

Calvinistic Methodist Church

Margam Road

Taibach

Heritage Impact Assessment



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Executive Summary

This HIA has been written to help inform and provide guidance on a planning proposal for the Calvinistic Methodist Church on Margam Road.

The proposed development will have an impact primarily on the structure and will include new gate openings on to the A48. The buildings measure approx. 350m² with approx. 20m roadside frontage. The building is “not listed” or in a conservation area but is considered as a building of local importance under Policy BE 2 of the 2011 - 2026 LDP - The Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Guidance.

This Statement aims to identify and summarise levels of significance based on an assessment of heritage values. There are six conservation principles which are based on those developed by English Heritage and published in 2008 (www.englishheritage.org.uk/conservationprinciples). Cadw has adapted these principles for use in Wales. We acknowledge a considerable debt to English Heritage who developed their principles after extensive consultation with outside organizations. Many of the explanatory paragraphs are also adapted from their Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, but have been tailored to meet the needs of Wales. The English Heritage document includes sections on ‘Understanding Heritage Values,’ ‘Assessing Heritage Significance’ and ‘Managing Change to Significant Places’, which give extended explanations of these topics. In this document, Cadw has replaced these with a more accessible and succinct summary entitled ‘Understanding heritage values and assessing significance’. It is based on the guidelines and policies contained in Historic England’s “Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in England” (Historic England, 2008, pp. 19 -24) and BSI Standards Publication (BS 7913:2013, pp. 6 - 8), to ensure a sound understanding of the heritage significance. This Plan also refers to Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (11th Edition) published by the Welsh Government (2021) and specifically Chapter 6.1: The Historic Environment (pp 125 – 136) as well as Neath Port Talbots Policy BE 2 of the 2011 - 2026 LDP - The Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Guidance.

1.0 Introduction

This Heritage impact assessment has been prepared by Nathan Goss Conservation and commissioned by Atrium Planning Consultants. It supports a planning application to develop/restore/conserve and adapt for reuse a Calvinistic Methodist Church on Margam Road, Taibach. This document is required by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council, the local planning authority and Cadw, as evidence in support of any redevelopment of a “Building of local importance”.

The HIA further considers the impact the proposal will have on the setting and the impact the proposal will have on the setting of any neighbouring heritage assets.

- This document also refers to Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (11th Edition) published by the Welsh Government (2021) and specifically Chapter 6.1: The Historic Environment - which states that “it is important that the planning system looks to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets. This will include consideration of the setting of an historic asset which might extend beyond its curtilage. Any change that impacts on an historic asset or its setting should be managed in a sensitive and sustainable way”.
- Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment of Wales, Cadw 2011
- Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales, Cadw May 2017
- Managing the setting of Historic Assets in Wales Cadw 2017
- Planning Advice: TAN 24: The Historic Environment, Planning Policy Wales, May 2017
- This Statement also follows guidance in Section 4 of Managing the Setting of Historic Assets in Wales [2017] which is to: Identify the assets and their significance, including defining and analysing their setting. Evaluating the potential impact of change or development, this is done with reference to and within the context of local and national planning policies and guidance. Consider options for mitigating the impact if required
- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Councils - Policy BE 2 of the 2011 - 2026 LDP - The Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Guidance

The church is positioned on Margam Road (A48) within the community of Taibach and the old county of Glamorgan.

The Methodist Chapel was built in 1926 in the Gothic style, it has a stone tracery arched headed doorway, fanlight with double doors. To the left and right of the doorway are two pairs of smaller trefoil headed stone windows.

The front facade is dominated by a rather large perpendicular window with a decorative stone tracery. There are narrow buttresses to the front and side elevations.

The building was still in use as a chapel in 1984.

RCAHMMW, March 2008

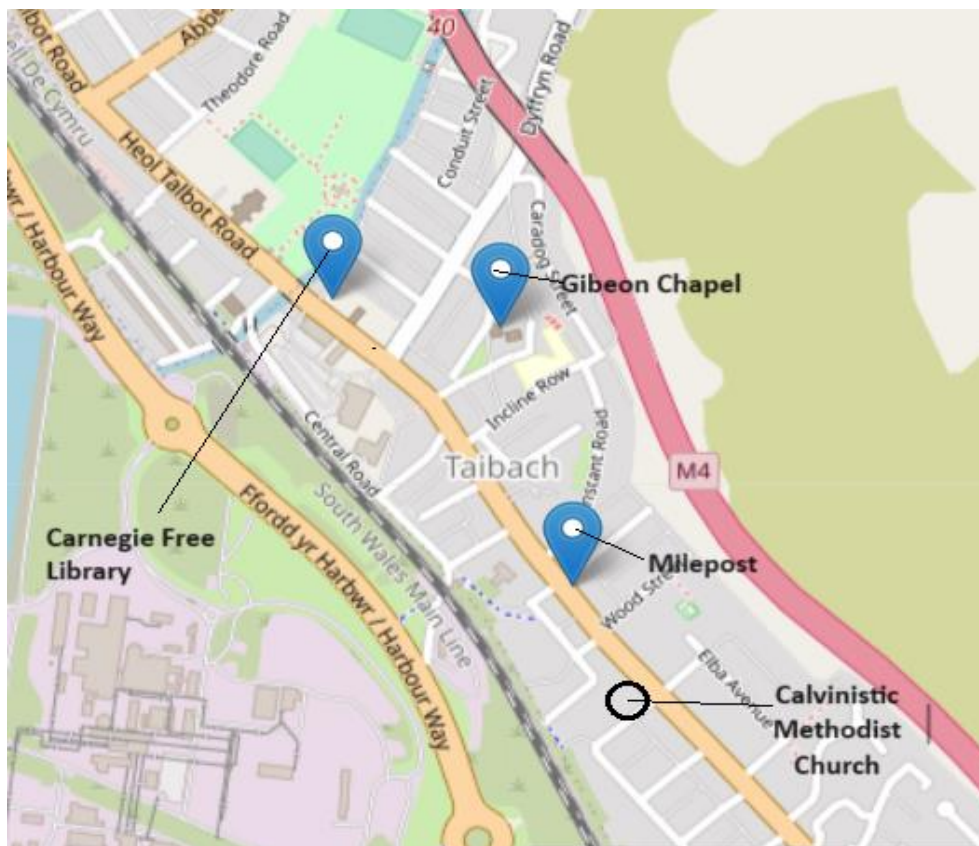
A list of listed buildings within the area:

Taibach

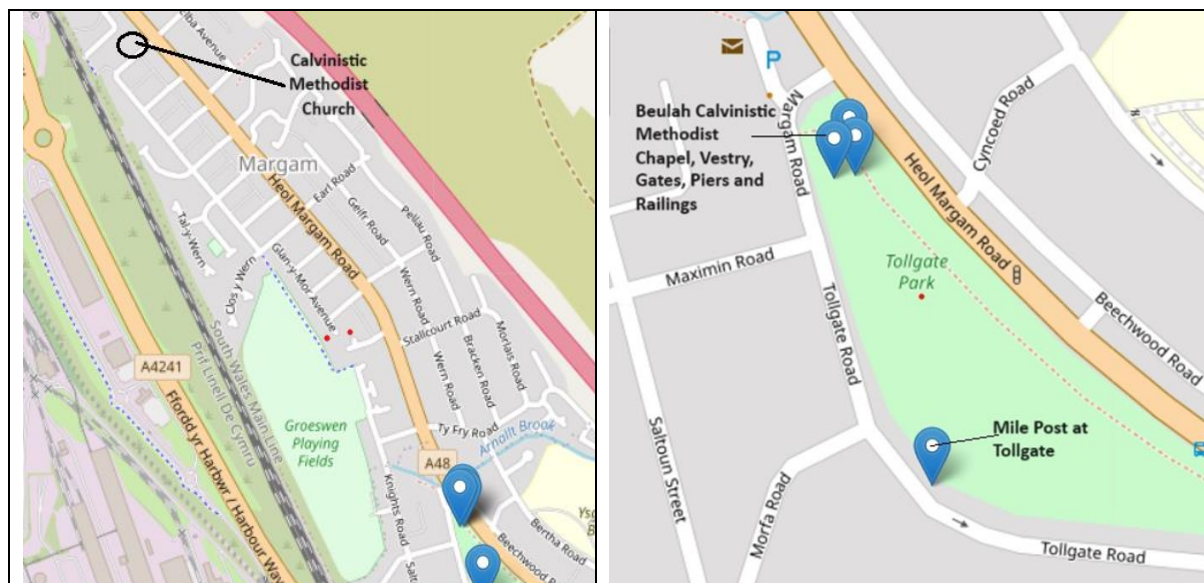
- Carnegie Free Library – Cadw ref 22807
- Gibeon Chapel – Cadw ref 22806
- Mile post – Cadw ref 22808

Margam

- Milepost at Tollgate Park – Cadw ref 23284
- Beulah Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Vestry, Gates, Piers and Railings – Cadw ref 14172, 23282 and 23283



Taibach Listed buildings in the vicinity of the Calvinistic Methodist Church



Margam listed buildings in the vicinity of the Calvinistic Methodist Church

2.0 Historic Development

1926	Margam Road, Presbyterian Chapel opened
?	Changed to Margam Road Evangelical Church (Presbyterian)
1984	Changed to Calvinistic Methodist Church
1911 - 1984	Registered baptisms with NLW
?	Closed

NOTE: This statement is not intended to be a detailed historic report, account or complete description of the site, it only intends to describe the history and context of the site so that the significance can be understood and articulated, in short, what forms the essence of the site and what makes it unique and important in its historic, architectural, evidential, and communal terms

Historic Association

The "little houses" of Taibach sprang up at the beginning of the 19th century in the parish of Margam as homes for colliery and other industrial workers, some way away from the historic village centre of Margam. Taibach has an association with significant historic figures, writers, personalities, and celebrities.

Richard Jenkins (Burton) – Famous Actor, not born in Taibach, but grew up in and around the village, it was in fact in Taibach in which he was schooled and was influenced by. Taibach was the town that moulded him to become the man he grew up to be.

Lord Heycock of Taibach - The Labour politician and life peer took his title from this area, which had been the home of the Heycock family since about 1800.

Other notable associations are:

Andrew Carnegie - A Scottish-American philanthropist, donated the funds for the library which was completed in 1916, one of 660 Carnegie libraries built in Britain and Ireland between 1883 and 1929. If it looks remarkably similar to a building on the opposite side of the road it's because they had the same architect, John Cox, the latter being built for the old Margam Urban District Council in 1906/7 where Cox worked as Surveyor.

Arthur Leslie Evans - (1911-1996), schoolteacher, poet and artist

Banksy – He created possibly the most famous, and certainly the most talked about, work of art on Welsh soil.

Historical map



TaiBach 1888 - @<https://www.nationallibraryofscotland>

Detailed Analysis of Individual Assets

This section considers the design, historic and current condition and form of the heritage assets individually.

The asset within this report is outside of a conservation area.

The asset is considered as a building of local importance under Policy BE 2 of the 2011 - 2026 LDP - The Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Calvinistic Methodist Church

Cadw Listing – Not listed



The church is positioned on Margam Road (A48) within the community of Taibach and the old county of Glamorgan.

Margam Road Methodist Chapel was built in 1926 in the Gothic style, it has a stone tracery arched headed doorway, fanlight with double doors. To the left and right of the doorway are two pairs of smaller trefoil headed stone windows.

The front facade is dominated by a rather large perpendicular window with a decorative stone tracery. There are narrow buttresses to the front and side elevations.

The building was still in use as a chapel in 1984.

RCAHMW, March 2008

The church/chapel is still in its original form and has no external alterations. Its condition is average, suffering from damp.

3.0 Statement of Significance

3.1 Principle Criteria for Assessment

In order to assess significance of the setting of these heritage assets the four component values from Cadw's "Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment of Wales" 2011, and BSI Standards Publication BS7913:2013 have been used.

These values are: -

- Evidential
- Historical
- Aesthetic
- Communal

Cadw's Conservation Principles are:

- Historic assets will be managed to sustain their values
- Understanding the significance of assets is vital
- The historic environment is a shared resource
- Everyone will be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment
- Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent
- Documentation and learning from decisions is essential.

BSI Standard's Publication (BS7913:2013) states that:

"Research and appraisal into the heritage values and significance of the historic building should be carried out to ensure that decisions resulting in change are informed by a thorough understanding of them. Understanding the significance of a historic building enables effective decision making about its future."

Paragraph 1.12 of TAN 24 Historic Environment Wales, for advice relating to the historic environment states:

“Applicants... are strongly encouraged to make use of these Conservation Principles when considering development proposals and other works to historic assets. It is important for those responsible to understand the heritage values and assess the significance of the historic assets that will be affected... an understanding of these values forms the basis of a statement of significance prepared as part of a heritage impact statement.”

3.1.1 Evidential Value

Cadw defines evidential value as deriving from:

Those elements of an historic asset that can provide evidence about past human activity, including physical remains or historic fabric. These may be visible and relatively easy to assess, or they may be buried below ground, underwater or be hidden by later fabric. These remains provide the primary evidence additional evidential values include documentary sources. Archaeological archives or museum collections. To assess the significance of this aspect of an asset all this evidence needs to be gathered in a systematic way and gaps identified.

BSI Standards Publication (BS 7913: 2013) states that evidential value is derived from:

The potential of a place to yield evidence about the past (i.e., archaeology)’.

TAN 24 Historic Environment Wales, defines evidential value as:

Value deriving from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity

3.1.2 Historic Value

Cadw defines historical value as:

A historic asset might illustrate a particular aspect of past life, or be associated with a notable family, person, event or movement these may be less tangible than evidential value but will often connect past with the present.

BSI Standards Publications (BS7913:2013) states that historic value is derived from:

The ability of a place to demonstrate or illustrate an aspect of the past or association with historic figures or events’

TAN 24 Historic Environment Wales, defines historic value as:

Value deriving from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present

3.1.3 Aesthetic Value

Cadw defines aesthetic value as deriving:

From the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a historic asset.

This might include the form of an historic asset, its external appearance and how it lies within its setting the design of this might be conscious or as a result of chance and evolution aesthetic value will be more subjective than its evidential and historical values.”

BSI Standards Publication (BS7913:2013) states that aesthetic value is derived from:

Ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place’.

TAN 24 Historic Environment Wales, defines aesthetic value as:

Value deriving from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

3.1.4 Communal Value:

Cadw defines communal value as deriving from:

The meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory

3.2 Levels of Significance

This section uses the information detailed in previous sections to assess the level of heritage significance of the site. This is achieved by assessing the evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values detailed in Section 3.1 above.

Significance has been graded Exceptional, High, Medium, Low, Neutral and Negative based on assessment of the heritage values. Whilst this will always be, to a certain extent a subjective judgement, assessment is guided by the assets associated designations (are they a national or local designation, or undesignated), the grade of that designation (ie/ Grade I or Grade II* listing), the guidance already referred to in this report, and is drawn on the experience of the author in producing such plans over a wide range of sites throughout the UK.

Exceptional significance is only considered for an asset of international, or of the highest national significance, with lowest significance referring to something of minor interest, or perhaps to an aspect of a building or sites that have been extensively modernised or altered (although individual elements within these parts may retain higher significance), and interventions that lower its heritage value and subsequent heritage significance.

There may also be elements that are of unknown significance. In this Statement, unknown significance might be found in below ground (ie. archaeology) or further documentary

research that has not yet been uncovered. Unknown significance might also relate to areas of a site that might not be accessible.

This section is summarised in Table 1 which uses a simple traffic light colour system where red is the most significance, amber is medium, and green is lowest. This Table also considers the impact of the proposals on the significance of the site and analysis where impact will be enhanced or harmed, in a similar style to the way in which the BS 7913:2013 Value and Impact Table is used to judge significance and magnitude of impact.

3.3 Heritage Values

Calvinistic Methodist Church: Group Value

VALUE LOW: **Evidential/Historic/Aesthetic**

The value is deemed to be low due to the building having no historic functional relationship as a group..

3.3.1 Calvinistic Methodist Church

VALUE MEDIUM: **Evidential/Historic/Aesthetic**

The church is of **Medium** evidential and aesthetic significance for its position as a central feature in the overall design and appearance within the community. The building is aesthetically pleasing with a very prominent frontage and intact interior (medium). Historic connections to the local community (medium), Evidential (Low)

3.4.2 Key views and Vistas from the church which form part of the setting

VALUE LOW: **Aesthetic**

There are no vistas to enjoy around the church, as its set back from the road.

There may well have been a vista to the west when the church was first built.

4.0 Planning Policy

4.1 National Legislation and Policy

4.1.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

The overarching legislation governing the consideration of applications for planning consent that affect heritage assets is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation) Areas Act 1990: Sections 16 (2) and 66 (1) of the Act require local planning authorities, in considering whether to grant listed building consent, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

4.1.2 National Planning Policy

Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales, Edition 10 2018, relates to the Historic Environment. In particular relevant to the proposal are the following paragraphs:

- **Paragraph 6.2.2** - Local planning authorities have an important role in protecting and conserving the historic environment while helping it accommodate and remain responsive to present-day needs. This is a key aspect of an authority's wider sustainable development responsibilities which should be taken into account in both the formulation of planning policies and the exercise of development management functions.
- **Paragraph 6.2.3** - Local planning authorities should seek to reuse or modify historic assets in order to reduce carbon emissions, secure sustainable development and respond to the impact of climate change. Some conflict between the conservation of historic assets and climate change objectives may be unavoidable, but this can often be mitigated by careful design, for example through the siting of renewable energy equipment and infrastructure. 3 The public benefit of taking action to reduce carbon emissions, or to adapt to the impact of climate change, should be weighed against any harm to the significance of historic assets..
- **Paragraph 6.4.1** - Local development plans (LDPs) must have regard to national policies on the historic environment.10 Development plans should also set out proposals for re-use or new development affecting historic areas and buildings, which may assist in achieving the Welsh Government's objectives for urban and rural regeneration
- **Paragraph 6.4.2** - In preparing plans and assessing proposals for development, local planning authorities must keep under review their access to records of the historic environment in their area. 11 Historic environment records represent indispensable tools for the formulation of development plans and the determination of planning applications.
- **Paragraph 6.4.8** - Local planning authorities may determine that a historic asset is of special local interest and may develop and publish lists of local historic assets, that do not have statutory protection, but which make an important contribution to local distinctiveness and have the potential to contribute to public knowledge. Where a local planning authority chooses to identify historic assets of special local interest, policies for their preservation and enhancement must be included in the local development plan
- **Paragraph 6.5.23** - Where a local planning authority has identified historic assets of special local interest or produced a list of local historic assets and included a policy in its LDP for their preservation and enhancement, any supporting supplementary planning guidance will be a material consideration when determining a planning application.

- **Paragraph 1.23 of TAN 24: The Historic Environment, Planning Policy Wales, May 2017** requires that planning authorities must consider the impact of the proposed development on historic assets including Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas. This includes [paragraph 1.25] an assessment of the surroundings of the assets, how they are experienced and appreciated, and past and present relationships to the surrounding landscape

4.2 Local Development Plan and Supplementary Guidance

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Policy Documents including:

Policy SP21 -The Historic Environment SPG supplements LDP Strategic Policy SP21

Policy BE2 (Buildings of Local Importance)

“There are various provisions made for the protection of historic assets depending on their significance. The strength of protection is related to the classification status of the building or structure and therefore to its importance and significance, and ranges from the statutory protections afforded by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to local policies and guidance”

“The building types identified as nationally important Listed Buildings or as locally recognised Buildings of Local Importance under LDP Policy BE2 reflect the social and economic history of the area. Many examples of churches and chapels are included (mainly from the era of rapid industrialisation), but also included are examples of houses, pubs, schools and entertainment venues that typify their time and the local social and economic history of the area. These historic assets can all help to illustrate the story of the growth of the area and its changing building techniques and styles, bringing to life the culture and society of the past”

5.0 Proposals and their impact on Heritage Assets

This Section allows a more detailed description and discussion of the proposals.

Heritage Assets Considered include Calvinistic Methodist Church

The proposals include:

- The conversion/restoration/adaptation of a building of interest into a family home

5.1 – Impact on Wider Setting and Historic Assets:

There is no impact on the wider setting or historic assets.

5.2 Key Areas that inform this assessment are:

- The character and significance of a Calvinistic Methodist Church including its value as a whole and the value of its component parts and the need to ensure that any proposal does not impact on this significance
- The potential impact that any development would have on the significance of the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings
- The need to consider new proposed surfaces and finishes and how they interact with the existing landscape.
- The potential impact that the proposal might have, including the traffic on the A48.

5.3 The conversion/restoration/adaptation of the Calvinistic Methodist Church

Current condition: The current condition of the building is fair, it is unused and suffering from damp. Old buildings benefit hugely when used, when left unused they deteriorate very quickly, due to lack of heat, air exchange and controlled ventilation.

Proposals: The proposals allow for the development of an unused church into a family home.

Impact on individual Heritage Values:

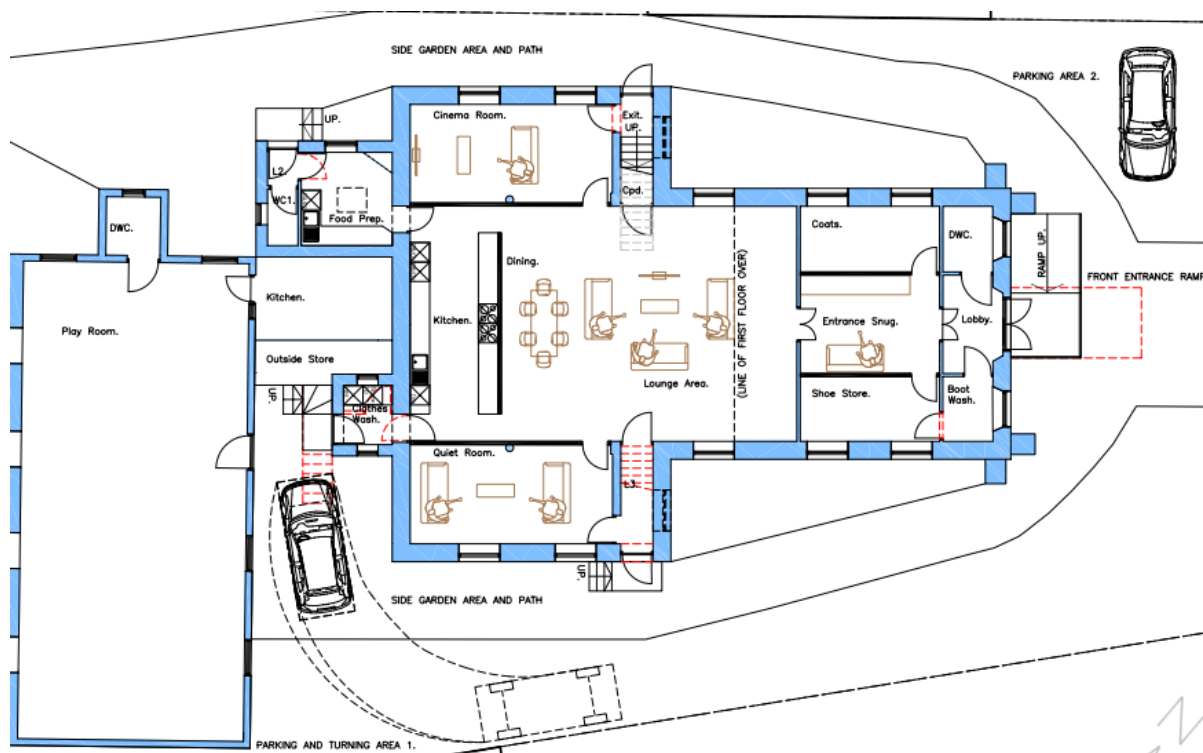
The proposals do not impact on the external/internal physical fabric of the heritage asset and it is considered that they have no impact on the **evidential** heritage values of assets or their setting.

Historic value: no impact.

The proposal **aesthetics** have been carefully and sympathetically designed so that their scale and character will not impact on the heritage asset.

The proposals do not have any impact on the **communal** activities as the church has been sold privately and will offer no “collective memory” as a place for people to meet.

Impact Conclusion: the proposals will have no impact on the significance of the heritage asset.



Ground floor showing no demolition work to the heritage asset

5.4 - Summary of Significance and Impact on Heritage Assets individually and as part of group

Item	Heritage Asset	Statutory Designation	Level of Significance	Brief Description	Brief Description of Change and Magnitude of Change	Impact Heritage Values	Safeguarded/Impacted: [E] : Evidential / [H] : historic [A] : Aesthetic / [C] : Communal
1.	Calvinistic Methodist Church	Not listed/building of interest	Medium	Gothic Style Church	Impact on setting or monument	No impact	Heritage Values will be safeguarded through the proposed works.

6.0 Conclusion

The proposal will have no impact on Calvinistic Methodist Church as an asset. The proposals presented will enhance the church's aesthetics through the restoration/conservation of the fabric of the building and will secure this assets future within the community.

The exterior skylights will mostly be hidden/obscured from the passing publics view. There is no demolition to the exterior or interior of the asset, other than the front boundary walls (to allow for off road parking).

The interior proposals are mostly self-supporting structures being fitted within the original fabric of the building and are reversable.

The proposed work to Calvinistic Methodist Church will ensure its future within a changing world, where adaptation and re-use of a structure should be seen as a positive intervention, as long as the asset isn't compromised and altered beyond recognition.

