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09 October 2009

Will Palin - Secretary
Save Britain's Heritage
77 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6BP

by email and post: william.palin@savebritainsheritage.org

Dear Will

RE: AVELING & PORTER BUILDNG, STROOD, KENT.

I was able to visit and inspect the above on 9th October 2009, although I was not able to access the building internally.

The building is clearly both well built and robust in nature. I looked carefully around the front and side elevations, as seen from the street, and could see no signs of any particular movement at all. This suggests that the building is well founded and has not been subject to any particular ongoing, or progressive, movement.

The roof coverings also appear in reasonable condition, although clearly there are some maintenance works required to areas and in particular valleys, gutters etc., but it doesn't appear to require re-roofing at this time. I did also inspect to the rear, albeit at some distance, but the two gables seen also shown no signs of any significant movement.

I note that underpinning is suggested in relation to where the adjoining remainder of the Civic Centre Building will be demolished. I do not understand the need for this as of course the Aveling and Porter Building existed prior to this extension, and therefore, I see no reason why it shouldn't do so again. Mention is also made of possible further underpinning to the building, but certainly on the basis of my limited inspection, I could see absolutely no justification for this.

In summary, from an external inspection, it seems clear that the building can and should be retained and certainly it looks in generally good condition. Undoubtedly works will be required but from the evidence that I have seen these are likely to relate to mainly non-structural works. I am sorry this letter is so short but I was struggling to find much to report on!

I hope that the above is useful, of course if access to the building is made available I would be happy to undertake a fuller examination.

Yours sincerely
FOR THE MORTON PARTNERSHIP LIMITED,



EDWARD MORTON