

CANOLFAN SOAR
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

FEBRUARY 2026
REV -



1. Heritage Impact Assessment

- 1.1. The overall objective for the project is to respond to the reasons why the interior spaces have deteriorated following the application of poor specifications applied in the previous refurbishment project.
- 1.2. The current architectural merit of the basement level is considered to be low/neutral, with any remaining heritage fabric retained within the body of the envelope.
- 1.3. The application site forms the basement level of the old school building, which is Grade II curtilage listed to the principal parent building, the Zoar Chapel. Historically there was a relationship between the application site and the principal listed building, with the application site providing Sunday school facilities for the chapel. Today, the relationship is ownership related with the organisation named Canolfan a Menter Gymraeg, operating out of both building, which includes the range of buildings directly opposite the entrance to the Zoar Chapel.
- 1.4. Managing Change (2017) states that an analysis of historic character is a useful base from which to identify historic assets of special local interest and that historic character should be a vital element of any plans for regeneration and renewal. The assessment can ensure distinctiveness and identity and also contributes to quality of life and quality of place. Individual historic assets can be a focus for specific regeneration investment.
- 1.5. Managing Change recognises that strengthening or complementing character in new development helps to sustain distinctiveness. It also provides opportunities for fostering engagement and developing skills and supports the well-being of local communities.
- 1.6. The application site has a good level of historical significance, with evidence of historic street mapping remaining today. However, sadly, any architectural remaining evidence in the building fabric is no longer evident. The form and body of the building do retain historical relevance as the form can be interpreted to that of the original design intent. Indeed, the building has a good level of social significance as the local community have connections to the building which ranges to previous generations attending the buildings for worship, Sunday school or other community events.
- 1.7. It is considered that the proposed works will not have a negative impact upon the significance of the wider site.
- 1.8. It is intended that the refurbishment of the basement will bring the spaces back in to use for the local community and groups to use. Without the proposed works, the basement level will continue to deteriorate, which potentially will impact other aspects of the building.
- 1.9. The proposed works will result in securing a long-term future of what is now a redundant space. Whilst there are repairs to be undertaken to the building, these can be undertaken methods which have been adopted in similar buildings positioned within similar topographical settings.

- 1.10. The proposed use does not require any significant structural alterations, other than to form a new entrance to the rear elevation which will support operational factors as well as providing a greater level of emergency egress. The modern floor slabs and floor coverings will need to be replaced to provide insulation and construction method which will meet the waterproofing requirements.
- 1.11. This statement provides an assessment of the heritage value of the current redundant basement level of the Canolfan Soar building. The basement level is no longer fit for purpose and refurbishment that looks to solve the environmental conditioning is required to secure its future.
- 1.12. The applicant is very keen to maintain the character and quality of the building as a whole and will be making good the structure of the building to avoid further deterioration of the heritage fabric.
- 1.13. The alterations required for the refurbishment of the basement level will be kept to a minimum which will preserve the historic fabric while enhancing the functionality of the space and ensuring its survival, alongside the operation of the wider site and the parent listed building, as a heritage asset in the townscape of Merthyr Tydfil.