

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT

In Support of an Application for Listed Building Consent for:

TEMPORARY INSTALLATION of INSPECTION SCAFFOLD

The Central Tower, Margam Castle, Margam Park

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Exterior of Tower, North Elevation

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DRAWING ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Mann Williams Dwg: 10899_000_P1, Notes
- B. Mann Williams Dwg: 10899_101_P1, Plans
- C. Mann Williams Dwg: 10899_301_P1, Section Details
- D. A1266-01 Location Plan
- E. A1266-02 Ground Floor Plan

1. Introduction

This application for Listed Building Consent is concerned with temporary installation of scaffold to the interior of the Central Tower at Margam Castle. Access is required for the inspection of architectural features and the ceiling structure.

The Tower Staircase has been closed to public access following the discovery of fallen plaster from the Dome Ceiling and uncertainties regarding its integrity. Scaffold access is required to survey the surface finishes from below while inspection of the ceiling structure will be achieved by removal of floor boards in the above Tower Room.

Works are intended to begin in February 2023 subject to approval of Listed Building Consent and pricing by a specialist contractor. The ceiling structure is to be surveyed by Mann Williams and architectural features are to be surveyed by a specialist Heritage Architect. A Cadw representative and NPT Heritage Officer will be invited to attend the inspection and discuss if a further application for LBC is required.

2. Access

Works access will be via the Entrance Hall in an advanced gabled bay at the North Elevation, leading to main staircase hall (Tower Interior)

The contractor's loading area, entrance and internal access routes will be closed to public and Margam Park staff during periods of scaffold assembly and dismantling until thoroughfares are made safe and sign posted.

Particular attention is required for the protection of Listed Architectural features including the entrance doors, a Quarella stone fireplace and marble floors. Method statements are to be developed in liaison with the specialist contractor (to be appointed)

3. Design Strategy

3.1 The scaffold concept and methodology has been designed by specialist heritage engineers Mann Williams. Their strategy includes a means of construction at Ground Floor to avoid installations in the Cellars as well as protection details at walls and floors. The company will also undertake the following tasks:

3.1.1 Site Visit (1No. 1/2 day visit meeting scaffolders on site, allowance for 1No. 1/2 day visit during/post scaffold erection)

3.1.2 Coordination & discussions with Scaffolders, Client or Other Parties.

3.1.3 Inspection of tower room floor structure following opening up

3.1.4 Reporting on tower room floor structure, including outline proposals for remediation if required, (N.B - this does not include detailed design of interventions)

3.1.5 Coordination and discussions

3.2 Detail design of the scaffold is to be carried out by the specialist contractor.

3.3 Method Statement for the temporary removal of floor boards is to be developed with the specialist contractor following removal of floor covering.

4. Purpose of this Statement

The purpose of this statement is to present information towards an application for Listed Building consent. The document will also be issued to other interested parties as information for planning and tender purposes.

5. Designation

MARGAM CASTLE
Grade 1
Cadw ID: 14170
Listed February 1975 and last amended April 2000

Listing includes the following description of the Tower Interior:

Square stairhall with oak wainscot panelling as in entrance hall and square-headed openings leading off. Flagstone floor surrounded by white marble tiles. The exceptionally fine imperial stair is of a hard pale grey stone. The 1st flight of stairs is retained by stone walls with blind Gothic arches. The octagonal gallery which includes the upper flights of stairs is fronted by massive full-height Tudor arches. Each has 2 orders of mouldings to each face, supported on triple clustered shafts with ringed capitals. The open balustrades to the stairs and gallery are in Tudor style with cinquefoil-headed ogee arches under heavy moulded handrails, and with square newel posts with recessed panels. Smaller Tudor arches within the full-height arches and under the balustrades. Arches supporting the gallery are supported off the side walls of the stairhall by foliate corbels. Narrow blind trefoiled arches rise from the spandrels of the full-height arches to a string course, above which are the tall windows of the stairhall. Single shafts fronting the jambs of the arches rise to support an ornate lierne-vaulted ceiling with large pendant finials and foliate bosses.

6. Site Location

The site is within Margam Country Park and predominantly rural with intermittent residential properties located around its boundaries. The local district centre of Margam is to the south with good access to Port Talbot. There are also good links to wider communities and visitors via the M4 corridor and A48 arterial roads. Its popularity is indicated by the large areas for onsite parking.

The Castle is in a raised and highly visible location on the site.

7. Constraints

- 7.1 Protection of architectural features is mitigated by the Mann Williams strategy for scaffold installation and will include contractor's method statements for carrying out the works. Also refer to design proposals, Section 9 of this document.
- 7.2 The Castle is a popular visitor destination with increased footfall during the summer season. Hence scheduling of works is preferred in the quieter months between January to March.
- 7.3 The Stair Hall is a popular space for wedding photographs and filming, contributing to Margam Park income. A minimal timescale for the scaffold installations would benefit this revenue input.
- 7.4 There is a Bat roost in the cellar which is mitigated by Mann Williams strategy for scaffolding construction starting at Ground Floor. Any future visits to the Cellar are to be agreed with the NPT Biodiversity Team.

8. Biodiversity

NPT Biodiversity Team have been consulted about this proposal, including a site visit with Megan Price, NPT Ecologist. That site consultation has informed the Mann Williams strategy for avoiding scaffolding in the Cellar and satisfied biodiversity concerns about potential interruption of the established roost.

9. Design Proposals

- 9.1 Pre tender design is noted in this document and its attachments which are intended to provide enough information to satisfy statutory consents and inform potential contractors with enough information to develop detailed design of scaffolding and method statements.
- 9.2 Detail design of Scaffold and its erection is to be undertaken by a specialist heritage contractor further to tender pricing, contract agreement and appointment.
- 9.3 The purpose of scaffold access is to enable surveys and establish if repair or maintenance works are required. Such works will require further detailed design by specialist heritage consultants and Cadw approval.

10. Conclusion

Inspection of the Tower interior and ceiling is essential to the ongoing wellbeing of the buildings fabric. This proposal addresses immediate concerns regarding falling plaster as well as informing the condition of the ceiling structure and any unforeseen maintenance issues that may arise with the windows or wall finishes.

The height of the Tower makes inspection a difficult and expensive undertaking. Thus we could take full advantage of this opportunity.