

**CUSTOM HOUSE, THE TERRACE, GRAVESEND, DA12 2BW
REPAIR WORKS TO EXISTING ORIGINAL FEATURES – REV A**

This statement formally sets out the methodology details of all repair works to the existing original features within Custom House. This method statement includes the repair work information relating to existing original skirting, architraves, cornicing, fireplace and staircases.

MAIN HOUSE

SKIRTING

An assessment by the heritage consultant has been undertaken to establish the extent of 'original' skirting which was listed in the associated room Gazetteer documenting original and historically important features throughout the main house.

The floor finishes plans for the main house (Drgs 1735-183 – 1735-187) highlight the locations of existing original skirting.

Skirting across the main house can be categorised into three types following this assessment;

- Existing original skirting, to be retained and repaired as required.
- New skirting or non-original skirting removed and replaced with new skirting to match original profile where possible.
- Appears original but not specified, further investigation required on site to establish originality.

Existing Original Skirting

The skirtings that have been highlighted on the drawings as original skirting are considered either original or period features following consultation with the heritage consultant. All skirting highlighted will be carefully retained, rubbed down removing paint surface, repaired where required and redecorated.

A template of existing original skirting will be taken to produce a replica profile which matches the original and can be used where the other two types of skirting assessment have been determined.



Images of existing original skirting profile, to be retained and repaired.

ARCHITRAVES

The heritage consultant has established through their historical gazetteer what original doors are to be kept throughout the main house. The architraves surrounding these doors are important features within the overall appearance of the doors.

The original features plans for the main house (Drgs 1735-194 – 1735-198) highlight the locations of existing original architraves.

Architraves across the main house are categorised on the joinery and original features plans in two types;

- Existing original door architrave, to be retained and repaired as necessary.
- New architrave, to be a similar profile to match original skirtings & architraves where possible.

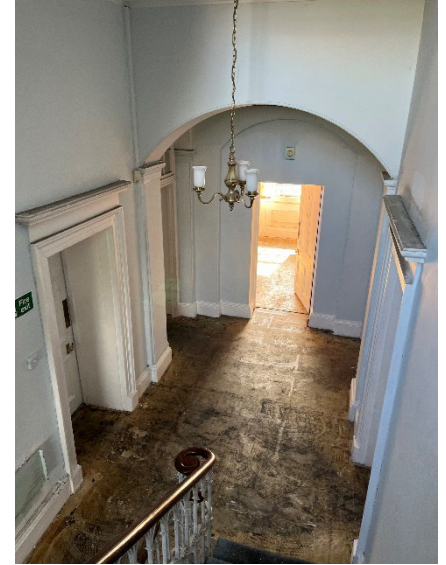
Initial repair works will start by cleaning of the architraves. While cleaning, the woodwork will be inspected for any further signs of damage such as cracks and chipped areas. Following the cleaning and inspection process, the architraves will be sanded down, smoothing any rough surfaces and working this into any area of chipped paintwork, priming the woodwork for new paint to be applied.



Examples of varying original architraves to be retained across the main house.

Several original doors to the main central stair landings across all floors are being fixed shut, with original door, architraves and recesses to be retained on the stair landing side. The intention is that the landing remains as per it's historical intent, whilst being able to split the spaces into individual spaces.

Example images and detail can be seen on the following page.



Original doors and architraves on landing of main staircase to remain but become fixed shut with wall behind.

New timber skirting board to match existing profile and dimensions.

Upon removal of existing timber architraves, existing wall finish to be 'made good' via traditional conservation construction.

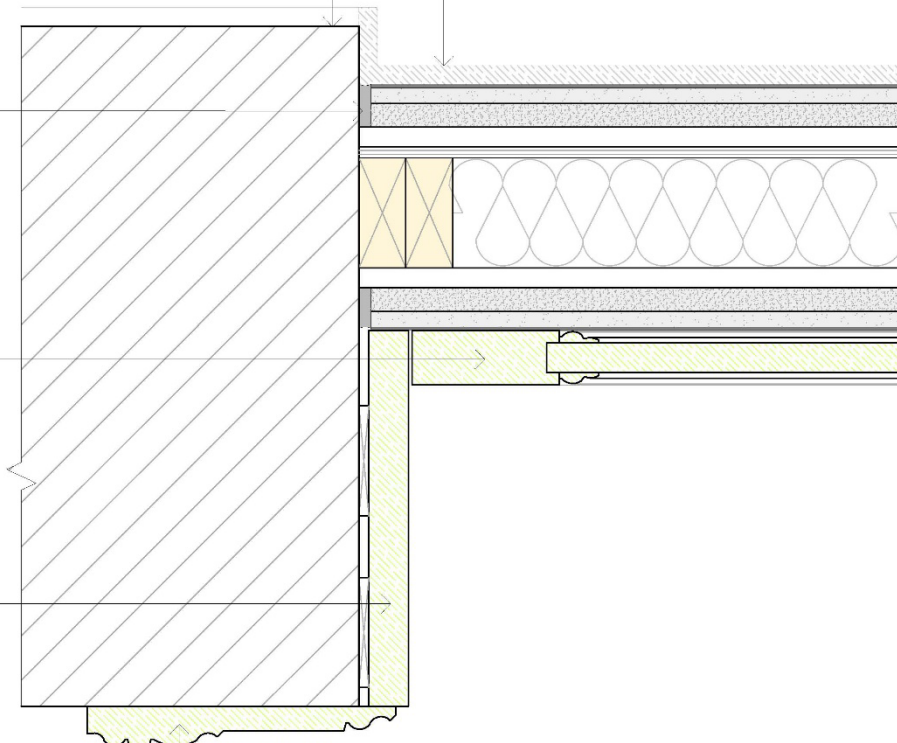
Flexible intumescent sealant to be applied to junction between new wall board and ex. wall construction.

Ex. ironmongery to be removed and finish 'made good', door to be fixed to new party wall construction, to maintain internal hallway aesthetic.

Existing linings to be cut back and 'made good' where required. Lining depth to be cut to suit new infill party wall construction.

Ex. architraves to be retained and repaired and/or repainted where necessary.

APARTMENT



HALLWAY

Fixed original door / party wall detail.

CORNICING

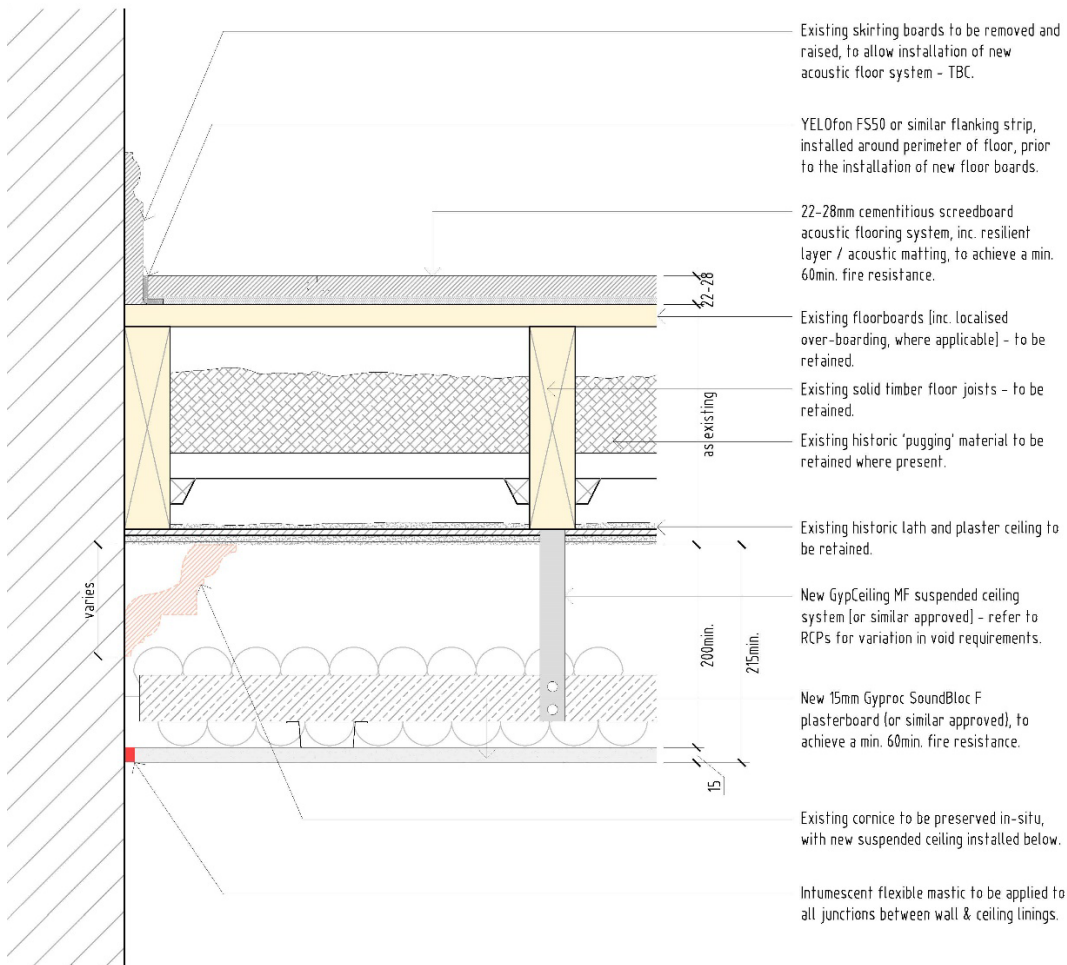
An assessment by the heritage consultant has been undertaken to establish the extent of 'original' cornicing which was listed in the associated room Gazetteer documenting original and historically important features throughout the main house.

The original locations of cornicing have been highlighted on the reflected ceiling plan drawings ref: 1735_188 – 1735-192.



Images of varying cornice details across the main house.

The original cornicing identified in habitable rooms will be carefully preserved in-situ with a new suspended ceiling to be installed below which will not interfere with the original.



Proposed suspended ceiling and cornice preserving detail.

Existing cornice to the stair areas highlighted on the reflected ceiling plans and images below will be carefully retained, rubbed down removing current paint surface and flaking, repaired where required and redecorated.



Staircase cornice details found on the main staircases throughout the main house.

FIREPLACES

There are nine fireplaces which have been identified as having historical value and will remain in-situ across five floors of the main house. These have been identified as early and late 19th century depending on fireplace.

The original features plans for the main house (Drgs 1735-194 – 1735-198) highlight the locations of existing original fireplaces.

Each fireplace will be carefully cleaned and inspected to gain a full representation of it's condition.

Lower Ground Floor – Unit 1

This fireplace is an early 19th century plain surround which has been altered over the years and a modern brick infill has been used to line the inside of the chimney.



Front elevation of fireplace surround.



Close up of wear and tear to surround.

Repairs to fire surround should only be carried out by specialists. The fireplace surround will be rubbed down, removing the flaking and damaged paint. Any visible repairs will be undertaken as necessary. If sections need to be removed it will be done so carefully, inspected, repaired and refitted.

Once repaired, the fireplace surround will be re-decorated as required. The internal fireplace zone will be lined out and kitchen units will be fixed in front of it, boxing in around where the surround connects with the kitchen. The top half of the fireplace surround will remain visible.

Upper Ground Floor – Unit 5

The fireplace to this unit is an early 19th century grey marble surround, late 19th century insert grate with ceramic tiles and a stone hearth. The intention for this fireplace as an important feature of the room that it will be conserved and remain a key feature to the space.

The fireplace appears well maintained and in good condition. The marble surround and insert grate will be carefully cleaned, inspecting any remedial work requirements. Any components for repair shall be carefully removed, if possible, inspected and repaired as necessary. The cast iron insert and grate will be polished /blackened where required. Any stone hearth repair work to be undertaken in-situ wherever possible.



Images of fireplace to Unit 5.



Upper Ground Floor – Unit 6

The fireplace to unit 6 is an early 19th century black slate target surround with late 19th century arched insert, basket grate and stone hearth. Designated as an important feature of the room this fireplace will be conserved to remain a key feature of the space.

The fireplace is generally in a good condition however there is some discolouration to the surround and insert. There is also some minor visible damage where the insert abuts the surround in the top corner.



Front elevation to fireplace to Unit 6.



Minor damage where insert abuts the surround.

The slate surround, insert grate and stone hearth will be carefully cleaned with material specific appropriate cleaning products, inspecting any remedial work requirements during the process. Following the cleaning process, the discolouration to the slate surround will be repaired to restore colour uniformity. The cast iron insert and grate will be polished /blackened where required. Any components for repair shall be carefully removed, if possible, repaired as necessary and refitted carefully. Any stone hearth repair work to be undertaken in-situ wherever possible.

First Floor – Unit 5

Fireplace is an early 19th century white marble surround; late 19th century insert grate with Delft tiles and stone hearth. Described as one of the more important features of the room that will be conserved and remain a key feature of the space.

The fireplace appears in good condition, generally in need of cleaning to remove dirt, decay and debris build up. The marble surround, insert grate and stone hearth will be carefully cleaned with material specific appropriate cleaning

products, inspecting any remedial work requirements during the process. If any remedial work is discovered this will be repaired carefully, minimising any conflict with the other good condition areas.



Front view of fireplace.



Side view of fireplace.

First Floor Unit – Unit 8

The fireplace to this unit is an early 19th century veined white marble target surround, late 19th century arched insert with grate and a stone hearth. The intention for this fireplace as an important feature of the room that it will be conserved and remain a key feature to the space.

The fireplace appears in a generally good condition, however, there appears to be some minor chipping to the marble surround, discolouration to the black insert and poor seal connection between the insert and the marble. The marble surround and insert grate will be carefully cleaned and inspected prior to any remedial works taking place. Any components for repair shall be carefully removed, if possible, and repaired as necessary. The seal between insert and marble to be carefully removed and reapplied. The cast iron insert and grate will be polished /blackened where required to provide uniform colour. Any stone hearth repair work to be undertaken in-situ wherever possible.



Front view of fireplace.



Close up of insert and grate.

Second Floor – Unit 5

Fireplace to this unit is an early 19th century grey marble target surround, late 19th century insert grate with ceramic tiles and a stone hearth. The intention for this fireplace as an important feature of the room that it will be conserved and remain a key feature to the space.

The fireplace appears well maintained and in good condition only requiring some cleaning and restoration to the insert. The marble surround and insert will be carefully cleaned, inspecting any remedial work requirements. The cast iron insert and grate are showing signs of rust and will therefore require some rust restoration treatment prior to being polished /blackened. The whole insert and grate will undertake this process to create a uniform finish. Any stone hearth repair work to be undertaken in-situ wherever possible.



Front view of fireplace.



Close up of insert and grate.

Second Floor – Unit 11

This unit has two identical fireplaces within the same room. The pair have early 19th century grates within a simple surround. The intention for these fireplaces as important features of the room that they will be conserved and remain key features to the space.

The fireplace grates appear in a good condition and require careful cleaning. The grates will be polished/ blacked where required to provide uniform colour across them. The surrounds comprise of black painted stone and timber architrave. There are some visible paint flaking and chipping which will require repair work. Surrounds area to be cleaned, rubbed down with flaking paint removed. Surround areas to be redecorated as required.



Image of two adjacent fireplaces.



Close up of early 19th century grate.

Third Floor – Unit 10

The fireplace to this unit is an early 19th century veined white marble surround, late 19th century arched insert with grate and a stone hearth. The intention for this fireplace as an important feature of the room that it will be conserved and remain a key feature to the space.

The fireplace appears well maintained and in good condition only requiring some cleaning and restoration to the insert. The marble surround and insert will be carefully cleaned, inspecting any remedial work requirements. The cast iron insert and grate are showing signs of rust and will therefore require some rust restoration treatment prior to being polished /blacked. The whole insert and grate will undertake this process to create a uniform finish. Any stone hearth repair work to be undertaken in-situ wherever possible



Front view of fireplace.

STAIRCASES

There are four staircases within the main house, three travel from lower ground floor to second floor and the other staircase is between second and third floor. Each staircase has been assessed by the heritage consultant through the gazetteer document.

The general approach for all staircases is to retain the spaces as much as possible, with repair works to be carried out where necessary. Further details on the staircases can be found in the floor finishes drawings (1735_183 – 1735_187), reflected ceiling plans (ref:1735_188 - 1735_192) and original features plans for the main house (Drgs 1735_194 – 1735_198).

The skirting, cornicing and original door features that are being retained and repaired as required are highlighted in the drawings mentioned previously.

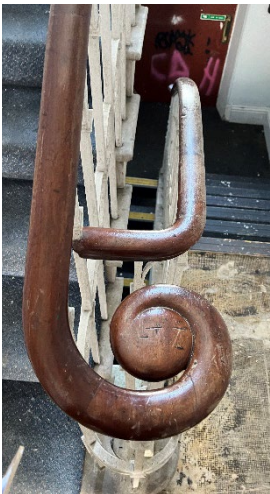
Stair Bannister

Staircase 1 – Main Staircase Central to building. Varnished wood, with curved wood and ornate detailing. Banister to be cleaned, carefully rubbed down and varnish to be reapplied to match existing appearance in colour.

Staircase 2 – Commissioners Staircase West of building. Varnished wood, with curved wood and ornate detailing. Banister to be cleaned, carefully rubbed down and varnish to be reapplied to match existing appearance in colour.

Staircase 3 – Surveyors Staircase East of building. Dark varnished wood, with simple curved wood and minimal detailing. Banister to be cleaned, carefully rubbed down, repair work required in places prior to a dark varnish being reapplied to match existing appearance in colour.

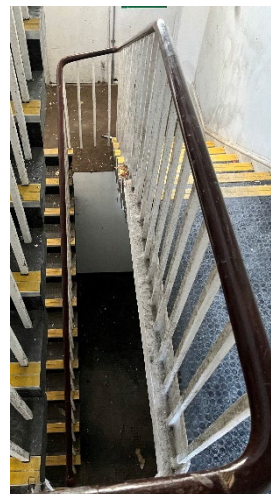
Staircase 4 – Staircase to observatory. White painted curved timber banister. Banister to be cleaned, carefully rubbed down and paint finish reapplied to match existing white colour.



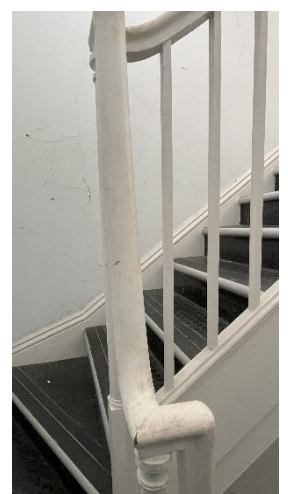
Staircase 1.



Staircase 2.



Staircase 3.



Staircase 4.

Stair Baluster

Staircase 1 – Main Staircase Central to building. White painted metal baluster with ornate detailing fixed into stone risers. Balusters to be cleaned, carefully rubbed down and paint finish reapplied to match existing white colour.

Staircase 2 – Commissioners Staircase West of building. White painted square timber balusters. Balusters to be cleaned, carefully rubbed down and paint finish reapplied to match existing white colour.

Staircase 3 – Surveyors Staircase East of building. White painted square timber balusters. Balusters to be cleaned, rubbed down to remove all flaking paint and reapply paint finish to match existing white colour.

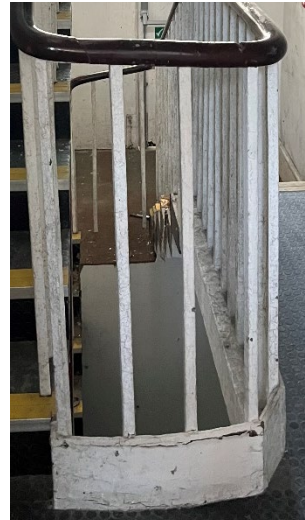
Staircase 4 – Staircase to observatory. White painted square timber balusters. Balusters to be cleaned, carefully rubbed down and paint finish reapplied to match existing white colour.



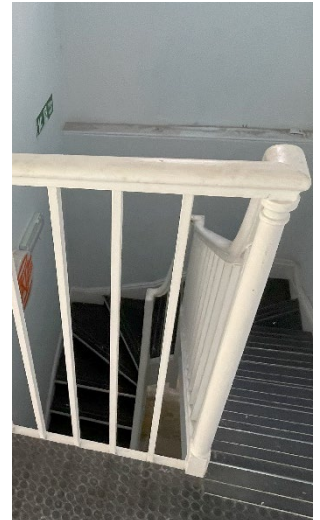
Staircase 1.



Staircase 2.



Staircase 3.



Staircase 4.

Stair Steps

Staircase 1 – Main Staircase Central to building. Cantilevered stone stair treads and risers. Existing carpet floor finish and underlay to be removed. Extent of proposed carpet floor finish applied to stair is found on the floor finishes drawings. Visible areas of treads and risers to be carefully cleaned removing build-up of dirt.

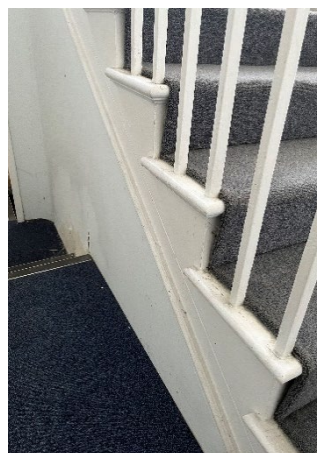
Staircase 2 – Commissioners Staircase West of building. White painted timber stair treads and risers. Existing carpet floor finish and underlay to be removed. Extent of proposed carpet floor finish applied to stair is found on the floor finishes drawings. Visible areas of treads and risers to be carefully cleaned, rubbed down, and paint finish reapplied to match existing white colour.

Staircase 3 – Surveyors Staircase East of building. Stone treads and risers. Vinyl existing floor finish to be removed. Extent of proposed carpet floor finish applied to stair is found on the floor finishes drawings. Visible areas of treads and risers to be carefully cleaned and rubbed down, removing build-up of dirt and black paint. Paint finish to be applied to visible areas.

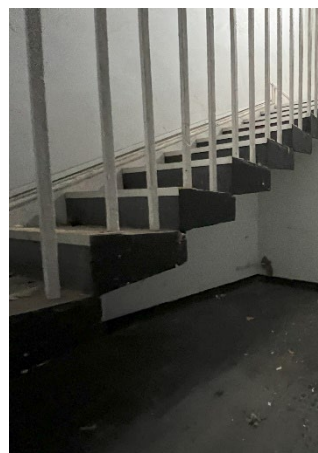
Staircase 4 – Staircase to observatory. Timber stair treads and risers. Vinyl existing floor finish to be removed. Extent of proposed carpet floor finish applied to stair is found on the floor finishes drawings. Visible areas of treads and risers to be carefully cleaned, rubbed down, and paint finish applied to match existing white colour of rest of staircase.



Staircase 1.



Staircase 2.



Staircase 3.



Staircase 4.

Method Statement - Cleaning of Stone Staircase (Staircase 1)

The objective of this method statement is to provide a process for the cleaning of the original stone steps for the main staircase (staircase 1) using the principle of least harm, ensuring the staircase's material integrity and historic value are preserved.

The approach set out below provides clear instructions for the controlled use of cleaning products only when gentler methods fail, ensuring compliance with conservation ethics.

The cleaning will follow a hierarchy of least harm:

1. Dry Cleaning (No Chemicals) – remove loose debris, dirt, and organic matter by hand tools/brushes.
2. Water-Based Cleaning – apply clean water (low pressure, mist spray, or sponge) and gentle brushing to soften deposits.
3. Mild Detergent or Biocide Treatment – if soiling persists, use a conservation-approved biocidal wash (e.g., Lithofin MN Outdoor Cleaner) in a test patch, prior to minimal use strictly following manufacturer's instructions.

Method Of Work

Step 1 – Preparation and Dry Cleaning

- Assess stone condition and photographically record existing soiling and defects.
- Carry out a test patch on an inconspicuous area to confirm suitability of any product proposed and monitor after 24 hours.
- Brush down the surface with soft bristle brushes to remove loose dirt.

Step 2 – Water Cleaning

- Apply clean water with a spray or sponge to soften remaining soiling.
- Gently agitate with soft brushes.
- Rinse with fresh water.
- **Assess results—if adequate, no further cleaning will be undertaken.**

Step 3 – Biocidal Wash – Lithofin MN Outdoor Cleaner (or similar).

- Apply Lithofin MN Outdoor Cleaner to remaining soiled areas.
- Allow contact time per manufacturer's instructions, 2-10 hours.
- Gently agitate with soft brushes if needed.
- Rinse thoroughly with clean water.
- **Assess again—if suitable, proceed to Step 4 (Final Rinse). If not, repeat Step 3.**

Step 4 – Final Rinse & Drying

- Conduct a thorough rinse of the treated areas with clean water.
- Allow staircase to dry naturally.
- Remove protective sheeting and restore site.

Step 5 – Protective Sealant Layer.

- Following the above steps, a stone sealer will be applied to the stone to protect the stone surface from future use and any further damage.

As per the floor finishes drawings, following the cleaning process above, the main staircase will be fitted with a carpet runner which will be adhered to the staircase, rather than fixing into the existing stone.

The grippers for the carpet runner to the stair will be adhered with Flexyfix. A contact spray adhesive such as Gekko G52 will be used to attach the underlay to the stairs. F3 carpet adhesive will be used to attach the carpet to the underlay. All products will only be used where absolutely necessary.