

Neath Masonic Hall Heritage Impact Statement.

The proposed works to the external Façade and stonework of the Neath Masonic Temple building in Neath Town Centre has been detailed within this application for Listed Building Consent and Conservation Area Consent in which the building is located.

The design principles and concepts of the works are to return the building to decorative and structural integrity, after many years of weather related deterioration and some similarly related small structural damage to the upper and lower decorative sandstone. The work will be carried out fully to CADW standards by the listed Stonemasonry company that has examined and assessed the building thus far, and submitted detailed documentation within this application.

The restoration work is necessary to return the building - that is of special architectural and historic interest, being the oldest purpose built Masonic Centre in Wales - to its former standard as a unique and decorative building within the Neath Conservation area, and one that was CADW listed via the Neath Antiquarian Society in 1989.

If the restoration work does not proceed the deterioration will worsen, a scenario not palatable to the Masonic owners and users of the building, nor acceptable to NPTCBC in regard to the visual, structural and historical location it has long held within Neath, since being built in 1848.

Since the structural deterioration access to the building via the front door in Queen Street has ceased, the frontage responsibly fenced by NPTCBC to protect passers by from any possible hazard that might be caused by small detachments of stone, though that has been very minor, it has not presented a good image for either the building or the Conservation Area. Given the buildings age, other difficulties including storm damage and 'party wall' disagreements have also taxed the Masonic resolve and finances, but as a body it is vital that the building is conserved, and with Summer looming, that traditionally a time when Masonic use of the building temporarily ceases, we hope that restoration work may commence on the CADW approval of this latest application, and the building will once again present its architectural and historic value to Neath.

**Roger Gale,
Secretary to The Neath Association of Freemasons and Agent in respect of the
Queen Street Building.**

