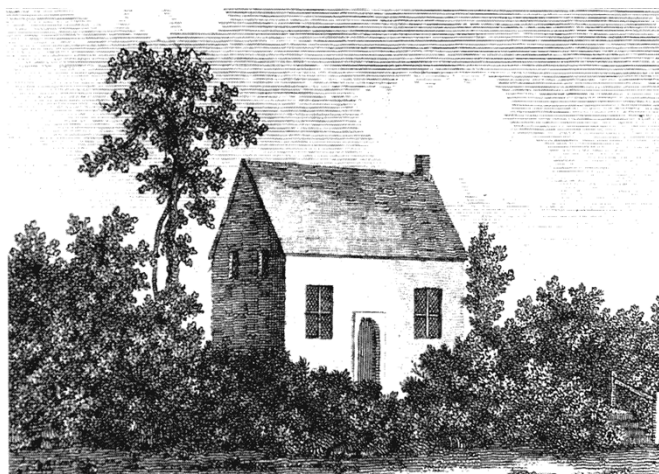


Heritage Assessment of Barton Chapel

Barton Chapel is a grade 2 listed building (List entry Number: 1188187). It is a historic building built in 184-0. It is listed because of its characteristic architecture, constructed in 'red brick with slate roof and yellow brick chequer and slate roof behind a pedimented gable. The Chapel is of 2-storeys with sill bands and dentilled eaves broken by a slightly projecting centre bay. It has fixed lights and 16-pane glazing bar sash windows.' Seen here from the front (South) during a very chilly routine maintenance visit, it is an impressive building.



Apart from its Victorian architecture, a key reason for the building's importance is its local historical significance. The Chapel at Barton has been in continuous use for over 275 years, originally established by the Huguenots in 1745. The existing chapel was a 'rebuilding' and enlargement of a previous one.



2. Baptist meeting-house at Barton in the Beans. From J. Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester*, 4 vols., 4.2, plate cxxix, facing p.808 London: Nichols, 1811.

The Chapel built in 1840 was at the centre of what was then a small hamlet, and the schoolroom to the North of the Chapel was the village school. One of the current trustees applying for planning permission is now in his 90's and was a pupil at the school. The Churchyard is the site of the grave of Samuel Deacon founder of a well-known local clock-making family, and Church Minister.

Heritage Contribution made by the setting

A main contribution to the heritage of this site is historical, however the fact that the Chapel site has been at the centre of a growing local community since the 17th Century is clearly of social importance. The field to the North of the schoolroom has been a school field for local children to play and a venue for village events such as celebrations of the coronation, and jubilee of more than one monarch.

The 'impact of the proposal on this heritage asset'¹, is in our opinion minimal in that the installation will be kept as unobtrusive as possible.

The heat exchangers would be located in the yard to the rear of the chapel, they would not be visible from inside the building, or from anywhere outside the red-brick wall surrounding the yard. Internally the warm air blowers would be sited at the front of the chapel building where existing stoves stand. This would mean that none of the original wood paneling would be affected. The area behind the stoves is backed with modern painted hardboard.

We also believe that the proposals will 'better reveal the significance of the asset'² because our intention is to make the Chapel more usable and flexible for modern users. This would be a continuation of the historical use of the chapel.

We also feel that this proposal will be a way of 'sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation'³. The chapel has been in good repair due to the building skills and labours of the trustees over many years. The congregation is now growing, but the chapel is deteriorating. Being able to keep the building dry and warm will help us to ensure its longevity. A key priority for us is to secure the future conservation of this wonderful asset. The scheme will also enable the chapel to be ecologically sustainable going forward.

Our assessment of the heritage impact of the proposed development is that it is very much in keeping with the original intentions and use of the site since 1745, which are about using the building as a practical meeting place. We have sought advice from the planning department to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and improving the warmth and welcome. It would be an opportunity for the chapel to last longer and be more usable.

References

¹ "Conserving and enhancing the historic environment" National Planning Policy Framework. paragraph 128

² "Conserving and enhancing the historic environment" National Planning Policy Framework. paragraph 137

³ "Conserving and enhancing the historic environment" National Planning Policy Framework. paragraph 131