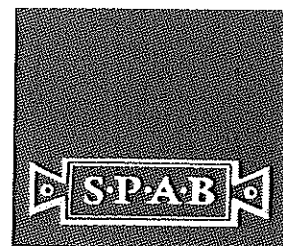


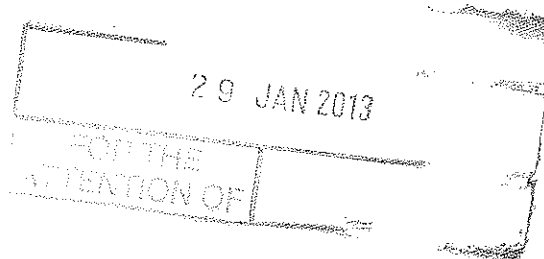
THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS
37 Spital Square London E1 6DY Telephone 020 7377 1644 info@spab.org.uk



Mr Adrian Dowd
Ribbles Valley Borough Council
By email

Our ref: LS/23716SPAB/13
Application ref: 3/2013/0012

29th January 2013



Dear Mr Dowd,

BARN ADJACENT TO ROCK HOUSE, TOWN END, SLAIDBURN

Thank you for your recent notification letter regarding this grade II listed building and the proposal for restoration of the barn to prevent further decay.

To bring the barn back into use is a worthy aspiration, and one which the SPAB would support. We do have one or two technical concerns with this proposal, as laid out below:

Extent of rebuilding: This is not made very clear in the drawings, and supplementary photographs to support the extent of rebuilding should be requested as a matter of principle. We remain to be convinced that such substantial quantities of walling need to be taken down as is suggested in the specification, and this requires further justification on the part of the applicant.

Foundations: Whilst we would concede that there may be some areas where some foundation work is required, we would not support the installation of concrete strip foundations under only certain sections of the building. This will exacerbate the movement issues already identified, and will be likely to induce further cracking in the immediate future. Using concrete block or limecrete may be a better way forward, however we would advise consulting the structural engineer for further advice.

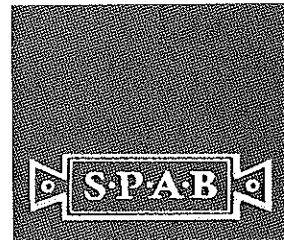
Mortar mix: The specification (Item 5.4) identifies the mortar mix as being 1:1:6 lime:cement:sand. The use of cement within a lime mortar mix is not to be recommended, as this greatly impedes the breathable and flexible nature of the lime which is desirable to retain for old buildings. The standard lime mortar mix is 1:3 lime:sand, however situations vary and advice should be sought from a specialist in lime products.

Full details and advice on building with lime and limecrete can be found either on our website (www.spab.org.uk), or by ringing our experienced advisors on the SPAB Technical Advice Line (0207 456 0916 Mon-Thurs 9.30-12.30) who will be happy to help with your conservation and building related queries.

Downpipes: For ease of cleaning and to avoid blockages, we would suggest that straight pipes are specified and that the swan neck detail omitted.

cont./

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Timber finishes: Oak weathers naturally to a subtle grey finish, and does not necessarily require 'Dulux Naked Wood' which is likely to peel over time. A painted finish would be more traditional and in keeping with the style of building.

Overall, the specification has the feel of a 'start again' approach, rather than subtle repairs to an existing structure. Indeed the word 'restoration' is used in the application title. Old buildings each have a unique character, and it is the conservation of this which is important. We would urge the applicants to consider carefully the real need for a lot of the stonework identified, and whether this can be achieved by more conservative methods, thus retaining as much of the historic fabric as possible.

We hope these comments will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Lucy Stewart
ARB RIBA AABC
Northeastern Caseworker