12 SEPTEMBER 2025

Proposed Conservation & Repair: The Poultry Cross Project Summary

Salisbury City Council

Report to the City Council

Author: Louise Salman RIBA CA DipConsHistEnv (RICS) Accredited Conservation Architect

loop ARCHITECTS

Loop Architects Ltd.
40 Bourne Avenue
Salisbury, Wiltshire,
SP1 1LS

2515-10/LS

12 September 2025

The Poultry Cross: Phase I Repairs

PROJECT SUMMARY :

Contents

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

The Poultry Cross**:** Phase I Repairs

PROJECT SUMMARY :

1. The Poultry Cross: Site Location:

The Poultry Cross stands at the junction of Minster Street and Silver Street, on the corner of Butcher Row at the edge of the Market Place in the centre of the medieval city of Salisbury. It is a hexagonal, open arched shelter with buttressed piers with carved and panelled pinnacles dating from the 14th Century, later modified in the 18th century.

Historically, a market cross was a prominent landmark used to designate a market in market towns. They were also used as public meeting places and sites for important announcements. They appeared during the early medieval period in strategic trading locations ensuring their prominence in daily life. A similar Market Cross can be found in Chichester.

Fig 1. The Church of St John the Baptist location. The churchyard is marked in red.

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

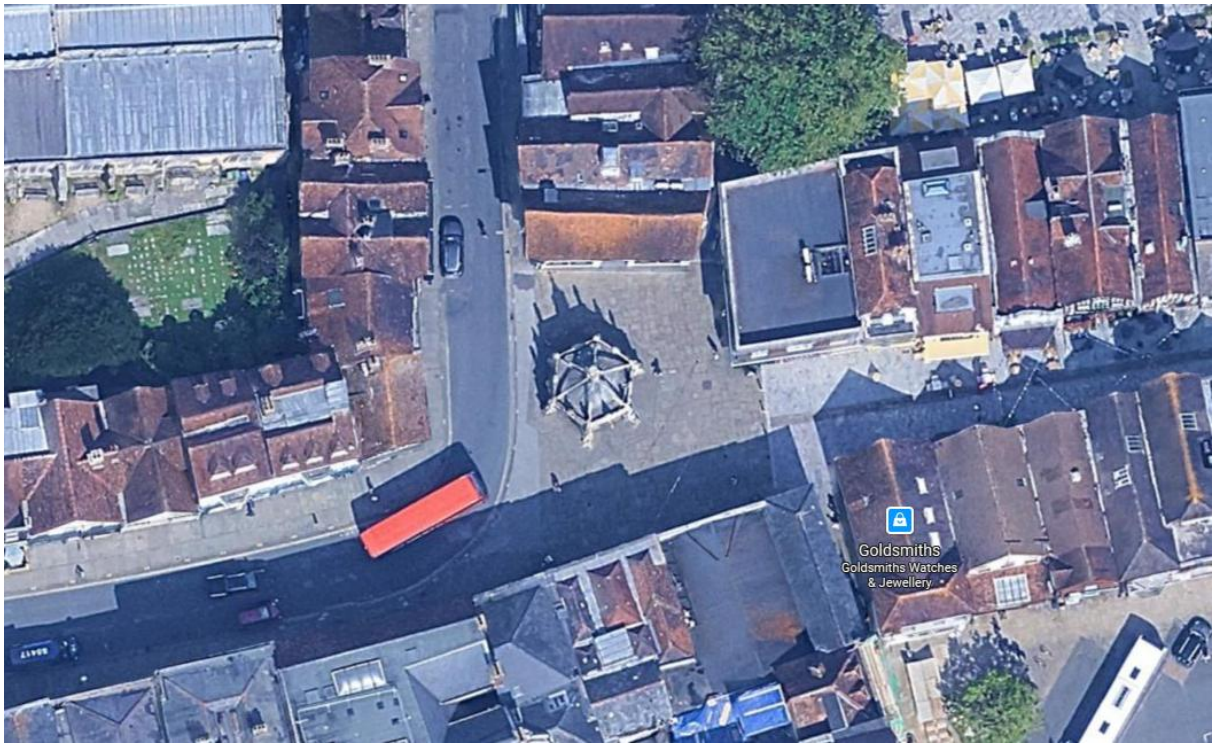

Fig 2. The Poultry Cross, just off the Market Place

2. History:

The Poultry Cross is the only one remaining of four market crosses that once stood in Salisbury. The others were the Cheese Cross in the present Cheese market area, Barnard's Cross (livestock) at the junction of Barnard Street and Culver Street and another which designated a market for wool and yarn at the east end of the present Market Place, near the War Memorial.

The presence of a market cross on the site dates from roughly 1307. [1] The present stone structure was built in the 14th century. The original stone vaulting was removed in 1711, the present flying buttresses date from 1852 to 1854, when the upper parts of the cross were rebuilt to the designs of the architect Owen Browne Carter, who latterly lived in Salisbury and who also designed the nearby Corn Exchange (now the Public Library).

The present-day site, around the structure, is used as part of Salisbury Market on Tuesdays and Saturdays. However, the structure itself is no longer in use.

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

3.0 Construction and evolution:

Built in Chilmark stone with a lead covered timber roof, the hexagonal arcade has piers with weathered and pinnacled buttresses supporting ogee-moulded and hollow-chamfered segmental pointed arches with ogee labels. Above is a moulded string course and a pierced parapet with a canopied niche at the centre of each bay.

The arches are flat segmental shaped and moulded with a drip turned up in a point over the centre, beneath a carved and pinnacle niche in the centre of each bay. [2]

A central stone shaft with a stone seat at the base is carried up through a later lead roof, which was originally thought to be finished with a sundial clock. A series of flying buttresses now meet in the centre and cover the sundial with a six ogee headed niches (one on each face), crowned with a pinnacle and cross. This upper stage, designed by Owen Carter was completed by local mason, William Osmund in 1852. The masonry to the lower part of the monument was restored at the same time.

Fig 3: Poultry Cross, 1810, Water colour by J Buckler (Devises Museum)[1]
The Poultry Cross before the high level alterations and flying buttress additions of 1852

1. Inventory of The Historical Monuments in The City of Salisbury: V. 1, unnamed, 1980,
2. The Buildings of England: Wiltshire, Pevsner N, 1963, p446

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

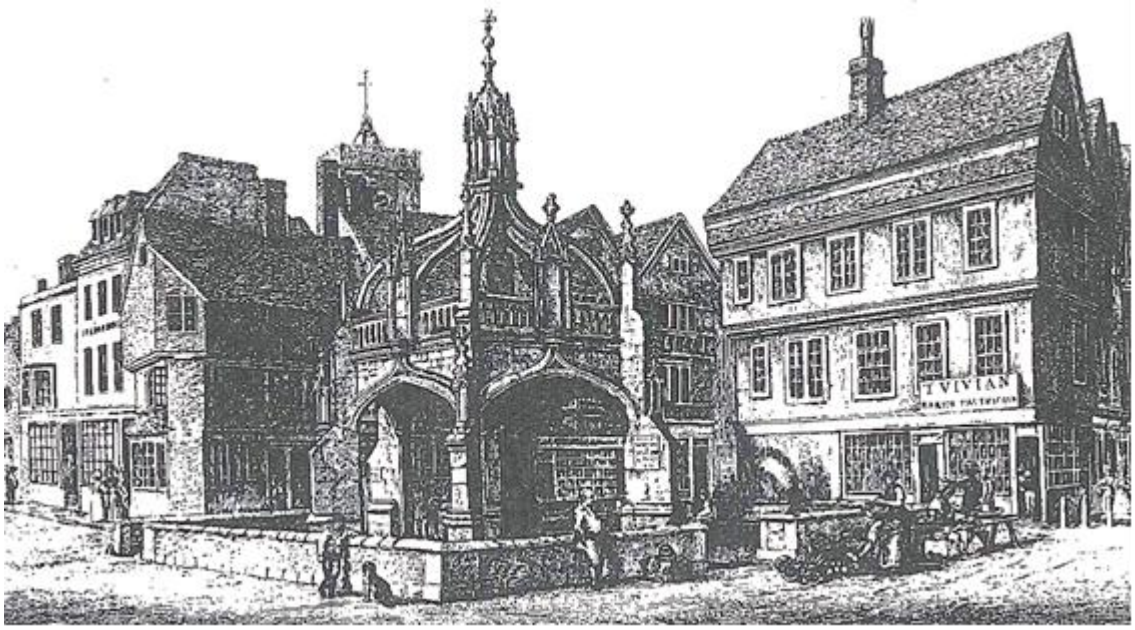

Fig 4: Poultry Cross, 1872, showing new high level addition and low walled seating around the perimeter.

The cross was at one time surrounded by a square of stone seats or a low wall, now removed. (Several drawings exist in the Salisbury Museum showing this). Inside, the hexagonal central shaft and the re-entrant angles of the buttresses retain traces of former vaulting. Each vault rib sprang from a carved corbel; those which survive represent angles holding shields. There are traces of heraldic colouring.

4. Significance and Statutory Protections

There are three types of listed status for buildings in England and Wales

Grade I: buildings of exceptional and/or national interest and importance.
*Grade II**: particularly important buildings of more than special interest.
Grade II: buildings that are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.

The Poultry Cross is both a Grade I Listed building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument, meaning it is of exceptional interest and national importance. It is a significant local landmark and integral to the fabric of the historic city.

The Poultry Cross is the only one remaining of four market crosses that once stood in Salisbury. Once common across the UK and more commonly simple stone shafts, few exist as elaborate or ornate as the covered structure in Salisbury. Its future protection is paramount.

5. Addition to the 'Heritage at Risk' Register:

In 2025 the Poultry Cross was added to Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk Register' which identifies historically significant sites deemed to be at risk of being lost due to neglect or decay. The register serves as a dynamic tool to understand the state of cultural heritage, highlighting sites that require intervention and safeguarding for the future.

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

6. Guardianship:

Until 2016 the Poultry Cross was the responsibility of the Wiltshire Council Unitary Authority. Beyond minor electrical alterations, no records exist of any repairs or conservation works. In 2016 the asset was passed to Salisbury City Council, who are now responsible for its care and maintenance.

7. Recent works: 2017 Fabric Condition Survey:

As a result of the asset transfer of the monument, In 2017 the architect was commissioned by Salisbury City Council to undertake a brief condition survey of the whole structure, from ground level. It was not possible to access or view the roof to assess its general condition from above, although distant views were possible from the first floor of neighbouring commercial properties.

Despite the roof being inaccessible for inspection, water staining on the timber boarding to the underside was noted, along with the caveat that significant and rapid decay could ensue if leaks were not remedied.

We know now that no remedial works were undertaken in the 9 years since that initial 2017 condition survey and there are no records of any repairs before 2007 to suggest any remedial works. The roof could therefore have been leaking for decades.

Fig 5: Poultry Cross, 2017, general extent of visibility of roof.

8. 2022 Vehicle collision and further fabric inspection:

In 2022 a car crashed into the southern buttress, necessitating an urgent and significant structural scaffold, to stabilise the monument and facilitate structural repairs. For the first time, this extensive scaffold provided access to the roof and high-level areas which were inaccessible within the scope 2017 condition survey.

The subsequent inspection report recorded the poor state of the aged lead roof as seen from the structural scaffold. It noted several historic patch repairs and many cracks and fissures. The asphalt gutter was also recorded to be significantly cracked and damaged, undoubtedly permitting water ingress.

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

The 2022 report states clearly the limitations of this inspection - the vast structural scaffold was knitted through the stone structure; it was impossible to simultaneously inspect the timbers below the aged lead roof to ascertain their condition. It was again noted (as in the 2017 report) that sustained water damage to timber can accelerate decay substantially. We attempted to attribute very loose budget costs to various priority areas for repair in the 2022 report, but did not have a detailed understanding of the condition of the timber roof structure. In the knowledge that no repair or maintenance works has been recorded in the recent past, we could anticipate that it would be very likely that the condition would be rapidly deteriorating.

Fig 6 and 7 : Poultry Cross, 2022: Dense structural scaffold to facilitate masonry repairs prohibited access into the internal roof structure.

Use of the scaffold was maximised in many ways; whilst urgent structural repairs (required from the vehicle collision) were underway, valuable conservation work was undertaken at high level, taking advantage of the scaffold; The Salisbury Cathedral stonemasons undertook some cleaning and repointing the central shaft and repaired pointing loss to the flying buttresses at the 'crown'. The masons also carried out some localised repairs to the parapet and a niche, as a result of disturbance during the collision.

Whilst the scaffold provided advantageous (and unexpected) access to other areas beyond the buttress repair, its primary structural role in stabilising the structure precluded access to the underside of the roof. The architect was not appointed in the specification of repairs and, to my knowledge, no further structural surveys were carried out once the buttress repair was complete.

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

9. 2025: Planned Repairs: Works undertaken to date:

DATE:	ACTION:
Mid March 2025	**Loop Architects appointed** to plan repairs and maintenance
April/ May 2025:	Loop Architects tendered for surveys. Detailed measured survey Commissioned - MEON Surveys (to facilitate recording of defects and repairs) **Architect meets with Historic England** on site to agree approach and route towards formal consents
June 2025	Loop begins to plan scope of project. Requested structural engineer inspection. Loop notifies Wilts Council Conservation Officers. **Ongoing engagement with Historic England** in relation to Scheduled Monument Consent
23rd June 2025	**Detailed inspection by Architect and Structural Engineer** (facilitated by access tower and temporary scaffold). Structural concerns established – emergency propping required **Class 5 Consent secured from Historic England to prop structure.**
24th June 2025	**Design for propping issued by structural engineer and installation** by D&N – SCC Approved Contractor
27th June 2025	Andrew Waring of AWA formally appointed to design structural repairs
July 2025	Finalised completed measured survey drawings issued by MEON Surveys. Ongoing engagement with Historic England. **Monument added to 'Heritage At Risk' Register.**
10th July 2025	AWA Report on Condition of Structure issued
Late July (onwards - current)	**Detailed design of roof repairs and monument conservation by architect and structural engineer now ongoing…**
Late August	Appointment of Martin Thomas Associates to consider building services and lighting upgrades

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

10. The way forward...

There are no records of repairs undertaken to the Poultry Cross in recent history and it is possible that the (much-repaired) lead roof dates from the Victorian addition to the structure in the 1850's. If so, the lead roof is almost certainly at the end of its serviceable life. It is also possible that some of the lead may date from the installation of the asphalt gutter and it appears that some of the timber below is probably of the same date.

We can compare the condition of the underside of the roof in 2017 with 2025 and see evidence of marked deterioration. We know from the 2022 scaffold access that the aged and damaged coverings would be letting water in.

Fig 8: Poultry Cross, 2025: High level inspection of internal roof structure.

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

Fig 9: Poultry Cross, 2025: High level inspection of internal roof structure; significant decay at beam ends and junctions in timber structure.

It is critical to prioritise roof repairs ahead of other conservation work to ensure that the roof is watertight. Internally, the exposed roof timbers are water-streaked and decayed, notably at bearing ends. Repairing the lead roof structure is therefore the highest priority item, as persistent water ingress will continue to cause further timber decay of the roof structure. On this basis, it is logical to start with a 'top-down' approach, addressing the roof and high-level masonry first and then subsequently, the masonry below.

Repairs to the roof structure and replacement of the lead coverings go hand-in-hand and form one project - to attempt to do it partially would be uneconomical and short-sighted. This represents a significant focus on the roof. This design work is now underway, although we will not know the full extent until we open up the lead roof.

There are (assumed defunct?) electric boxes within the structure and cabling which require attention. If replaced and upgraded, this presents an opportunity to integrate lighting and remove surface mounted and dangling cables.

This must be a 'top-down' project, prioritising the integrity of the roof. The roofing works will also be the most invasive, requiring a scaffold. Subsequent phases of masonry works could be scaled to suit budgets and be undertaken on a 'bay-by-bay' basis and therefore generally be far less disruptive to life around the Poultry Cross....

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

11. A phased strategy for repair: 'Top-down' repairs:

The anticipated work is therefore planned in two phases (see image 6 overleaf):

Phase I:
This would include roofing repairs; structural repairs to the roof, lead re-roofing and timber repair as well as high level masonry repair and conservation to the Victorian 'crown'
This phase could also include electrical and lighting improvements - both flood lighting of the structure and providing some internal light. Bird and vermin netting also requires upgrading.

Phase 2:
A subsequent phase (or phases) of work, planned around rolling maintenance and repair budgets. would include masonry repairs to the six arches (front and back) and the intervening external buttresses. It would also include the central column and seat.

Future work packages might include:

- The development of a Conservation Management Plan for ongoing care and protection of the heritage asset
- Long term Maintenance planning and cyclical repair schedule.
- Consideration of landscaping adjustments/improvements

Disruption and Impact Management:
Phase I would require a significant scaffold to access all areas of the roof, but phase II might only need tower access and works could be undertaken on a 'bay-by-bay' basis, which would be less disruptive in this busy area.

Alex Bellisario (Historic England, Inspector of Ancient Monuments) has indicated that separate work phases could still be carried out under one continuous application for Scheduled Monument Consent.

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

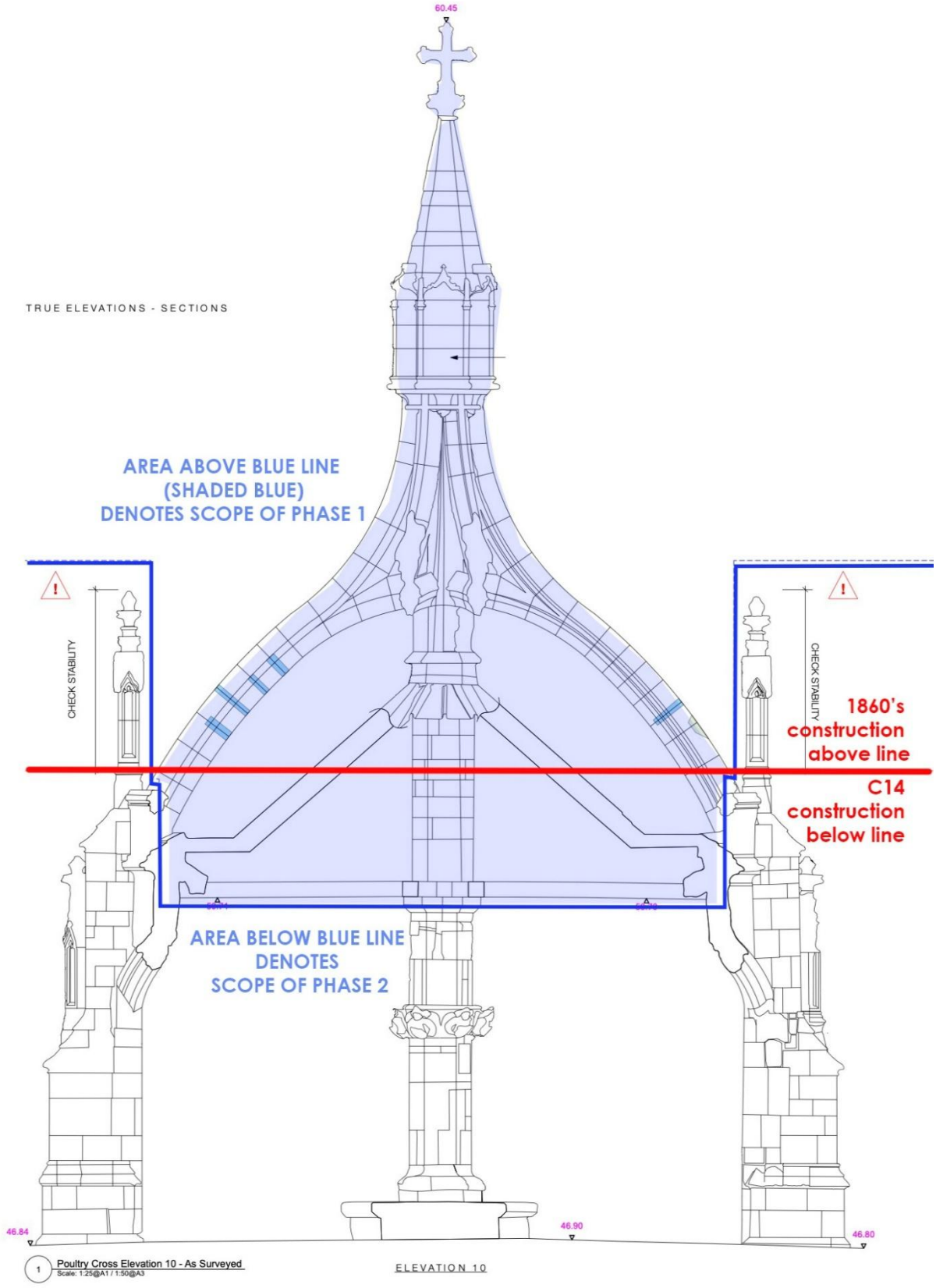

Fig 10: Poultry Cross, 2025: Typical sectional elevation: Scope of Phase 1 Repair and Conservation

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

12. Progress to date: Where are we now? Next steps…

The architectural and conservation proposals within phase I are now largely scheduled and designed by the architect. Input from the other (separately appointed) consultants are awaited, to be incorporated within the overall proposals. This includes the engineer's structural repairs (AWA) and building services upgrades, to include lighting and power, by a building services consultant (MTA).

With a detailed documentation package for the repairs complete, this can be used to seek Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic England. It can also be used to cost the repair works, (either by the approved SCC contractor or more favourably - external Quantity Surveyors). Quantity Surveying input by specialists working with historic buildings is recommended. As too, are specialist Conservation contractors suitably qualified and experienced in heritage conservation.

13. Steps towards work on site:

1. Apply for Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic England.
2. Obtain accurate costings for the work (simultaneously with item 1 above?)
3. Together items 1 and 2 can be used alongside the structure's addition to the 'Heritage at Risk' Register to aid applications for external grant funding (if required). Other grants might be available too? (- SCC to pursue grant funding options).
4. Working with lime and traditional materials requires an external temperature of 5deg and rising. Site works are therefore largely limited to March-October.

14. Conservation Philosophy and Practical Application:

Conservation of the building fabric should maintain and enhance the architecture of the monument. The philosophy for the repair and conservation of stonework is based upon a premise that fabric should be retained as far as practically possible, and that earliest fabric will be preserved with minimal alteration. Exceptions to the premise above may include works related to public safety, or where the fabric is deteriorated to the extent that it detracts from the significance of the architecture as a whole.

The basis for conservation should be continued attention to daily care and sound management, in order to slow the rate of decay and as far as possible mitigate risks to the building fabric. Well managed maintenance works should make the most efficient use of financial resources, for the greatest benefit of the fabric of the monument

Interventions to the structure of the building should be kept to a minimum, except where alterations are necessary for the continued use of the building, have a substantial public benefit, or address matters of safety. There may be cases when interventions are required

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

to strengthen building fabric. In such cases, interventions should be proportionate and based on well-informed decision making from a specialist conservation engineer.

Stonework repair

Masonry replacement

Masonry replacement should be on a like-for-like basis, using the same stone type to conserve the inherited pattern of geological diversity and historical replacement.

Treatment of previous repairs

Previous cement repairs shall ordinarily be removed due to the inherent risk posed by imporous cement exacerbating the rate of decay to adjacent stone. Cement repairs shall only be retained in specific cases, where the harm caused by removal outweighs the long-term benefit.

Mortar repairs

Lime mortar repairs should be used for the reconstruction of eroded details where this would be to the benefit of overall legibility of the architecture, or as a means of consolidating and protecting vulnerable stone from further degradation. Care should be taken to match the mortar mix to the colour and texture of the adjacent stone, using a stone dust mix as appropriate.

Mortar repairs may not be appropriate where falling debris may risk public safety due to the reduced life cycle of the mortar repairs compared to stone indents.

Weatherings, cappings and cills

The replacement of stone to decayed weatherings or any other features which are directing rainwater runoff shall generally be prioritised, in order to ensure that rainwater is correctly dispelled from the building, preventing the risk of water ingress and protecting adjacent fabric.

Decorative carved features (non-functional)

It should be assumed that all decorative carved features shall be preserved, so long as they are sufficiently legible to be of benefit to the architectural quality and understanding of the building's evolution, are structurally sound and are in a sufficiently stable condition to endure the projected lifecycle of repairs. Where defects occur, all efforts should be made to consolidate and conserve carved details.

Sheltercoats

A sacrificial sheltercoat may be provided for external ashlar masonry and delicate carved features. When working with limestones, the sheltercoat should be coloured to match the stone type. This may not be appropriate for certain areas of hard stonework where the consolidant advantages of a sheltercoat will not be as beneficial.

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk

15. A final thought:

After decades of neglect, we are faced with an opportunity to not only repair and conserve this scheduled ancient monument, but to bring it to life as a treasured and unusual landmark in our historic city. It has changed and evolved over more than 800 years and we have the potential to add our own layer to its history – perhaps we might consider ways to do this? Improved lighting will make the interior more inviting, perhaps other building services could be sensitively incorporated. A time capsule could be incorporated into the newer elements of the roof structure? There are improvements and changes that might be worthy of further thought?

Historic buildings are one of the few things we have today that can tell us about the past and how people once lived and worked, they are an integral part of a community's cultural heritage. Preserving historic buildings helps to keep communities connected with both their past and with one another. They are irreplicable. The older a building is, the less likely there are to be surviving examples of its kind. The legacy we leave tell our story to future generations. We are merely the current custodians and it is our responsibility to protect and pass on these buildings.

Louise Salman RIBA CA DipConsHistEnv (RICS)
Loop Architects Ltd, Salisbury
12 September 2025

01722 273 194
hello@looparchitects.co.uk
www.looparchitects.co.uk