Albion Square War Memorial

Condition Report

Date: 13.04.2026

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CRUCIFORM ARCHITECTURE HERITAGE PLANNING

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1 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The memorial is in good condition.

In the immediate term, There are no immediate issues to address

In the medium term, some minor stone repairs infilling holes, and repointing needs to be carried out.

In the long term, stone to the plinth and base could be cleaned to improve appearance. Litter needs to be regularly cleared from recessed joints.

A list of recommended repairs is presented at the back of this document.

2 - INTRODUCTION

2.1 Site information

Address: 25 Albion St, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 1QF

Listed / Scheduled Monument Status: Grade II Listed

Date of Construction: 1922 (WW1) 1946 (WW2)

Inspection Information:

Inspection Date: 13th April 2026

Surveyor: Mr. S. Smith RIBA AABC

Cruciform Ltd.
Enterprise House
Moorland Road
Stoke-on-Trent
ST6 1JQ

01782 777000

Weather: Dry, Sunny

2.2 Description

The Albion Square war memorial located outside the former municipal offices in Hanley is a Grade II listed monument dedicated to service personnel from the local area who lost their lives in the First and Second world wars.

Designed in 1922 by Harold Brownsword a local sculptor, the memorial consists of a stone plinth with a bronze Britannia figure atop it. The figure is depicted wearing a helmet with a lion motif and chain mail, raising a sword pointing down encircled by a wreath in her right hand and a circular shield in her left hand resting by her side with a snake at the base of the figure.

Symbolically the design incorporates traditional military elements and national imagery, including the snake beneath the feet of the victor to represent defeat of evil, while the wreaths, lion helmet and two Tudor roses either side of the Stoke-on-Trent coat of arms symbolise national identity.

The plinth features two black stone plaques with inscriptions in gold lettering to commemorate the Burma Campaign and to the Far East prisoners of war.

The front and rear faces have applied black lettering - “TO OUR VALIANT DEAD 1914-1918 & 1939-1945” and “THEY DIED FOR OUR FREEDOM”.

2.4 Methodology

This report provides an overview on the condition of the Site. Where observations may contain a recommendation for action (generally a repair or further investigation) and if so these will be accompanied with a priority rating. The ratings indicate the following levels of priority:

1 – Urgent work, requiring immediate attention. Issue severity could lead closure of parts of premises / immediate risk to health and safety / serious breach of legislation. e.g. dangerously unstable masonry or finishes likely to cause injury or structural damage.

2 – Essential work that will prevent serious deterioration of fabric / address medium risk to health and safety / minor breach of legislation (generally required within 12 months) e.g. drainage blockages, missing roof tiles, rotten timberwork, monitoring of possible ongoing structural movement, failed flashings

3 – Necessary work that will prevent deterioration of fabric / address minor risk to health and safety (generally required within 12 – 24 months). e.g. high priority repointing, high priority timber redecoration, gutter leaks and adjustments

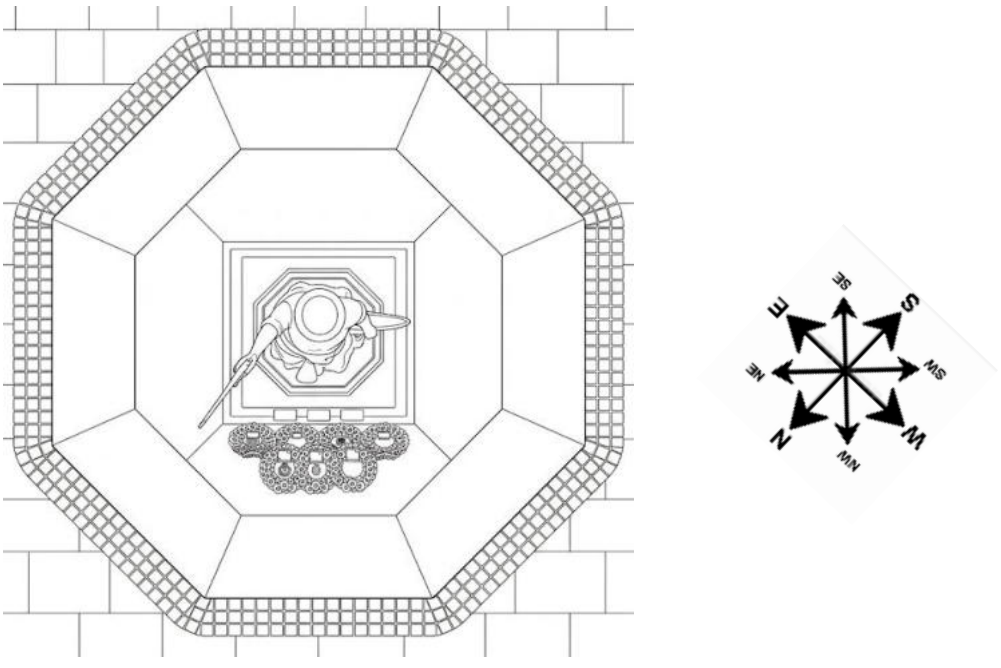
4 – Desirable remedial work that will prevent deterioration over the long term (generally required within 5 years) e.g. lower priority repointing, lower priority redecoration,

5 - Desirable Improvement with no timescale e.g. functional improvements, monitoring of historic structural movement and other issues that are unlikely to cause consequential damage at this time.

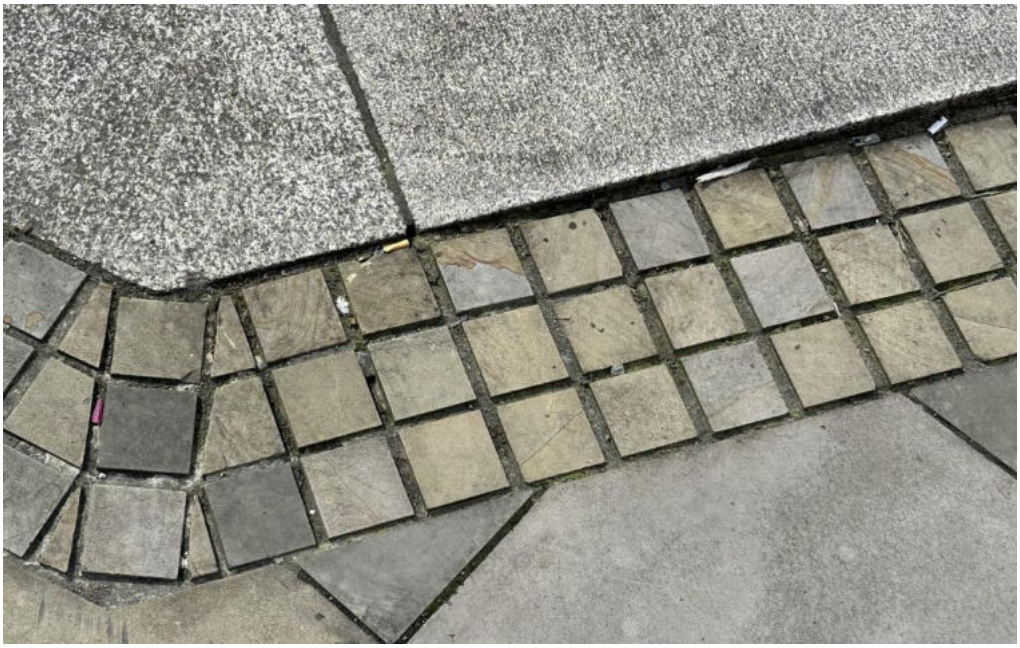
The recommendations made in the report are based upon a conservation minded approach that is considered appropriate to its status. The recommendations herein also rely upon constructional methods of repair, using materials compatible and consistent with the historic fabric, and, wherever possible, repair techniques that are reversible and that maximise the retention of the surviving historic fabric.

Recommendations are not intended to be used as repair specifications.

3 – GENERAL ARRANGEMENT



4 - CONDITION: OBSERVATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

	Base	
4.1	The base consists of granite slabs laid in two steps in an octagonal shape around the plinth. The lower labs are laid with a fall away. Joints are tight and slabs are level. There is some atmospheric dirt on the surface that could be cleaned. Cleaning should be considered with an appropriate biocide. If results are not satisfactory a superheated steam system could be considered. No abrasive or high-pressure methods should be employed. ***STONE CLEANING*** 	**4**
4.2	There are Yorkstone setts surrounding that have recessed joints that trap litter. Regular clearing of litter is needed. ***LITTER CLEARANCE*** 	**4**

4.3	Outside of the setts there is Yorkstone slabs laid as part of the last public realm works. These are in good condition.	
4.4	There are spotlights fitted into the slabs. Some have water ingress inside the glass and seals should be checked. It should be checked that this does not impede their operation. ***CHECK AND CLEAN LIGHT GLASS*** 	**4**

	Plinth	
4.5	The square plinth is of a cream granite. There is staining from water run-off. Cleaning should be considered with an appropriate biocide. If results are not satisfactory a superheated steam system could be considered. No abrasive or high-pressure methods should be employed. ***STONE CLEANING*** 	
4.6	Joints between blocks are recessed but mostly appeared well filled. On the southwest corner mortar has recessed further and daylight visible. The joint needs carefully repointing. ***REPOINTING*** 	**3**

4.7	Above the inscription there is a bronze panel with roses to each side of the Stoke on Trent coat of arms. The bronze has weathered and oxidized to a verdigris patina. The visual effect is relatively pleasant but the appropriateness of oxidation of memorials is subjective. It would be undesirable to attempt to remove the patination but a hot or cold wax coating could be considered for application over the existing patina. ***CONSIDER WAX COATING OF BRONZE*** 	**4**
4.8	Black stone plaque on the east face is in good condition with clear lettering.	
4.9	Above the plaque is a bronze wreath. The bronze has weathered and oxidized to a verdigris patina. The visual effect is relatively pleasant but the appropriateness of oxidation of memorials is subjective. It would be undesirable to attempt to remove the patination but a hot or cold wax coating could be considered for application over the existing patina. ***CONSIDER WAX COATING OF BRONZE*** 	**4**
4.10	There are drill holes in the centre of the wreath that should be filled. ***STONE REPAIRS***	**3**

4.11	There is a similar bronze wreath on the west face. The bronze has weathered and oxidized to a verdigris patina. The visual effect is relatively pleasant but the appropriateness of oxidation of memorials is subjective. It would be undesirable to attempt to remove the patination but a hot or cold wax coating could be considered for application over the existing patina. ***CONSIDER WAX COATING OF BRONZE*** 	**4**
4.12	There are similar drill holes in the centre of the wreath that should be filled. ***STONE REPAIRS***	**3**

	Statue	
4.13	The bronze has weathered and oxidized to a verdigris patina. The visual effect is relatively pleasant but the appropriateness of oxidation of memorials is subjective. It would be undesirable to attempt to remove the patination, but a hot or cold wax coating could be considered for application over the existing patina. ***CONSIDER WAX COATING OF BRONZE*** 	**4**

4.14	No holing could be identified within the bronze casting however there is some brown oxidization to the centre of the shield, suggesting a ferrous metal core pins left in the bronze at the time of casting, or armatures still present within the hollow bronze. This can be removed with the localized use of chemical poultices. ***REMOVE FERROUS STAINING*** 	

5 - SCOPE OF THE REPORT

This report is based on the findings of an inspection made from the ground and from other readily accessible parts.

It is emphasised that the inspection has been purely visual and that no enclosed spaces or inaccessible parts such as boarded floors, roof spaces or hidden timbers at the wall heads have been opened up for inspection. Any part which may require further investigation is referred to in the appropriate section of this report.
We have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and we are, therefore, unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect.

We can make no comment on the substrata and cannot confirm that the property is unaffected by coal seams, underground workings or general subsidence.

Unless stated to the contrary a physical penetrative examination has not been undertaken as part of this report. A full structural survey has not been carried out.

No tests have been carried out to determine whether red ash or clinker has been used as filling below ground slabs or the like. No investigation has been carried out in respect of pollution or contamination of ground on which the property is built. We are not aware of mining operations or adverse soil conditions. Should investigative work be required, this will be subject to an additional instruction fee to the appropriate specialist.

Where properties are occupied, the inspection of floors and certain areas will be limited. Such areas as can be exposed and inspected will be commented upon; where carpet cannot be lifted, we will be unable to comment on, and as such we cannot say the floors under are free from defect.

We have not tested hollow walls to determine the condition of wall ties; should investigative work be required, this will be subject to an additional instruction/fee.

In normal circumstances it is not possible to comment in detail on the condition of ceiling and wall plaster where it is covered by ceiling and wallpaper. It must be borne in mind that the condition of ceiling and wallpaper will cause wall plaster in particular to have become detached from the underlying structure.

We have not tested the various main services, specialist heating, electrical and mechanical service. Engineers should be commissioned to carry out such tests on additional instructions/fees.

Furthermore, we must stress that we have not carried out any investigation to determine whether High Alumina Cement was used during the construction of the building inspected and we are therefore unable to report that the building is free from risk in this respect. In view of the possible potential danger connected with High Alumina Cement, we strongly recommend that the appropriate investigations, inspections and tests be carried out immediately by a suitably qualified engineer.
Roof voids will be entered only if there is adequate access, the cover of which is removable without significant damage being caused.

Drains and underground services have not been examined or tested; camera tests can be carried out at an additional fee.

We can make no comment on the location or type of asbestos which may be present in the building. A specialist contractor would need to be separately employed to test for the presence of asbestos.

Cruciform Ltd. accept no liability for losses directly or indirectly arising out of, or in any way involving the actual, potential, alleged or threatened formation, growth, presence, release or dispersal of any fungi, moulds, spores or mycotoxins of any kind.

We have not checked the site for Japanese Knotweed nor Giant Hogweed. These are notifiable weeds, and their presence can cause serious damage to buildings and sites. If Japanese Knotweed or Giant Hogweed are discovered, they should be disposed of in accordance with the Countryside Act.

Although best practice dictates that the buildings should be inspected every five years, it should be realised that serious troubles may develop in between these surveys if minor defects are left unattended.

6 – RECOMMENDED REPAIRS

1 – Urgent work, requiring immediate attention.

2 – Essential work (generally required within 12 months)

3 – Necessary work (generally required within 12 – 24 months)

4 – Desirable remedial work (generally required within 5 years)

5 - Desirable Improvement with no timescale

L = Listed Building Consent is likely required (*check with LPA)

C = Cyclical Maintenance task

V = Non-specialist task, suitable for volunteer (subject to risk assessment)

Priority 1 Repairs:			
Priority 2 Repairs:			
Priority 3 Repairs:			
1	REPOINTING	4.6,	
2	STONE REPAIRS	4.10, 4.12,	L
Priority 4 Repairs:			
3	STONE CLEANING	4.1, 4.5,	C,L
4	LITTER CLEARANCE	4.2,	C,V
5	OVERHAUL/REPLACE LIGHT FITTINGS	4.4,	
6	WAX COATING OF BRONZE	4.7, 4.9, 4.11, 4.13,	L
7	REMOVE FERROUS STAINING	4.22	
Priority 5 Repairs:			