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Touchstones Gallery, Rochdale
Design, Access and Heritage Statement

For Alterations and Repairs to Roof Zone 1

For Rochdale Development Agency
December 2024



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1.0 Historic Building Analysis and Justification of Proposals

1.1 Introduction

The Touchstones Gallery building is currently being renovated to form a new museum and art gallery. During these works water ingress was reported from the pitched roofs to roof zone 1 - RF01, RF02, RF03 and RF04 (refer diagram in Appendix A). Donald Insall Associates were contacted by the client, Rochdale Development Agency to carry out a roof condition survey considering the water ingress that was evident.

The condition survey report highlighted the current condition of the roofs, the remediation works recommended for the building to be made watertight and avoid any further deterioration of the fabric and for upgrading the roof fabric to a good condition to safeguard the museum for its ongoing use.

This document has been prepared to accompany the application for Listed Building Consent for these recommended repair works.

1.2 List Description

The Touchstones Gallery is a Grade II building (List no: 1367096) and is located in the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area.

Listing description: SD 81 SE ROCHDALE THE ESPLANADE (north-west side) 6/55 Rochdale Central Library, Museum and Art Gallery.

Library, museum and art gallery, now library. Library 1883, museum and art gallery 1903 and 1913. Jesse Horsfall. Yorkshire stone with slate roof. The 1883 library consists of a central porch and entrance hall flanked on either side by parallel reading rooms. The 1903 extension added a linking passage, porch, hall and stairway to the left of the original building and a two-storey range with art gallery on the upper floor. The 1913 extension involved further rooms to the west and a diagonal wing, all on two storeys. The original library has 3 gables and is symmetrical about the smaller central one; it is all of one storey and has a low central porch with arcaded parapet, elliptical headed door opening with enriched spandrels, over light enriched advanced gablet with ball finial and 3-light mullion and transom windows to either side with ovolo-moulding. The large gables to either side have 5-light ovolo-moulded mullion and transom windows with segmental heads and drip moulds, heraldic and inscribed panels above, and ball finials. The linking passage is detailed similarly but has elliptical headed 3 and 4-light mullioned windows with Art Nouveau-stained glass. The museum and art gallery has a 4-bay central section with a 3-bay gable to the right and diagonally set gable to the left. Detailing is again similar, but each gable includes 3 panels of carved figures, one representing science art and literature designed by C.J. Allan and carved by J.J. Millson. The museum was requisitioned in the war and has since been used as part of the library.

1.3 Summary of Heritage Impacts and Justification of Proposals

- The existing slate roof and lead flashings are defective and allowing water ingress into the building. The slates may be original but been re-used in re-roofing the building, having been re-nailed. Several times the backs of the slates have degraded, and slates lifted had de-laminated. Non breathable underlay has been used in the re-roofing and where insulation has been retrofitted no ventilation has been incorporated. The roof will need re-slating, and at best only 25% of existing slate is likely to be re-usable. Re-slating using Westmorland green slate from original source may not be practical given the small scale of the existing slate quarries and demand on supply. Consideration of matching slate from another source might be necessary. The 'new' roof covering is a primary heritage impact.
- The existing copings, stone balustrades and chimneys have no dpc and have defective or inadequate flashings. It is proposed to lift and re-bed copings on a dpc, and to add a dpc and extra lead cladding to the chimney. Where upstand to insides of parapets is inadequate a lead abutment gutter is proposed to be added – this should have nominal visual impact. The stone balustrade around the porch may be improved by lifting and re-bedding on a dpc, and by adding lead to the blocking course and cornice. The additional lead will change appearance but mitigated by means of being a high-quality heritage material.

- The windows to the dormers are affected by rot and may be deflecting, having to support some of the dormer roof loading. It is proposed to replace in painted hardwood, with small increase in section to take more load. The windows are not visible externally but are visible from inside the main part of the building, albeit from ground floor level. This is in effect a like-for-like replacement.
- The leadwork around the dormers – cheeks and flashings, is poorly formed and cheeks appear to be laid over non breathable plastic membrane. The lead needs reforming to correct detailing, with ventilation adding. The dormers are not visible from ground level.
- A number of rafters are 'soft' where water has been leaking from defective gutters. The rafter ends are to be replaced as a side-by-side repair, and these will not be visible once ceiling finishes are repaired. Purlin ends built into walls appear to have been affected by damp in the past and there are a number of existing repairs using steel plate. Remaining purlin ends are reported as being soft and it is anticipated that similar steel plate repairs will be needed. Visible steel plate will have a painted finish, as per existing.
- Existing cast iron hoppers and downpipes require refurbishment, repainting and better fixing, however there are plastic downpipes and gutters to the north elevations and to the dormers which require replacement in painted cast iron. This is considered to be an enhancement.
- Add a proprietary metal capped vent to the chimney. The chimney is at the rear elevation and so not prominently located – considered to have minimal visual impact.

As outlined above the proposals are essential to remedy failings with the roof to ensure the long-term conservation of the building and to enable the wider success of the previously consented adaptive reuse scheme without causing harm to the significance of the listed building or its contribution to the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area. As such they meet the requirements of the NPPF, specifically paragraph 210 which requires that heritage assets are sustained and enhanced in a manner according to their significance. Indeed associated works such as the replacement of plastic downpipes with painted cast iron in accordance with the building's original designs would present an enhancement alongside the significant benefits to both the building and the local community that its new multifunctional arts and heritage centre use will bring. As such the proposal would also meet the statutory duties of the Town and Country Planning Act (paragraphs 16, 66 and 72) and the requirements of the Local Plan.

2.0 Description of the Proposals

2.1 Existing Roof Arrangement

The building at roof zone 1 comprises three bays running north-south each comprising a slate covered pitched roof with stone gables with parapets to the south (photo 1) and north. Roofs RF01 and RF03 both have a fleche which incorporates passive stack ventilation, each with a lead lined base and slate covered capping (Photo 2). There is a lead lined abutment gutter between RF03 and RF02, and between RF02 and RF03. Roof RF02 has three dormer windows to the west and east roofs, with hipped slate roofs (photo 3). There is a lead lined abutment gutter along the west side of RF03 and the wall to roof zone 2.



Photo 1. South elevation showing the gabled bays making up, from left to right, RF03, RF02 and RF01.



Photo 2. East elevation.

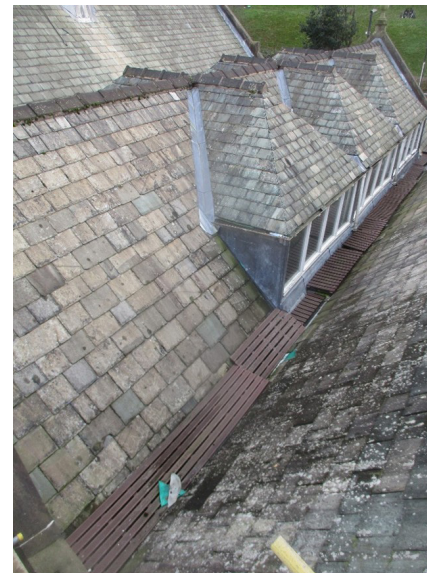


Photo 3. Dormers to roofs RF02.

2.2 Existing Condition

Water ingress was reported along the north walls of roof area RF01, RF02 and RF03, with deterioration of the wall plaster following water ingress over a period of time (photographs 4 and 5). On closer inspection the ends of the purlins built into the north walls were found to be soft as a result of decay. Water ingress was also visible to the north end of east wall of RF1 and to the north end of the west wall to RF3. The rafter ends abutting these walls were found to be wet. A condition survey was carried out to assess the condition of the roof.



Photo 4. North wall below RF02.



Photo 5. North wall below RF03.

2.3 Condition Survey Findings

The condition survey was carried out during October 2024. The condition survey report identified the following problems to roof slopes RF01, RF02 and RF03:

Slate Roof Covering

- Slipped and broken slates (Photos 6, 7 and 8).
- Inadequate head lap to slates.
- Use of half slates on roof slopes and especially at abutments.
- Slates laid on plastic sheet underlay (photo 9).
- Insulation infilled between rafters in some instances, but no ventilation provided.
- Deterioration found to underside of slates, possibly caused by condensation due to lack of ventilation (photo 10).
- Selected slates removed all found to be delaminated.
- Selected slates removed all found to have been re-nailed (photos 10 and 11).

It is assessed that only 25% of the existing slates may be re-usable for re-roofing.



Photo 6.



Photo 7.



Photo 8.



Photo 9.



Photo 10.



Photo 11.

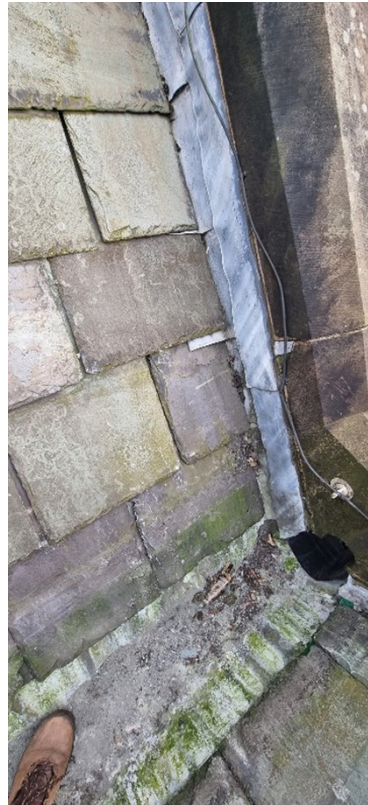


Photo 12.

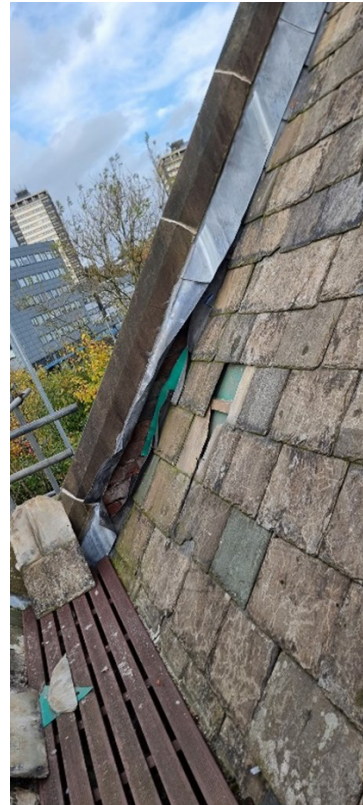


Photo 13.

Flashings and Soakers at Parapet Abutment

Inadequate laps were found at the junctions between soakers and cover flashings at the roof abutment with the back of the stone parapets (photo 13). Some of the roof slopes have inadequate height between the slates and current top of flashing to meet recommended lap requirements (photo 12).

Parapets and Finials

The parapets have no dpc and lack any overhang or drip - dark staining relating to damp at the top of the walls can be clearly seen in photograph 1. Parapet copings and stone finials have moved in places (photo 14), and there is cracking to mortar joints between coping units and between copings and masonry wall beneath. Fixings are visible to the top surface of the copings (eroded and forming a water trap), and extra fixings have been added to some of the copings.

The entrance porch has a flat roof (FR01) concealed behind a stone balustrade. The roof coverings appear to be originally lead with more recent asphalt but both covered over using a liquid applied membrane. Lead flashings appear retrofitted between the stone balusters, and these are lifting in places (photo 15). The roof is reported to be leaking. Ideally the existing roof coverings are to be stripped, and new lead lined gutters and roofs formed. The stone balusters are ideally to be lifted, and leadwork taken beneath the balusters to LSTA details, with the lead dressed over the front of the blocking courses and cornice.



Photo 14.



Photo 15.

Chimney

Chimney flashings and back gutter are in poor condition (photo 16), with slipped lead and patch repairs in flash-band. Roof is leaking around the stack. The chimney appears to have been capped off using concrete, and it is recommended that this is unblocked and vented using a proprietary metal vented capping.

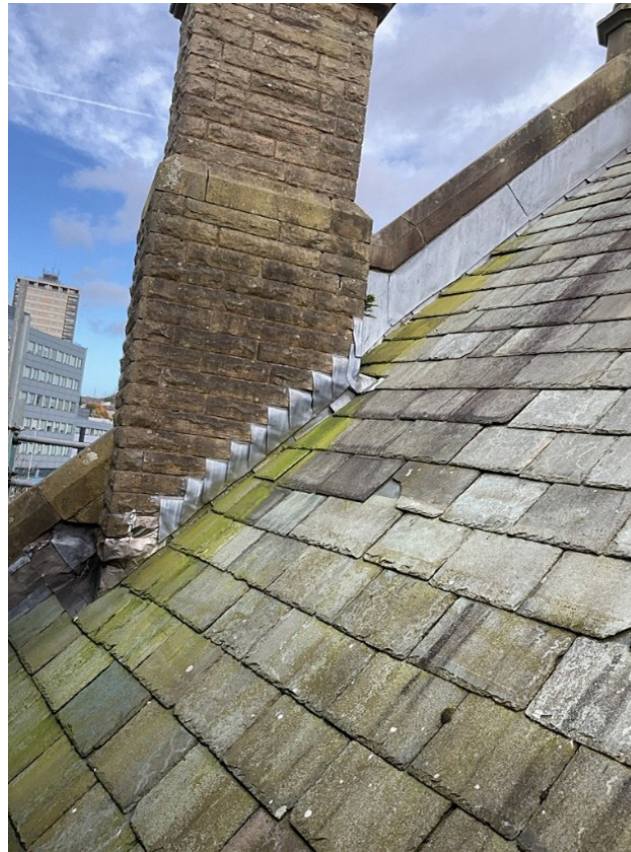


Photo 16.



Photo 17.

Fleches

Water ingress was reported beneath both fleches and it appears the secret gutter around the top of the leaded base of each fleche is blocked or cracked. The outlet pipes are undersized, and one outlet pipe has been replaced using white plastic – closer inspection required but enlarged outlets in lead should be formed. Otherwise slating and lead is in fair condition. The lightning protection system to the fleche on RF03 is damaged (photo 17) with the down conductor broken off. The original copper rope down conductor is present to the fleche to RF01.

Abutment and Valley Gutters

The abutment gutter to RF03 at the north west is blocked and leaking and there is ladder damage to one of the bays (photo 18) and drips are undersized – this gutter should be reformed and re- leaded. The tapered gutters between roofs RF02 and RF03, while obscured by plastic walkways, appear to be in fair condition.



Photo 18.



Photo 19.

Dormer Windows

The dormer windows are leaning outwards and the sills deflecting inwards (photo 19). The roof appears to be straight, but the windows themselves may be carrying some of the roof loads, deflection exacerbated by the decay present to timber members.

The existing windows are modern, of plain section painted softwood, with fixed lights and double-glazed units. The bottom rail is also the sill and has been affected by decay (photo 20, 21 and 22). Cover beads have been planted over the sill, and these beads are also now decaying. The base of the mullions is decayed (photos 20, 21 and 22). Patch repair might be attempted due to the advanced nature of the interior fit out, but due to the lean of the windows they are better replaced, with increased section mullions, if necessary, to improve strength. The windows are not visible externally but are visible at high level internally (photo 23). Replacement is included with this application. The mechanical fixing of the flashings below the sills have failed due to decay of the timber substrate and need reforming as part of the window replacement (or repair).

The dormer lead cheeks are crudely detailed (photo 21) and not in compliance with LSTA recommendations. Lead to the side cheeks appear to be laid over a plastic membrane.



Photo 20.



Photo 21.



Photo 22.



Photo 23.

Downpipes, Hoppers and Eaves Gutters

Generally, in fair condition. Blockages and paint loss, and hopper fixings becoming loose being identified in the condition survey. All cast iron fittings are to be retained, cleaned back, repainted and reinstated. Plastic hoppers and downpipes fitted to the north elevation (photo 24) are unsuitable modern replacements and it is proposed to replace these using cast iron fittings.

Roof Timbers

Rafter ends are soft and suffering from wet rot to the north east side of RF01 and to the north west side of RF03. Closer inspection is required but the application includes to replace the rafter ends between the lowest purlin and the eaves along the north side of the west and east gutters.

The lowest purlins to the north wall of RF01, RF02 and RF03 are soft and suffering from decay (photos 03, 04 and 25). A closer inspection is required but the application includes for cutting back of decayed timber and provision of steel plate repairs to improve bearing of these purlins – steel to be painted where visible. It is presumed there are similar instances within the roof space, which require the same repair. The purlins built into the south walls all appear to have had steel plate repairs carried out in the past.



Photo 24.



Photo 25.

2.4 Proposals

Slate Roof

The roof requires stripping and sound slates set aside for re-use. As detailed above, optimistically only about 25% of slates are thought to be re-usable. Matching Westmorland green slate is on long order and a like for like replacement imported slate may be necessary, dependant on programme and lead in times. As the roof is being re-slatted an upgrade in the insulation will be required. The existing plaster ceiling will be retained, and so nominal insulation only may be added between the rafters from above. Ventilation to cold roof voids and between rafters will be provided at valleys, abutment and ridges using proprietary ventilation packs.

Flashings and Soakers

These need to be renewed in lead to latest Lead Sheet Training Academy details and recommendations. A 'secret' lead lined abutment gutter is recommended to mitigate where recommended upstands and laps are not achievable.

Chimney

Flashings and back gutter to be reformed in lead to LSTA recommendations. As the chimney is located adjacent to the sloping ceiling area, the installation of a lead dpc might be considered. This will involve taking down and rebuilding the top part of the stack, on lead dpc. The back and two sides of the stack would be clad using lead to integrate the dpc with the cover flashings.

Parapets and Finials

Due to the movement noted it is recommended that all parapet copings and finials are carefully lifted and re-bedded on a lead dpc, integrated with the flashings and soakers, to make the back of the upstand fully weather proof. Nothing can be done about the lack of a drip to the outer visible edge, and as the walls are solid, there is still a risk of damp tracking of the parapet gable copings from the outer face into the plaster wall beneath the sloping ceilings. The porch parapet is ideally to be reset on lead dpc, with lead taken down the front of the blocking course and over the top of the cornice.

Downpipes, Hoppers and Eaves Gutters

The plastic hoppers and downpipes fitted to the north elevation are unsuitable modern replacements and it is proposed to replace these using cast iron fittings.

Lightning Protection

The existing system is damaged to RF03. An assessment by a specialist is recommended but a new comprehensive lightning protection system is likely to be required. Conductor tapes can be plastic coated in colours to match background, concealed beneath ridge tiles and fitted close to downpipes to mitigate appearance.

2.5 Application Drawings

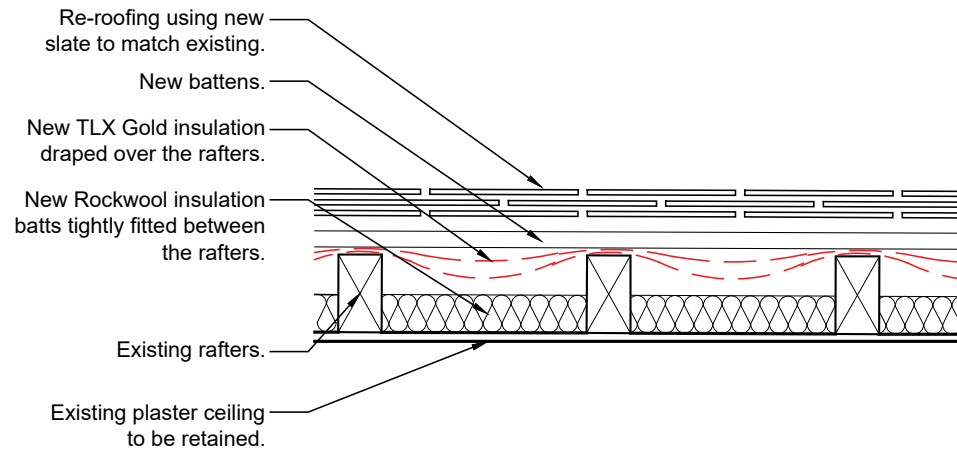
Site – Drawings

Site Block Plan	4001
Site Location Plan	4002
Roof zone 1 – Ground Floor Plan - As Existing	1000
Roof zone 1 – Roof Plan As Existing	1001
Roof zone 1 – Section AA+BB - As Existing	1100
Roof zone 1 – Sections CC+DD - As Existing	1101
Roof zone 1 – South Elevation - As Existing	1200
Roof zone 1 – East Elevation - As Existing	1201
Roof zone 1 – North Elevation – As Existing	1202
Roof zone 1 – West Elevation – As Existing	1203
Roof zone 1 – Roof Plan As Proposed	2000
Roof zone 1 – Section AA+BB - As Proposed	2100
Roof zone 1 – Sections CC+DD - As Proposed	2101
Roof zone 1 – South Elevation - As Proposed	2200
Roof zone 1 – East Elevation - As Proposed	2201
Roof zone 1 – North Elevation – As Proposed	2202
Roof zone 1 – West Elevation – As Proposed	2203

3.0 Sustainability

The existing ceiling finishes are to be retained and there is limited scope to increase the height of the roof build up to significantly increase the amount of insulation. All the slates are to be lifted and the roof re-slatted, as such there will be a requirement to improve the insulation standard of the roof. The existing sloping ceiling plaster is being retained as such the insulation strategy proposed is to lay draped TLX Gold over the existing rafters, with additional 50mm Rockwool batt fitted between the rafters. There will be small uplift in the roof covering height due to the TLX gold compressed above the rafters, but this will be mitigated by the proposed lead abutments gutters.

The existing modern dormer windows, with double glazing, are to be renewed due to decay to sills and mullions. Improved double glazing can be incorporated within the replacement windows. Hardwood is specified for durability due to the windows 'out of sight' location.

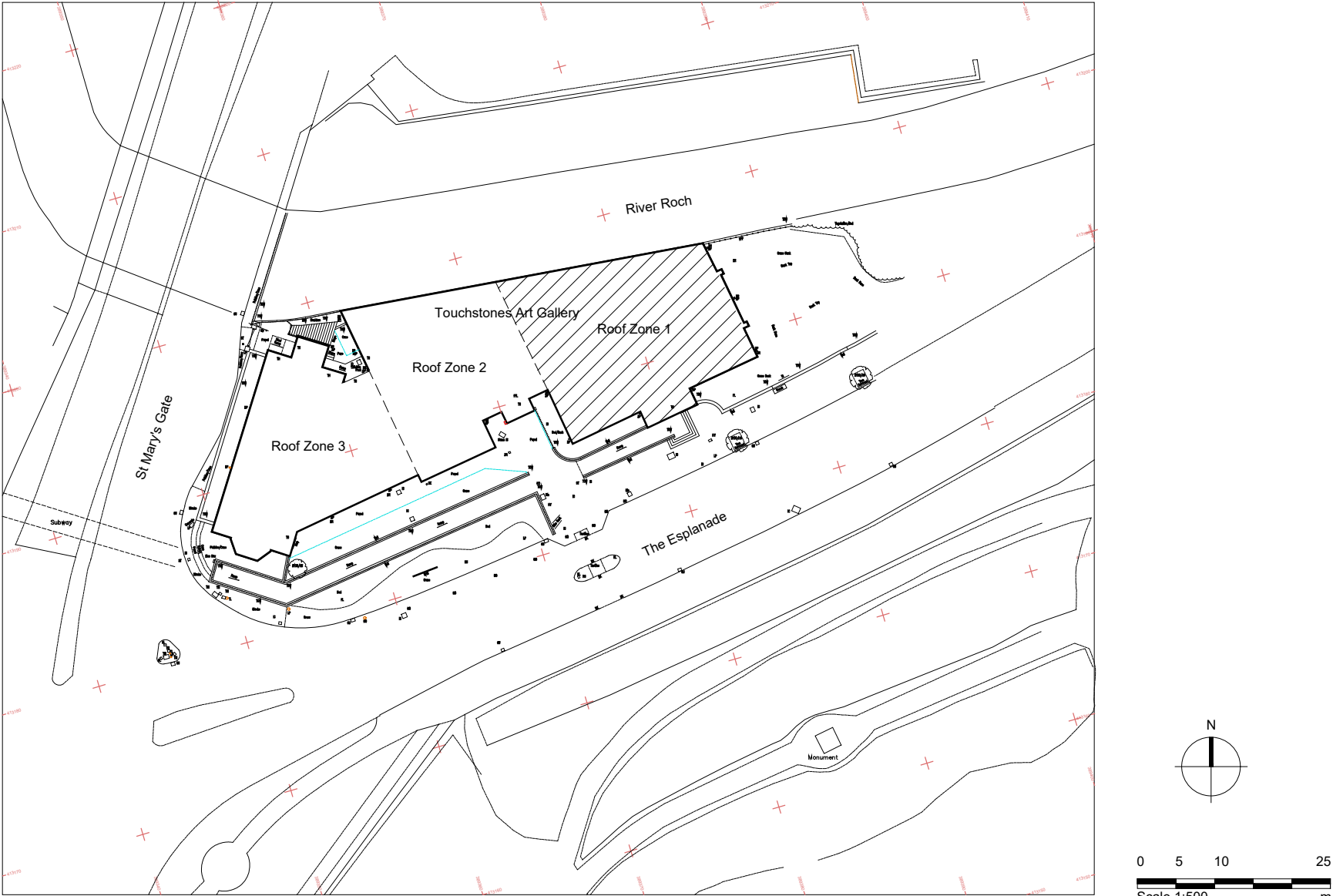


Sketch cross section through roof showing proposed insulation strategy

4.0 Access

The proposals have no implications for vehicular access to the site, nor increase in traffic on the public highway.

Appendix A - Roof Zone 1



Donald Insall Associates