former Unitarian Chapel

Official list entry

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II*

List Entry Number: 1270670

Date first listed: 03-Oct-1974

Date of most recent amendment: 06-Jun-1994

List Entry Name: Former Unitarian chapel

Statutory Address 1: Former Unitarian chapel, Upper Brook Street

Location

Statutory Address: Former Unitarian chapel, Upper Brook Street

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: Manchester (Metropolitan Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

National Grid Reference: SJ 84745 96980

Details

This list entry was subject to a Minor Amendment on 06/11/2018

SJ8496 698-1/21/621

MANCHESTER UPPER BROOK STREET (east side)
Former Unitarian chapel

(Formerly listed as Chorlton-On-Medlock Islamic Academy, previously listed as: UPPER BROOK STREET (east side) Chorlton-On-Medlock Welsh Baptist Chapel)

03/10/74

II* Formerly known as: Unitarian chapel UPPER BROOK STREET Chorlton-On-Medlock.

Unitarian chapel with attached Sunday school, subsequently Welsh Baptist church then Islamic Academy, now residential. 1837-39, by Sir Charles Barry. Coursed squared sandstone, slate roofs.

Early English style. Seven narrow bays with buttresses, a tall lancet with hoodmould in each bay; gabled west facade with giant archway moulded in three orders and containing a similar recessed arch with moulded two-centred arched doorway at ground floor and two-light window above; rose window in east gable: square corner pinnacles. Sunday School on same axis to north, attached by a link, two-storeyed under two-span roof, triple-gabled north side with large two-centred arched windows at first floor each of three lancet lights; canted apse to west end, lean-to porch in angle.

Interior of chapel has galleries to three sides, ribbed vaulted ceiling.

History: said to be the first Gothic Nonconformist chapel.

Listing NGR: SJ8474596980

7.3 Appendix: 3 History & Development

The chapel was built 1837-1839 by Sir Charles Barry, and it is believed to be the first neo-Gothic Nonconformist chapel. The Sunday School was 'developed in 1887 at the behest of the chapel congregation in acknowledgement of the hardship suffered by local families; the construction marked the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria.'[5]

'The subsequent history of the chapel represents a decline from the later nineteenth century. Baptisms were performed at the chapel until 1912 and the last marriage was in 1916.[6] In 1917, demographic changes to the district and the effect of the departure of many men to the Western Front led to the chapel becoming financially unviable and the Unitarian Home Mission College Conference Sub-committee commissioned a report on the matter. Despite an up-beat submission from the minister, G Randall Jones, the Warden reported unfavourably, a position not helped by a failure of matters to improve with the termination of hostilities and the chapel had effectively closed by 1921.[7]

The chapel was advertised for sale in 1926 but it was 1928 before it found a buyer.[8] The new owners were a congregation of Welsh Baptists.



Figure 16 Right: BB72/00044 Welsh Baptist Chapel (1972), Manchester © Crown copyright. Historic England





The Welsh Baptist national union was organized in 1866, although the first Welsh Baptist chapel in Manchester was founded at Granby Row, SE of the city centre in 1835. This subsequently closed in 1891, but it would appear that the acquisition of the Upper Brook Street chapel represented something of a revival.

The Welsh Baptist congregation soldiered on until the 1960s but thereafter the chapel was again only in sporadic use until a further sale to the Jehovah's Witnesses, becoming their Kingdom Hall for Manchester. This continued until the City Council decided in 1974 to compulsorily purchase the building with a view to clearing the NE side of Upper Brook Street in order to make room for planned urban motorway. This led to the Jehovah's Witnesses re-locating to New Bolton road and the chapel falling vacant yet again.
It also led to the building being added to the statutory list grade II*.'

Figure 17 Top: BB72/00038 Welsh Baptist Chapel (1971), Manchester © Crown copyright. Historic England

Figure 18 Bottom: BB72/00049 Welsh Baptist Chapel (1971), Manchester, viewed from the west corner. © Crown copyright. Historic England



Figure 19 BB72/00042 The schoolhouse of the Welsh Baptist Chapel (1971), Manchester © Crown copyright. Historic England



Figure 20 BB72/00052 Looking from the rostrum to the south corner of the Welsh Baptist Chapel (1971), Manchester © Crown copyright. Historic England



Figure 21 BB72/00046 The north east elevation of the Welsh Baptist Chapel (1971), Manchester © Crown copyright. Historic England



Figure 22 BB72/00053 The south-west end of the gallery, above the main entrance of the Welsh Baptist Chapel (1971), Manchester © Crown copyright. Historic England

7.4 Appendix 4: Assessment of Significance

Following guidance outlined in Historic England's *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008), along with the more recent *Historic England Advice Note 12 Statements of Heritage Significance*: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets, the following section will aim to assess any heritage interest(s) that the site might hold.

The level of significance will be assessed based on the scale below:

Exceptional: Heritage interests having national or international importance, usually found where assets are designated at grade II*, grade I, scheduled monuments and UNESCO World Heritage sites.

High: Heritage interests having national importance, usually found where assets are designated at grade II*.

Medium: Heritage interests having regional importance, usually found where assets are designated grade II. Also, generally applies to Conservation Areas.

Low: Heritage interests that make a positive contribution to their area, group or setting. Usually, non-designated heritage assets and historic townscapes.

Neutral: Historically unimportant. These ratings are intended to address the heritage values outlined below, and do not relate to the significance of specific buildings, spaces, or areas of fabric.

Understanding of significance is broken down into the following categories:

Archaeological Interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Architectural & Artistic Interest

These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

Historic Interest

An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

7.4.1 Archaeological Interest

It is not believed that the site has any medieval or ancient heritage and therefore future works or excavations are unlikely to yield information about the development of the site from this early period. The development of the building's use illustrates the historical value which is explored elsewhere.

The archaeological interest of the asset is **low.**

7.4.2 Architectural & Artistic Interest

7.4.2.1 Aesthetic Value

> *Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.*[9]

The Chapel's association with Sir Charles Barry, and possible influence of A.W.N. Pugin, places it within a very prestigious period of the development of British architecture, as well as providing visual links with some of the largest and most iconic buildings in the British collective memory, such as The Palace of Westminster. The style of the building is very much of its time, but it is also symbolic as it is 'generally acknowledged to have been amongst the very first dissenting chapels to have been built in that style anywhere in the United Kingdom.'

The current sight of the Chapel within its surrounding context is very striking. The area is mixed use and the building is immediately surrounded by car forecourts, which contrast significantly with the remaining fabric of this nineteenth century Neo-Gothic religious building. In this way, the chapel is a visual representation of history in an area where it is otherwise lacking. Furthermore, the Chapel is cited on a main road that runs straight out from the city centre. Standing outside of the building presents long views both towards and away from the city, following nineteenth century development patterns. The building is the only listed building nearby and the only representation of how this area may have previously been developed.

7.4.2.2 Associative Value

> *Association with a notable family, person, event, or movement.*[10]

7.4.2.3 Sir Charles Barry (1795-1860)

The Welsh Baptist Chapel holds architectural interest due to it's association with Sir Charles Barry. Barry was, and still is, nationally renowned for his work including major projects such as the rebuilding of House of Parliament, including the design of the Elizabeth Tower (Big Ben), the remodelling of Trafalgar Square, and the remodelling of numerous significant stately homes such as Highclere Castle, Cliveden House, and Trentham Hall.

The Welsh Baptist Chapel is thought 'to have been an early collaboration between Sir Charles Barry and A W N Pugin before they worked together on the Palace of Westminster'[11]

7.4.2.4 Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852)

The Welsh Baptist Chapel's association with Pugin further contributes to the assets architectural interest.

> *It is…believed to have been an early collaboration between Sir Charles Barry and A W N Pugin before they worked together on the Palace of Westminster"*[12]

Certainly, aspects of the finished building carry overtones of the latter's work. This is supported by a recent biography of Pugin, which confirms his involvement, suggesting that Pugin designed the chapel's west end for the busy Barry.[13]

Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852) is generally regarded as the greatest and most important of the architects and decorators associated with the 19th century Gothic revival movement. He proved that revival would never have succeeded if the style could not have been made capable of meeting every modern requirement: entirely new structures such as railway stations and huge public buildings would test the style to its limits, and it was not found wanting.[14]

7.4.2.5 James William Beaumont (1848-1931)

Responsible for the design of the later Sunday School, 'he [Beaumont] was a very important Manchester architect (although latterly living at Wimslow) and had designed the town halls at both Hyde and Colne as well as the Stockport Liberal Club. His best known work is the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester. He was the son of John Beaumont of Manchester, and was articled to Sir James Allanson Picton in Liverpool before moving on to become assistant to Corson and Aitken in Manchester, setting up on his own account in 1873. He had various partners, latterly with two of his sons. The building of the Sunday School removed part of the Chapel's original graveyard, upon restrictions were placed in 1856, burials being prohibited altogether from 1882, thus making the building of the school possible.

The architectural and artistic interest of the asset is **high.**

7.4.3 Historic Interest

7.4.3.1 Illustrative Value

> *The perception of a place as a link between past and present people.*[15]

The location of the Chapel slightly outside the city centre demonstrates how Manchester was growing and altering in response to industrial, social and religious pressures. The Welsh Baptist Chapel is illustrative of the reforming spirit in Manchester during the growth and reform of Unitarianism. Revd. William Gaskell, husband of novelist Elizabeth Gaskell and minister of the Cotton Chapel, was determined to re-found the lost Unitarian congregation that had existed in Mosley Street, and the site of the current building was chosen to be the home of the new chapel.

'A subscription was raised towards the new building which quickly attracted sufficient money for an architect to be appointed and a start to be made.'[16] The financial investment made on a local level indicates that it had a community of support for its foundation.

7.4.3.2 Associative Interest

> *Association with a notable family, person, event, or movement.*[17]

7.4.3.3 Revd. William Gaskell (1805-1884)

Revd. William Gaskell was the minister of the Cotton Chapel, the mother-chapel of the Mosley Chapel, and subsequently the Welsh Baptist Chapel. He led the charge for finding the location and foundation of the Welsh Baptist Chapel, and is therefore key to its history. Gaskell was a proactive and well known social reformer, keeping reformist company such as John Ruskin and Charles Dickens. He was also husband to now-famous Manchester author Elizabeth Gaskell, and their Grade II* Listed House at 84 Plymouth Grove underwent a massive £2.5m restoration, opening to the public in 2014. This refurbishment project indicates how significant the Gaskells were during their lifetime, but also the lasting impact their legacy has had on the heritage of Manchester.

7.4.3.4 Communal Value

> *Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.*[18]

Due to the original and adopted functions of the Welsh Baptist Chapel, its communal values are linked to what would previously have been its liturgical or worship values. Though its original Unitarian roots are not likely to be remembered by contemporaries, the building was also used by Jehovah's Witnesses in the mid-twentieth century before it was compulsory purchased by the Council. The building also functioned as a mosque while on short term lease from the council, with the Sunday School building being home to the Islamic Academy. Though it has changed hands between many religious ideologies, the chapel may be remembered as a place of worship by those later caretakers of the building. The chapel is now used as student accommodation and is the home of many individuals. This contributes strongly to the communal value of the building.

The historic interest of the asset is **high.**

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