

DESIGN AND ACCESS 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

LPA:

Kirklees Metropolitan Council

Application Reference:

2024/65/91490/W

Drawing Reference:

2539/01

Project Reference:

2539

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1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by UHDesign Architectural Services on behalf of Anwar-e-Madina Mosque in support of a full planning application and listed building consent application 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 small single storey rear extension to provide a body washing and storage facility for the deceased (Application Reference: 2024/65/91490/W). That permission was not implemented. Following careful consideration, 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. A revised proposal was therefore required.

This application proposes a two storey rear extension on the same site. The two storey approach has been adopted not only to deliver the necessary internal floor area but also to ensure the extension 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 character of the original listed church hall.

This statement sets out the existing conditions, the nature of the proposed works, access arrangements, the amenity impact, and the planning policy framework within which the proposal is assessed.

2. Existing Conditions

2.1 Site and Location

The site is located at 8-10 Clara Street, within the established residential and mixed-use neighbourhood of Hillhouse in Huddersfield. The mosque occupies a prominent corner plot and is well embedded within the local street scene.

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 West Yorkshire. It is Grade II listed and represents a building of special architectural and historic interest. The building has been in use as a mosque for a considerable period and serves a congregation of approximately 850 worshippers.

2.2 Existing Rear Structure and Extension Zone

To the rear of the main listed building there is an existing small double-storey structure added to the original church hall at a later date, constructed of red brick with a flat felt roof and white UPVC windows. This is a non-original addition that does not contribute positively to the architectural or historic significance of the listed building.

The area within which the extension is proposed sits to the rear of this brick addition, between its rear wall and the neighbouring boundary wall. The existing ground level in this area is already concreted and raised, and there is no evidence of movement or subsidence in the immediate vicinity. The photographs below show the existing condition of this area.



Figure 1 (left): Existing rear extension zone — overgrown and unmaintained, bounded by the neighbouring wall and the rear of the brick addition. Figure 2 (right): Street-level view showing the original listed stone building (left), the later brick addition, and the extension zone.

2.3 Existing Internal Spaces

The spaces within the later rear addition at ground floor level — including the lobby and the existing wash room — show no architectural merit and no features of historic significance. The lobby is accessed from within the main building via a plain door and frame of no historic interest.



Figure 3: Interior lobby — door leading to the existing body wash room. Plain, utilitarian finishes throughout with no historic fabric present.

The existing wash room contains a stainless steel wash table and wall-mounted pipework. The photographs below demonstrate the severely restricted floor area available around the wash table — the defining operational deficiency that this application seeks to address.



Figure 4 (left): Existing wash room showing the wash table and the very limited circulation space available around it. Figure 5 (right): Alternate view showing the rear window and the restricted dimensions of the room.

The kitchen adjacent to the extension area has a window that faces into the proposed extension zone. This window does not serve a habitable room and will be superseded by the new works.



Figure 6: Adjacent kitchen showing the window facing into the extension zone (right of image), which will be superseded by the proposed works.

2.4 Need for the Proposal

The Islamic tradition of Ghusl — the ritual washing of the body of a deceased person prior to burial — requires a dedicated facility that enables a number of people to be present and assist simultaneously. This is a collective act of religious duty, and the available space must be sufficient to accommodate those carrying out the washing with dignity and without physical restriction. Separate provision is also required for the dignified storage of the deceased prior to or following washing.

The previously approved extension was never implemented. Assessment of that scheme concluded that the space gain it would have delivered was insufficient to justify the construction cost — the approved footprint would still not have allowed a body storage unit to be accommodated alongside an adequate washing facility within the same space. The decision was therefore taken not to proceed with that scheme and instead to bring forward a revised proposal that properly addresses the operational need.

The need for the facility has been further reinforced by experience from recent funerals conducted at the mosque, which have demonstrated that the current space is too restricted to accommodate the number of people required to be present during the washing process. This has compromised the dignity of the occasion and the ability of the community to fulfil their religious obligations properly.

3. The Proposal

3.1 Description of Works

The proposal is for a two storey rear extension to Anwar-e-Madina Mosque. The upper floor, at ground level, will provide the body wash and storage facility — comprising a dedicated washing area fitted with a wash table and appropriate drainage, and a body storage area for the dignified storage of the deceased prior to or following washing. These two areas will function as an integrated suite, allowing the mosque to provide a complete funeral preparation service within a single facility.

The lower ground floor level is not intended for practical operational use. It provides an entrance connection to the existing lower ground level of the building. Its inclusion as part of the two storey form is a deliberate design decision — a two storey extension is more in keeping with the character of the surrounding built environment and the scale and listed status of the original church hall than a single storey addition would be at this location.

3.2 Design and Materials

The extension will be constructed in stone, reflecting the principal material of the original listed church hall. This represents a material improvement over the previously approved scheme, which proposed brick construction consistent with the existing later addition. The use of stone in this revised proposal demonstrates a more considered response to the heritage context and the character of the listed building.

The extension will feature white UPVC windows with obscure glazing. The roof will be flat in profile, consistent with the existing rear addition. The extension is designed to sit alongside the existing later brick addition without abutting or physically connecting to the original listed church hall building, ensuring the historic fabric is not affected.

The works are confined to the rear of the site and are not visible from the principal elevation on Clara Street. The main listed elevation remains entirely unaffected by the proposed works.

3.3 Foundations and Ground Conditions

A structural engineer has been consulted regarding the foundation approach for the extension. The extension zone sits on an area of existing concrete hardstanding that is raised above the surrounding ground level. There is no evidence of movement or subsidence in this area, making it very unlikely that the specific location is impacted by coal mining activity in the wider vicinity. The structural engineer has confirmed that raft foundations and other conventional foundation options are available and appropriate for construction in this area, and the final foundation design will be confirmed prior to commencement of works.

3.4 Use

The facility will be used solely for the ritual washing and dignified storage of the bodies of deceased members of the Muslim community served by the mosque. No public access is associated with the extension. The use is appointment-led and need-led and will not generate regular footfall. Access to the upper floor facility is provided from within the existing building — no new external entrance to the wash and storage facility is required.

4. Access

Access to the body wash and storage facility at upper ground floor level is provided from within the existing building. There is no change to the existing vehicular or pedestrian access arrangements serving the site.

The lower ground floor of the extension provides a connection to the existing lower ground level of the mosque. As the operational use of the facility is by appointment and on an occasional basis, there are no access management issues arising from the proposal.

5. Amenity

5.1 Neighbouring Properties

The extension is located entirely to the rear of the building, set between the existing rear addition and the neighbouring boundary wall. It has no impact on the street scene or on the amenity of properties to the front or sides of the site. Windows proposed for the extension will be fitted with obscure glazing, preventing any overlooking of neighbouring properties. The two storey form of the extension is consistent with the scale of the surrounding built context.

5.2 Noise and Disturbance

The use of the facility is quiet in nature. The washing and storage of the deceased does not generate noise, vibration, or any other form of environmental disturbance. There is no mechanical plant or equipment associated with the extension that would give rise to noise impacts on neighbouring properties.

5.3 Community Benefit

The proposed facility delivers a significant community benefit to the Muslim community of Hillhouse and the wider Huddersfield area. The ability to wash and store the deceased within the mosque complex is of profound religious and cultural importance. The enlarged facility will enable the mosque to carry out its community function with proper dignity and without the spatial constraints that have prevented the previously approved scheme from being delivered. It will reduce the logistical burden on families at an already difficult time, allowing the full funeral preparation process to take place within the mosque that the community trusts and attends.

6. Planning Policy Framework

The following planning policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

Policy Reference	Policy Name	Compliance
NPPF (2023) — Chapter 2	Achieving Sustainable Development	The proposal supports a well-established place of worship in meeting the needs of its community. The extension enables a community service of significant religious and cultural importance to be delivered effectively for the first time, consistent with the social strand of sustainable development.
NPPF (2023) — Chapter 12	Achieving Well-Designed Places	The extension is designed to be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area and the listed building. The use of stone

Policy Reference	Policy Name	Compliance
		construction and a two storey form demonstrates a considered design response to the heritage context. The extension does not harm the character of the surrounding area.
NPPF (2023) — Chapter 16	Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment	The proposal has been designed to avoid physical impact on the historic fabric of the listed building. Stone construction reflects the material of the original church hall. The extension does not abut the original listed structure and preserves the heritage significance of the building.
Kirklees Local Plan — LP1	Settlement Hierarchy	The site is within the Huddersfield urban area. The proposed community facility use is appropriate to an urban location.
Kirklees Local Plan — LP2	Spatial Priorities	The proposal supports the vitality and function of an established community facility within the urban area.
Kirklees Local Plan — LP3	Delivering Sustainable Development	The proposal makes effective use of existing land associated with an established community facility and delivers a use that the community has a demonstrated need for.
Kirklees Local Plan — LP7	Heritage Assets	The extension is constructed in stone to reflect the character of the original listed building. It does not abut or affect the original historic fabric. The significance and character of the Grade II listed building are preserved and the quality of the proposal is enhanced compared to the previously approved scheme.
Kirklees Local Plan — LP30	Community Facilities	The proposal directly supports the function of an existing community facility by providing dedicated funeral preparation space that is an established and demonstrated need of the community it serves.
Kirklees Local Plan — LP51	Design Principles	The extension adopts stone construction and a two storey form that is in keeping with the host building and the surrounding area. It does not adversely impact the character of the local environment.
Kirklees Local Plan — LP52	Amenity	The proposed use is quiet in nature, generating no noise, traffic, or other disturbance. Obscure glazing prevents overlooking of neighbouring properties.

7. Conclusion

This application seeks planning permission and listed building consent for a two storey rear extension to Anwar-e-Madina Mosque at 8-10 Clara Street, Hillhouse, Huddersfield. The extension will provide a body washing and storage facility at upper ground floor level to serve the funeral preparation needs of the local Muslim community, with the lower ground floor providing a connection to the existing lower ground level of the building.

A previous permission for a single storey rear extension on this site was not implemented. That scheme was assessed as not financially viable because the floor area it would have delivered was insufficient to accommodate both a body storage unit and an adequate washing facility alongside one another. This revised proposal addresses that shortcoming by providing a two storey extension that delivers the necessary space whilst also responding more appropriately to the character of the surrounding area and the listed status of the building.

The extension will be constructed in stone, reflecting the principal material of the original listed church hall and representing a more considered heritage response than the previously approved brick construction. The extension does not physically abut or affect the original listed fabric. The principal elevation of the listed building on Clara Street is entirely unaffected. The proposal preserves the architectural and historic significance of the Grade II listed church hall.

The proposal is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and with the adopted policies of the Kirklees Local Plan. The application is commended to Kirklees Metropolitan Council for approval.