

Heritage Statement for Proposed Covers to Blackley Crematorium Domes

The Crematorium was designed under the auspices of the former Manchester City Architect Leonard C. Howell by the renowned modernist architect Frank Williams, who later formed his own partnership, and was awarded the Manchester Society of Architects Bronze Medal in 1959. It is a Grade 2 Listed Building under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as amended) for its special architectural or historic interest. It has been designated for its strong and confident pioneering modern design with crisp and clear lines, its particularly striking elevations, and its interior quality with carefully considered materials and lighting. It is little altered internally or externally and has a wealth of original features.

- The 5no. large shallow concrete and cast glass roof light domes are original, but due to weathering over the years the glass inserts in the concrete have leaked water into the building on numerous occasions.
- Several attempts have been made over the years to waterproof these without success, and they are currently covered over with felt as a temporary solution by Facilities Management to prevent disruption to services and damage to the building fabric.
- The proposed solution to both waterproof these and to prevent further damage to the original domes is to cover them with a clear lightweight material in a non-destructive, non-interventionist, fully reversible manner in accordance with the long established ruling principles, concepts and requirements of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, (SPAB).
- To retain the original domes, a purpose made clear acrylic dome with grp surround manufactured by specialist manufacturer Talbot designs is proposed. These will fit snugly over each of the original domes, thereby preventing any further water penetration.
- The original lighting effect intended by the Architect, one of the reasons cited for listing, is thereby reinstated and maintained.
- The original fabric is not affected, and the dome covers can be easily removed at any time.
- As the domes are set behind a parapet and are not visible from ground level, the addition of clear tight-fitting covers would make no change to the striking elevations cited, or indeed to the aerial view.

Prepared by –

**R.J. Broadbent RIBA
Architect/Building Surveyor
Minor Works
Capital Programmes Division
Town Hall Extension
Manchester M 60 2JT**

December 2021