

Conservation Method Statement

Fixings and Sealants to Stonework

Link Building to Listed Building – 731 Wilmslow Road, Didsbury For Atmos International Ltd

1. Introduction

This method statement relates to proposed fixings and sealants to existing stonework within a listed building located within Manchester City Council's administrative area. The works are designed to preserve historic fabric, minimise intervention, and comply with Manchester City Council conservation requirements.

2. Policy and Guidance

The works will be carried out in accordance with:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Heritage Assets
- Historic England guidance
- BS 7913: *Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings*
- Manchester City Council Core Strategy and heritage policies

3. Conservation Approach

The following principles will be applied throughout:

- Minimal and necessary intervention only
- Preference for reversible techniques
- Avoidance of damage to original stonework
- Use of compatible, breathable materials
- Retention of historic fabric wherever possible

4. Pre-Commencement Measures

- Exact fixing locations to be reviewed on site prior to installation.
- Condition of stonework assessed to identify weaknesses or decay.
- A photographic record taken before works commence.
- Trial fixings and sealant samples installed in inconspicuous locations if requested by the Conservation Officer.

5. Materials

Fixings

- Non-ferrous or stainless steel (A2/A4) fixings only.
- Fixings kept to the minimum size and number required.
- Mechanical fixings preferred; resin anchors avoided unless specifically approved.
- No ferrous metals used.

Sealants

- Lime-based or conservation-grade sealants compatible with historic stone.
- Vapour-permeable, non-staining, and non-acidic.
- Silicone sealants avoided unless unavoidable and then neutral-cure only, subject to approval.

Sealants Between Aluminium Frames and Historic Stonework

Purpose

A discreet seal is required between the new/existing **aluminium frames** and the surrounding **historic stonework** to provide weather protection while allowing for differential movement between materials and avoiding harm to the historic fabric.

Conservation Approach

- The sealant selection and installation will:
 - Be non-staining, vapour-permeable where possible, and chemically compatible with historic stone.
 - Allow for thermal movement of aluminium frames.
 - Be visually recessive and reversible without damage to stonework.
- No sealant will bridge drainage paths or trap moisture within the stone.

Approved Sealant Types

The following sealants are considered suitable for use with historic masonry and aluminium frames, subject to final approval:

Preferred Sealants

- **Neutral-cure silicone sealant**
 - Non-acidic (no acetic cure)
 - Low-modulus, high-movement capability
 - Non-staining and suitable for natural stone
 - Examples:
 - Dow Corning / Dowsil 791
 - Sika Hyflex / Sikasil Neutral Cure (stone-compatible)

Alternative (where breathability is required)

- **Silane-modified polymer (MS polymer) sealant**
 - Low shrinkage
 - Paintable if required
 - Compatible with stone and metal substrates

Not permitted

- Acetic-cure silicones
- Bitumen-based mastics
- Cementitious fillers
- Hard-setting or brittle sealants

Joint Preparation

- Joint widths kept to the minimum necessary (typically 5–10 mm).
- Stone surfaces to be:
 - Cleaned by dry brushing only
 - Free from dust, salts, and loose material
- No chemical cleaners or aggressive washing methods will be used.

Installation Method

1. Backing rod (closed-cell polyethylene) inserted where joint depth requires, ensuring:
 - Correct sealant depth
 - No adhesion to the rear of the joint
2. Sealant applied using hand tools only.
3. Sealant tooled flush or slightly recessed to avoid visual prominence.
4. No sealant smeared across stone faces.
5. Works undertaken in suitable weather conditions in accordance with manufacturer's guidance.

Appearance and Colour

- Sealant colour to be:
 - Neutral / stone-matched
 - Subordinate to historic fabric
- Trial sample to be provided on site for approval if requested by MCC Conservation Officer.

Breathability and Moisture Management

- Sealant application will not impede:
 - Natural evaporation from the stone
 - Existing drainage or weep details
- The joint acts as a weather seal only, not a rigid bond.

Reversibility and Future Removal

- Sealant can be removed mechanically by hand without damage to stone.
- Any residual material will be carefully cleaned without abrasive methods.
- No permanent alteration to stone arrises or faces will result from installation or removal.

6. Method of Work

6.1 Protection

- Adjacent stonework protected using breathable materials.
- No adhesive tapes applied directly to stone surfaces.
- Vibration, dust, and impact kept to a minimum.

6.2 Drilling

- Drilling undertaken only where unavoidable.
- Hand drilling or low-speed rotary drilling used; no hammer action.
- Mortar joints targeted in preference to stone.
- Drill holes limited to the smallest practicable diameter and depth.
- Dust removed using vacuum or dry methods only.

6.3 Fixing Installation

- Fixings installed carefully to avoid stress or cracking.
- No overtightening.
- Load spreaders or packers used where required.
- Redundant fixings removed and holes repaired.

6.4 Sealant Application

- Surfaces cleaned using dry brushing only unless otherwise agreed.
- Sealants applied neatly in thin beads.
- Joint profiles matched to surrounding historic detailing.
- Excess material removed immediately to avoid staining.

7. Making Good

- All holes and disturbed areas repaired using lime-based mortar.
- Mortar matched in colour, texture, and permeability to existing fabric.
- No cementitious or hard-setting materials used.

8. Supervision and Quality Control

- Works carried out by operatives experienced in historic buildings.
- Ongoing supervision by a competent person familiar with conservation practice.
- Any unexpected discoveries reported immediately to Manchester City Council and works paused pending instruction.

9. Health, Safety and Environment

- Works undertaken in compliance with CDM Regulations.
- Dust suppression and safe access maintained at all times.
- Waste disposed of responsibly.
- No harmful substances permitted to leach into the stone or ground.

10. Completion

- Final photographic record provided.
- All works left clean, secure, and visually unobtrusive.
- Maintenance recommendations issued where relevant.