

GUILDHALL MARKETS, Cardigan

Answers to the points raised by the Victorian Society.

The Market Stalls.

The provision of stalls is an essential for the continuity of market-trading in the building. There have been stalls in the lower market for many years now. The original use of the ground floor may have been as a beast market, with the upper floor divided with stalls for the sale of meat, dairy products and poultry. The temporary nature of Victorian markets may have meant that there were more table stalls than would work for modern use where some part of the stall needs to be secure. The detailed design of the stalls could be left for decision before start of works.

The Lower Market

The current paving of the lower market could not be replicated, being as it is of severely eroded Pembrokeshire slates (probably from Cilgerran) that are no longer in production. It is impossible to say if the flooring is original, it does not have the runnels for a beast-market. It may have been put in after that use ceased, later in the nineteenth century. The replacement of the floor slab is to remedy damp and occasionally flooding that has long affected the building. The existence of damaged sewage pipes beneath makes the removal of the current floor unavoidable. Replacement slate slabs could not be the same as those removed, being unavailable. To refloor for instance in small slate squares, even if it could be afforded, would be no more historically accurate than a concrete floor, and less honest to function. There may be some argument for colouring the concrete, but that could be also left for discussion before the start of works.

The major improvement proposed to the floor spaces is the removal of the current metal staircase in the lightwell and returning to use the original stone corner stairs (with the lift and stairs in the new addition for main access). It would be perverse to fail to provide a handrail for the Victorian stairs which inevitably will be used by many. That too could be left for discussion before the start of works.

The design of the original building with major access from College Row has become a problem with traffic passing close to the doors on this side, where there is no pavement. College Road is very steep and the lower of the 2 double doors is deemed to be particularly dangerous because of the 2 steps in this location. The upper pair of doors which are on a level with the street are to be retained.

The roof.

The renewal of the roof is one of the major elements of the restoration scheme, dealing with poor (non-existent) insulation and persistent water leaks. The addition of insulation could either alter the internal appearance of the roofs, changing the relationship between beams and boarding, or the external by raising the depth of the fascia boards. The height of the building makes the alteration to the fascia boards less noticeable than the layering of the inner roof slopes in insulation. The reuse of existing North Wales slates in the inner roof slopes visible from the inside is proposed because these slopes are more accessible in case of damage and more protected from wind damage than the very high exterior faces. Here new slates are proposed to minimise the cost of replacement of slipped or broken slates. The overwhelming cost difference in using North Wales slate cannot be overlooked in the choice of what slate to use. But the argument that North Wales slates are historically correct on this building cannot be sustained, as in 1860 the slates were far more likely to have come from

North Pembrokeshire, Llangolman possibly, and have been therefore of quite different type. Pembrokeshire slates would have been mostly smaller graded from tiny at the top of the roof to quite large at the eaves. They like the Cilgerran slabs are no longer in production.

Julian Orbach

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