

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Client:

Anwar-e-Madina Mosque

Address:

8-10 Clara Street, Hillhouse, Huddersfield, HD1 6EN

Project:

Two Storey Rear Extension — Body Wash and Storage Facility

Listed Building:

Church Hall of Hillhouse United Reformed Church

List Entry No.:

1134329 — Grade II

LPA:

Kirklees Metropolitan Council

Application Reference:

2024/65/91490/W

Drawing Reference:

2539/01

Project Reference:

2539

Prepared by:

Umar Hussain — UHDesign Architectural Services

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1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by UHDesign Architectural Services on behalf of Anwar-e-Madina Mosque in support of applications for full planning permission and listed building consent for a two storey rear extension at 8-10 Clara Street, Hillhouse, Huddersfield, HD1 6EN.

The building is a Grade II listed structure recorded on the National Heritage List for England under the name Church Hall of Hillhouse United Reformed Church (List Entry No. 1134329). It is now in use as Jamia Masjid Anwar-e-Madina, a mosque serving a large and established Muslim community in the Hillhouse area of Huddersfield.

Planning permission was previously granted for a single storey rear extension at this site. That permission was not implemented. The approved scheme was assessed as not financially viable given the limited space gain it would have delivered — the approved footprint would still not have been sufficient to accommodate both a body storage unit and an adequate washing facility alongside one another. This revised application proposes a two storey rear extension to address that shortcoming and to deliver a proposal that is more in keeping with the character of the surrounding area and the listed status of the building. The extension will be constructed in stone, reflecting the material of the original listed church hall.

This statement provides an assessment of the significance of the listed building, an analysis of the architectural and historic character of the affected area, and a reasoned conclusion as to the impact of the proposed works on the significance of the heritage asset. It has been prepared with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), Chapter 16, and to Historic England's guidance on the Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA3) and Conservation Principles (2008).

2. Designation and Significance of the Listed Building

2.1 Listed Building Status

The building at 8-10 Clara Street is a Grade II listed building, recorded as the Church Hall of Hillhouse United Reformed Church, List Entry No. 1134329. Grade II listing denotes a building of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve it.

2.2 Historic Character and Significance

The main building is a Victorian-era church hall of traditional stone construction, exhibiting the architectural character typical of late nineteenth century nonconformist ecclesiastical buildings in the West Riding of Yorkshire. Historical Ordnance Survey mapping from the 1890s records the site as comprising a Sunday School with a chapel adjacent to the south, confirming the building's origins in the Victorian nonconformist tradition.

The principal architectural significance of the building derives from its front elevation facing Clara Street, which displays the characteristic features of its type: dressed stone construction, ecclesiastical window forms, and a composition of formal symmetry befitting a place of worship and communal assembly. This elevation forms the primary public face of the building and is the defining contribution it makes to the local streetscape and the character of the Hillhouse area.

The building has been in use as a mosque for a considerable period and now serves a congregation of approximately 850 worshippers. This continued active community use represents a positive dimension of the building's current social significance, demonstrating adaptive reuse that maintains its function as a place of worship and communal gathering.

2.3 The Later Rear Addition

To the rear of the original listed church hall there is a small double-storey structure added at a later date. This structure is constructed of red brick with a flat felt roof and white UPVC windows — characteristics that are materially and visually distinct from the Victorian dressed stone character of the original building. It is not contemporaneous with the listed structure and does not form part of the building's special architectural or historic interest.

Internally, the spaces within the later rear addition — including the lobby and the existing wash room — show no architectural merit and no features of historic significance. The ceiling, skirting, and door surrounds are all plain and of a utilitarian character. There is no historic fabric of note within these spaces.

For the purposes of heritage assessment, the later rear addition is considered to make no positive contribution to the significance of the listed building. Its alteration does not harm the architectural or historic interest for which the building was listed.

3. Existing External Character of the Affected Area

The area within which the proposed extension is to be constructed is located entirely to the rear of the building, between the rear wall of the existing brick addition and the neighbouring boundary wall. It is not visible from the public realm on Clara Street or from any principal viewpoint of the listed building.

The existing condition of this rear area is one of neglect: the space is overgrown and in a poor state of maintenance, presenting a negative visual contribution to the immediate context of the building. The existing ground level in this area is concreted and raised, with no evidence of movement or subsidence. The rear wall of the brick addition — which faces onto this space — is a functional and unremarkable elevation of a non-original element of the building containing no features of architectural or historic interest.

The surrounding built context at the rear of the site is characterised by two storey structures. The scale of the proposed two storey extension is therefore consistent with and in keeping with the character of the immediate built environment.

4. Assessment of Impact on Heritage Significance

4.1 Physical Impact on the Listed Building

The proposed extension does not physically touch or abut the original listed church hall building. A deliberate spatial separation is maintained between the new structure and the historic fabric. All new construction is confined to the area between the existing later brick addition and the neighbouring boundary wall. No original historic fabric is affected, removed, or obscured by the proposed works. There are no openings, fixings, or structural connections proposed into the fabric of the original listed building.

The proposal is therefore assessed as causing no physical harm to the fabric of the heritage asset.

4.2 Impact on the Setting and Character of the Listed Building

The extension is located entirely to the rear of the building and is not visible from the principal elevation on Clara Street. The main listed elevation — which constitutes the primary architectural and historic contribution of the building to the public realm — is entirely unaffected. No changes are made to the front elevation, roofline, or any publicly visible element of the listed building.

The two storey form of the extension is consistent with the scale of the surrounding built environment and avoids the incongruous appearance that a single storey infill would present in this context. The use of stone construction — reflecting the principal material of the original church hall — represents a positive design response to the heritage setting and is an improvement upon the previously approved brick construction. Rather than introducing a contrasting material, the proposed extension acknowledges the material hierarchy of the listed building and seeks to harmonise with it.

The rationalisation of the existing neglected rear area into a purposeful, well-maintained facility improves the immediate context of the rear of the building compared to its current condition.

4.3 Significance of the Use

The proposed use — the ritual washing and dignified storage of the deceased in accordance with Islamic practice — is directly connected to the community function of the mosque and its ongoing role as a place of worship and communal service. A previous permission for a smaller scheme on the same site was not implemented because the space gain was insufficient to make the use practically viable. This revised proposal delivers the space necessary for the use to function properly, enriching the living significance of the building as a community anchor and a place of faith.

4.4 Comparison with Previously Approved Scheme

The previously approved single storey scheme proposed brick construction consistent with the existing later addition. The current proposal improves upon that approach in two material respects: first, it adopts stone construction that is more sympathetic to the character of the original listed building; and second, the two storey form is more in keeping with the surrounding built context than a single storey addition would be. The revised proposal therefore represents a better heritage outcome than the scheme that was previously approved.

4.5 Summary Assessment

The proposed two storey rear extension is assessed as causing no harm to the significance of the Grade II listed building. The works do not affect the original historic fabric; they do not affect the setting as experienced from the public realm; and they are confined to a later, non-original portion of the building's curtilage that makes no positive contribution to the heritage asset's significance. The use of stone construction and a two storey form represents a positive and considered response to the heritage context.

The proposal is consistent with paragraph 208 of the NPPF (2023). No harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset has been identified, and the public benefits — in the form of a community facility of profound religious and cultural importance that has been demonstrated to be needed — are clear and deliverable for the first time through this revised scheme.

5. Heritage Policy Framework

The following policy and guidance documents are relevant to the assessment of heritage impact.

Document	Relevance to this Proposal
NPPF (2023) — Chapter 16	Sets out the statutory framework for assessing development affecting designated heritage assets. Paragraph 206 requires applicants to describe the significance of affected heritage assets and how impacts have been assessed. Paragraph 208 requires less than substantial harm to be weighed against public benefits. This proposal causes no harm to the significance of the listed building.

Document	Relevance to this Proposal
Kirklees Local Plan — LP7 (Heritage Assets)	Requires that development affecting listed buildings avoids harm to their significance. The proposal does not harm the architectural or historic interest of the listed building. It is confined to a non-original, non-significant later addition and does not affect the original fabric or principal setting of the building. Stone construction demonstrates a positive response to the heritage context.
Historic England — Conservation Principles (2008)	Defines the significance of heritage assets through heritage values: evidential, historical, aesthetic, and communal. This assessment has evaluated the impact of the proposed works against each of these values and concludes that no harm arises. The communal value of the building is positively supported by the proposed use.
Historic England — GPA3: Setting of Heritage Assets	The extension does not affect any significant view or setting of the listed building. It is not visible from the principal public vantage points and does not alter the experience of the listed building from the street or the surrounding area. The two storey form and stone construction respond positively to the character of the built setting.

6. Conclusion

This Heritage Statement has assessed the potential impact of a two storey rear extension at 8-10 Clara Street — the Grade II listed Church Hall of Hillhouse United Reformed Church, now Anwar-e-Madina Mosque — on the significance of the listed building.

The assessment concludes that the proposed works will cause no harm to the significance of the heritage asset. The extension is confined entirely to a later, non-original addition to the building's curtilage that carries no positive architectural or historic significance. The original listed fabric is not physically affected. The principal elevation and publicly visible setting of the listed building are entirely unaltered.

The two storey form of the extension is in keeping with the surrounding built context, and the use of stone construction reflects the principal material of the original church hall. In both respects the revised proposal represents an improved heritage outcome compared to the previously approved single storey brick scheme, which was not implemented.

The proposed extension serves a use — the ritual washing and dignified storage of the deceased in accordance with Islamic tradition — that is of profound religious, cultural, and communal significance to the community served by the mosque. The previously approved scheme was not built because its footprint was insufficient to make the use practically viable. This revised proposal provides the space necessary for the facility to function properly, delivering a community benefit that has been a demonstrated need for some time.

The proposal is consistent with Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and with Policy LP7 of the Kirklees Local Plan. It is commended to Kirklees Metropolitan Council for approval of both listed building consent and full planning permission.