

Heritage Impact Assessment – Risca Library, 75 Tredegar Street, Risca Library

The existing historical asset is a Grade II listed building comprising a purpose-built cinema constructed circa 1917 to provide facilities and entertainment to the local workforce. It is significant in as it represents one of the first purpose-built cinemas in Wales and offers insight into the community lifestyle and experience in its era. The historic value of the site also needs to be taken in context with the surrounding Tredegar Grounds, Jubilee statue and Baptist churches adjacent to the site as part of a more holistic heritage setting.

The cinema was stopped operating some years ago and acted as a bingo hall up until 1999 before being refurbished and extended in a development that now houses the current Council run library and mini supermarket.

The library is experiencing leaks and water ingress into the property and must undergo repairs to prevent further damage. Investigation revealed that the single ply membrane to the modern flat roof extensions has failed and core samples revealed saturated insulation below and is very likely the cause of ingress into the ground floor.



Figure 1 - Core sample of flat roof - Single ply has failed and insulation is saturated

This correlates with the location water ingress is manifesting on the ground floor near the front exit as well as upstands on the first floor.

The proposed scope of works includes to lift the old single ply membrane and insulation and replace it with a proprietary IKO roof system with a 20-year guarantee. This will have no visual impact on the property and will maintain the same flat roof level. The roof finish is not visible to the public from the road or pathway.

The other suspected route of ingress to the front elevation is around the reveals of the sash windows. The possible and likely cause of this is the cornice above the windows which is not lead dressed. This allows rain to sit on the projection and track back within joints in the stonework.

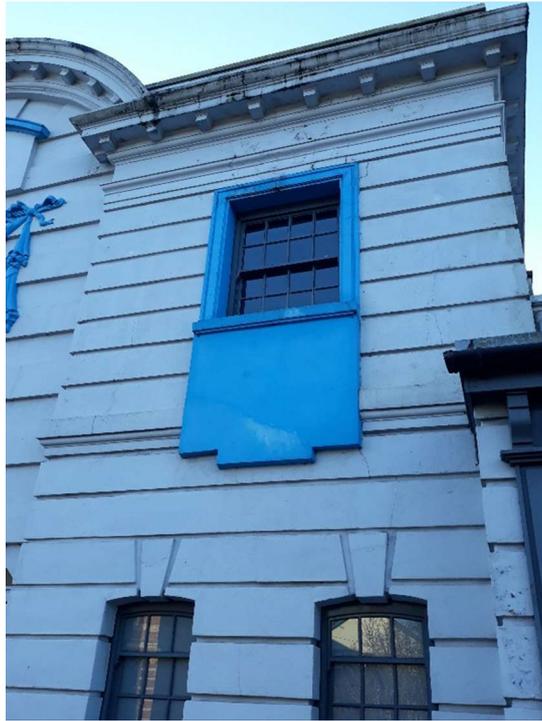


Figure 2 - Photo of Undressed Cornice on principal elevation

The scope of works includes installing Code Four lead capping to cornice to shed water away from the building. This detail is to be installed in accordance with the Lead Sheet Association manual. A dressing would be considered the "correct" detail for this in terms of historic architecture and believe would add to the asset rather than detract as it would not result in any loss of historic fabric (beyond a chase) and would in fact protect the original timber sash windows.

In terms of access this would remain unchanged from existing.