

DESIGN and ACCESS STATEMENT to accompany Full Planning Application for Change of Use & demolition in Conservation Area

(see also Heritage Statement – January 2026)

Reference:- TMC

Project: - Conversion of Redundant Church to Dwellinghouse

Location: - South Road Methodist Church, South Road, Timsbury, Bath, BA2 0NA

South Road Methodist Church is located on the north side of South Road, which runs along the southern side of the village of Timsbury, and comprises a double height chapel built in 1805, with single storey ancillary buildings attached to the rear of the property. The site is virtually landlocked and currently has no significant external space except for a narrow passageway along the eastern boundary and pedestrian access to the church on the west side – the main south elevation borders the pavement (see Fig.2 below).

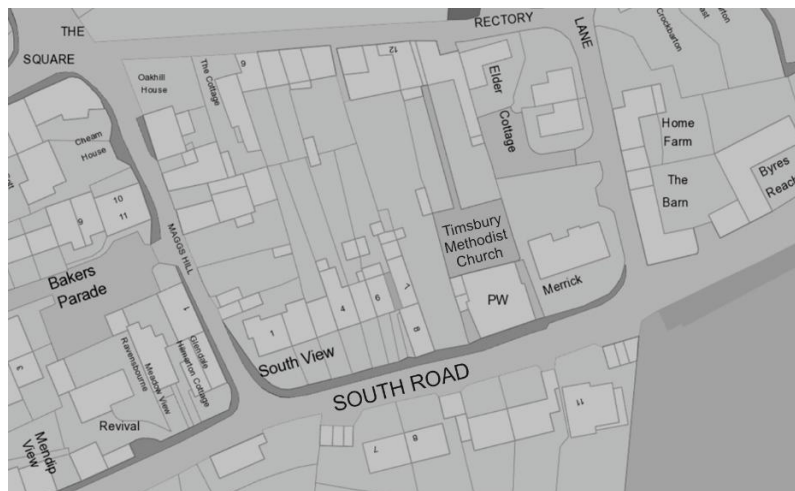


Fig. 1 – site location of South Road Methodist Church, Timsbury



Fig. 2 – photograph of South Road Methodist Church from west side

THE DESIGN BRIEF

The Church ceased providing religious services on 31st August 2025, and the Methodist Circuit of North East Somerset & Bath has determined that there is no future community role for the church. They therefore wish it to be converted to a suitable use which will ensure its survival as an important heritage building within the local townscape. To this end it is proposing to apply for change of use to a single family dwellinghouse.



Fig.3 – computer model of existing building from east – adjacent site vegetation omitted for clarity

As detailed in the Heritage Statement, priority has been given to retaining as much of the original chapel external envelope as possible, and thus the external appearance from public viewpoints along South Road will be virtually unchanged, save for the insertion of new upgraded windows in matching style.



Fig.4 – computer model of existing building from north west – structures in adjacent gardens omitted

The adjoining outbuildings at the rear comprise a meeting room, kitchen and lavatories, which occupy the whole of the rear of the site – see Fig.4 above. These facilities were added some time after the original chapel was built and appear on the 1844-1888 OS 25" 1st edition map (although the lavatories do not and were added sometime after 1943).

The outbuildings do not particularly complement the original chapel architecturally, and it is proposed to demolish them completely in order to provide a rear garden/patio area which will allow natural lighting into the rear Ground Floor spaces.



Fig. 5 – computer model aerial view of proposed Ground Floor layout and rear garden/patio area

The Ground Floor space will be divided into three bays, corresponding to the three main windows on the south façade. The entrance hall will be accessed via the existing church public entrance at the west end, and will accommodate the staircase, lavatory/cloaks and a utility room at the rear accessed from the kitchen. The central bay will comprise a two-storey atrium over the dining area, with adjoining open plan kitchen overlooking the new rear garden/patio area. The east end bay will accommodate a large living room with folding sliding glazed doors to the rear garden, and a separate study/home office (see Fig.5 above).

Parking for four pedal cycles will be accommodated in a secure roofed enclosure located in the north west corner of the garden area.



Fig. 6 – computer model aerial view of proposed First Floor layout

The First Floor space will comprise the staircase bay and landing, with a full-height glazed screen overlooking the two-storey atrium above the dining area. There will be a master bedroom with en suite bathroom, two double-bedrooms, one with en suite bathroom, a single bedroom and family bathroom (see Fig.6 above). Existing windows are fully utilised throughout with no additional windows required, thereby maintaining the integrity of the original chapel building.

THE BUILDING FABRIC

The original chapel building is constructed in White Lias random rubble brought to courses, which is generally in very good condition. There are round arched windows throughout – the main south elevation windows have been replaced with uPVC sashes, whilst the remaining original timber windows are generally in poor condition and some have been clad externally with acrylic sheets in an attempt to waterproof them. The main roof, originally natural slate, has been re-clad with plain concrete tiles at some time in the recent past.

The existing timber roof structure will be retained intact, with thermal insulation included above the new First Floor ceiling structure. The existing windows are not suitable for upgrading and will be replaced with new White uPVC casements/sliding sashes to resemble the original style and achieve current Building Regulations thermal and ventilation standards.

Thermal insulation of the external walls will be achieved by internal dry-lining with a plaster-board faced insulation board providing an overall U value of 0.21 W/m²K, i.e. a higher standard than currently required under Building Regulations L1(a).

The existing Ground Floor floor structure will be excavated to provide a new thermally insulated floor with underfloor heating. The space heating could be provided by an air-source heat pump, and there is ample south facing roof slope to accommodate solar panels.



Fig. 7 – computer model section view showing new rear garden/patio area and Ground Floor windows

ACCESS ISSUES

Currently there is no vehicular access to the property and unfortunately vehicle parking on site is not practicable due to the narrowness of the external space between the building and the boundary wall. There is ample on-street parking space adjacent to the site and a bus stop with regular timetable within 150 metres walking distance ¹.

Pedestrian access to the property will not be affected by the proposals.

As noted above, parking for four pedal cycles will be provided on site in a secure enclosure, and there is ample space for location of recycling containers within the site.

Internal circulation at Ground Floor level within the building will be suitable for ambulant disabled and wheelchair access, and the staircase will be of ample width to accommodate a stair lift if required. All electrical and plumbing services will be fully compliant with Building Regulations Approved Document M4(1).

Robert Taylor Architect - 20th January 2026

¹ From April 3rd, 2023 a new service, number 522, will operate hourly, Monday-Sunday, between Bristol Bus Station and Bath Bus Station via Brislington, Keynsham, Marksbury, Farmborough, Timsbury, High Littleton, Paulton, Midsomer Norton, Radstock and Peasdown St. John. **Travel time from Timsbury to Bristol will be around 50 minutes, and to Bath will be around 75 minutes.**