

Method Statement for Paint Removal Manor Farm, Etchilhampton SN10 3JR

Project ref: 24-11
Date: 10th March 2026
Application no: PL/2025/00520

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Condition no. 7 from the Listed Building Consent referenced above reads:
- No works to clean/remove paint from the historic fabric of the listed building shall be undertaken until: a) A Method Statement detailing the method of cleaning/removing paint has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and b) A sample panel not less than 1 metre square to show the method of cleaning/paint removal, has been prepared on site, inspected and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall thereafter be carried out to match the approved sample.*
- 1.2. This method statement has been prepared in order to discharge the above planning condition requiring the submission and approval of proposed methods for the removal of paint finishes, supported by site trials, prior to commencement of works.
- 1.3. The statement sets out the methodology developed following on-site trials, and explains how the proposed approach aligns with established conservation principles, with particular emphasis on the protection of historic fabric and significance.

2. Conservation Philosophy

- 2.1. The works will be undertaken in accordance with established best practice for the conservation of historic buildings, informed by guidance issued by Historic England, and underpinned by the following principles:
- Understanding and retaining significance
 - Making the minimum necessary intervention
 - Avoidance of unnecessary loss of historic fabric
 - Preference for methods that soften and release coatings rather than mechanically removing substrate
 - Acceptance of patina, irregularity, and evidence of age
- 2.2. The intention is to remove later, non-original paint finishes whilst preserving the surface qualities, character and evidence of historic craftsmanship in the underlying materials.

3. Scope of Works

- 3.1. This method statement relates solely to:
- Removal of paint finishes from external brickwork
 - Removal of paint finishes from internal timber elements

4. Site Trials and Assessment

- 4.1. Targeted site trials were undertaken on representative areas of both brickwork and timber to assess the impact of various paint removal techniques. The trials focused on:



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- Effectiveness of paint removal
 - Degree of control achievable
 - Impact on the underlying substrate
 - Risk of loss of surface detail, patina, or material
- 4.2. The methods described in sections 5 and 6 below were selected as they demonstrated the least harmful approach capable of achieving the required outcome.

5. Brickwork

- 5.1. Paint coatings to the external brickwork were identified as later, non-breathable finishes. Trials confirmed that attempting to remove these coatings through dry or abrasive methods presented an unacceptable risk of surface erosion.
- 5.2. A combined chemical softening and low-pressure steam approach was found to be the most sympathetic.
- 5.3. Methodology:
- A poultice-based paint softening agent will be applied strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance and allowed to dwell for the minimum period necessary to achieve softening and weaken adhesion between paint layers and masonry
 - Softened paint layers will be gently removed using a DOFF superheated water system operating at low pressure, relying on temperature rather than pressure to release the coating
 - Cleaning will be carried out incrementally, with frequent pauses to assess the condition of the masonry
 - The process will cease once the paint has been removed, without any attempt to achieve a uniform or overly "clean" appearance
- 5.4. Safety provisions:
- No abrasive media will be used on the brick surfaces
 - Water pressure will be kept to the lowest effective level
 - Masonry will not be over-cleaned or retextured
 - Any areas of fragile brickwork or soft mortar will be treated with additional caution or excluded if necessary
- 5.5. Two sample panels were carried out using the methods described above:



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6. Timber

- 6.1. The internal timber structure is currently coated in multiple layers of various paint and in some areas a thin layer of plaster. The poultice system was therefore deemed ineffective for paint removal.
- 6.2. The internal timber elements retain evidence of historic workmanship and surface tooling beneath later paint layers. Trials demonstrated that prolonged manual scraping risked cumulative surface damage, particularly to edges and mouldings.
- 6.3. A carefully controlled vortex cleaning method was found to provide greater consistency and reduced physical interaction with the timber surface.
- 6.4. Methodology:
 - The TORC vortex cleaning system will be calibrated to operate at a low pressure (2 bar) and using a soft, inert dolomite medium appropriate for historic timber.
 - Paint removal will be undertaken gradually, with constant movement of the nozzle to avoid concentration in any one area
 - The system will operated in dry mode since the works are indoors
 - Cleaning will stop once paint layers have been removed and the historic timber surface revealed
 - Tool marks, surface irregularities, and patina will be retained
- 6.5. Safety provisions:
 - Edges, arrises, and fine detailing will be treated with extra caution and care
 - No attempt will be made to produce a 'new' or uniform timber finish
 - Works will cease immediately if any unintended loss of surface material is observed
- 6.6. A sample panel was carried out on an existing beam using the method described above:



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7. Monitoring and Quality Control

- 7.1. All work will be undertaken by those experienced in the conservation of historic buildings
- 7.2. Approved sample panels will be retained as benchmarks
- 7.3. Regular visual assessment will be undertaken throughout the works
- 7.4. The methodology will be adapted where necessary in response to variations in condition

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. The methods set out in this Method Statement are the result of informed site trials and have been selected to minimise harm to the historic fabric while enabling the removal of later, non-original paint finishes.
- 8.2. Alternative methods, including manual paint removal, were considered. Whilst manual techniques may be successful in limited contexts, the methods above demonstrate reduced risk of cumulative damage and loss of detail compared to manual methods.
- 8.3. The proposed methods were therefore selected as the least harmful viable option capable of achieving the required outcome in a controlled and proportionate manner.
- 8.4. The approach aligns with established conservation best practice and guidance issued by Historic England, and is respectfully submitted for approval in discharge of the relevant planning condition.



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