

Meanwood Church

Heritage Statement

To Support Listed Building Consent Application for Changes Associated with Modifications to Grade II Listed Church from denomination of Methodism to Iglesia Ni Cristo.



INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to support the application for Retrospective Listed Building Consent for modifications to the Former Methodist Church, Green Road, Meanwood, Leeds, (henceforth known in this report as 'Meanwood Church').

The building was purchased by the Iglesia Ni Cristo following an open market sale in 2016 following the sale of the building by the Methodist congregation. It is unknown whether the church was formerly de sanctified as a place of worship.

The building was Listed in 1996 as Grade II and the List description is as follows:

SE23NE GREEN ROAD, Meanwood 714-1/6/961 (South West side) Meanwood Methodist Church

GV II

Methodist chapel. 1881. By William Hill, extended 1886 by same architect. Meanwood sandstone and Potternewton stone, slate roof.

PLAN: on a steeply-sloping site, the building is at the corner with Monkbridge Road. Gothic Revival style. EXTERIOR: plinth. Nave with entrance lobby at NE end, octagonal buttressed turret with stone spire; former Sunday School entrance at W end of Monk Bridge Road facade, the building 2 storeys high at this end. Chapel entrance has 6 stone steps up to board door in arched recess with round window in the tympanum, flanking lancets, tall 3-light wheel window flanked by lancets with quatrefoils, all under hoodmoulds, spire to left and a 2nd narrower entrance far left. Paired trefoil-headed windows to nave, plainer openings to basement and SW end openings. INTERIOR: an impressive wide nave of 6 bays with open roof, the arched ribs having pierced panels; round arch to chancel, column and pointed arch to organ loft. Original pine pews with brass fittings, cleaned c1990,



pulpit with quatrefoil panels; repositioned. Screen to entrance lobby altered, gallery with panelled front, stairs with turned newels and balusters. The extensions were to provide a minister's vestry, more rooms for the Sunday School and meetings. (Hopwood, A & Rose, S: Sesquicentenary Story: 150 years of Meanwood Methodism: 1961-: 15).

PLANNING HISTORY

The Methodist denomination benefits from Ecclesiastical Exemption as regulated through the Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) (England) Order 2010. As such there is no secular Planning record of changes made to the building throughout its 137 year history. As such it is extremely difficult to comprehend the levels of change undertaken since the building's construction and subsequent extension in the late 19th century.

It is assumed however that few changes to the fabric took place and certainly fewer alterations would have occurred following formal Listing of the building in 1996. However a summary of later changes as confirmed by former parishioners and through a search of the Methodist Archives is as follows;

1981 - Enlargement of the Communion Area (also includes the organ refurbishment)

1997 – Rewiring (new fuse box etc.)

2001 – New Boiler

2003 – Refurbishment of Kitchen

2005 – Roof Repairs

2005 – Disabled Access and to create a disabled w/c (including installation of stair lift)

2014 – Replacement noticeboard – (Was to be approved but was later abandoned because the church ceased to meet).

The church was deemed surplus to requirements by the Methodist Church and placed on the open market in 2016 under agents Sanderson Weatherall. The building was subsequently purchased by the Iglesia Ni Cristo. It is understood that early negotiations were undertaken prior or shortly after purchase with Leeds City Council Conservation Officers at which time Officers were made aware of the desire to retain the building as a church. It appears that negotiations initially went well and an initial Listed Building application was submitted. It is unclear exactly why work commenced within the building prior to this application being determined however. It may have been partially due to the lack of understanding of the current planning system by the largely Filipino congregation who were, through no fault of their own, ignorant of the restrictions placed upon the whole of a listed structure. It may also have been in light of the need to address structural defects within the building that were in danger of worsening. As a result however much work was undertaken that was un-authorized. This included the removal of the Pulpit and part of the organ. In 2018 Enforcement action was commenced by Leeds City Council and a formal stop notice was subsequently issued in late July 2018. No work has gone on in the building since that time although scaffold has since been removed.

CURRENT SITUATION

The interior of the church still maintains its essential dimensions and character. The work that the Iglesia Ni Cristo have undertaken has been of a very high quality. Bespoke manufacturers have been employed to undertake renovation of joinery work and all new furnishings are of an exceptionally high quality. The church Nave itself is still functioning as it was intended and the building is readable as a church with all the essential elements of a functioning Christian building being maintained.

Work however has halted until a new retrospective Listed Building Application has been submitted and agreed. There are several outstanding issues that Leeds City Council have concerns with. These will be covered more specifically below. Since the appointment of TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage Ltd much assessment of significance and understanding of the implemented changes has taken place. A full record of the building has been undertaken through visits and photography and new plans have been produced by a Conservation Architect.

This application therefore, although retrospective, has been undertaken by IHBC accredited Heritage professionals who have arrived at the building with fresh perceptions. It is our opinion that the majority of the work undertaken does not in any significant way compromise the overall significance or understanding of the building as a whole.



As can be seen from the above images, the church is still easily recognisable as such. Although work has stopped the basic credentials of the building, decorative features and joinery and architectural features have been largely retained to the benefit of the building. Left: The original Nave doors with stained glass retained and refurbished. Centre Left: No change to the hammer beam roof trusses and decoration is still clearly visible against the white background. Centre Right: The church now has elements unique to the Filipino church congregation such as the gold ceiling panels and crystal chandelier. Right: View of the Nave, still a recognisable Gothic building.

THE IGLESIA NI CRISTO

The Iglesia Ni Cristo are a growing church that originated in the Philippines and was founded in 1914. It now represents the largest indigenous Christian church in the Philippines. The church grew extensively following the Second World War and now has congregations within 100 countries with its first overseas church being founded in Hawaii in 1968. The foundation day of the church became a national holiday in the Philippines in 2009.

Services are largely held in indigenous languages and the Church conforms to a Unitarian tradition. In terms of architecture, the Iglesia Ni Cristo largely conform to the general aesthetics of traditional Christian architecture including large Nave and often ornate decoration but without figurative forms included.

In a similar way to other churches around the world the church buildings seem to celebrate the glory of God through architecture, colour and decoration and often great expense is given over to creating the quality as required. The church's mother church in the Philippines is a highly ornate piece of architecture that successfully takes traditional gothic and classical forms and intersperses them into a new, dramatic whole that exemplifies new religious architecture that was borne of traditional European and East Asian forms.

At Meanwood typical, but more subtle, Iglesia Ni Cristo motifs have been used to enable the church to be synonymous with other Iglesia Ni Cristo churches and to provide a place of worship for their growing congregations which in Leeds numbers around 1000 people. These include the triple pulpit of fine hardwood, the crimson carpeting and the partial gold ceiling panels. As described below such interventions are not in conflict with the traditional Methodist forms and decoration. The church will also be attractively lit and the stone cleaning has considerably improved the physical appearance of the church building.



HISTORIC CONTEXT

1850 - The settlement of Bentley consisted of a dispersed settlement of houses around the junction of Monkbridge Road and Stonegate Road.

1890 - The first appearance of Meanwood Methodist Church which is listed as a Wesleyan church. The building of the Highbury terrace houses appear up the hill and this conforms to the growth of Methodism within the working class communities.

1910 - Little change to the development of the area.

1930's - The 1930's saw the expansion of suburban type housing within the vicinity. The church now stands next to the former cinema building and this reinforced the town centre nature of the Bentley/Meanwood area.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

“The loss (of so many) urban meeting houses of early date has sometimes skewed the history of Non Conformist architecture, emphasising the charming and the vernacular at the expense of the stately and the architecturally polite.” (Wakeling 2017)

The earliest Non Conformist Chapels date to the era of the Commonwealth and were at the time generally simple, minimal structures with an authenticity to material and proportion. Early examples locally include Bramhope (1649) and Great Houghton (1650) although even here there was a desire for visual affect. Other local early non conformist chapels can be found in the Rawdon area which became a centre of concentration for Baptist and Quaker churches.

Non conformist churches were not intentionally hesitant to use decoration, as Wakeling announces ***“Presbyterian godliness and sobriety did not preclude architectural display.”*** Indeed he goes on to state that urban congregations actually often had ‘architectural expectations’ and this is reflected in the replacement of several of the earlier non conformist chapels to be resurrected as new buildings later in the 19th century. Later chapels began to elaborate further on the use of decoration and architecture and both the Italianate and Gothic styles were used widely as the 18th and 19th centuries went on. The earliest Methodist churches were not afraid of showing their grandeur and even some of the first Methodist Chapels sanctioned by Wesley were highly ornate. These included the Whitefield’s Methodist Tabernacle (1756) which sported grand classical pediments complete with Corinthian pilasters and topped by a copy of the Halicarnassus Mausoleum - one of the classical wonders of the world! Countess Huntingdon’s chapel of 1765 was also one of the first Neo Gothic buildings in Bath and was intentionally flamboyant in its design. The chapel of Ebenezer Chapel in Sheffield (1823) represents an early use of the Neo Gothic style in Yorkshire and included Gothic detailing that was to inspire later churches to great effect.

It was therefore not uncommon for Non Conformist Churches to epitomise several styles of architecture, not only the Italianate or primitive/minimal designs that they are usually, and often wrongly, associated with. Methodist Churches therefore can be found in all types of building and Gothic Revival was one popular style that was used to very great extent. This was especially true in the urban areas throughout the north of England where the church gained considerable credence. Notable examples of the Gothic Revival in such churches occur at Todmorden (1865-9), Upper Wortley Road (1881) Mill Hill Chapel (1847) and Headingley Methodist Church (1845) with Meanwood (1881) being a much later example.

Internally there was wide variety and even Wesley’s first Methodist churches sported rather grand interiors, including a Adam inspired ceiling decoration that is now painted gold! This is echoed in the contemporary descriptions of Methodist chapels being ***“...well lighted by chandeliers suspended from the ceiling”*** or through descriptions of the whole height of the nave being ***“surmounted with Corinthian capitals in white and gold.”*** Even Andrew Trimen’s 1850’s pattern book of chapels stated that ***“No colour is more becoming for coverings of the alter or communion, than the rich brown or port wine. The best crimson velvet, with carpets and coverings to match, with small tassels, and a gold fringe, are the most appropriate.”*** Such a description is hardly describing Puritan sparsity.

The Methodist New Connexion was a breakaway faction from the Wesleyan Methodists and at Meanwood the church employed Architect William Hill to undertake the work on their new building, strategically located on the junction of Stonegate Road and Monkbridge Road, its focus fronting up the hill and forming a key gateway building into the area then known as Bentley. The siting of the church was no coincidence as just down Meanwood Road was the largest concentration of Tanneries outside of London, this giving rise to an explosion in workers migrating to the area to serve both the tannery at Meanwood and the nearby stone quarries.

The Methodist Church at Meanwood therefore was constructed much later in this period at a time when Gothic Revival design was actually receding in popularity within the Non Conformist movement. The building corresponds well with designs within certain pattern books of the time and Meanwood Methodist Church actually appears very similar to a Neo Gothic church design appearing on the front cover of George Bidlake's *'Sketches of Churches: Designed for the use of Nonconformists'* dated 1865. (see images below). The idea therefore that a Methodist church is somehow intentionally minimal and lacks the flamboyance of style of architecture or decoration of other churches is erroneous.

Many Methodist churches are ornate, some with plasterwork or blue painted ceilings, others with chandeliers or ornate classical detail. Gothic hammerbeam roofs as used at Meanwood are also intended specifically for decorative purposes and are hardly the result of wishing to 'tone down' the decorative nature of such buildings. Nevertheless a small amount of the significance of Meanwood is due to this relationship between what could be construed as the highly decorative, i.e the Hammerbeam roof and organ column, with the sparsity of other decoration, including the simple, tongue and groove cladding.



WILLIAM HILL ARCHITECT

William Hill was involved with the creation of several new churches for the Methodist New Connexion and his willingness to travel to undertake work enabled him to be gainfully employed throughout his career. Hill was by no means the most famous architect of his time concerned with such buildings but he did win notable commissions including the competition winning entry for Bolton Town Hall (1866-73) which was actually a scaled down copy of Leeds Town Hall. (Hill even ironically won the Bolton competition over Cuthbert Broderick, the original Architect of Leeds Town Hall!).

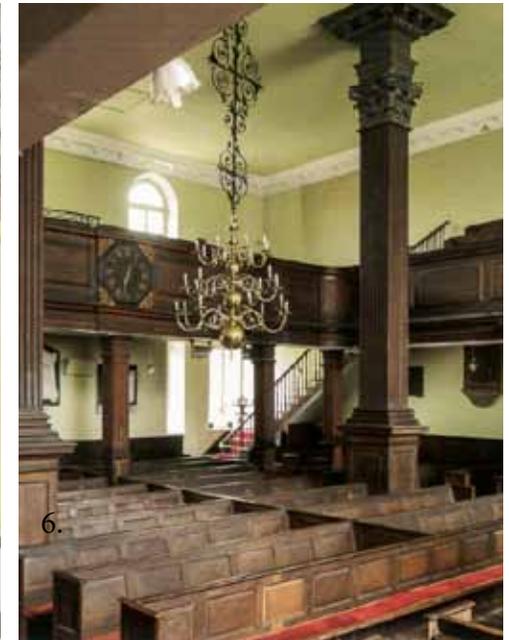
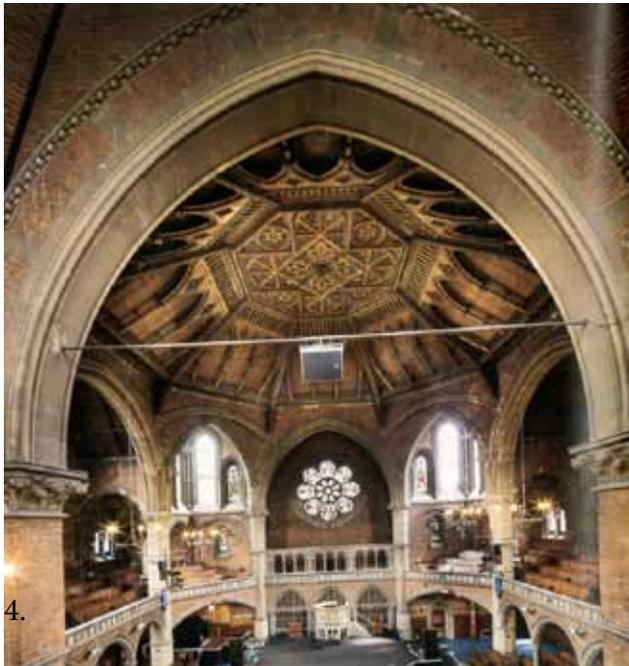
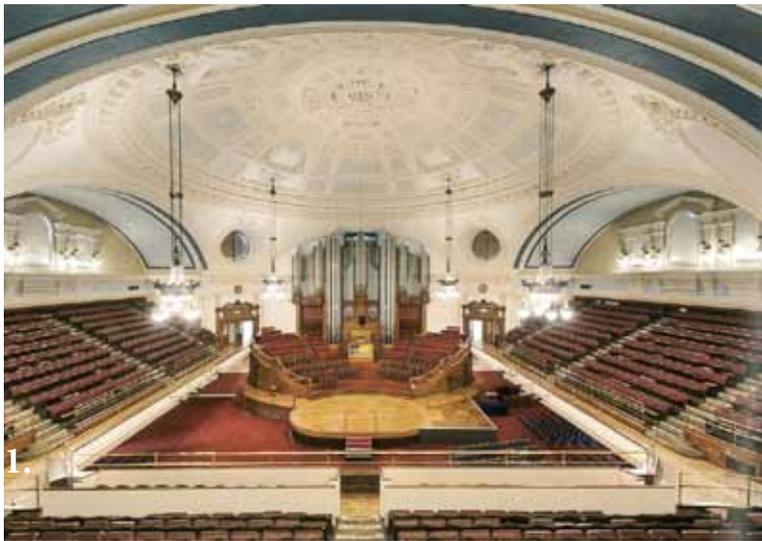
Hill commenced work in 1850 and started his own company aged 22, his office was located at 59 Albion Street, Leeds. He was elected fellow of RIBA in 1871. In 1868 Hill joined in partnership with Salmon L Swann of Sheffield and his later commissions included around 45 Gothic Revival Chapels including Christ Church, Barrow in Furness (1873-5) Bethesda Methodist Church in Elland (1879-80), and Meanwood (1881).

According to 'Building a Great Victorian City, Leeds Architects and Architecture 1790-1914 (Victorian Society 2011) Hill was ***“Adept at all styles of Architecture although arguably weakest with Gothic!”***

Meanwood Church is arguably therefore the least significant of Hill's work, despite obtaining the same Grade II listing as that of the obviously superior Portsmouth Guildhall (1886). The building represents a flurry of low key Gothic Revival buildings coming immediately after Bethesda and Yeadon Town Hall and of lesser quality than the more grand town halls elsewhere. This is reflected in Bidlake's book and one could argue that Meanwood is actually a rather dated copy from such a pattern book, the similarities between Bidlake's diagrams and Hills commissioned churches being rather obvious. Indeed it may be possible to question how much involvement Hill actually had within the design of the church as at the time he appeared to be very busy with other, more high profile, projects. Nevertheless the building is clearly Gothic and of its time but it also has an obvious general conformity to the likes of Bidlake and his pattern book.

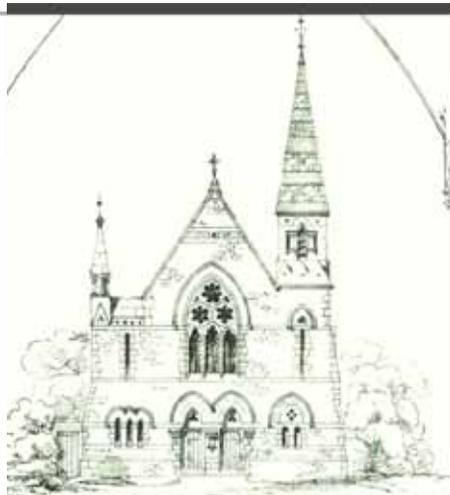
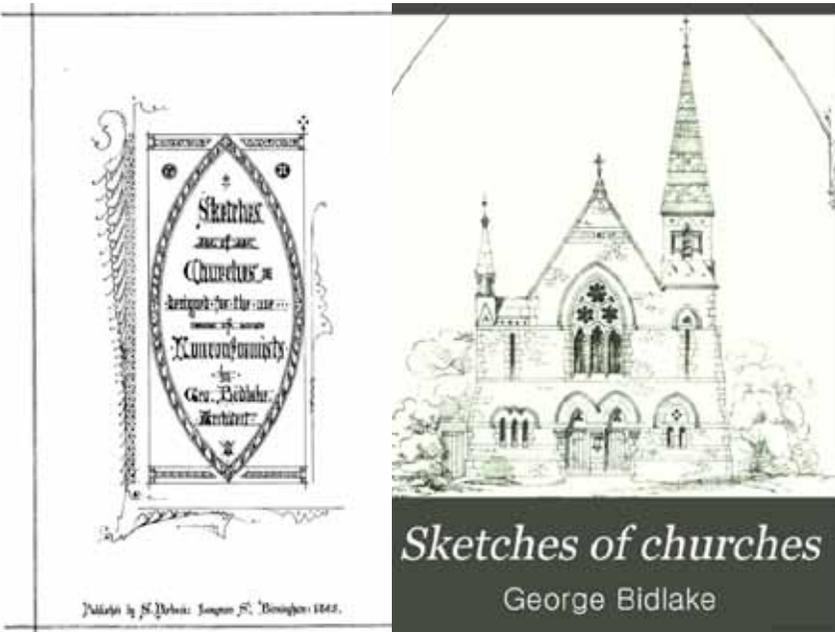


Above: Hill's greatest creation, Portsmouth Guildhall, and yet still on considered a Grade II Listed building, the same as Meanwood.

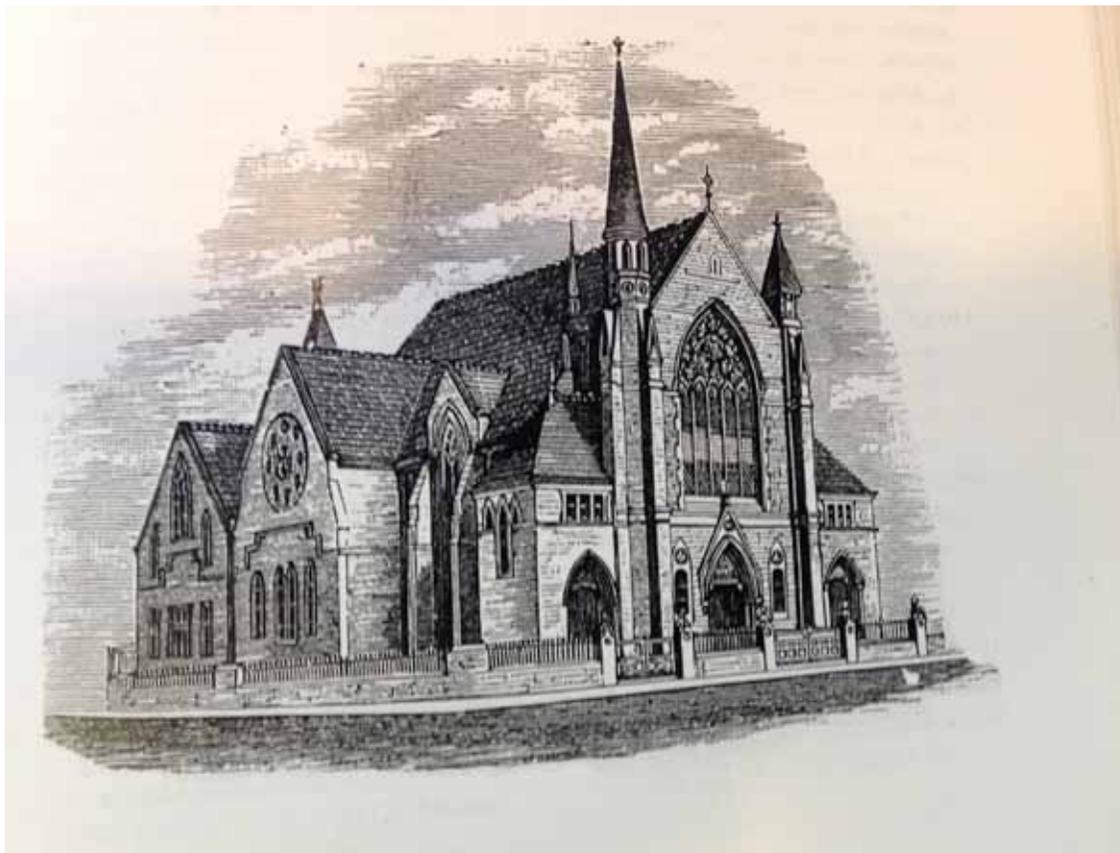
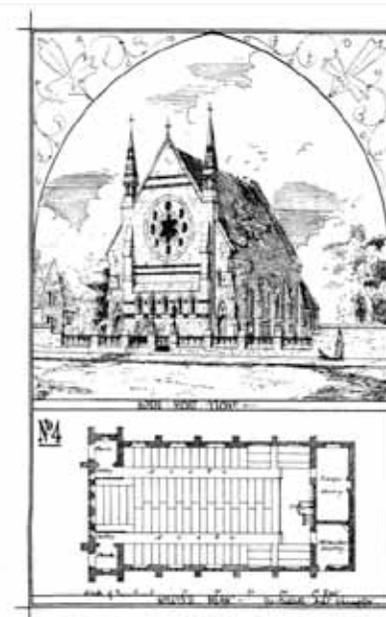


Non-Conformist Elaboration

As Wakeling so convincingly illustrates in his book 'Chapels of England' from where these images are taken, Non Conformist chapels were anything but minimal in their decoration. As these examples show, elaborate ceilings, the use of blue and gold along with carved woodwork, plaster and chandeliers are all synonymous with the general design approach used within this application by the Iglesia Ni Cristo. 1/2) Westminster Wesleyan Methodist Central Hall (1905) 3) Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, Wolverhampton (1899), 4) Union Chapel, Islington, (1875) 5) Congregational Chapel Saltaire, (1856) and 6) Mary Street Chapel, Taunton (1721)



Sketches of churches
George Bidlake



Some examples from George Bidlake's 1865 book 'Sketches of Churches - Designed For The Use of Non Conformists'.

What is apparent from these images is the similarity of Meanwood Church to the pattern book styles. There are subtle deviations but the overall aesthetic is the same. This may be due to Hill's competing priorities at the time and it is possible that a smaller commission such as Meanwood didn't obtain the full attention of the man who designed Bolton Town Hall and Portsmouth Guildhall. The conclusion that Meanwood Church is by no means unique or architecturally outstanding is therefore plausible.

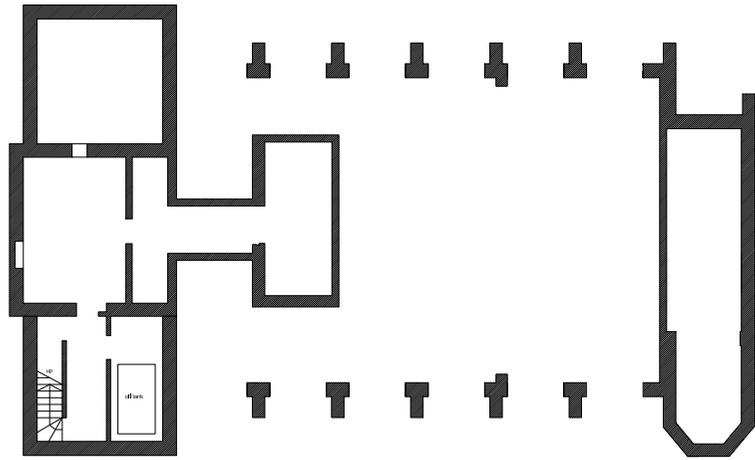
It is also worthy of note that none of these examples show an organ within the church plan.

Christ Church, Barrow in Furness by Hill. A very similar church to Meanwood.

Proposed Plans, Elevations and Sections

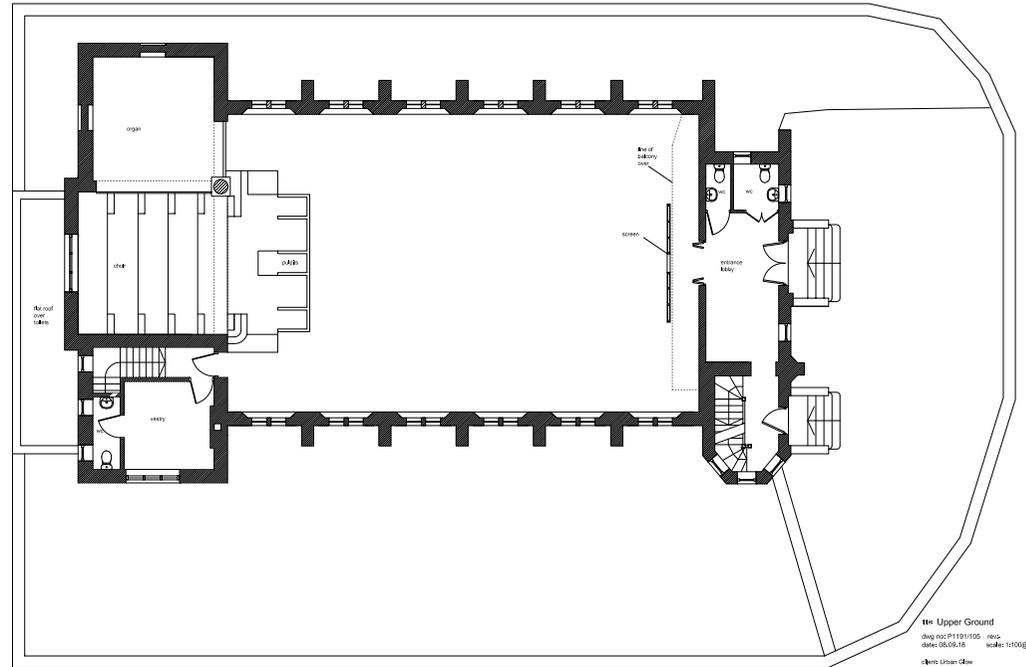
Undertaken by Peter J. Rice BArch DipArch MA RIBA IHBC (Affiliate)





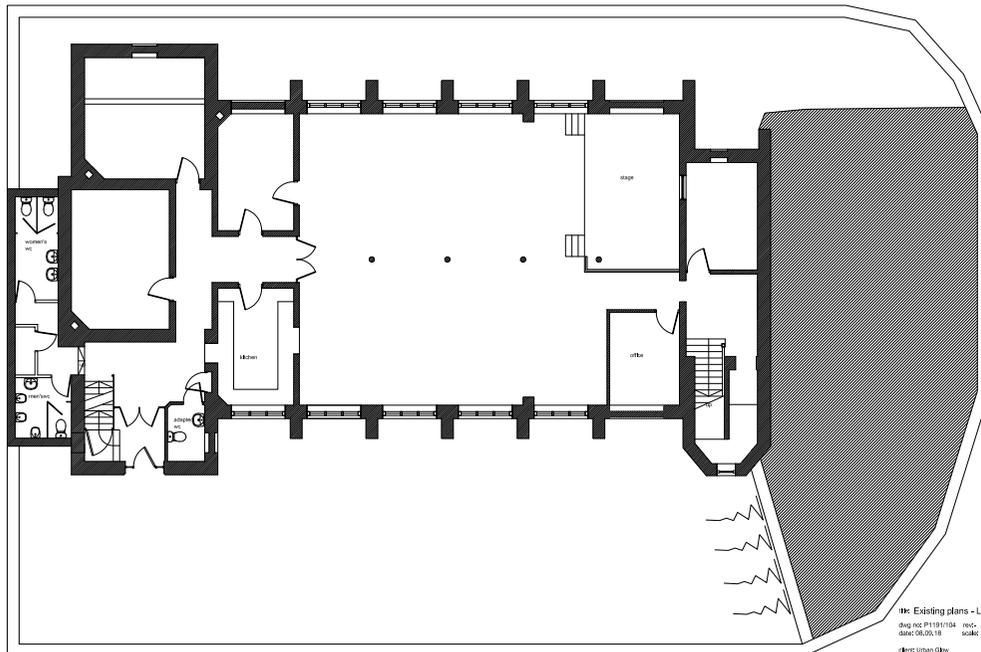
Basement Level

Existing plans - Basement
 diag no: P1191103 rev: 08.09.18 scale: 1:100@A3
 client: Urban Glen
 project: Meanwood Methodist Church
Peter J Rice RIBA
 Chartered Architect
 581 Meanwood Rd, Leeds LS6 4AY
 telephone: 0113 2304114
 e.mail: peterjrice@yahoo.co.uk



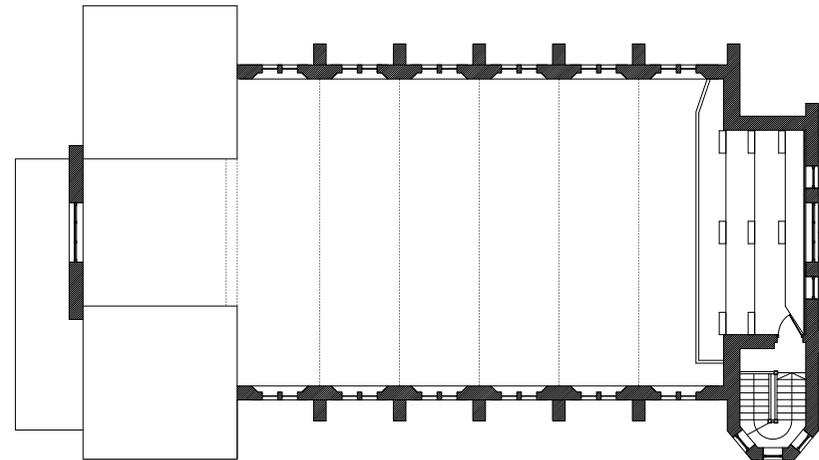
Upper Ground Level

Upper Ground
 diag no: P1191105 rev: 08.09.18 scale: 1:100@A3
 client: Urban Glen
 project: Meanwood Methodist Church
Peter J Rice RIBA
 Chartered Architect
 581 Meanwood Rd, Leeds LS6 4AY
 telephone: 0113 2304114
 e.mail: peterjrice@yahoo.co.uk



Lower Ground Level

Existing plans - Lower Ground
 diag no: P1191104 rev: 08.09.18 scale: 1:100@A3
 client: Urban Glen
 project: Meanwood Methodist Church
Peter J Rice RIBA
 Chartered Architect
 581 Meanwood Rd, Leeds LS6 4AY
 telephone: 0113 2304114
 e.mail: peterjrice@yahoo.co.uk



Balcony Level

Balcony Level
 diag no: P1191106 rev: 08.09.18 scale: 1:100@A3
 client: Urban Glen
 project: Meanwood Methodist Church
Peter J Rice RIBA
 Chartered Architect
 581 Meanwood Rd, Leeds LS6 4AY
 telephone: 0113 2304114
 e.mail: peterjrice@yahoo.co.uk

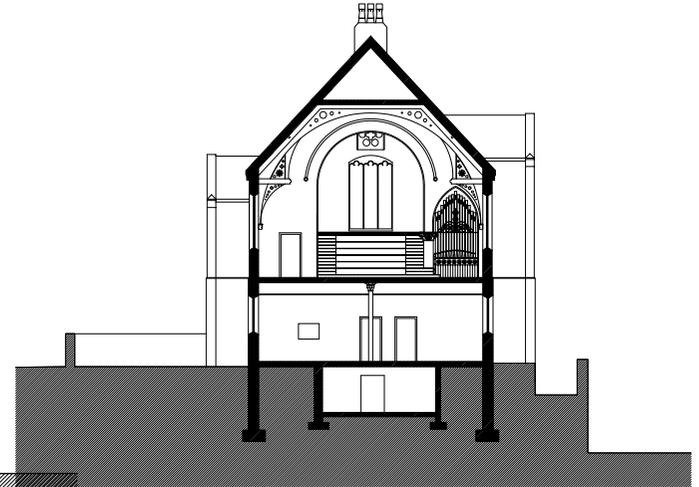




Long Section



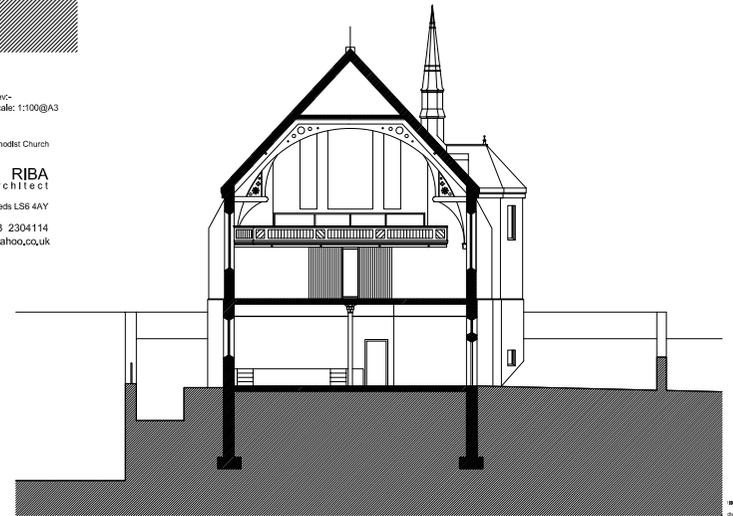
#1c Long Section
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 client: Urban Glow
 property: Meanwood Methodist Church
 Peter J Rice RIBA
 Chartered Architect
 581 Meanwood Rd, Leeds LS6 4AY
 telephone: 0113 2304114
 e.mail: peterjrice@yahoo.co.uk



Section Looking South West



#1d Section looking south west
 dwg no: P1191107 rev:
 date: 28.09.18 scale: 1:100@A3
 client: Urban Glow
 property: Meanwood Methodist Church
 Peter J Rice RIBA
 Chartered Architect
 581 Meanwood Rd, Leeds LS6 4AY
 telephone: 0113 2304114
 e.mail: peterjrice@yahoo.co.uk

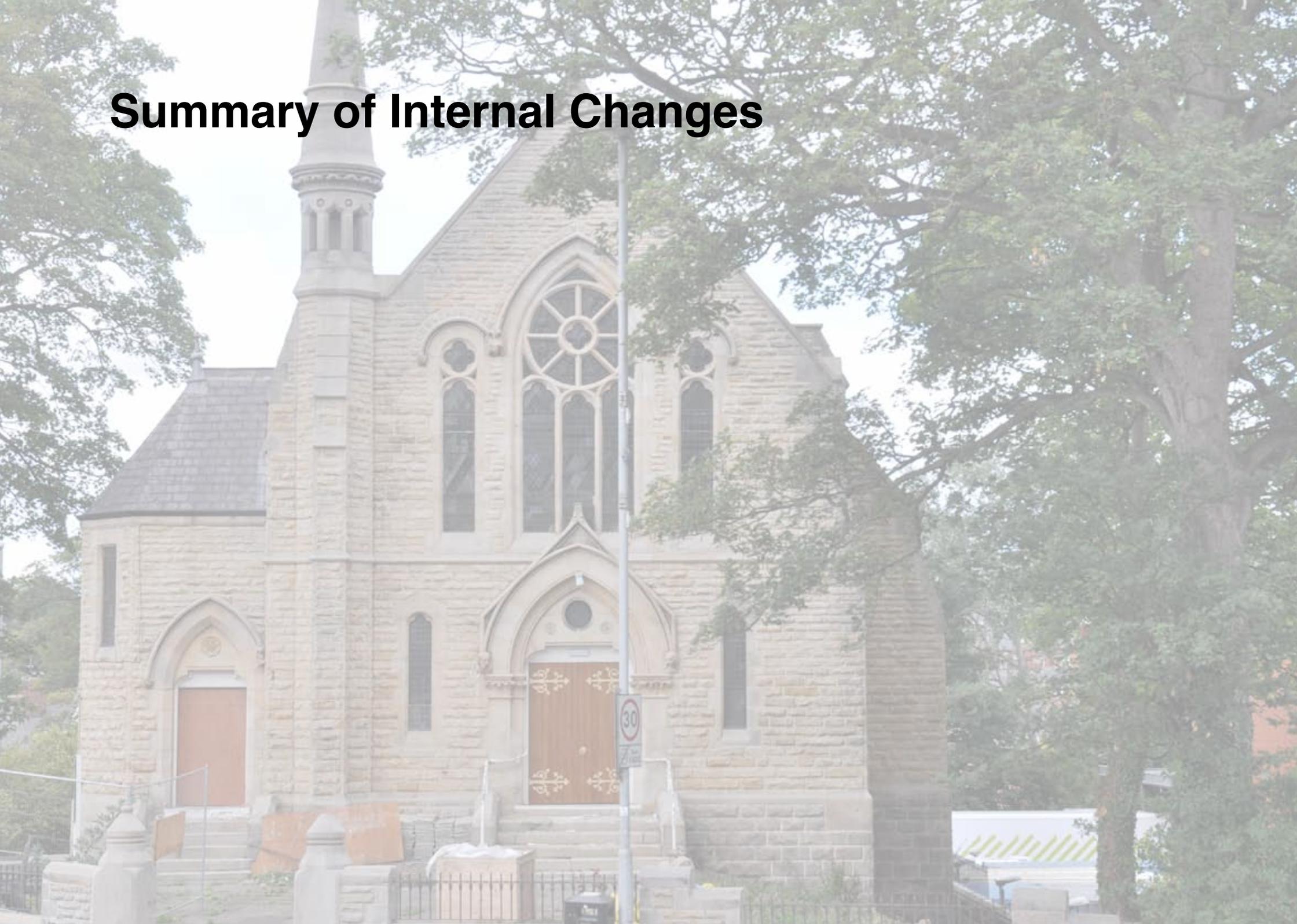


Section Looking North East



#1e Section looking north east
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 client: Urban Glow
 property: Meanwood Methodist Church
 Peter J Rice RIBA
 Chartered Architect
 581 Meanwood Rd, Leeds LS6 4AY
 telephone: 0113 2304114
 e.mail: peterjrice@yahoo.co.uk

Summary of Internal Changes



SUMMARY of INTERNAL CHANGES

WORKS TO THE LOBBY AREA

There is an existing vestibule/lobby area as one enters Meanwood Church. This is an area where the Methodist congregation created a disabled wc in 1995 and as such the lobby has experienced some significant change. The only changes however occurring through this application include the installation of new flooring, new bathroom furniture and tiles and the insertion of a screen under the balcony.

The screen below the balcony is considered the most contentious issue. Such a screen is required for very clear liturgical reasons by the Iglesia Ni Cristo as it serves two functions; Firstly the congregation is split by gender, in a similar manner to the way in which other religious congregations are segregated. The second reason is to enable the names of those present to be registered and subsequently seen by all.

We do not believe that the insertion of the screen causes obstruction or significantly harms the significance or appreciation of the building. There has been concern raised regarding the obstruction of the view into the Nave of the Chancel window however, the screening of the central Nave is a very well established mechanism for obscuring the view of the Nave historically, either through physical partitions or curtains.

The screen itself will be very high quality timber which will be well integrated with the existing doors with stained glass panels. However as a means of acknowledging the concerns outlined in discussions the proposal presented is to glaze the central portion of the screen so as to allow the view to be maintained, whilst at the same time providing a draught and sound exclusion area. It is felt that such a solution will introduce a modern, minimal intervention into the space and maintain the perception of the Chancel and the Nave for visitors. The glazed screen will be full height although some frosting may be required to highlight that the glass is present. The flanking woodwork will be high quality joinery synonymous with the rest of the church. We would be happy to accept conditions for the implementation of this screen.





Two impressions of the impact of the proposed screen upon the Nave and entrance to the church. Above: The left hand image shows the structure when work ceased on the building. The right hand image attempts to create an impression of what impact there will be upon the church. In these cases the view of the Nave will be maintained as one walks through the existing doors and any perception from the Chancel end will be minimal.

ORNATE PANELLING TO NAVE WALLS

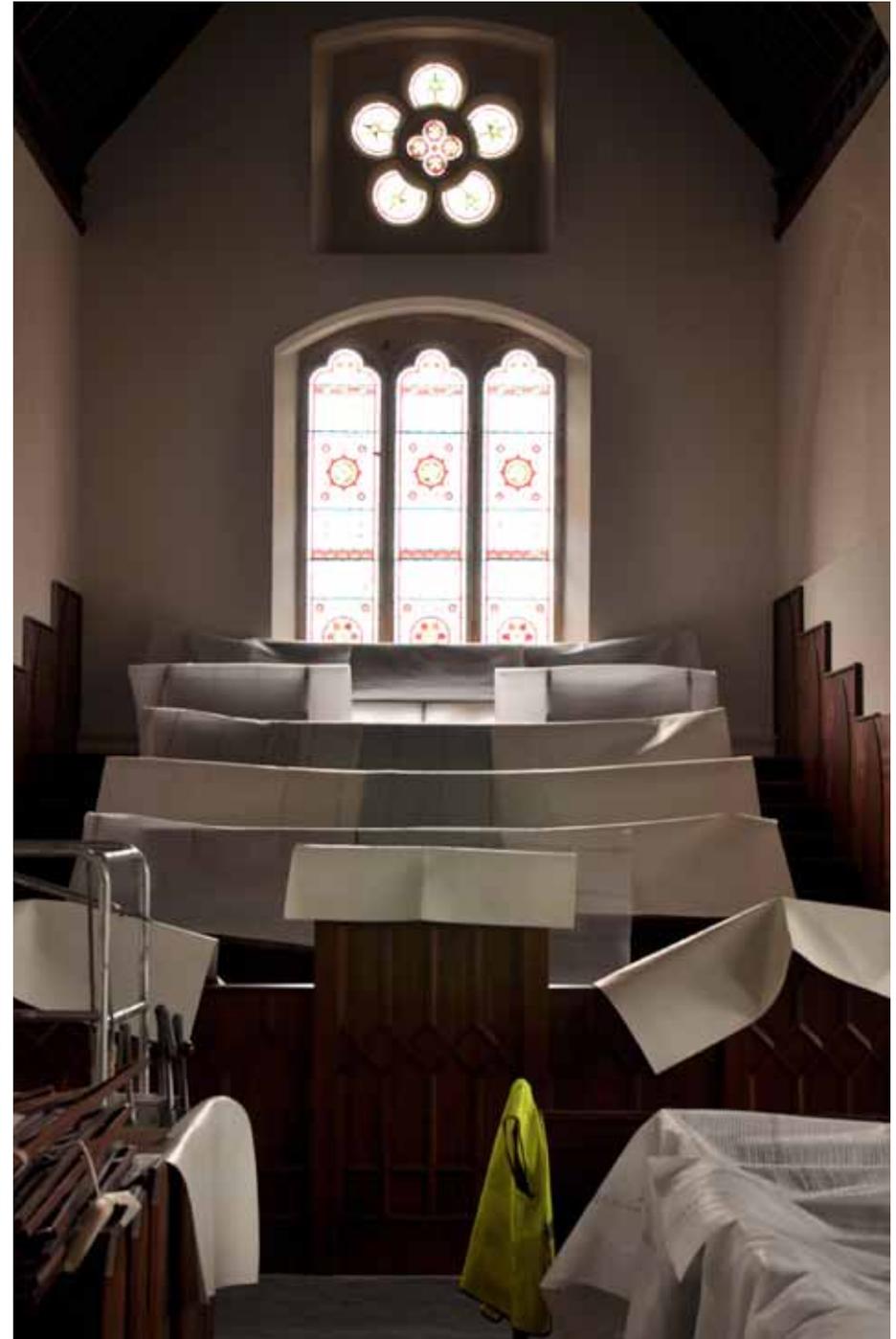
The panelling surrounding the Nave walls was necessary for very practical reasons. Firstly the requirement to alter the configuration of pews that were previously fixed to the walls leads to some walls needing either a plaster or panel covering to cover the 'scars' left behind from the previous structures. Timber panelling is not considered inconsistent with Methodist churches or buildings of this type indeed Andrew Trimen, in his 1850 pattern book regarding Chapels goes to some lengths to explain the acoustic benefits of wood to the chapel interior.

The proposal therefore is simply to reinstate panelling to the walls of the Nave using a high quality timber with simple, Gothic details. The panels themselves use the simple Gothic arch as their central motif. This motif is absolutely consistent with a Gothic Revival church of this kind. Evidence can also be found of Non conformist Primitive Methodist Churches where almost identical Gothic panelling can be found, even in much simpler chapels. (see image below from Wakeling 2017).



PODIUM OVER QUIRE LOFT.

The Iglesia Ni Cristo have certain theological reasons for needing seating within the quire facing the congregation. Similar to conventional Christian worship such seats are required for the high clergy and church Elders. The podium within the quire was constructed from timber platforms so as to create a stepped elevation. Concerns have been raised with regards to the seating upon this level obscuring the Chancel window. The solution within this application is a simple one. The existing platform has not built over or across the existing Chancel window cill level. Therefore the window cill is still present and has not been interfered with. The installed pews at this level currently obscure the window and the simple solution is to remove these pews from the top level. Remaining pews will flank either side of the window but the result will maintain views towards the window and help maintain the continuity and significance of the window.



RECONFIGURATION OF PEWS

The existing pews have been refurbished by **Jacobs Furniture Ltd** who are specialist conservation joiners based in Warrington, Cheshire. The work undertaken included the strip, sand and repolishing of the pews as per the client's requirements. No pews were replacements and all have been refurbished to a very high standard, as can be seen from the photographs. The pews now have the capacity to last at least another one hundred years.

RECONFIGURATION OF THE BALCONY.

The balcony area has been modified to enable three full rows of seats to be installed as opposed to largely inaccessible seating that was present previously. The balcony has also been strengthened and prior to this work was deemed dangerous. The balcony still maintains its original function and provides extra seating for the congregation. The window is still clearly visible and the church's significance is not deemed to have been adversely affected.

Balustrade. A deliberately contrasting balustrade was used to provide a readable contrast to the church. As well as being very practical in terms of maintenance the balustrade is required for the safety of those using the balcony. Glass panelled balustrades were considered however they were deemed too onerous to keep clean and not always visible by people. The balustrade currently inserted is modern but does contrast and is largely recessive to the dark wood of the rest of the church. **If required conditions to examine the details of a change in balustrade would be accepted.**



Above: Pews as refurbished and repaired. Above Right: Profile of pew. Left: View of balcony. Below: In situ balustrade to the balcony. Not very visible from below and the modern contrast does not interfere with the church interior.



HEATING UNITS

Prior to the halting of work within the church two new gas heaters were installed above the balcony level. These heaters reflected previous heaters that were located below the balcony. These heaters are however much larger and do have an industrial aesthetic and discussions around covering the units or boxing them in has not managed to obtain a suitable solution. Such solutions indeed explored a louvred cabinet around the units and even the solution of moving the units under the chancel platform. Unfortunately due to restricted airflow this solution will not be feasible.

As a result the proposal is now to completely remove the heaters and install a ducted heating network to serve the nave. This will utilise the area above a suspended ceiling for the pipe runs and will be served from the original boiler room beneath the north side of the church where existing flue outlets are present. Grills will then be placed at strategic intervals within the floor of the Nave so as not to harm the fabric of the building to any great extent.

It is felt that such a solution will be infinitely preferable to many other heating options and, although some, very minor, removal of selected floorboards will be required, it is felt that this is proportional and will result in a better, more sustainable heating system being implemented into the church fabric. Such an intervention would also represent an improvement upon the previously approved electric heaters that were mounted beneath the balcony.

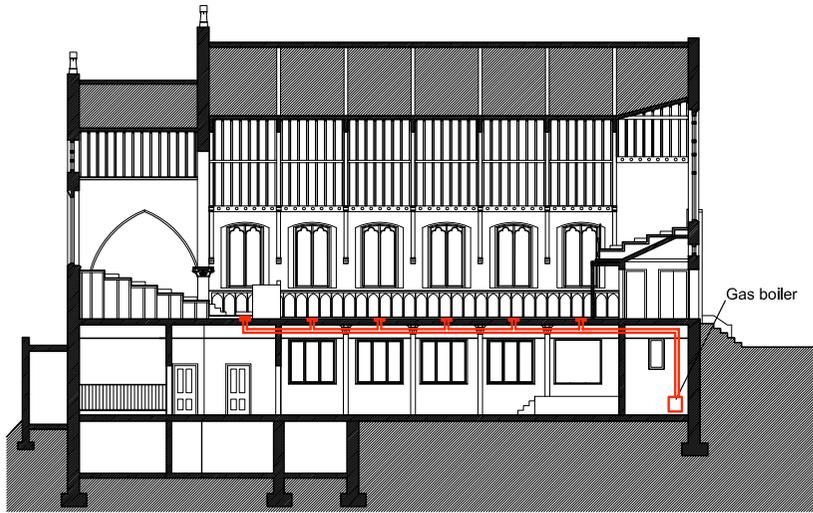
The second concern with regards the heating system are the two flues extending out of the roof. Although the replacement of the orange flange with a black charcoal colour piece would remove the glare of the orange colour in this ducted proposal all exhaust apparatus would extract through existing openings in the north of the building. Where the flues are to be removed, slates will be replaced and the roof made good.



Existing heaters and flue to the roof. Proposed to be removed and replaced with a ducted solution. Below: Existing (historic) flue extract.



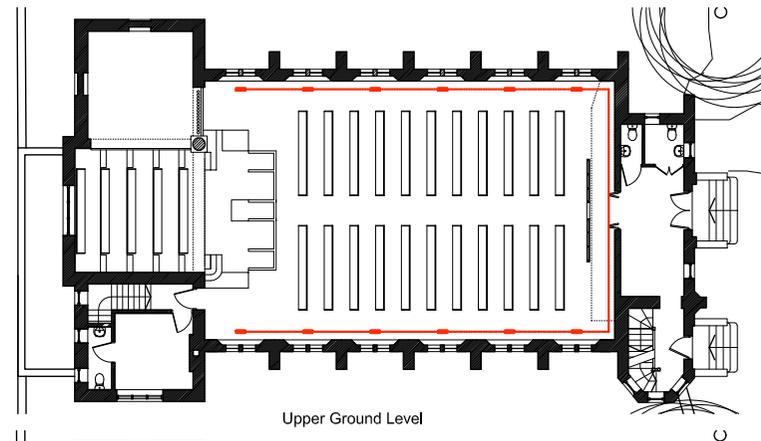
Proposed New Heating Runs



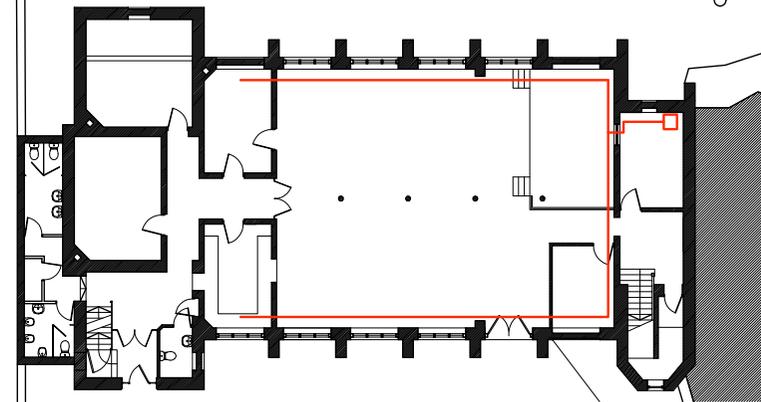
Long Section



Section



Upper Ground Level



Lower Ground Level

title: Heating Ducting

dwg no: P1191/110 rev-
date: 02.10.18 scale: 1:200@A3

client: Urban Glow
property: Meanwood Methodist Church

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ORNATE PANELLING TO CEILING.

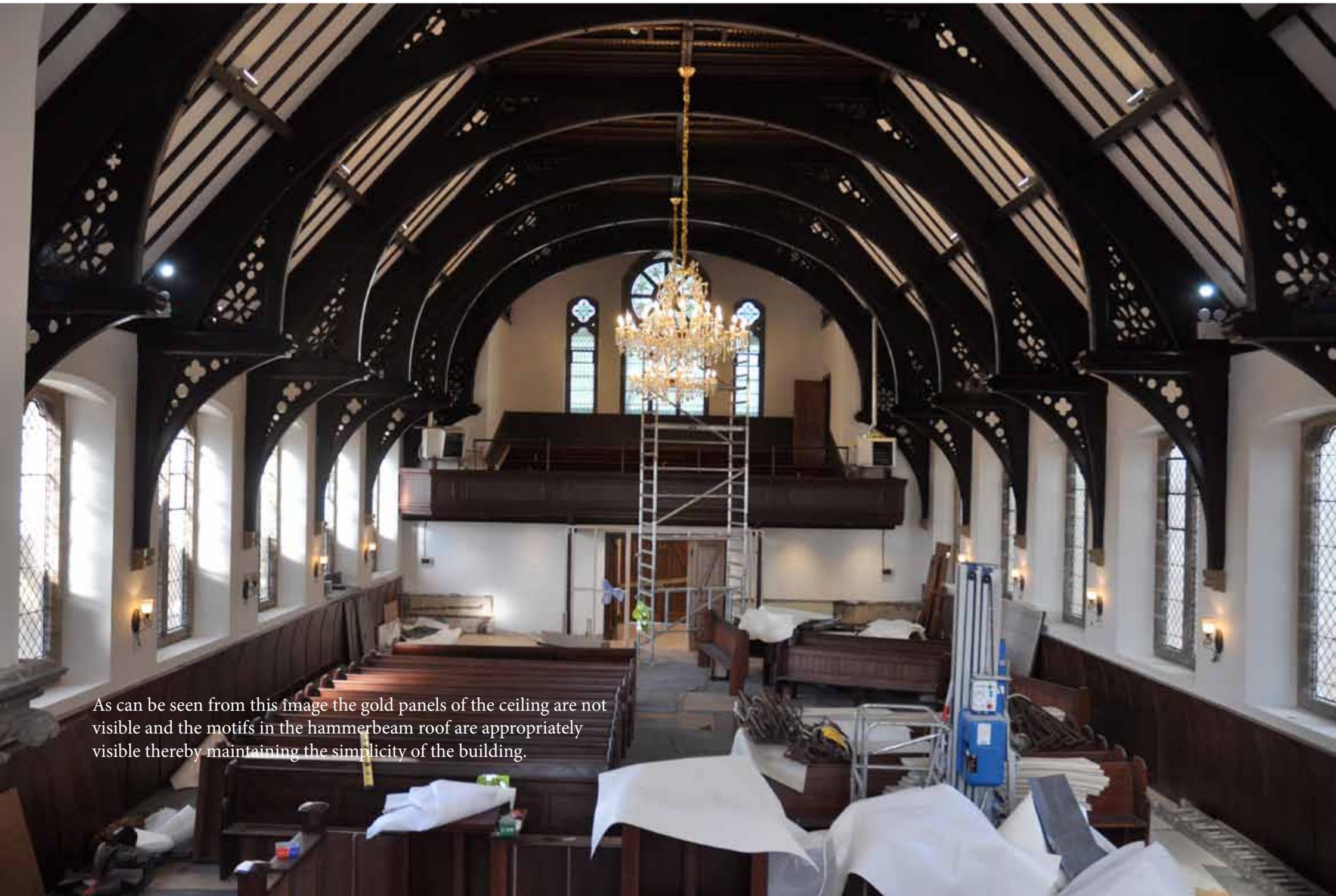
The gold panelling to the ceiling of the church Nave is arguably a modern interpretation of the traditional Methodist tradition of painting the ceilings of their churches a sky blue colour, as can be seen in the images below. Indeed the ceiling of Meanwood Church itself was painted a similar blue colour. The reason for this decorative scheme was presumably to enable the feeling of the presence of 'God in his heaven' to be perceived from within the church, in a similar manner to classical Renaissance churches, where heavenly beings are portrayed above a central dome or nave roof.

The Iglesia Ni Cristo have a similar theological reason for the gold panelling, gold equally being capable of communicating the glory of Heaven to the congregation. In this manner the gold itself should not be seen as being inconsistent with the significance or architectural style of the building. The panels used are a bespoke, high quality material and great lengths have been taken to ensure that the traditional motif of rose and flower has been included.

It is possible to be critical of such an intervention, but equally opinions as to whether the panelling is appropriate is rather subjective as the fundamental reason for having the panelling is absolutely synonymous with the Methodist or even the Catholic tradition of using rich, gold and colours to communicate the glory of Heaven above the Nave. The motif also recognises the elements of Gothic shapes and decoration that is not inconsistent with the Gothic tradition. In terms of the simplicity of the church, the decorative apertures through the hammerbeam roof structure will be completely unaffected when seen from either side of the nave. As a result the white ceiling will still be seen and the roundels and flowering motifs will be clearly visible thereby not affecting the architectural significance of the building. Vents will also be inserted within the panels.

In summary however if these panels are deemed unacceptable the church is (perhaps reluctantly) willing to paint the panels a blue or white colour as thereby removing the gold colour. We do not feel that this panel should be used as a reason for refusal of Listed Building Consent and would be willing to discuss as part of the Council's Duty to Co-operate with applicants over such complexities.





As can be seen from this image the gold panels of the ceiling are not visible and the motifs in the hammerbeam roof are appropriately visible thereby maintaining the simplicity of the building.

The Church have provided the following liturgical readings to support the integration of the gold ceiling panels. These are inspired by Bible passages and reflect the spiritual reasoning behind the integration of the gold, high above the nave of the church and the specific liturgical reasonings these have for the new congregation of the church. Some of these passages are also reminiscent of English traditional religious texts such as the Medieval 'Pearl' manuscript that compares the glory of God and Heaven to the riches of earth in terms of nature and jewellery.

Texts from the Iglesia Ni Cristo

The foundation

Rev. 21:18-21 Phillips:

18 The wall itself was built of translucent stone, while the city was of purest gold, with the brilliance of glass.

*19-20 The foundation stones of the wall of the city were fashioned out of every kind of precious stone. The first foundation-stone was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth cornelian, the seventh goldstone, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth green goldstone, the eleventh zircon, and the twelfth amethyst. 21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. **The street of the city was purest gold gleaming like glass.***

The New Heaven & Earth

II Pet. 3:7 & 10 & 13-14:

7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

Isa. 65:17-18:

17 For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy.

Shown to Apostle John

Rev. 21:10-11 NET:

10 So he took me away in the Spirit to a huge, majestic mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. 11 The city possesses the glory of God; its brilliance is like a precious jewel, like a stone of crystal-clear jasper.

The one that gives light

Rev. 21:23 ETRV:

23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it. The glory of God gives the city light. The Lamb (Jesus) is the city's lamp

PULPIT REPLACEMENT

Like all religious denominations, the Iglesia Ni Cristo have specific liturgical requirements for their specific services. One of these is the requirement for not one, but three pulpits within the church. This not only provides space for the church officers to preach from, but also brings the church ministers closer to the congregation. Like many churches the Iglesia Ni Cristo have a unique design for such pulpits and in Meanwood church, the new pulpit row was inserted prior to any consents being obtained. The main implication of this introduction of three pulpits however is the fact that the original Victorian pulpit is no longer required and is too large to be successfully integrated within the chancel area. The original pulpit may not be original to the building but, more importantly, it reflects the Wesleyan Methodist tradition of preaching from the pulpit where the speaker was raised high above the congregation. The Iglesia Ni Cristo do not believe that their Ministers preach from on high and are so removed from the congregation and as such there is a clear liturgical justification for the removal and alteration of the pulpit.

The pulpit is however still within the church and the applicants are willing to find a new use for the pulpit. At present however the best option would appear to be to retain the pulpit within the Nave. It is proposed therefore that the original pulpit will be relocated to the rear of the Nave thereby reflecting the historic fabric in the form of this specific piece of furniture. It is hoped that side services or incidental use of the pulpit can be undertaken as and when the need arises and as such the old pulpit will not be totally redundant.



Right: The new pulpit row or a similar quality to that of the original joinery of the building. Below: The original pulpit - too large and removed from the congregation as the new church do not believe in preaching from on high.



The innards of the organ will then be removed, the room cleaned and painted and the former window reopened, this will remove any possibility of the organ components becoming damp and causing future problems, as well as leading to a new Liturgical use of this valuable space.

The Iglesia Ni Cristo have supplied the following statement of the need for extra liturgical spaces within the sanctuary of the church:

Reasons For The Need Of A Room Near The Main Sanctuary

Having an extra room that is accessible from the main sanctuary will not only serve as a nursery room/children's room so that the children would not disturb the solemnity of the worship service in the Church of Christ but is also necessary for other activities in the Church.

One of these important activities in the Iglesia Ni (Church of Christ) is the Special Gathering for 'Anointing The Sick With Oil'.

Upon request, a brother or sister in the Church who is sick may be anointed with oil and be prayer over at any day or time but especially during worship service days. Aside from this, the Church of Christ conducts the special gathering for this purpose on a regular basis.

The program of the said special gathering is as follows:

- *Hymn Singing*
- *Briefing and reading of Bible verse by the officiating minister*
- *Hymn Singing*
- *Prayer*
- *Anointing of Oil*
- *Hymn Singing*
- *Thanksgiving Prayer*

In the anointing of oil, those to be anointed with oil on their head, hands or feet may remain in the sanctuary/main hall. But those to be anointed on



other parts of the body should be brought to a private area or room that is easily accessible from the sanctuary. Sisters should be separated from the brothers. Deacons will be anointing the brothers; deaconesses will be anointing the sisters. Once they are done, they would go back to main sanctuary for the congregational prayer (after a hymn).

This, therefore, is another reason why a room for sisters/female members is necessary and important to be able to conduct the activities in the Church in a proper and orderly manner.

The anointing of oil for the sick is based on the teaching of the Bible as written in James 5:14-15 which states:

“Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayers of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.”

In conclusion the need for a new liturgical space is well understood. The reinstatement of the full organ will, regrettably, be extremely difficult to predict at this stage in terms of the work needed. Therefore it is proposed to gain approval in principle for the removal of the organ subject to detail of the re-erection being presented to the LPA at a later stage.

MINISTER'S STUDY

The Minister's study was added onto Meanwood Methodist Church in 1891, just ten years after the building's first construction. It would appear that this work occurred around the same time as the installation of the organ in the opposite wing and as a result the window to the organ wing was blocked. The extension was constructed using the same Gothic Revival style and included provision for a Ministers study. It is unclear as to whether the secondary staircase in this location was original to the building or not, but it is assumed that it was. The staircase therefore gives a second direct access to the basement level. The Minister's study will remain unaltered other than decoration including the insertion of the gothic timber wall panels. The existing fireplace will remain although the later electric fire unit is to be removed and the fireplace cleaned. The Minister's study contains a smaller room that will be completed as an en suite wc. Tiling and the installation of sanitary ware will be installed. Plumbing will follow existing, historic plumbing runs and all other interventions will be purely decorative in the form of paint, curtains etc.



BASEMENT WORKS

The basement area will form a key community area within the church to be used by the congregation. The basement was originally constructed as a Sunday School as can be seen in various other examples including Bethesda Chapel in Elland (CHECK) and Headingley Methodist Church nearby. Such an evolution of buildings was not uncommon and reflected the desire to engage with the children of all social status within the urban areas.

Insertion of stud wall

In order to create a separate room within the basement area a new stud wall was constructed. The stud wall effectively scribed around existing simple architectural features such as the skirting boards. As a result the later wall could be removed in the future should any future owners see fit. As such the significance of the building is unaffected.

Enlargement of stage

The stage area seems to have formed a part of the early church but was likely only inserted around the early 20th century. The Iglesia Di Cristo have maintained the function of the stage within the basement, however an enlargement has taken place to extend the stage and ensure that adequate health and safety matters have been conformed with. As a result the stage is larger, and now contains balustrade in solid wood to the southern side.

Insertion of suspended ceiling.

The suspended ceiling has been inserted in order to cover up technical wires and service runs without harming the significance of the building. The basement does still maintain the steel columns to this space each with their own classical capital above. The capitals are unseen through this proposal but only due to unavoidable practical reasons and not though a desire to intentionally cover them. Nevertheless the capitals are still within the roof and will remain there until such time as the ceiling is changed.



Images from the basement. NB: New stud wall scribed around existing panels. All fireplaces retained. Capitals to columns retained behind replacement suspended ceiling.



EXTERNAL CHANGES

This application does not intend to include any application for the covering of external architectural motifs, faces or grotesques to the church.

Proposed Landscape Interventions.

Since purchasing Meanwood Church the Iglesia Di Cristo community have undertaken a deep tidy up of the grounds of the church and where previously the old Methodist garden of daffodils and shrubs was beginning to fill with litter and urban detritus, the present church community have gone to great lengths to ensure that the garden and grounds of the church contribute in a positive manner to the community of Meanwood.

However since an Enforcement stop notice was issued, work has ceased on the grounds. Unfortunately anti social behaviour still continues and wine bottles and stolen food is a common sight. However proposals for the reinstatement of a appropriate garden continue to form part of this application. The garden contains several trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order that are also intended to be retained through any applications.

The intention is to create several elements that will enable the garden area to function well for both the church and the wider community. Firstly a pleasant seating and amenity area for the church community will be created that will include the provision of planting, seating area and the maintenance and sound management of trees. A change in surface level already existed within the grounds and this has been reinforced through the use of large timbers in order to provide a terrace area. This timber terrace is well away from protected TPO trees and it is understood that the structure respects the trees' Root Protection Area. The proposals will include appropriate surface materials and planting to ensure that the garden is attractive to the passerby, including those sitting out in the Waitrose seating area. Already there is much improvement upon the previous garden with its grass and rose bushes where there was rarely any positive activity.



New Railing to Boundary Wall

The proposed new railings were partially installed prior to stop notices being issued. The proposed boundary railings are however a very good copy of the original railings that still exist to the front of the building. A bespoke metal fabricator was commissioned to undertake the work and as a result the fixings, design and slender appearance of the original railings has been preserved and recreated to an extremely high quality.

Stone Gateposts

Since prior to the sale of the church a pinnacle from one of the stone gateposts has been damaged and the finial was broken. It is proposed that the finial ball is restored to the stone either through a resin repair or re-carving of a new stone.



Above: Stone gateposts to be repaired as per original. Below: New replica railings have been commissioned to reflect and reinstate the original railings that were present around the front of the church. The simple form of two upright pieces and a curved, bolted joint looks far more ornate from farther away. As can be seen the new railings are bespoke and of extremely high quality.



War Memorial

The War Memorial Plaque was requested by a member of the Methodist community so that it may be maintained by the community of men who are commemorated upon it. The plaque also however was part of the physical fabric of the building and its removal has been deemed to adversely affect the building. A solution to this has been proposed whereby the plaque is reinstated within an ornamental structure within the garden area. This will allow the Meanwood community as a whole to be able to commemorate the men of Meanwood who fell during the war without the need to enter the church. Such a structure will be of sandstone with a small overhang to protect the plaque from the weather.

Stone Cleaning and Removal of Window Grilles.

Work has now been completed on stone cleaning and together with the removal of scaffolding and window grilles, the church is able to exploit its architecture once again. The glass can be seen to glint in the sunshine and the light sandstone creates a pleasing aesthetic against the modern buildings adjacent. The removal of window grilles has substantially enhanced the appearance of the building.

Other Changes - Including Decorative Sculptures

Other, less significant changes will be undertaken or finished within the church. These include new black drainage goods to the flat roof element at the rear of the main chapel and the completion of decorative lights to the Nave walls. The external figurative designs are not proposed to be interfered with during this application for the primary reason that we feel there is much more work to be undertaken in order to come to an appropriate solution. Nevertheless the intention is to retain all the grotesque and sculptures to the external faces of the church and to design bespoke, artist designed, covers for them that maintains and protects the sculptures from future weathering. Details of these designs are available should the Council seek reassurance of this approach but it is anticipated that a new application will seek the necessary consents for such change. .

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, although it is unfortunate that unauthorised works were carried out, the result so far is one of extremely high quality, bespoke refurbishment and design that maintains the church in its original function and preserves the special character and appearance of the building. This is largely obtained through the reuse of the building in its original function. There are some areas where some fabric has been disturbed, most notably the organ, however the new use of the church, the use of the space behind the organ and its much later date are considered to be justification enough for the removal of the 'innards' of the organ structure with the pipes and aesthetic of the organ being replicated externally to the proposed children's/anointment room.

Elsewhere internally work has utilised specialist craftspeople to refurbish pews, joinery and doors and where such repair work has been carried out, it has been of an exceptionally high standard. The work has been shown to be consistent with the legacy and architectural freedom that characterised Non Conformist church building of the 18th and 19th centuries and this latest phase is merely a continuation of this reinterpretation of past architectural styles.

The cleaning of the stonework has also already given substantial public benefits and this can be seen, not only from the interest generated by passers by, but also through the praise that the church has received on social media.

In essence the building will still maintain its original use. Any new modifications, even the partial gold ceiling, is not alien to a Methodist tradition and although parts of the church have changed, this has not undermined the building's significance. This allows the new Church to effectively use the building for the long term future. It is therefore commended that the building is worthy of obtaining the necessary consents to allow this valuable community building to remain as such and for the community of the Iglesia Ni Cristo to have a future here.

TheUrbanGlow logo, featuring the text 'TheUrbanGlow' in a white serif font over a background of a street scene at night with warm lighting.

TheUrbanGlow

IHBC logo, consisting of the letters 'IHBC' in white serif font inside a maroon rectangular box.

IHBC

HESPR logo, featuring the text 'HESPR' in a maroon serif font with a checkmark symbol, and a smaller version of the logo to the right.

HESPR

Heritage Statement for Meanwood Church, Monkbridge Road, Meanwood.

Undertaken by TheUrbanGlow Design & Heritage Ltd
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