

Revised Heritage, Design and Access Statement

Royal Cornwall Museum – Re-roofing, Improvement Works and Repairs

12th August 2022

CGH/7377

1.00 Introduction

- 1.01** This application is being made following listed building consent PA21/10106 which was obtained on 22nd December 2021. This included replacement of flat roof areas a number of pitched roof slopes. This application expands on the roof areas that will be replaced following advice from Historic England as part of a recent round of grant applications.

This application will cover re-slatting of roofs R1, R3, R4 and R5.

2.00 Significance

- 2.01** The Royal Cornwall Museum is a Grade II listed building to the north side of River Street in Truro. It has been linked by a C20 structure to the neighbouring former Baptist Chapel to the east, also listed grade II. The museum currently utilises the upper floor of the chapel for exhibition displays within the Trefry room and the lower floor is an art store (Truro Arts) with an open link through to the cafe to the east of the main museum reception.
- 2.02** The museum belongs to the Royal Institution of Cornwall and the RIC has been housed in the museum building since 1919. The RIC was founded in 1818 for "the promotion of knowledge in natural history, ethnology and the fine and industrial arts, especially in relation to Cornwall."
- 2.03** The museum is a former savings bank that was designed by Philip Sambell for the Trustees of Truro Savings Bank and constructed in 1845. The Chapel was a former Baptist chapel and was constructed in 1848 also by Philip Sambell.
- 2.04** Sambell was a local architect who was deaf without speech.
- 2.05** The RIC acquired the chapel in 1986/7 and in 1998 the link between the two was constructed and housed a shop and foyer.
- 2.06** For many years the ground floor of the chapel has been used as a restaurant. This has recently changed and the arts shop has full access through to the museum via the new cafe formed within the link foyer and reception area of the museum.
- 2.07** The buildings are currently viewed in their combined format and present a dominating and imposing frontage on River Street with a small patch of garden maintained to the road side.
- 2.08** Both buildings were fronted with grey granite ashlar. The museum is of classical design with a symmetrical elevation originally in three bays (this is now distorted by the link to the east). The main section comprises five intermediate bays with sliding sash windows and giant iconic pilasters. The building runs to a triangular pedimented gable. To the west a smaller bay exists largely hidden by the trees to this end. A central porch with iconic pillars forms the primary entrance into the museum.

- 2.09** Internally the museum is divided into gallery and exhibition spaces with stores and workshops to the north and offices on upper floors to the east side. There are 6 levels in the building with a basement, ground floor, lower intermediate floor, first floor, upper intermediate floor and archive floor.
- 2.10** The link is faced with granite ashlar and is clearly of newer construction as the granite colour and style does not quite match in with the buildings on either side. This new structure runs the full length of the building between the museum and chapel to The Leats north of the building. The linking structure provides much of the vertical circulation of the museum and also contains the bulk of the lavatory facilities.
- 2.11** The chapel is designed in a classic fashion very similar to the Wesleyan and Baptist chapels that are found throughout Cornwall. It is a rectangular plan building with a 1:1:1 frontage to the street running to a large pedimented gable end. Pilasters divide up the elevation and arched headed doors / windows are provided to both floors. The ground floor is open with stores etc to the north.
- 2.12** To the north elevation the buildings are far less grand with numerous extensions and additions. Both have been rendered with cement on mesh and insulation and present a rather dull elevation.
- 2.13** The building is of the C19 classical style that pervaded from the C18 and typical of inner site construction of this nature due to the ordered nature of the buildings required. It is of architectural significance as examples of the type and of Sambell's work. The historic significance is with the use of the building and it contains a significant number of important artefacts. The building also has cultural and community significance as an iconic building in Truro and a hub point for this area of the city.
- 2.14** The roof of the building is a mix of different designs and finishes with access difficult to some areas. The main pitched slopes are slated, with a mix of natural and asbestos cement slating provided. Flat roof areas have bitumen coverings with paving slabs and insulation sited on top.
- 2.15** The bulk of the roof slopes were re-covered and altered in the early 1990s and the works proposed deal with the degraded coverings and detailing applied at that time.

3.00 Objective

- 3.01** There is evidence of deterioration of the pitched roofs and a desire to amalgamate the covering of the slopes and bring them back to consistency with new Cornish slating throughout. A number of poorer quality imported slates have been used. There are areas of fibre cement slating as well and generally all slopes are showing signs of deterioration. Pitched slopes R2 and S5 were covered by application PA21/10106.

4.00 Proposal

4.01 Roofs R1, R3, R4 and R5

- 4.02** Existing pitched roof areas slated with a mix of natural and fibre cement (possibly asbestos) slates. The roof has black clay ridge tiles. Partial re-roofing was undertaken in 1994 although we believe existing slates in a lot of areas were re-used. Roof R1 has been replaced on the back side with a very thin profile artificial slate. Slippage is occurring to all slopes indicating that the slates have reached the end of their life and nail fatigue is taking place.

4.03 The roof covering will be stripped and the roof structure repaired as necessary with any insulation upgraded. New Cornish Delabole or Trevillet 7x14inch slates (or size as available) will be dry-laid to battens as existing. New black clay ridge tiles to match existing will be provided.

5.00 Impact on Significance

5.01 There will have a positive impact on significance. There will be no change in the profile of the roofs so from below there will be no change in appearance. Poor quality fibre cement slates will be removed and replaced with Cornish slating which will restore the roof covering back to their original format.

6.00 Access Statement

6.01 *Vehicular and Transport Links*

6.02 Drop off zone for cars to front elevation. Parking is available in city centre car parks.

6.03 There is a bus stop immediately outside the building.

6.04 *Inclusive Access*

6.05 The museum has full disabled access to all areas.

6.06 *Approach and Circulation*

6.07 The building can be approached by foot and full access is available to all areas (where not restricted) internally.

6.08 *Sanitary Accommodation*

6.09 The building has full accessible accommodation.

6.10 *Emergency Egress*

6.11 Stairwell and lift access plus emergency exits provided as required by a public building.

6.12 *Compliance with regulation approved document M*

6.13 As part of the application and approval process for the design a full submission to Building Control will be made meaning that full compliance with the building regulations will be achieved including part M.

6.14 *On going requirements*

6.15 This access statement will be amended to reflect any subsequent decisions reached on site so that any new owner or occupier is made aware of the rationale used in making decisions which impact on accessibility and their on-going obligations under the DDA. Amendments will be added when extending or altering the building at a future date.



1. View of main south elevation from River Street. The museum sits on the left with the link between and the chapel to the far right of the shot.



2. View of the main elevation of the museum.



3. View of the 1998 link between the two buildings.



4. View of the chapel from the south.



5. View of the rear elevation from the northeast. The downpipes will be replaced.



6. Slope to back of R1.



7. Inner slopes of R3 and R4



8. Imported slates to R5