

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed External Repair and Maintenance Works to Front Elevation of a Grade II Listed Building

2 Edwin Street, Gravesend DA12 1EH

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent and, where required, planning permission for external repair and maintenance works to the front elevation of a Grade II listed late Georgian / early Victorian townhouse at **2 Edwin Street, Gravesend DA12 1EH**

The statement has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant policies of Gravesend Borough Council. It assesses the significance of the designated heritage asset and evaluates the impact of the proposed works on that significance.

2. Site and Asset Description

The application property comprises a Grade II listed mid-terrace townhouse dating from the late Georgian to early Victorian period (early–mid 19th century).

The building is constructed in traditional loadbearing brick masonry with a principal elevation of high-quality facing brick laid in a regular bond. The front elevation displays characteristic features of the period, including:

- Vertically aligned window openings
- Refined brick detailing with historically appropriate mortar joints

The building forms part of a coherent historic terrace and contributes positively to the architectural and historic character of the area.

3. Significance

As a Grade II listed building, the property is of special architectural and historic interest. Its significance derives from:

- **Architectural Interest:**
The building is a well-preserved example of late Georgian / early Victorian domestic architecture, with particular significance attached to its original brickwork and detailing.
- **Historic Interest:**
The property reflects early 19th-century urban development and retains a high degree of historic fabric.
- **Group Value:**
The terrace forms a unified composition, contributing to the wider historic townscape.

The front elevation brickwork, including the original mortar composition, joint profile (notably flat iron/flush joints), and surface patina, is integral to the building's significance.

4. Condition Assessment

The front elevation exhibits weathering and deterioration typical of its age. Mortar joints have eroded in places, with evidence of localised failure that may permit water ingress and accelerate decay.

The brickwork has accumulated atmospheric soiling, which detracts from the legibility and appearance of the façade.

5. Proposed Works

The proposed works comprise minimal, conservation-led repair and maintenance to the front elevation, including:

- **Repointing of brickwork** using a **Natural Hydraulic Lime (NHL)-based mortar**, explicitly avoiding cementitious materials
- Mortar to be carefully matched to the original in terms of:
 - Colour
 - Texture
 - Composition
 - Permeability
- Joints to be finished in a **traditional flat iron (flush) joint**, consistent with the historic detailing of the building
- **Gentle cleaning of brickwork** using non-abrasive, conservation-appropriate techniques to remove surface soiling

All works will be undertaken on a like-for-like basis, with careful retention of sound historic fabric.

6. Impact on Significance

In accordance with Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and relevant paragraphs of the NPPF, the impact of the proposals has been assessed.

The works are considered to result in **less than substantial harm, at the lowest end of the spectrum, and overall enhancement**, for the following reasons:

- The use of **NHL mortar** ensures compatibility with historic masonry, maintaining breathability and preventing damage associated with hard cement mortars
- Reinstatement of the **original flat iron joint profile** preserves the architectural authenticity of the façade
- Removal of inappropriate or failing mortar will prevent further deterioration
- Cleaning will enhance the visual quality and legibility of the historic fabric without loss of significance

The proposals are limited in scope, reversible in nature, and follow established conservation principles.

7. Policy Context and Compliance

The proposed works accord with:

- The NPPF requirement to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance
- Statutory duties under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Local plan policies of Gravesham Borough Council relating to heritage conservation and high-quality design

The works represent appropriate and justified intervention necessary for the conservation of the listed building.

8. Justification

The repair works are essential to safeguard the long-term condition of the building. The use of traditional materials and techniques ensures that the works:

- Preserve historic fabric
- Maintain structural and material integrity
- Avoid harmful interventions (such as cement-based pointing)

The approach reflects best practice in building conservation and aligns with guidance from Historic England.

9. Conclusion

The proposed repointing and cleaning works are sensitive, proportionate, and conservation-led. They will preserve and enhance the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building.

The proposals therefore meet the statutory and policy requirements for the protection of heritage assets and should be supported.

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