



Commentary Dated: 21st June 2024

WCS Project Reference: P5090
Bury MBC Listed Building Consent Reference: 70507

Plant Farm, Cross Lane, Ramsbottom, Bury BL8 4LY

Additional commentary on application for Listed Building Consent for internal refurbishment works:

Proposed tanking works to cellar

1. Appointment and project context

- 1.1 The following additional commentary has been prepared by Matthew Williams of Williams Conservation Surveying Limited (WCS) on behalf of the applicant, Mrs Julie Ormerod.
- 1.2 The commentary and explanation of the proposals is submitted in support of the application for Listed Building Consent for refurbishment of Plant Farm as referenced above and should be read alongside our original report dated 4th June 2024 (Final V1).
- 1.3 This additional commentary concerns the proposed approach to tanking works within the cellar area to the rear of the ground floor / basement, only. The present report is accompanied by the following third-party documents detailing the proposals which are relevant to this part of the submission:
 - Damp report and proposed tanking approach (Porter Construction, dated 11.06.2024)
 - Proposed plan and section of tanking works to cellar (CD Wilkinson Plans, dated June 2024, drawing reference 2715_RAM_05_Detail)

2. Commentary on proposed approach

- 2.1 As detailed in our main report, there is extensive groundwater ingress into the cellar of Plant Farm caused by its position dug into the adjacent hillside. The topography and positioning of the cellar structure make a French drain or other traditional external solution impracticable. In particular, mechanical excavation for a drain is not possible in the affected area. As such, any such intervention would require hand excavation to considerable depth, presenting an unacceptable physical risk to the operatives involved due to the potential for excavation collapse.
- 2.2 As a result of these considerations, and following further discussion with the Local Authority Conservation Officer, it is proposed to install a membrane-based tanking system with a drainage channel and sump pump to prevent further water ingress into the inhabited part of the property.
- 2.3 As detailed within the accompanying report and the plan and section drawings, the membrane-based tanking system would comprise a plastic damp proof membrane fixed to the walls with plaster membrane plugs which would direct water to a drainage channel at the base of the membrane. The

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drainage channel would direct the water to a sub floor level electric sump pump which would operate continuously to remove the water to the mains drainage system.

- 2.4 To provide a suitable finish to the accommodation, the walls would be fixed with timber studs supporting a moisture resistant plasterboard wall and ceiling finish. The timber structure would also support a suspended floor of moisture resistant chipboard. This would allow standard internal domestic finishes to be installed.
- 2.5 Beneath the floor level, the sump pump would be installed into an excavated housing beneath the termination of the drainage channel.
- 2.6 In addition to the sump pump provision, continuous mechanical extract vent provision would be installed to reduce the risk of internal condensation occurring. **Note:** the mechanical extract vent unit would require an external termination point and it is suggested that the positioning and appearance of this could be subject to a condition attached to any grant of Listed Building Consent.
- 2.7 To facilitate the installation of the tanking system, removal of the central stone table within the cellar would be required. In addition, the niche to the right-hand side wall of the cellar (as viewed from the entrance to the chamber) would be concealed by the installation of the new tanking system. The heritage implications of these proposed alterations are discussed concisely below.

3 *Heritage considerations and Conclusions*

- 3.1 In line with our site observations, it is acknowledged that the lower parts of the internal walls of the cellar may be of some modest historic interest. Nevertheless, as discussed with the Local Authority Conservation Officer, it is considered that the existing condition of extensive water ingress presents a considerable threat to the fabric overall. Therefore, it is submitted that this justifies the alteration in internal appearance which would be caused by the installation of the tanking system.
- 3.2 The stone table within the cellar may equally be of some historic interest. It is considered, however, that its removal to allow installation of the tanking would be an acceptable intervention to reduce the risk of damage from water ingress. Without this removal it would not be possible to install a tanking system as hydrostatic pressure will cause moisture to enter the stone table structure and evaporate into the surroundings with a significant condensation risk as a result.
- 3.3 The stonework to the niche appears to be modern and as such the covering up of the niche is not considered to have any impact upon the special architectural and historic interest of the building.
- 3.4 As confirmed by the existing Heritage Assessment (Gary Miller Heritage Consultancy, February 2024) following multiple previous internal alterations the special architectural and historic interest of the building now rests in the external envelope of the building. As such, a further minor alteration to provide tanking to the cellar is considered to be acceptable and not to amount to damage to the overall special architectural and historic interest of the building.

4 *Relevant site photographs (Overleaf)*

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4.1 Stone table within cellar, proposed for removal under a scheme of membrane tanking.



4.2 Partially historic stonework within cellar walls proposed for tanking system.

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4.3 Modern niche within cellar. This would be concealed on completion of the tanking scheme.