

KAUMAN

CONSERVATION & DESIGN GUIDELINES



KAUMAN HISTORIC AREA, YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA

These guidelines were drafted by the participants
from UM, NUS, UII during UM-NUS-UII Architectural
Conservation Field School 2018 @ Kauman, Yogyakarta from
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A Kauman village is usually located on the west side of a town square with a mosque adjacent to the square. Some etymologists assume the name "Kauman" is an abbreviation of "kaum iman" meaning "faithful/pious people."



LOCAL SELLING HOME-GROWN VEGETABLE

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Kasultanan Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat initiated the rise of Kauman in the 18th century. The Kraton was built in 1756. In 1773, Sultan Hamengkubuwono built Masjid Agung, which is now known as Masjid Gedhe Kauman. Following its construction, the Penghulu started to form many other religious institutions.

Kauman is also the birthplace of Muhammadiyah, founded by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan. Presently, the langgar KH Ahmad Dahlan can be found in Kauman and is highly regarded by the locals. In 1945, the inauguration of the Sekolah Tinggi Islam was held in the Ndalem Pengulon. This building is also considered significant. Siti Walidah (1872 – 31 May 1946), better known as Nyai Ahmad Dahlan, the wife of KH Ahmad Dahlan, played a pivotal role in the establishment of several educational institutions for females such as the Musalla 'Aisyiyah, an important community node within the village even until now. Nyai Achmad Dahlan died on 31 May 1946, and her body has been buried behind the Great Mosque of Kauman, albeit poorly maintained, this tomb compound remains a highly regarded structure.

Having a significant place in history, numerous Batik handels ("handels" in Dutch means "entrepreneurs") which are no longer in operation can also be found within Kauman. Although some remain vacant or have been repurposed, these historic buildings are not protected by law and remain vulnerable to demolition.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

One of the most striking characteristics of Kauman would be the presence of food hawkers along its narrow alleys and streets. Gang Pasar Ramadhan, as its name suggests, is where the greatest variety of Kauman delicacies can be found. The traders are mostly old ladies who will set up their makeshift food stalls on wide steps in front of their houses.

The streets and alleys of Kauman are mainly for pedestrian use. The residents of Kauman has been following an age-old tradition according to which no one is allowed to ride motorised vehicles inside Kauman. The users of motorised vehicles have to dismount, switch off the engine and push their vehicles once they enter Kauman.

The residents of Kauman are enthusiastic gardeners. They take ownership to maintain their potted plants, neatly arranged in front of most houses in Kauman. Generally, residents enjoy their home-grown fruits and vegetables themselves, though some even sell them for an extra income.

In the event of any death in Kauman, Masjid Gedhe will announce the news to the community through their public announce system. The residents will then gather at the mosque to pray for the departed soul.



AERIAL VIEW OF KAUMAN

URBAN CONTEXT

Kauman is a “gated community.” The entire area comprises of buildings including housing, religious buildings, educational institutions, alleys and passageways; and open-spaces. Two entrance gates located on Jl. KH. Ahmad Dahlan provide only pedestrian access to Kauman. These narrow gates positioned in the interstitial spaces between buildings on the periphery of the area. The motorised vehicles generally enter the area from Masjid Gedhe side.

Kauman is located in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. The Sultan of Yogyakarta is also the Governor of Kauman. Kauman is divided into four regions and managed by 4 RWs (Rukun Warga) and further sub-managed by about 50 RTs (Rukun Tetangga). It had a flourishing Batik economy back in the 1800s, which saw the development of many established Batik handel enterprises. However, with the advent of mass production, the industry went into decline, and now the locals are mostly employed by the government or self-employed.

Nonetheless, its vibrant Batik past has left its mark on the architecture of Kauman. Batik handels, albeit vacant or repurposed, can still be found in their original places throughout Kauman. The local residences grouped in zones according to the inherent hierarchy found in the Batik industry. Although in present times, this hierarchy no longer exists, but there are still some areas where division between residents as per their financial status is clearly visible.

NATURAL CONTEXT

Kauman is located centrally in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Java. Located in the middle of an axis created by Mount Merapi in north and Laut Selatan in south, Kauman developed around the Masjid Gedhe, centripetally. Notably, Sungai Winongo traverses through the village, acting as its main water source that is channelled through the main drainage system, Kali Larangan.



MASJID GEDHE KAUMAN, SERAMBI

SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS OF KAUMAN

STREET SYSTEM

HISTORICAL BUILDING FABRIC

HEIGHT CONTROL

SPATIAL ORGANISATION

RHYTHM IN ARCHITECTURE

TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS



ALLEYS (GANG RUKUNAN)



Kauman's planning is based on the concept of *catur gatra tunggal* (four components in one):

- i) Kraton (Palace)
- ii) Alun-Alun (Public square)
- iii) Mosque (Masjid Gedhe)
- iv) Market (Pasar Beringharjo)

Kauman built heritage has the characteristics of mainly the Javanese and Kalang architecture.

Kauman is mainly defined by the existence of Islamic symbolic elements like mosque, musholla and Islamic boarding schools.

STREET SYSTEM

The main access to Kauman in Yogyakarta lies from north to south of Jl KH. Ahmad Dahlan and to the south towards the great mosque (Masjid Gedhe), while other entrance gates to Kauman are either from north to south or east to west. The orientation of the entrance to Kauman imitates that of the Yogyakarta city layout in the form of imaginary line that begins from the South Sea (Segara Kidul) and ends at Mount Merapi in the north, passing through Kraton (Palace) in Yogyakarta. From the perspective of religious philosophy, the north-south orientation symbolises harmony between all humans (Hablum Minnanas) and God (Hablun MinAllah).

MAIN ROADS

Jalan Nyai Ahmad Dahlan (on west); Jalan KH. Ahmad Dahlan (on north); Jalan Kauman (on south); and Jalan Alun-Alun Utara (on east) are the main roads (ranging between approximately 3.8-4.5m wide). Seven entry points from these main roads lead to Kauman.

ALLEYS

Kauman have a network of narrow alleys (*gang rukunan*) in grid pattern, which are around 2.2m wide or less and passageways range between 0.7m-1.5m wide. These *gang rukunan* are formed by connecting the open spaces between several houses in the neighbourhood. The *gang rukunan* are originally private land that has been donated in the past for the use of public as an escape route in an event of attack by Dutch military.

The usage of these narrow alleys and passageways is mostly for walking (accessibility), as a public space for interaction, and for local trades (mostly during morning).

In the past, the steps in front of a house facing *gang rukunan* were used by Batik craftspersons to receive their weekly wages from the main trader.

HISTORIC BUILDING FABRIC

Traditional houses in Kauman are mainly Javanese and Kalang architecture style. The use of modern architectural materials such as encaustic tiles on the floor, glass panels for the windows/doors, and various forms of ornamentation can be seen in historic buildings.

SIGNIFICANT ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

ORNAMENTATION

The intricacy of the metal bracket (Konsol, corbel) could be use as a substitute for a column or beams that shows the financial status of each family in Kauman.

NAMEPLATE

The name of the Batik handel entrepreneur is usually engraved on a marble plate that is placed on the exterior wall of the house.

DOORS/ WINDOWS

Houses with more than one door means that the owner of the house enjoys to communicate and interact with neighbours. The windows of the houses are usually large and wide.

ROOF FORMS

- Tajuk
- Joglo
- Limasan
- Atap
- Pelana

HEIGHT CONTROL

Based on the height of nearby Kraton complex and Masjid Gedhe (both are significant buildings). It is recommended that the building height in Kauman should not exceed 12m (top of the roof). This control of height will maintain that no building in the future will be taller than the significant Kraton and Masjid Gedhe and preserve the vertical rhythm of the place.

SPATIAL ORGANISATION

Most house fronts in Kauman possess a striking characteristic of the undak-undakan. It is the term locals have coined for the steps to the door designed in front of their houses. These steps act as viscous, pausal spaces for residents of each house to socialise with one another and with their neighbours.

The composition of the mosque, ndalem pengulon, rumah gedhong batikhandel, living quarters, jalan and gang rukunan is unique to Kauman.

RHYTHM IN ARCHITECTURE

The rhythm of the architectural elements and building heights in Kauman create a sense of movement and establish vivid pattern and texture. This rhythm of Kauman invokes an intense feeling of the sense of place.

The steps (undak-undakan) at the street level should be preserved as a significant element of Kauman's cultural life and must be integrated into any new design proposals in the area. This will further maintain the hierarchy of spaces and help to continue local activities that happenhere.

Existing narrow alleys (gang rukunan) and passageways should be preserved for easy accessibility around the area.

TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

Kauman used to be home to a community of Yogyakarta's most popular batik entrepreneurs. A diminishing evidence of batikhandel houses scatters the village. These houses were used as spaces of commerce and industry on top of the housing unit. While many houses have now been demolished, the dying tradition of crafts is survived by other houses in the neighbourhood which have been gradually transformed into textile workshops.

To employ local men as security guards to maintain the security of a village is quite common in Kauman and Yogyakarta. These guards are ronda-ronda, who are paid a sum of money by each household to maintain the security of the village.



PUSH-CART HAWKERS



DILARANG
NAIK MOTOR
HARAP
TURUN
DI TUN TUN

NURUL MOTOR

STREETS OF KAUMAN

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

BUILDING COVERAGE
LANDSCAPE/ VEGETATION
STREET SYSTEM
BUILDING ORIENTATION





BUILDING COVERAGE

Not more than 90% of the total site area, to take into consideration the setback which should not be more than 800mm from building boundary line.

LANDSCAPE/ VEGETATION

BUILDINGS

To keep the vegetation within the compound or on the front porch or steps. If not, vegetation can be placed (potted plants) or planted on the streets however keeping it within 300mm from the boundary line of the building.

Sacred areas (Makam Pahlawan Nasional "Nyai Achmad Dahlan")

Deep rooted vegetations should be at a minimum distance of 1.0m away from tombs and other structures.

80% - 100% of the ground area should be exposed and provide opportunities for growing of vegetation to allow natural rainwater drainage.

Maintenance of vegetation such as grass and shrubs should be done once every two weeks. Trimming of large trees should be done once every six-eight weeks.

STREET SYSTEM

1.0m - 2.4m wide streets as they are also regularly used as a cultural and social space.

BUILDING ORIENTATION

The proposed building should face south to minimise direct radiation from the sun.



DAILY LIFE OF A LOCAL WITH HIS BIRD

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

STREET SYSTEM

HEIGHT CONTROL

WIDTH CONTROL

For architectural heritage conservation approach, we are greatly influenced by the SPAB¹ approach that "is based on the protection of 'fabric' - the material from which a building is constructed. A building's fabric is the primary source from which knowledge and meaning can be drawn. Materials and construction methods embodied in building fabric illustrate changes in people's ideas, tastes, skills and the relationship with their locality. Fabric also holds character and beauty; the surfaces, blemishes and undulations of old buildings speak of the passage of time and of lives lived. Wear and tear adds beautiful patination that new work can only acquire through the slow process of ageing."

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS

All historic buildings with significant heritage values should be preserved and not be either demolished or sold to the people outside of the Kauman community.

Only techniques and materials which have been demonstrated to be appropriate to the fabric should be considered for conservation and repair works. These will normally be the same as the original or parent material or where this is no longer available or appropriate, have compatible properties, both technically and aesthetically.

Interventions should maximise the life expectancy of significant building fabric consistent with sustaining its significance.

Interventions should be reversible, if technically feasible and practicable, or at least, retreatable and should not prejudice future interventions when these become necessary.

All works should be adequately recorded and the records made available for others.

Interventions should contribute to or at least not compromise the sustainability of future management and maintenance.

STREET SYSTEM

The function of streets/ alleyways/ passageways not only for accessibility but also as communal spaces should be maintained. The age-old tradition of not allowing anyone to ride motorised vehicles inside Kauman should be strictly adhered to limit noise pollution and for the safety of residents.

Street system and hierarchy of streets should be preserved as it encourages strong community bonding and add uniqueness to the place.

HEIGHT CONTROL

Any expansion of floor area by converting a single-storey building into a two-storey structure should consider appropriate building construction methods and materials including earthquake-resistant materials. No building should be taller than Masjid Gedhe or Kraton main building and must not obstruct their views from important vantage points. A building after expansion in height to maintain harmony of form with other buildings in Kauman.

WIDTH CONTROL

Expansion of floor area by combining two or more building plots into a wider area should not be allowed as it will disrupt the rhythm in architecture and harmony with other buildings. Furthermore, it will negatively affect the relationship and activities in the community.

¹ The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) was founded by William Morris in 1877. It was established in response to the work of Victorian architects whose enthusiasm for harmful restoration caused irreparable damage. Today the SPAB encourages excellence in new design to enrich and complement the built historic environment. Please refer to Appendix 1 for "The SPAB approach to the conservation and care of old buildings."



**DESIGN PROPOSALS
KAUMAN FIELD SCHOOL 2018**

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

ADAPTIVE RE-USE

LANDSCAPE



INFILL DEVELOPMENT

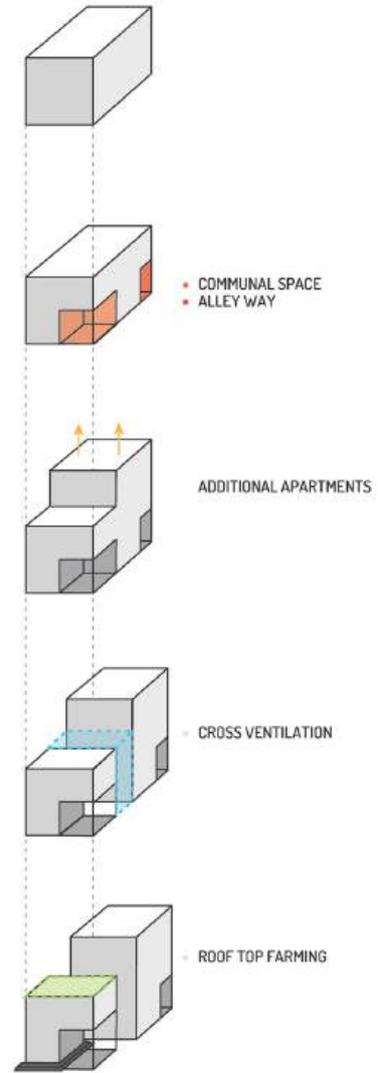
RUMAH KAUMAN

LIVING AND EXPERIENCING IN KAUMAN

By Pye Phyo Aung, Aida Syafiqah, Lam Fung, Khairul Bahari Andi, Nur Asyrof Muhammad, Kartikya Islah, Zoe Lim, Seri Sapari

The aim of the project is to provide "green" living and working spaces for entrepreneurs and young couples who are willing to continue living and working in Kauman near to their friends and family. Spaces are catered for those who are looking for affordable office spaces within Yogyakarta. Urban roof farming spaces are also provided to grow vegetables for local enthusiasts and the residents. The needs of the community is taken into consideration as a way of giving back to the community; it is

created in a form of "Push Cart and Motorbike Parking Station" at ground floor. The decision to create such spaces comes from the observation of the vendors pushing their carts along the alley ways and parking it where ever it is convenient when it is not in use. By providing such spaces, not only can they park at designated locations, they can also continue to sell their products/foods throughout the day.

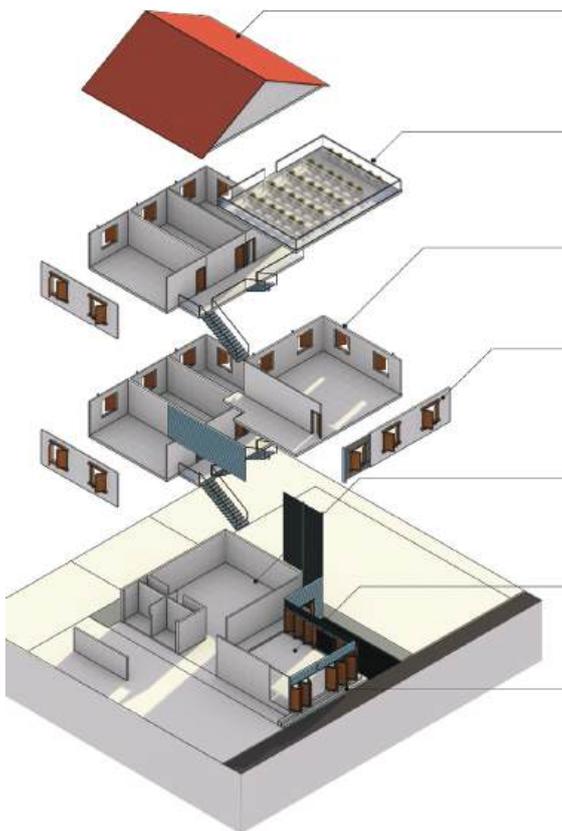


PROCESS - PLAN - SCHEMATIC DESIGN





Further more, the space can also be utilise as motorbike parking space. This allows the people to park their motorbike without having to push it all the way into the alley ways of Kauman, Kauman has a unique culture of pushing the bikes in the alley ways instead of riding them to reduce the noise and air pollution.



ROOF

Align with the surrounding buildings that generally use the roof, so it will produce a harmonius facade and building form with the neighbours.

ROOFTOP FARMING

Provided to grow vegetables, so the people have access to fresh, wholesome, and affordable food. Furthermore, it is also good for the environment.

LIVING SPACES

Affordable and flexible studio apartments for young couples which can also be utilised as an office and working space

WINDOWS

Influenced by the neighbours and the significant buildings around Kauman such as the Batik Handel. This is to ensure the rhythm and typology of Kauman is maintained.

WORKING SPACE

Working space is not only for the people who rent the living quarters, anyone from the community can also use the space but with a minimal fee.

COMMUNAL SPACE

Street vendors can utilise the communal space for their daily business as well as a gathering area by the locals.

UNDAK-UNDAK AND PARKING SPACE

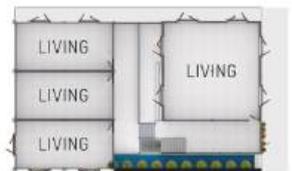
Communities' products/foods can be sold throughout the day in undak- undak/communal space. The parking space allows people to park their motorbike without having to push it all the way into the alley ways of Kauman.



ROOF PLAN



2nd FLOOR PLAN



1st FLOOR PLAN



GROUND FLOOR PLAN





ADAPTIVE RE-USE

A TASTE OF KAUMAN

THE ADAPTIVE RE-USE OF NDALEM PENGULON

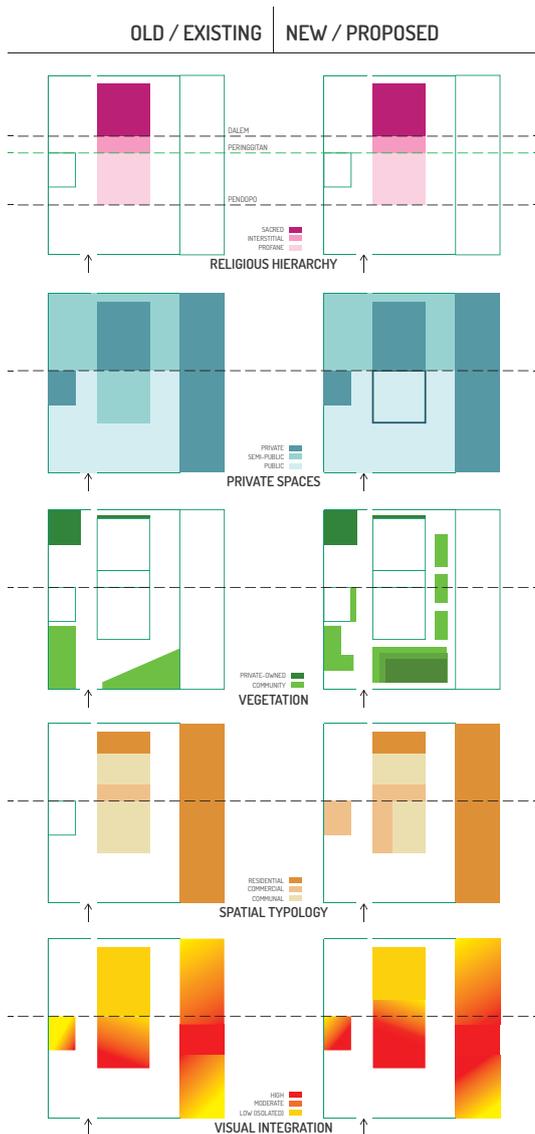
by Gaius Leong Ji, Dwi Andriansyah, Trendyanitra, Yugsa Khaninur K., Prasetyo Adi N. Jeevan a/I Mariappan, Lee Rui Xian, Mustaqim bin Musthafa

Coupled with the rich heritage of Kauman's cuisine, the community of the Kauman locals proves to be an exceptionally peculiar yet intriguing one. With houses arranged in an almost sporadic nature, alleyways intrinsically become the meeting place of the villagers.

Yet, large establishments like community centres and public spaces are observedly underused by the community, especially since neighbours are content with socialising at their doorsteps.

The aim of repurposing the Pengulon building is to enrich the gathering experience of chiefly, the locals, and next, internationals. With the addition of functions both commercial, residential and communal, our group believes that the Pengulon will become an activity hub that is sustainable, green and rambunctious, as like its local people.

The interior spaces will house a traditional guesthouse, cafe, activity centre as well as two offices - one for Saka Wisata and one for a religious organization.



CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION



KAUMAN CUISINE AND RITUALS



LOCATION PLAN

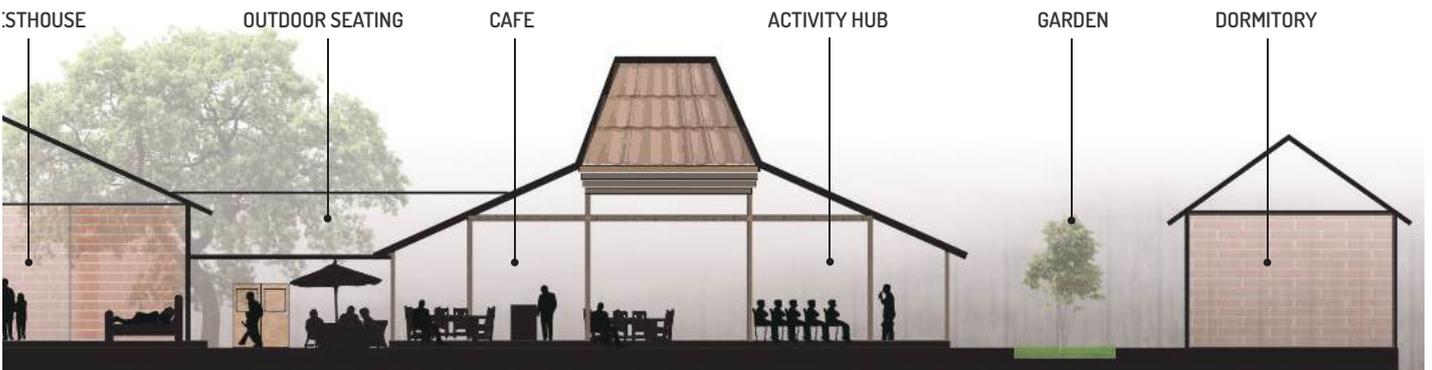


PROPOSED SECTION



PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN

1:150



1:50

MAKAM PAHLAWAN NASIONAL
NYAI ACHMAD DAHLAN
1872 - 1946

SESUAI SURAT KEPUTUSAN
PRESIDEN REPUBLIK INDONESIA

NOMOR : 042 / TK / 1971
TANGGAL : 22 SEPTEMBER 1971

BUKA PINTU DIDORONG
MASUK TIDAK DITARIK
KELUAR

LANDSCAPE

REMEMBRANCE CEMETERY IN KAUMAN

Aussie Virdadya Wijayanto, Camy Chat, Ethen Chung Er Pei, Junian Achmad Mahendra, Lee Kee An, Munirah binti Mohamed Ayob, Pudita Sekar Prabaw, Kelly Yee Qing Xuan, Zhou Wentao

Located along a tranquil stretch of alley in Kauman village (Yogyakarta), the new cemetery design aims to align the project to the principles of Kauman, which is to promote philosophy, history and sociology. The new design aims to create relevancy of the cemetery to both the local community and tourists, and also to provide a both public and private space for visitors to reflect upon.

On top of providing the functional improvement of public amenities of the cemetery like provision of seats and green spaces, the new design also attempts to educate visitors about the tensions between different ideologies such as the Muhammadiyah movement, the Java-Islamic and the Hindu-Buddhist practices. This is to be achieved by curating a linear stone pathway that guides them along the 3 tomb areas and learn how burial practices were done differently.

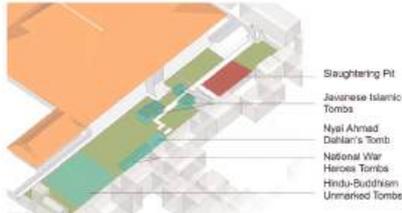
The key feature of the project is the water body that flows across all 3 tomb areas serving functionally as a soft physical barrier between visitors and the tombs and aesthetically as a dynamic element for new life like lotuses to grow, but more importantly the water body is the unifying element for the various ideologies.



EXISTING ENTRANCE AND MOTORBIKE PARKING



EXISTING VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN DENSITY



EXISTING TOMBS AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES



SECTION A-A'



EVENT SPACE



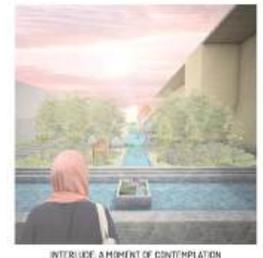
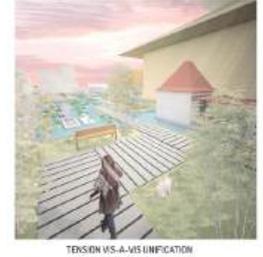
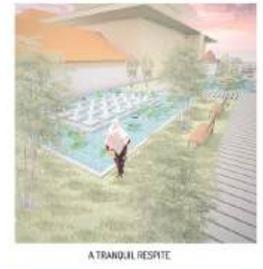
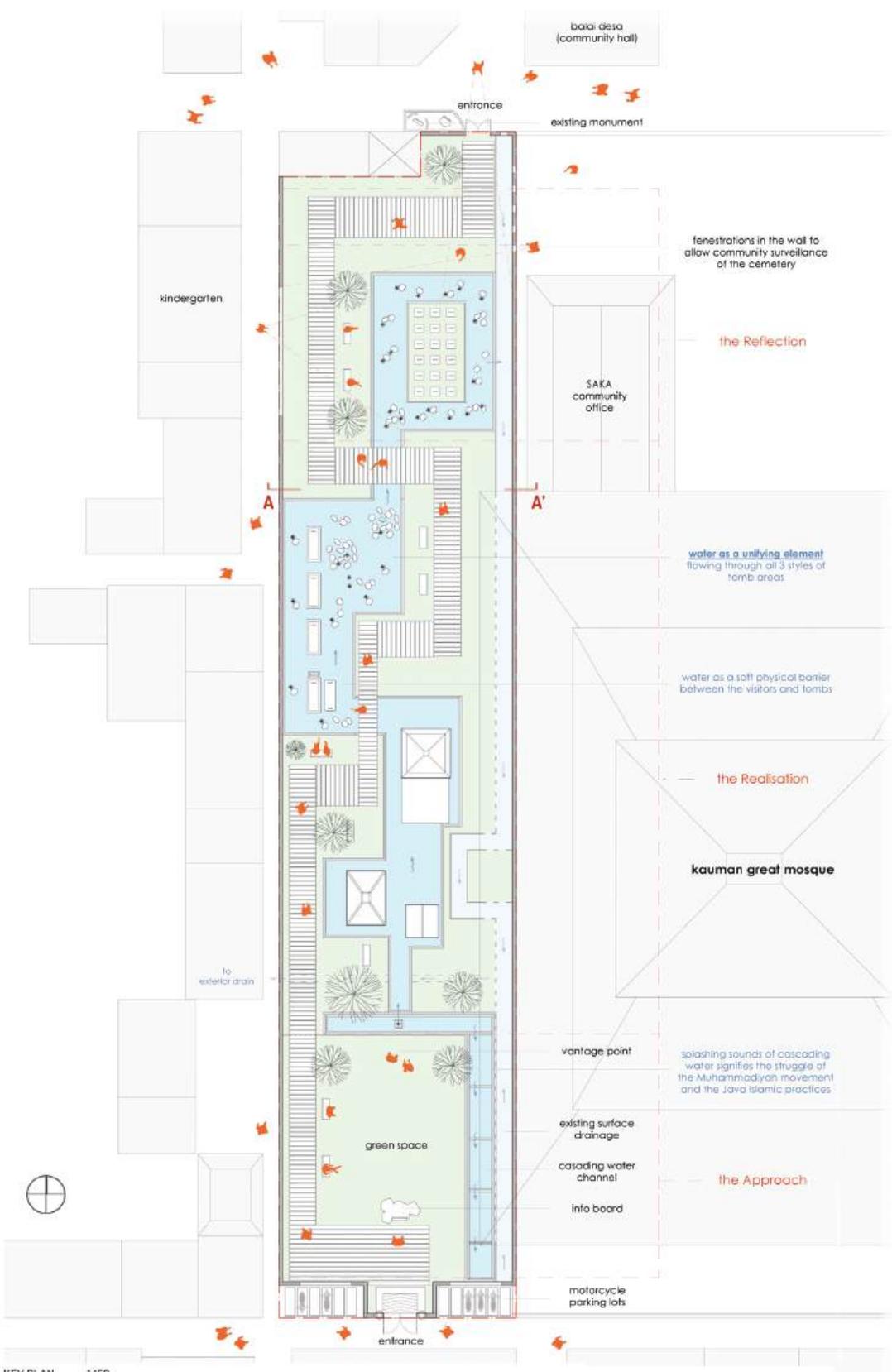
JAVANESE ISLAMIC TOMBS



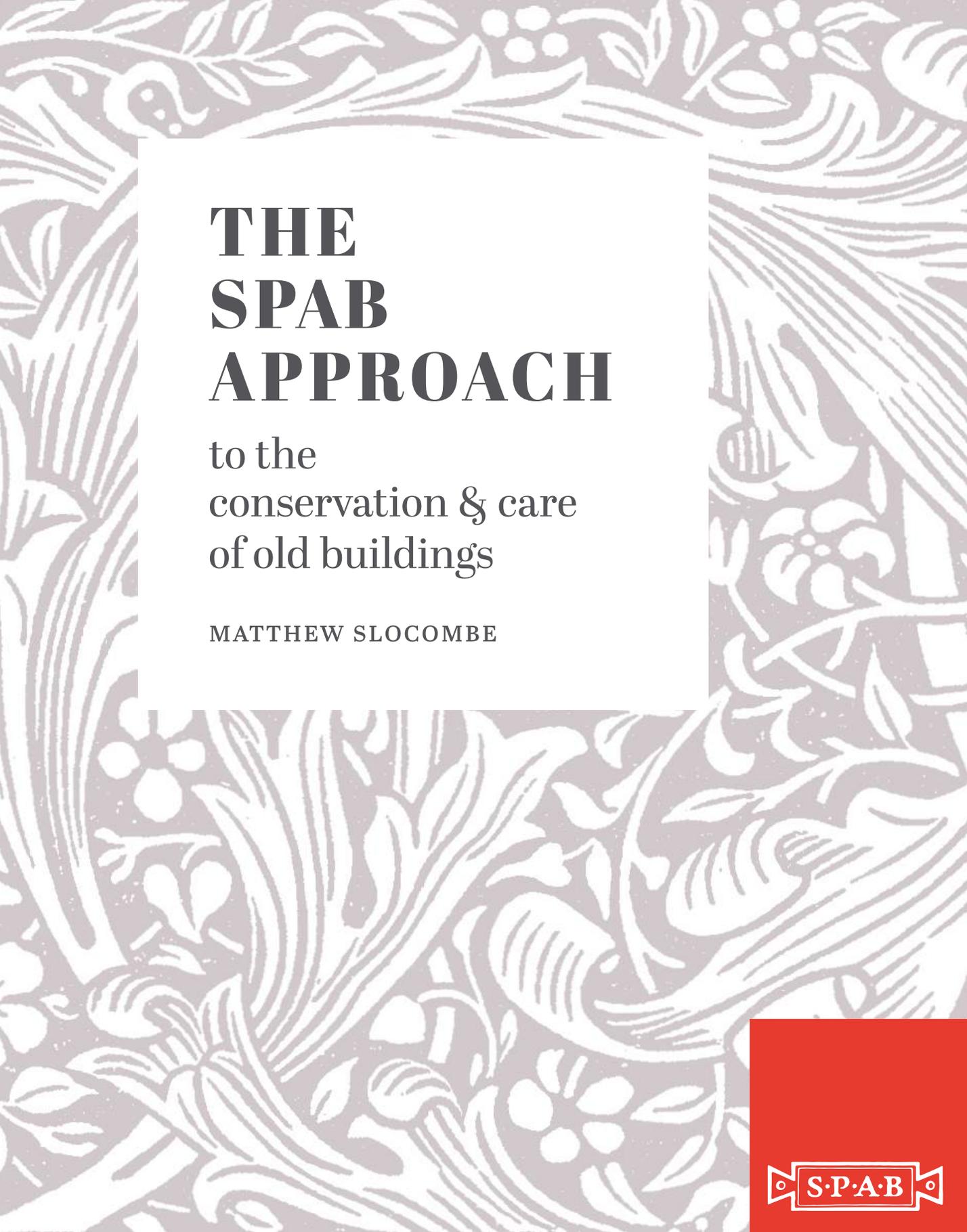
MUHAMMADIYAH TOMBS



HINDU-BUDDHISM TOMBS



APPENDIX



THE SPAB APPROACH

to the
conservation & care
of old buildings

MATTHEW SLOCOMBE

“ The Great British conservation movement
... draws its intellectual energy and passion
from the wellspring that is the Society for
the Protection of Ancient Buildings. ”

KEVIN MCCLOUD, SPAB MEMBER,
DESIGNER AND TV PRESENTER.

←

SPAB William Morris
Craft Fellow, Andrew Johnson

Picture: Ralph Hodgson

Foreword

The SPAB is over 140 years old and is widely admired around the world as the fount of conservation thinking for the built heritage. It is still involved in the everyday problems and battles that old buildings face today.

One of the reasons for the Society's longevity is its founding, not on commercial or political ground, but on a philosophy that offers proven and sustainable conservation ideas.

The principles contained in the elegant, precise prose of William Morris's *Manifesto* have served to enlighten those who care for old buildings since the founding of the Society, but each generation has had to consider how those principles apply to the particular problems of the age.

The aim of this document, under the title *THE SPAB APPROACH* is to re-present and interpret the *Manifesto* for new audiences in the 21st century. It provides practical guidance for building owners and professionals who manage or need to repair an old building, while, for the Society, the Approach informs our strategic direction as well as providing a basis for much of our work including campaigning, training and advice.

At the same time, we seek to reach the widest possible audience, including our new members, writers, grant funders, peer organisations and the next generation of home owners, so that they can appreciate the singular and reasoned line of thought that helps us 'protect our ancient buildings, and hand them down instructive and venerable to those that come after us'.

Iain Boyd, Chairman

→
St Mary Magdalene,
Caldecote, Hertfordshire.

Picture: SPAB





Introduction

THE SPAB APPROACH to building conservation combines well-proven principles with practical repair techniques. It has influenced building conservation worldwide and underpins much in UK heritage legislation. Other conservation approaches exist, but the Society's principles are viewed by most as the yardstick. *THE SPAB APPROACH* began as an outcry against destructive work, but the guidance the Society offers today is practical and positive.

It aims to promote the value and good sense of caring for the fabric of old buildings. The SPAB takes a long-term view, urging that in our own actions we consider the legacy we will leave to future generations.



“ It is for all these buildings, therefore, of all times and styles, that we plead, and call upon those who have to deal with them, to put Protection in the place of Restoration. ”

“ Stave off decay by daily care ”

— *from the SPAB Manifesto*

←
Tile repair to the door of
Rottingdean Church, Sussex,
1920s

Picture: SPAB

Historical background

The SPAB's ideas stem from the thoughts of John Ruskin. In his 'Seven Lamps of Architecture' (published 1849) Ruskin railed against destructive work to old buildings, described at the time as 'restoration'. Ruskin called restoration 'a lie from beginning to end' because it sought to change the character of an old building by erasing the evidence and record of its true history. The SPAB's founders, led by writer and designer William Morris and architect Philip Webb, took up Ruskin's ideas and translated them into the Society's founding *Manifesto*. The *Manifesto* remains a concise and beautifully poetic expression of SPAB conservation principles, as relevant to the needs of today as to those of the 19th century. SPAB members have applied the *Manifesto's* ideas to the care and repair of thousands of historic structures in the UK and beyond.



St John the Baptist Church, Inglesham, Wiltshire. William Morris paid for its conservative repair.

Picture: Diana Neale/ The CCT

Early on, the SPAB was nick-named 'Antiscrape' as it rejected the 19th century fashion for removing historic surfaces and emphasised that leaving the fabric of old buildings unaltered was the best way to ensure their history and character remained intact.

A conservation philosophy

THE SPAB APPROACH is based on the protection of ‘fabric’ — the material from which a building is constructed. A building’s fabric is the primary source from which knowledge and meaning can be drawn. Materials and construction methods embodied in building fabric illustrate changes in people’s ideas, tastes, skills and the relationship with their locality. Fabric also holds character and beauty; the surfaces, blemishes and undulations of old buildings speak of the passage of time and of lives lived. Wear and tear adds beautiful patination that new work can only acquire through the slow process of ageing.

Building fabric is precious. A concern for its protection helps ensure that the essence of an old building survives for future generations to appreciate. *THE SPAB APPROACH* therefore stands against Restorationist arguments that it is possible and worthwhile to return a building to its original — or imagined original — form. Equally, *THE SPAB APPROACH* generally rejects arguments that original design or cultural associations are more important than surviving fabric. For the Society, protecting fabric allows meaning and significance to be drawn from it by individuals, groups and successive generations.



“ Prop a perilous wall or mend a leaky roof by such means as are obviously meant for support or covering, and show no pretence of other art, and otherwise to resist all tampering with either the fabric or ornament of the building as it stands...”

— *from the SPAB Manifesto*

The SPAB Approach

»» REGULAR MAINTENANCE

The starting point for *THE SPAB APPROACH* is care and maintenance. Some deterioration of a building over time is almost inevitable, but maintenance helps slow the rate and lessens the need for larger campaigns of work. Major interventions tend to be more costly, disruptive and damaging to building fabric. Good maintenance involves simple, frequent checks and minor works: clearing gutters and drains, fixing slipped slates or tiles, or replacing missing putty around glass. Maintenance is a continuous obligation for building owners, but the effort always pays dividends in protecting a building's historic and monetary value. The most important message of the *SPAB Manifesto* is: 'stave off decay by daily care'.



SPAB Scholar Marianne Suhr supporting SPAB National Maintenance Week.

»→ UNDERSTANDING

All conservation work involves decision-making. For these decisions to be well-considered, knowledge and understanding are essential. *THE SPAB APPROACH* calls for an understanding of history, design and construction. Buildings are the product of decisions made at the time of their construction and in every era since. This sequence of change, and the relative importance of the elements that make up the whole, need to be explored and assessed. Past changes often add interest and value; but sometimes they will have caused damage and need reconsidering. Equally important is understanding of structural issues. For example, is the lean of a wall worsening, or did it occur and cease years ago? Is the decay of a timber superficial or a structural threat? Often the best first step, where a potential structural problem is identified, is simply to monitor, watch and learn. Thought and investigation should precede any action.

»→ CONTEXT AND CONTINUITY

Old buildings invariably have a strong connection with their locality. This can result from the materials and construction techniques used, as well as the relationship between people and buildings that helps create a sense of community. Buildings are also likely to age and weather according to the conditions on a particular site. For these reasons, the Society does not support the moving of buildings to new locations nor their reduction to mere facades. Also, repairs carried out in situ, rather than on elements dismantled and moved to the workshop, will help ensure that the maximum amount of existing fabric is retained, thus maintaining integrity and continuity. It is extremely rare for there to be no hope for a building.

»» RESPECT FOR AGE

The ‘oldness’ of a historic building is a precious quality. It is the patina of age that distinguishes old from new. Those signs of age, often held in the slender surface layers of an old building, deserve special consideration. They may be the undulations of old plaster, the dip in a roof ridge, or the wear on stair treads. Sometimes wear and tear becomes a practical problem, but, wherever possible, *THE SPAB APPROACH* encourages restraint. Through respect for the signs of age in surfaces and architectural features, the integrity of the whole as an old building will be retained. Thoughtful management and maintenance help slow down the more harmful effects of decay.



Weathered carving,
All Saints Church,
Theddlethorpe.

Picture: SPAB

»» ESSENTIAL WORK ONLY

The Society’s approach very often involves carefully considered inaction. Where no problems exist, or where a problem has no major effect on use or conservation, an old building is best left alone and simply enjoyed. Problems need to be tackled, but the Society encourages work which is no more – but no less – than is essential. Restricting work to these things helps ensure the maximum survival of historic fabric. As a secondary benefit it should also reduce effort and cost. Sometimes more work than essential is undertaken in a bid to secure long-term benefits. There are certainly occasions when the opportunity of access makes it sensible to

carry out more work than is immediately necessary, but generally the best conservation approach is to deal with present problems alone.

»» **REPAIR NOT RESTORATION**

Restoration of the kind opposed by Ruskin and Morris sets out to turn back the clock or to recreate the past. Its often a destructive process and may leave a building without the signs of age or evidence of its past interaction with people. Knowledge of an original design is not sufficient reason for erasing later change, particularly where this change has added positively to a building's historic interest. Also, the Society believes that damaged or missing elements of a building do not necessarily need to be replaced, except where there is a functional need. Then, small-scale, localised reinstatement may be justified, but only if carried out for well-considered, practical reasons. Reinstatement for the sake of tidiness, or to recreate historic design or detail is at odds with *THE SPAB APPROACH*.



Monument at St George's Church, Hinton St George, Somerset conserved without restoration of lost detail.

Picture: SPAB

OVERLEAF →

Archbishop's Palace, Charing, Kent. Changes and additions add interest to the original.

Picture: SPAB





»» CONSERVATIVE REPAIR

THE SPAB APPROACH champions ‘conservative repair’ in opposition to ‘restoration’. Conservative repair can embrace a wide range of techniques. Its aim is to retain as much as possible of a building’s historic fabric. Sometimes it involves matching the existing materials of a building and sometimes use of compatible alternatives. Conservative repair is based on thorough investigation and understanding of the whole building and of the element directly concerned. It requires careful planning and appropriate craft skills. A good repair deals quietly and modestly with a problem, with a skilled repairer knowing when to hold back and when to intervene with the aim that work is done quietly, modestly and humbly but effectively.



Conservative repair to a window head replaces as little fabric as possible.

Picture: SPAB

»» FITTING NEW TO OLD

THE SPAB APPROACH calls for new work to be fitted to the old. All too often, old work is cut back or levelled off to make the job of inserting the new simpler. Modelling the new to fit the old can be more complex and technically challenging, but it is necessary to ensure protection of an old building’s surviving fabric.

» MATERIALS

A careful choice of materials is essential to the sympathetic and effective repair of old buildings. Often it is best for new materials to match the old, ensuring fabric remains compatible in terms of structural movement or 'breathability'. Sometimes though, use of alternative materials may be more fitting and effective, allowing new work to be distinguished from the old, and illustrating that an intervention has occurred. Equally, use of alternative materials can sometimes assist the maximum retention of historic fabric.

The Society does not generally encourage re-use of materials on a building when they have been taken from another structure. This is because the inclusion of historic materials from else-where can confuse an old building's history. Furthermore, salvaged materials are a finite resource, and damage or loss of interest sometimes results when they are taken from one building for use on another. Production of traditional building materials helps ensure a continuing supply for future repair work.



Tile repair: a method sometimes used by SPAB members to follow the eroded contours of a building and minimise fabric replacement.

Picture: SPAB

»» **PROVEN METHODS**

Conservation work often requires creative thinking and ingenious planning. Despite this, the techniques to be used should be tried and tested. New techniques of repair may become useful once proven, but old buildings are not the place where experimentation should occur. There are many instances where new repair methods and products, considered a panacea in their day, have proven ill-advised and harmful over time. Much effort is expended in undoing well-intentioned but misguided works of the past.



The SPAB has led the revival in use of traditional lime and earth-based mortars, plaster and renders.

Picture: SPAB

»» **CRAFTSMANSHIP AND PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE**

Skilful repair requires skilled people. Some old buildings were constructed by people with no more than basic craft skills, and this simple workmanship can lend a building charm. But the old buildings that have survived into the present are precious, and any work done to them today should be tackled by people who have gained conservation experience and expertise but show a willingness to keep learning. The SPAB supports conservation training in all the disciplines that are needed to ensure sensitive care and repair of old buildings. The Society has also argued,

since its earliest days, that people involved with old building care as owners, managers or professionals benefit from gaining hands-on practical experience of construction and repair methods.

» **GOOD NEW DESIGN TO COMPLEMENT THE OLD**

The Society recognises that, from time to time, old buildings may need sympathetic alteration, adaptation or extension to ensure their continuing usefulness. There are occasions, the SPAB Manifesto argues, when it may be better to leave an old building unaltered and to build a new one if the adaptation required would involve serious damage. These cases are the exception. Generally, modest, sympathetic new works allow continuing life for old buildings and can contribute positively to their interest and story. Further alterations and additions, the Society believes, are best when they complement what exists. They should not compete unduly with the old building in form or position; nor should they mimic the original or pretend to be historic. They should fulfil modern needs in a way that respects both the old building's form and context. The new should not harm the old where they meet, nor create problems with future maintenance.



New complements the old at Astley Castle, Warwickshire.

Picture: SPAB

»» EMERGENCY WORK AND A LONG-TERM VIEW

THE SPAB APPROACH involves taking a long term view of a building's care and needs. The Society has seen many examples where repair for re-use has been considered unviable at a certain point in time – usually by virtue of cost or surroundings – only to become a more attractive proposition at some later date. Many country houses or old cottages, for example, were viewed as 'white elephants' in the mid 20th century, but where they have survived are now considered valuable and useful property. Sometimes full repair is not possible at a particular point. In such cases, temporary repair can buy time for a building, halting decay or reducing its rate.



Emergency work to fire-damaged Tonge Hall, Tonge, Middleton, Greater Manchester.

Picture: SPAB

»» SUSTAINABILITY AND THE SPAB APPROACH

If we are to be 'trustees for those that come after us' in William Morris's words, we need to consider the impact of our treatment of old buildings on future generations. Overall, *THE SPAB APPROACH* is about understanding, care and conservative repair. It is a simple message of sustainability. Through protection of building fabric the stories and beauty embodied in old buildings can be enjoyed by us and by generations to come. This is as much an issue for us today as it was in 1877.

»» PASSING ON KNOWLEDGE

The Society's founders were concerned not only with conservation theory, but also its practice. This interest in the practical has been developed through the work of the Society's members over many generations. Passing on and developing knowledge is a vital part of *THE SPAB APPROACH*. The Society seeks to help those entering the conservation field, and all those who wish to develop their existing skills and experience of old building care and management.



Sharing traditional skills with school children at a SPAB Working Party.

Picture: SPAB

Ruins — structures which are roofless and without active use — can be picturesque and beautiful. Their ruination may also result from an important historical event. Where a ruinous structure is reasonably resistant to decay, and the reasons for ruination are of historic importance, the Society would not normally support reconstruction for re-use.

In other cases re-use may be sensible and appropriate — particularly where the reasons for ruination are of lesser importance, or where decay is likely to be rapid because of the structure's constructional type. Where ruination has resulted from a recent disaster, pause for thought may be needed before decisions about its future are taken, though temporary protection must still be considered.

OVERLEAF →
Ruin conservation at Penicuik House, Midlothian

Picture: SPAB





Our work today

The Society is the longest established building conservation body in the UK and continues to be recognised for its knowledge base, training expertise, and promotion of the built historic environment's value.

The Society's mission

- To supply expertise that keeps old buildings useful, beautiful and part of people's lives
- To be the most recognised organisation for building conservation knowledge and skills
- To connect with all people who appreciate old buildings or care for them.

Today this is put into action through:

- Campaigning for individual buildings and for historic places through our formal casework role in the planning system as well as media outreach and public engagement.
- Technical research and guidance, including the information service provided by our website, advice line, publications and appearances at events and exhibitions.
- Training and courses for those involved professionally, and for owners and enthusiasts
- Opportunities for involvement as a SPAB member through social events, lectures, volunteering and participation in working parties.



The SPAB puts its ideas into practice through its training, advice, working parties and events.

Pictures: Ralph Hodgson

Become a member of the SPAB



Join the Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings and help us to protect, care and repair historic buildings into the future. We need your support to continue our unique education and training programmes, provide advice, carry out essential research and campaign to save old buildings from decay, harmful alteration and demolition.

With your SPAB membership you'll receive:

- The SPAB Magazine, a must-read for those who love old buildings
- A copy of our annual Property List publication as well as access to our online directory of historic and interesting buildings for sale
- Priority booking on selected SPAB courses and training
- A programme of member-only events
- Activities organised by regional membership groups
- Exclusive online content
- Occasional offers from partner organisations

Visit spab.org.uk for more information or contact 020 7377 1644, membership@spab.org.uk

Leave a gift in your will.

You can give old buildings a future. Leaving a legacy to the SPAB is a powerful and effective way to ensure that our work can continue.

Demands for the SPAB's help and support are ever-increasing. To meet them we rely on the assistance of those passionate about the charity's philosophy. William Morris left us the SPAB as his legacy. We hope that you will join us in continuing the important work he started in 1877. By leaving a legacy you can help protect old buildings for future generations.

Visit spab.org.uk for more information or contact 020 7377 1644, development@spab.org.uk







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