Circular Economy Statement

Companion document to the SSH Conservation Environmental Policy (Version 4.0, October 2026)

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Owner / approved by	Jake Motley, Managing Director
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1. Statement of Position

The circular economy places the retention, repair and life extension of existing assets above recycling, and recycling above disposal. SSH Conservation Ltd operates at the top of that hierarchy as a matter of core business rather than as an initiative bolted onto it.

Every square metre of historic masonry we repair rather than replace retains material already in productive use, avoids the extraction, processing and transport of new stone, and avoids the demolition waste that replacement would generate. Our specification approach — minimum intervention, repair in preference to renewal, and the indenting or piecing-in of new stone only where existing fabric is genuinely beyond repair — is a circular practice applied to buildings that are frequently several hundred years old and are expected to last several hundred more.

This statement sets out how circular economy principles already operate within our business, the further measures we intend to implement, and the timescales for doing so. It is approved by the Managing Director and should be read alongside our Environmental Policy (Version 4.0, October 2026).

2. Scope

This statement applies to all activities undertaken by SSH Conservation Ltd, whether as main contractor or as a specialist subcontractor, and to our project sites, our stonemasonry workshop and yard at The Forge, Over Stratton, and our office. It applies to the Managing Director, any employees, and everyone working under the Company's direction, including labour-only subcontractors, and to specialist subcontractors and suppliers working on our behalf.

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3. Why Conservation Is a Circular Practice

3.1 Repair extends the life of material already in use

The most effective circular intervention available in the built environment is not to recycle a building but to keep it standing and serviceable. Conservative repair does exactly that. Where a wholesale replacement approach consumes newly quarried stone and generates demolition waste in the same operation, a conservation repair retains the original fabric, introduces new material only at the points where it is structurally or technically necessary, and returns the structure to service with its embodied carbon and material value intact.

3.2 Lime mortar keeps masonry recoverable

Our use of lime rather than cement matters for circularity beyond its lower embodied carbon. Lime mortar is deliberately weaker than the stone it beds, so masonry built or repaired in lime can be carefully dismantled and the individual stones recovered intact for reuse. Cement-bonded masonry cannot: the bond is stronger than the stone, and the unit fractures on removal and is lost.

Working in lime therefore preserves a building's capacity for future disassembly and material recovery indefinitely, while cement repair forecloses it. This is the single most consequential circularity decision taken on a conservation project, and we take it in favour of recoverability on every project where the fabric allows.

3.3 Maintenance advice reduces future material demand

Advising clients on the correct care and maintenance of historic fabric — particularly the breathability requirements that govern whether a building deteriorates or remains stable — lengthens the interval before the next intervention is needed. For a parish or trust client, this is the highest-value circular measure available, because it reduces the total quantity of material and labour the building will consume over its remaining life.

4. Current Practice

The following circular economy practices are already in operation across our projects and our workshop:

- Original fabric is retained wherever it can be repaired; sound stone taken down in the course of works is reset rather than replaced.
- Surplus and salvaged stone, lime, sand, aggregate and timber are retained and redeployed across projects rather than disposed of.
- Historic fabric removed from a building is retained on site or returned to the client where it holds conservation, archaeological or archival value.
- Workshop offcuts are reused for small indents, mortar samples and benchmark test panels.
- Mortar analysis is used to match original mixes, allowing continued use of locally available sands and aggregates rather than proprietary substitutes.
- The Company owns a limited range of specialist plant, including a Thermatech cleaning unit, gantries and generators, which is maintained and kept in service for as long as practicable; scaffold, access equipment and other plant are hired in as needed — a product-as-service arrangement that keeps equipment in shared circulation and maintained by its owner.
- Reusable masks, gloves and eye protection are used in preference to disposable equivalents, supported by PPE take-back recycling schemes.
- Suppliers who accept the return of pallets, drums and packaging for reuse are preferred at procurement.

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- Waste is segregated on site by stream, with sound material recovered for reuse before recycling is considered and disposal treated as the last resort.
- Through its predecessor, Sally Strachey Historic Conservation Ltd, the continuing team has built a technical archive documenting thirty years of techniques and processes applied to original materials and structures; it keeps knowledge as well as material in circulation and is used to train everyone working for the Company.

5. Planned Development and Timescales

We have set a three-phase programme to move from practices that are real but largely unmeasured, to a measured and targeted circular economy position. The phases and dates are as follows.

Phase	Period	Actions
Phase 1 Baseline and measurement	Sept 2026 – Feb 2027	• Establish a materials and waste baseline: stone, lime and aggregate purchased against quantity reused; waste transfer note tonnages by stream. • Create a stone reuse register logging the dimensions, geology and condition of surplus and salvaged stone held at the yard, so that it can be matched against future projects rather than cleared. • Add circular economy criteria — packaging take-back, offcut take-back, recycled content where permissible — to the supplier and subcontractor prequalification questionnaire. • Record reuse and recovery opportunities as a standing item at project pre-start meetings.
Phase 2 Targets and integration	Mar 2027 – Aug 2027	• Set measurable annual targets from the Phase 1 baseline: reused stone as a percentage of stone used, and percentage diversion from landfill. • Introduce a materials record within project handover documentation identifying what was used and where, so that future contractors can match and recover. • Trial the crushing of clean masonry arisings for reuse as aggregate or fill where technically and archaeologically appropriate. • Agree offcut and packaging take-back arrangements with our principal quarry and lime suppliers. • Integrate circular economy criteria into the environmental aspects and impacts register supporting our progression towards ISO 14001.

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Phase	Period	Actions
Phase 3 Extension beyond our own operations	Sept 2027 – Aug 2028	• Develop the yard stone store into a matched salvaged stone resource available to clients and to other conservation contractors, rather than a private surplus. • Publish maintenance-first guidance for parish, trust and small charitable clients, extending the interval between interventions. • Apply whole-life assessment to vehicle and plant decisions, favouring retrofit and extended service over replacement. • Explore shared reuse and recovery standards with other conservation contractors and industry bodies.

Progress against each phase is reviewed by the Managing Director at management review, and reported to clients on request.

6. Constraints We Acknowledge

Circularity in building conservation is bounded by the conservation objective itself, and we would rather state those limits than overclaim:

- We cannot substitute recycled-content or reclaimed materials into historic fabric where geological, petrological or aesthetic matching governs the repair. The correct stone is the stone that matches, and its provenance is determined by the building.
- Consent conditions under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 properly restrict what may be introduced to or removed from a protected structure, and those conditions take precedence over any circularity preference of ours.
- Material recovered from a client's building belongs to that building and to that client, not to us; our ability to redeploy it elsewhere is limited and always subject to the client's instruction.
- Some waste streams arising from historic fabric — asbestos, lead-based coatings, spent biocide and poultice residues — cannot be recovered and must be consigned for controlled disposal.

Our circular practice therefore concentrates on three things we genuinely control: retention and life extension of fabric in situ; elimination of waste from our own operations; and keeping our surplus and workshop material in productive circulation.

7. Measurement and Reporting

From Phase 1 onward we record and report the following:

- Quantity of stone, lime and aggregate purchased, against quantity reused or redeployed from existing stock.
- Waste tonnages by stream, taken from waste transfer and consignment notes, and the proportion diverted from landfill.
- Reused stone as a percentage of total stone used across projects in the year.
- Number of entries added to and drawn from the stone reuse register.

These measures share their source records with the environmental baseline established under our Environmental Policy, so the data is collected once and serves both purposes. Where a client requires

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reporting in a specific framework or format, we will report in that format and agree the measures at project start.

8. Responsibilities and Review

- The Managing Director owns this statement, commits the resources required to deliver the programme in section 5, and reviews progress and this document annually.
- The Managing Director and the lead conservator on each project identify opportunities for retention, reuse and recovery at the specification and pre-start stages, and agree them with the contract administrator.
- The lead operative nominated for each project ensures recoverable material is set aside and recorded rather than skipped, and that waste segregation is maintained on site.
- The Managing Director maintains the stone reuse register and the condition of material stored at the workshop and yard at The Forge, Over Stratton.

This statement is reviewed annually by the Managing Director, or sooner following a material change in our operations or in client requirements.

Supporting evidence (maintained and available on request): Environmental Policy (Version 4.0, October 2026); environmental aspects and impacts register; stone reuse register; materials purchase and reuse records; waste transfer and hazardous waste consignment notes; supplier and subcontractor prequalification questionnaires; project handover documentation and materials records; mortar analysis records; benchmark sample records; management review minutes.

Approval

This document is approved by the Managing Director and is reviewed at least annually, or sooner following a significant change in legislation, the business or its activities.

Signed	Signed copy held on file
Name	Jake Motley
Position	Managing Director, SSH Conservation Ltd
Date	22 October 2026

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