

## The Conservation Office

### Statement of Significance Example 1

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#### Trinity, Southborough (Grade II\*)

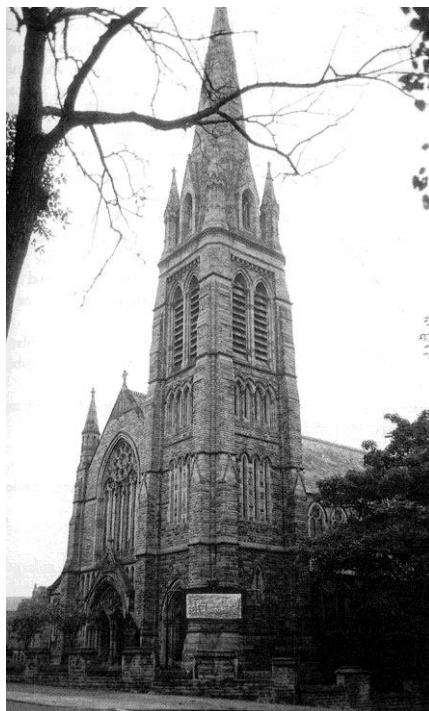
##### Part I: The church in its urban environment

This is a large and grandly conceived Victorian Gothic church, in what was in the late 19th century a relatively prosperous urban residential area. It is a monument to the prosperity of Southborough at the peak of its industrial development. The church is visible from some distance due to the height of its spire, and stands at the intersection of what remains of the 19th century terraced housing, post-war council housing, newer housing developments of the 1970's and some larger 19th century detached dwellings - some now reverting to single rather than multi-occupation. The church stands on Merchant Street with no curtilage on the north and east sides, and a garden on the south side encompassed by a stone wall to the east and iron railings to the west. It is not in a Conservation Area. It is of moderate to high significance in terms of its townscape value.

The church was built in 1888 in the Early English style to designs by Robert Moncur. The benefactor was Benjamin Taylor, a prominent local steel merchant. The church (nave 22m x 10m) consists of a 5-bay aisled nave, vestibule, south-west tower, 2-bay chancel and paired transepts. It is built of rock-faced sandstone with ashlar sandstone dressings, under graduated Lakeland slate covered roofs. There is an attached, separately listed Sunday School, also by Moncur, which is now used as community and playgroup facilities, and is very popular with the local community, especially young families and the elderly. In architectural terms it is of low to moderate significance.



*Above, interior view of chapel from original drawing by the architect*



*view of the chapel from the south west*

The church interior is impressive, retaining the majority of original Gothic furnishings, The pulpit and lectern are on stone bases, with a remarkable brass pulpit handrail in the form of a serpent. The “east” window with its excellent stained glass by Arnold and Co. is of high quality. Other good quality memorial windows are by Cain and Son. The interior is largely unaltered and is of moderate to high significance.

## **Part 2: The significance of the area affected by the proposal**

The proposal is to modernise and extend the facilities in the Sunday School. A new ramped access is also proposed. It is also proposed to enlarge the entrance vestibule to the chapel to create a welcome area and to provide toilets and a small kitchen. The space can also be used for meetings, increasing the use of this part of the building. This will involve the removal of the three rear rows of pews under the gallery and the insertion of a glazed screen, based on the original screen.

The proposal will have some visual and spatial impact, but this can be minimised by careful design and the use of quality materials. The setting of both listed buildings will be affected by the ramp but this is an area of low significance.

**Bibliography:** Pevsner, N (1967). *The Buildings of England: County Barham*  
Spencer, G and Toft, F (1984). *Building on Faith, Southborough*  
Stell, C (1994). *Nonconformist Chapels & Meeting-houses in the North of England*  
Listing Description

**The Conservation Office** Central Buildings, Oldham Street, Manchester M1 1JQ

Website: [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk)

Email: [conservation@methodistchurch.org.uk](mailto:conservation@methodistchurch.org.uk) Tel: 0161 235 6722

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