

Heritage Statement: Internal replastering and damp treatment

Property: 55 Brighton Road, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6EZ

Listing Grade: Grade II

Date: 16/02/2026

1. Introduction and Proposal

This statement accompanies an application for Listed Building Consent to remove failing internal plasterwork on the ground floor and first floor, and replace it with a membrane-based damp-proofing system.

2. Assessment of significance

55 Brighton Road, is a detached house with solid brick external walls, constructed circa 1850. The external walls are finished with render.

3. The problem: Existing Damage

External Observations

During the external inspection, the following defect was noted:

- A rainwater downpipe located on the right-hand side of the living room, above the lower level, is leaking.
- The guttering beneath is not butted against the wall, allowing rainwater to discharge down the led flashing and adjacent wall.
- The defect is considered a contributory factor to the internal dampness identified.

Internal Observations

- Elevated moisture readings were recorded to the walls of the living room and the two bedrooms above.
- Evidence of salt contamination was identified within the existing and former chimney breast and adjacent walls at both ground and floor levels.
- This condition is consistent with long-term moisture ingress combined with historic chimney use, which has resulted in the accumulation and migration of hygroscopic salts with masonry.

4. Proposed Works (Methodology)

To rectify this, the following works are proposed, based on conservation principles aimed at restoring and maintaining breathability:

Preparatory Works

- Carefully remove and later reinstate fitted cupboards and shelving in living room.
- Remove and refit any radiators skirting boards affected by the works.

Strip-Out Works

- Strip back all wall finishes, including plaster and plasterboard, to expose bare masonry to full wall height in the affected areas.

Membrane Installation

- Apply a base render coat where necessary to level the masonry and provide suitable substrate.
- Install a high-density polyethylene (HDPE) cavity membrane system, mechanically fixed to the masonry using waterseal plugs set at approximately 300mm centres.

Framework

- Fix pre-treated softwood battens securely onto the membrane plugs to form a dry lining framework.

Dry Lining and Finishing

- Fix 12.4mm moisture-resistant plasterboard over the battens.
- Tape and joint all board edges.
- Apply a two-coat plaster skim finish, trowelled smooth and ready for decoration.

5. Impact on significance and Justification

The proposal is essential to maintain the long-term conservation of the building. While it involves the removal of some historic fabric, this fabric is already failing and detrimental to the buildings health.

Impact: Positive. The use of a membrane-based damp-proofing system will resolve the damp issue at source rather than masking it. This system is compatible with current heritage building guidance.

Justification: The proposed works are necessary to prevent further structural damage from moisture retention, which can cause timber decay and masonry failure.

6. Conclusion

The proposed use of traditional, a membrane-based damp-proofing system is a remedial intervention designed to ensure the long-term, sustainable management of moisture in this listed building.