



Method Statements- Historic Repairs

Westwood Cottage, Sheerlands Road RG40 4QX

The purpose of this report is to accompany a planning or Listed Building Application.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Heritage Asset and its Setting:

Project Address: Westwood Cottage, Sheerlands Road RG40 4QX

Local Authority: Wokingham Borough Council

Building Use: Residential

Listing Status: Grade II

Method Statements for making good:

- Electrical works (avoid cutting through historic timbers or lath and plaster for example)
 - New drainage routes where this requires cutting through historic fabric or affecting appearance (proposals should seek to minimise impacts on historic fabric and appearance)
 - Making-good plastering in lime when applied to existing lime-plastered or unplastered walls or exterior walls
- Cleaning of historic timbers

General methodology:

The following principles will be applied to the proposed works in accordance with good practice outlined in British Standard BS7913:2013 : Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings.

- The extent of intervention should be kept to a minimum in order to achieve the approved works. New works should always take the course of least interference and if possible avoid entirely cutting through or disturbing historic fabric such as lath and plaster walls of existing timberwork.
- Repair should be prioritised over replacement. Avoid losing features that contribute to the buildings significance.
- The correct choice of materials for construction works is important for conservation works. Where possible existing materials should be investigated and tested so that good performance and aesthetic matches can be achieved. New materials and techniques should only be used where there is evidence that they perform satisfactorily in use.
- Proven repair techniques using matching materials and traditional repair techniques should be used.
- Honest repairs should be used. Repairs should be carried out without any attempt to disguise them providing they are not unduly obtrusive or unsympathetic. A different approach should only be taken where aesthetic significance would be harmed as a result of the approach.
- Reinstate lost features providing there is strong evidence and research supporting as justification.

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- Prioritise repair and good maintenance. Building condition has a major impact upon building performance. Like for like repair and maintenance should be prioritised when planning works. Future maintenance should also be carefully considered when new planning service routes.
- When carry out alterations the principle of reversibility should be used, for example new insertions such as subdividing walls should be contoured around original features and moulding so that they can be removed in the future, leaving the original fabric intact.
- Protect the existing fabric when carrying out work so that historic features are not damaged by manoeuvring equipment around the building or from works being carried out.
- Record drawings of the works should be produced and be made available to the building owner, and passed to future building owners.

Repairing/ making good Plaster ceilings:

- Where a traditional lath and plaster ceiling remains in tact in the property priority should be given to its retention and not wholesale replacement. Repairs should always be carried out using lime based, vapour permeable, products. Repairs should always be carried out by a competent person experienced in working with lime plaster.
- Small repairs can be carried out by cutting the hole back to a rectangular shape to reveal the joists on two sides. New laths as required can then be fixed back to the joists. These should be screwed back to the joists to minimise vibration and further damage. Replacement lath used should match the existing in material and size.
- Plaster work patches (lime) to be built up in two to three coats of reducing thickness. The first coat should be squeezed through the laths to ensure a good key. Scratch the coat in a diamond pattern to allow for next coat. Allow each coat to carbonate before applying the next.
- Old House Store pre mix lime plaster to be used to match existing- presumed to be 'Fine Stuff'.
- <https://oldhousestore.co.uk/product/old-house-store-fine-stuff/>
- New plasterboard to only be used where it is replacing existing plasterboard or where a fire separation is required for Building Regulation Compliance.
- All ceilings to be finished with breathable paints.

Cleaning of Historic Timbers:

- The cleaning of the existing timbers is to be non chemical based and to use the gentlest approach in order to remove the existing black paint, allowing the timbers to breathe again. A test area approach is assumed. For the purposes of this application we would assume the use of a wet abrasive blasting or soda low pressure blasting which minimizes dust and risk of damage. This would be specified and carried out by a specialist contractor.

Rewiring and Electrical Works:

- Wherever possible avoid knocking holes in ceilings or chasing plasterwork for pipes or cables and use existing service runs, voids etc to accommodate runs. Follow the principles of mitigation, minimisation and reversibility.
- Using wireless technology for controls that remove the need for hard-wired connections where wired systems would result in unreasonable harm.
- Avoid chasing in lath and plaster walls entirely due to prospect of structural damage.
- Use appropriate lime based products for plaster repairs.
- Coordinate service installations to avoid floorboards being repeatedly lifted by different trades. Number and record floorboards prior to lifting and allow this to be done by a competent carpenter rather than the electrician or plumber to ensure the preservation of the floor.
- Where floors may be taken up again in the future use brass screws rather than nails. This also likely prevents damage to the ceiling below from the vibration of hammering nails.
- Wherever possible run services parallel to joists and avoid cutting into timbers. Notching into timber where unavoidable should be carried out under the careful advice of a structural engineer. Route pipework, controls or cabling through buildings in ways that might not be the shortest, the most direct, or the simplest.
- Ensure that all electrical work is carried out by a suitably qualified electrician. Existing electrical systems to be checked for capacity and fire risks before extending the existing system.
- Install new power points where needed on new partitions or modern fabric. Where this is unavoidable use surface mounted installations avoiding damaging plaster walls or architectural details.
- Use existing features, such as mouldings or balustrades, to conceal services such as cabling.
- Using the minimum number of fixings in historic fabric. Reduce the impact on historic fabric by making fixings into mortar joints between brickwork, stonework or where least visible. Do not fix back to historic timberwork.
- Install services so that they don't cover up, damage, or interrupt views of important building features and surfaces or create dirt traps or staining patterns from heat and air movement.
- Produce record drawings of service runs to allow for easy maintenance in the future.

New Plumbing works:

- Existing SVPS to be reused. Follow the principles of mitigation, minimisation and reversibility.
- Gaps around pipes that pass through external walls must be plugged with lime mortar.
- Pipes travelling through unheated spaces or voids must be lagged.
- Using existing features, such as mouldings or balustrades, to conceal services such as cabling.
- Produce record drawings of service runs to allow for easy maintenance in the future.
- Route pipework, controls or cabling through buildings in ways that might not be the shortest, the most direct, or the simplest if it results in the least harm to historic fabric.
- Fix new sanitaryware back to modern studwork work rather than back to historic fabric. Use the minimum number of fixings in historic fabric. Reduce the impact on historic fabric by making fixings into mortar joints between brickwork, stonework or where least visible.
- Install drainage so that it doesn't cover up, damage, or interrupt views of important building features and surfaces or create dirt traps or staining patterns from heat and air movement.
- New UG foul drains proposed to the rear replacing a modern drainage system.
- Do not fix new plumbing back to historic timbers. Provide timber studwork set off the historic fabric and use them for concealing piperuns.

Structural Works: N/A for this project

- Where structural works are proposed designs should be carried out by a competent structural engineer.
- Protect the existing fabric when carrying out work so that historic features are not damaged by manoeuvring new structural members around the building or from works being carried out. Plan the installation process in advance of the works. Minimise vibrations from any structural works.
- Avoid hot works to minimise fire risk.
- Where existing structural timbers are found to be structurally compromised due to rot or past damage then an inspection from a suitably qualified engineer should be carried out. Advice should be given on the correct course of remedial action with priority given to the members repair and retention.
- Where timber treatment is needed for example for insect or fungal treatment then advice should be obtained by a specialist experienced in traditional/ historic buildings. Chemical treatment should not be used without prior approval from the local authority.
- If timber in a building is found to be rotting, it's essential to identify the source of the moisture and remedy its cause to prevent a recurrence.
- Install support as specified by the structural engineer for existing the chimney following historic chimney removal.

New Partitions:

- Unless specifically specified by a structural engineer new partitions should be constructed of timber so not to place undue additional weight onto the existing structure. The bearing of these new partitions should be inspected by an engineer and any strengthening work agreed in advance. Strengthening work should prioritise the retention of existing fabric.
- New subdividing walls should be contoured around original features and moulding so that they can be removed in the future, leaving the original fabric intact.

Repairing/ making good Plaster Walls:

- Wherever possible avoid knocking holes in walls or chasing plasterwork for pipes or cables and use existing service runs, voids etc to accommodate runs.
- Avoid chasing in lath and plaster walls entirely due to prospect of structural damage.
- Use appropriate lime based products for plaster repairs.
- Where a traditional lath and plaster finish to a wall remains in tact in the property priority should be given to its retention and not wholesale replacement. Repairs should always be carried out using lime based products. Repairs should always be carried out by a competent person used to working with lime plaster.
- Where timber partitions are modern they are to be finished with plasterboard and a choice between lime based or modern gypsum plaster will be made.
- When patching care must be taken to pack new plaster tightly against the sides of the original.. Where the original is weak in nature allow the first coat to more fully harden than is usual to avoid the second coat springing the old and new apart.
- When applying new plaster to existing solid walls avoid using plaster beads, metal corners or fixing guides.
- Ensure wall is in a reasonable state of repair prior to applying lime plaster. Any old nails, cramps or items that may rust must be completely removed. Any loose material should be removed with a chum brush. Spray walls with water prior to application of new lime. Old plaster should be retained wherever possible and carefully patched around. When patching the edges of the old plaster should be trimmed roughly at right angles to the surface.
- All walls to be finished with breathable paints.

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Repair of Cast Iron Rainwater Goods

- Original elements to be retained where possible. Only components that are missing or beyond repair should be replaced. Redecorate existing like for like.
- Any replacement sections should match the existing is size and appearance.
- Replacement downpipes should be fixed away from the wall to facilitate repainting.
- Cast iron rainwater goods that are suffering from minor corrosion, but are otherwise sound, should have all of their rust removed using a wire brush and sandpaper prior to being repainted. Existing sound paint should be roughened with sandpaper to help the fresh coat adhere well.
- For new castings best practice is to apply two coats of a zinc based primer, one coat of micaceous iron oxide and two coats of gloss paint.
- Any defective gutter joints should be resealed with oil putty to prevent leaks. Small holes should b filled prior to painting.