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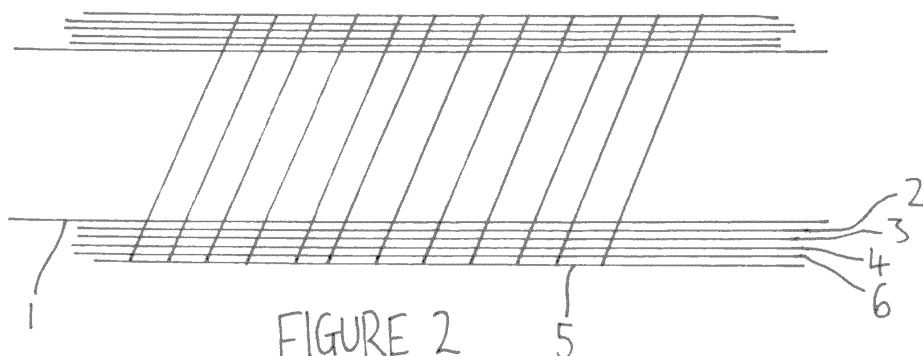
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E04F 13/08 (2006.01) **F16L 58/00** (2006.01)
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(56) Documents Cited:
US 20030116214 A1
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(58) Field of Search:
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Other: **WPI, EPODOC, RM25, RM26**

(54) Title of the Invention: **Apparatus and method for providing an interstitial space**
Abstract Title: **Apparatus and method providing an interstitial space to the surface of a wall**

(57) Apparatus and method for providing an interstitial space on a wall surface, comprising:
An adhesive layer 2 next to the wall
A layer of, fluid impervious, weather proof, tape overlapping itself 5
A layer of spacer material 3 between the tape and adhesive layers 2 which has encapsulated ends to form a sealed interstitial space.
There may be a device to monitor the interstitial space which may be subjected to a vacuum, the device monitoring the vacuum therein. The apparatus may further comprise a fluid impervious layer 4 between the weather proof tape 5 and spacer 3 layer which may comprise a foil which may be in tape or sheet form. The adhesive layer 2 may be an impregnated material or sprayed or otherwise directly applied to the wall. A further reinforcement layer 6 may be present between the fluid impervious foil 4 and the weather proof tape 5 and may comprise a scrim which may be fibre glass or polymer. The weather proof tape 5 may be self-amalgamating.
Included is a method for providing an interstitial space comprising building up the elements of the apparatus on the surface of a wall.



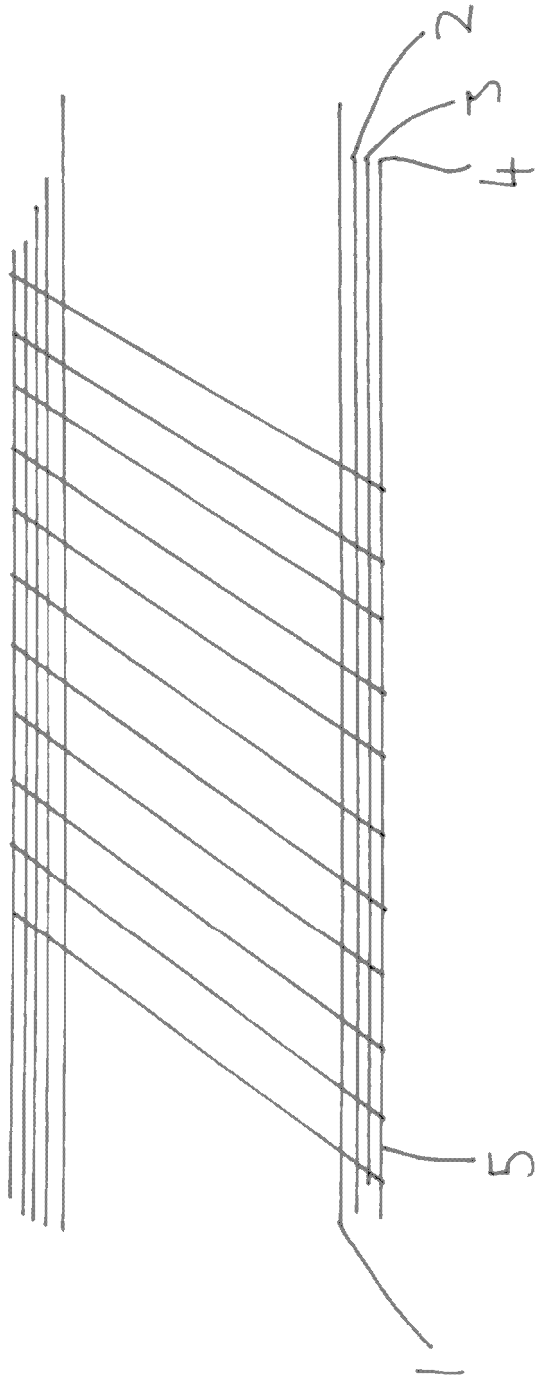


FIGURE 1

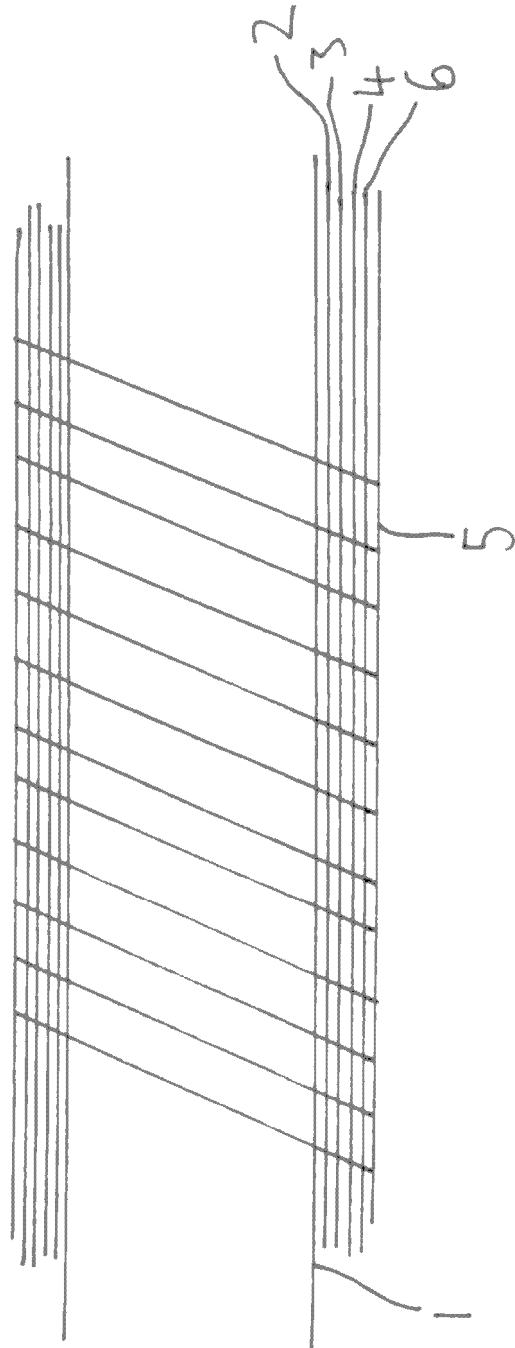


FIGURE 2

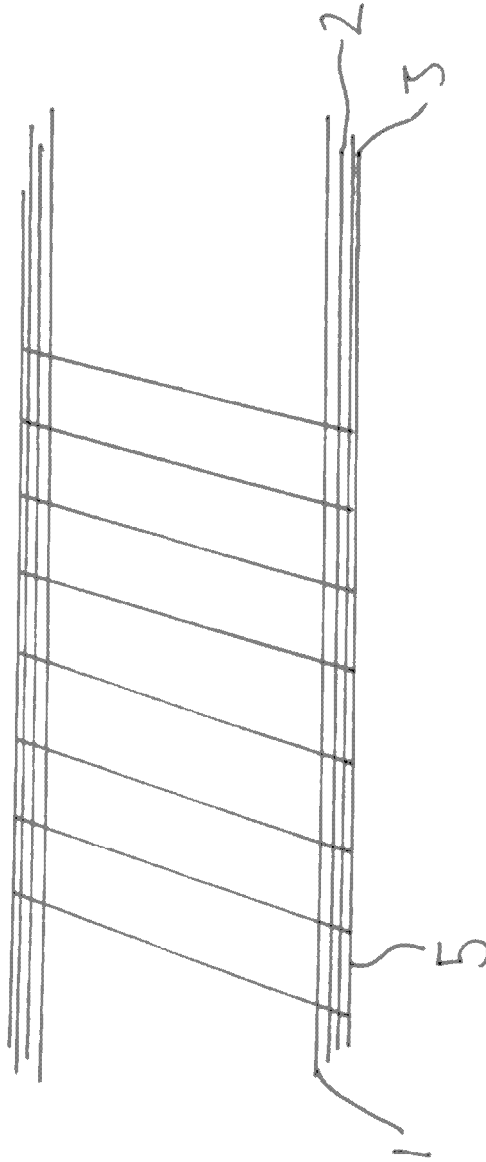


FIGURE 3

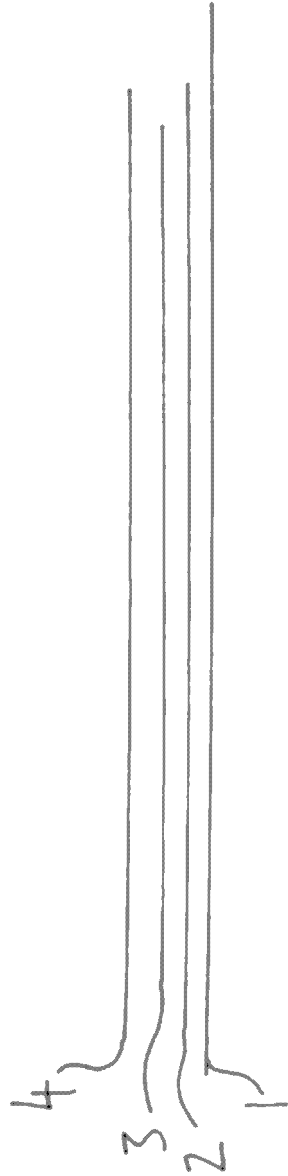


FIGURE 4

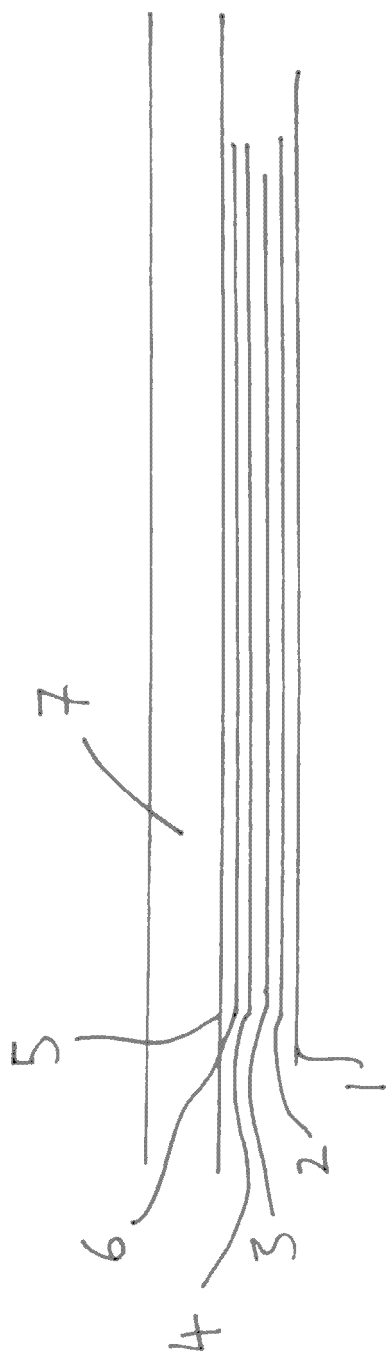


FIGURE 5

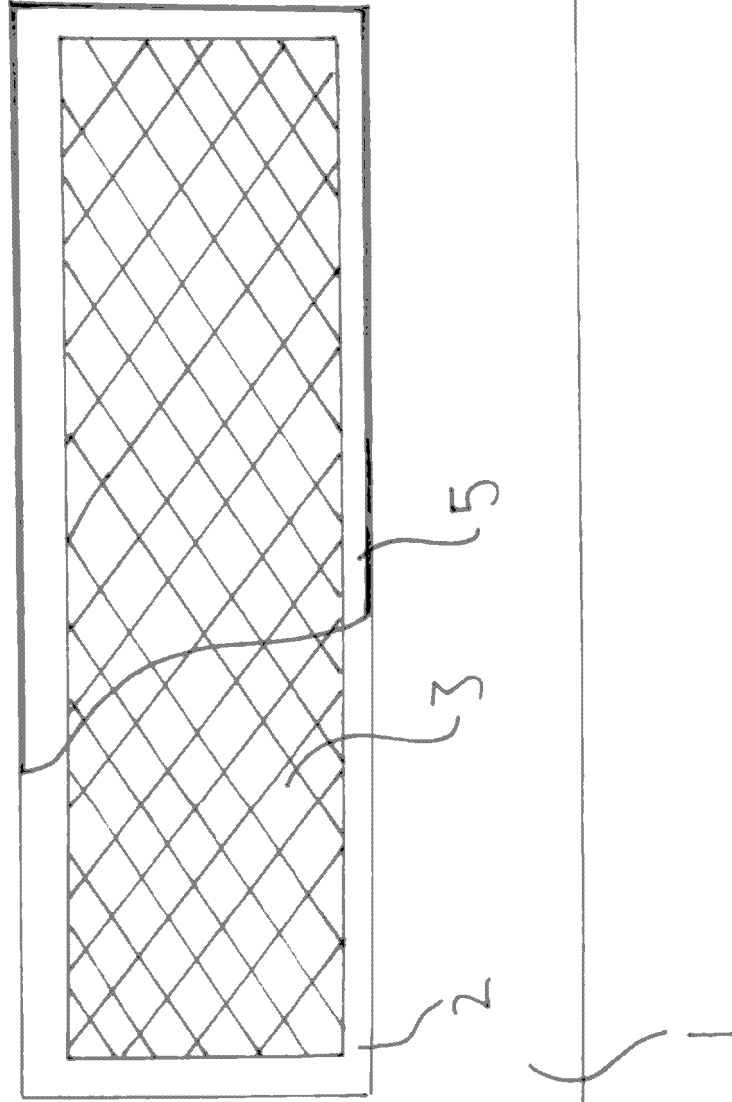


FIGURE 6

Apparatus and Method for Providing an Interstitial Space

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to the provision of a monitorable interstitial space between a surface of a wall and skin attached to the wall, and in particular to the provision of monitorable interstitial spaces around pipes.

Background of the Invention

The advantage of providing twin walls for tanks, such as fuel storage tanks, by constructing a monitorable interstitial space between the twin walls is understood and a number of systems are available for providing twin walls. Typically, the integrity of the tank is monitored by subjecting the space between the twin walls to a vacuum. If the vacuum fails this indicates that one of the twin walls has become porous, for example through mechanical piercing of one of the walls or through corrosion.

Some examples of solutions to the above-described problem are described below.

The publication WO 00/32394 describes a method of lining a fuel storage tank in which a keying means is applied to the surface of a tank. A corrosion barrier is then applied to the keying means. An interstitial grid is then applied to the tank and pliable glass reinforced plastics material is laid onto the grid. The glass reinforced plastics material is then exposed to ultra violet rays to cure the material and form a hardened inner liner shell for the tank.

An apparatus and method for lining a tank so as provide a monitorable interstitial space is described in GB2444486. This apparatus uses sheet material having adhesive applied to both sides to attach itself and the other components of the lining to the wall of a tank. The apparatus and method described in this invention have been found to be particularly effective in the lining of underground and above-ground storage tanks used for storing fuel, acids and other fluids.

Pipelines are susceptible to corrosion. If a pipeline were to become porous the environmental damage resulting could be much worse than that occurring in the case of a leaking in

tank, since in the case of a pipeline the volume of fluid is not limited in the same way as it is with a tank.

In some environments it is necessary to insulate pipelines. Corrosion of the outer surface of the pipeline can be a particular problem where pipelines are insulated. This is because condensation occurs on the surface of the pipeline and builds up between the surface thereof and the insulation.

Whilst the apparatus and methods described above in connection with providing monitorable interstitial space for tanks are not limited to tanks, and could theoretically be applied to pipelines, to do so is not straightforward.

In the case of a tank the environment where the work is carried out is self-contained, substantially stable, and controllable. For outdoor pipelines this is not the case and prevailing environmental conditions may either severely limit, or prevent the use of the components of the above-described apparatus and the equipment required for their installation.

It would therefore be desirable to provide an apparatus and method for providing an interstitial space between two walls, one of which may be the wall of a pipe or pipeline.

Summary of the Invention

According to an aspect of the present invention there is provided an apparatus for providing an interstitial space to the surface of a wall, the apparatus comprising:

- i. an adhesive layer;
- ii. a layer of fluid impervious and weather proof material in the form of a tape, the tape partially overlapping itself;
- iii. a layer of spacer material situated between the surface of the tape facing the wall and the surface of the adhesive layer distal from the wall;

and wherein the spacer material has ends which are encapsulated, the apparatus providing a sealed interstitial space.

Preferably, the sealed interstitial space is monitorable and more preferably, a monitoring means is provided for monitoring the integrity of the sealed interstitial space.

It is preferred that the sealed interstitial space is subjected to a vacuum and more preferably, a vacuum monitoring means is connected to the sealed interstitial space.

The wall may be part of a pipeline. Preferably, the surface of the wall is an outer surface.

The apparatus may comprise a layer of fluid impervious material between the fluid impervious and weather proof tape and the spacer layer. The fluid impervious material may be a foil such as metallic (for example aluminium) or plastic foil. The fluid impervious material may be in sheet or tape form.

The adhesive layer may be provided by a material that is impregnated with adhesive, such as a paper based material impregnated with adhesive. Alternatively, an adhesive may be sprayed or otherwise applied to the surface of the wall, or the adhesive may be applied to the side of the spacer layer that is to face the outside of the wall, either as a pre-applied adhesive or during construction of the apparatus.

A further layer may be provided, in particular where a fluid impervious foil is used. The layer is a reinforcement layer situated between the fluid impervious foil and the fluid impervious and weather proof tape. The reinforcement layer is preferably a scrim layer and more preferably the scrim layer fibre glass or polymer such as polyester and is preferably woven. Alternatively, the reinforcement layer may be a tape such as a non-permeating tape, typically with adhesive on one side thereof.

The fluid impervious and weather proof material tape may be a self-amalgamating tape.

The apparatus may be applied to only a part of a wall. In the case of a pipeline, the apparatus may only be applied where there is a need to be able to monitor the integrity of the pipe, for example over weld seams.

A layer of insulation may be provided to the side of the apparatus distal from the wall to which the apparatus is applied.

According to another aspect of the invention there is provided a method of providing an interstitial space to the surface of a wall comprising the steps of building up the elements of the apparatus of the first aspect of the invention on the surface of a wall.

Preferably, the method comprises applying a vacuum to the interstitial space, and more preferably the step of monitoring the vacuum.

According to another aspect of the invention there is provided a wall having an apparatus according to the first aspect of the invention applied thereto.

Brief Description of the Drawings

In the drawings, which illustrate preferred embodiments of the invention, and are by way of example:

Figure 1 is a schematic representation of a pipeline having an apparatus according to the invention applied to the outer surface thereof;

Figure 2 is a schematic representation of a pipeline having an apparatus according to another embodiment of the invention applied to the outer surface thereof;

Figure 3 is a schematic representation of a pipeline having an apparatus according to another embodiment of the invention applied to the outer surface thereof;

Figure 4 is an exploded view of the apparatus illustrated in Figure 1 in a partial state of assembly;

Figure 5 is a cross-sectional elevation of an insulated pipeline according to another embodiment of the invention; and

Figure 6 illustrates a further embodiment of the apparatus of the invention.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

Referring now to Figure 1, there is shown a pipeline 1 to which the apparatus of the invention is attached. The apparatus comprises a plurality of layers. The first layer 2 provides an adhesive to which the second layer 3 is attached.

In the illustrated example, the first layer 2 is formed by a layer of flexible material 2 coated with adhesive on both sides thereof. In the present example the flexible material is a paper impregnated with adhesive. Each side of the flexible material 2 is typically covered with a layer of peel-off material which when peeled off reveals the sticky surface. The peel-off layer is removed from one surface of the flexible material 2 and that surface is presented up to and press on to the outer surface of the wall 1. With the peel-off material removed from the other surface of the flexible material 2 of the first layer, the second layer 2, which is a layer of non-woven grid material 3 is attached to the surface of the flexible material 2 of the first layer that is distal from the outer surface of the pipeline 1. The non-woven grid is open and highly permeable, and in the present example a thermoplastic. The adhesive applied to the surface of the flexible material 2 is sufficient to hold the layer of non-woven grid material 3 onto the flexible material 2. However, additional adhesive, either in a layer or in spots may be provided between the flexible material 2 and the non-woven grid material 3.

A third layer 4 is formed by a fluid impervious layer comprising a foil sheet having adhesive applied to at least one side thereof. Prior to attachment of the foil sheet to the non-woven grid 3 a peel off layer is removed from the adhesive covering one side of the foil sheet. This adhesive attaches the foil sheet to the non-woven grid 3.

A fourth sealing layer 5 is formed by wrapping a fluid impervious and weather proof tape around the pipeline, over the top of the previously applied payers. The fluid impervious tape utilised in the illustrated example is a self-amalgamating tape, that is when the tape is stretched or tensioned over itself as it is wrapped around the pipeline, the overlapping regions of the tap unite or amalgamate to form a continuous weather-proof layer. In an alternative, the tape may be provided

with has adhesive to one side thereof, this adhesive providing for the the tape to attach to the foil 4 and where the tape overlaps, to itself.

Figure 2 illustrates another embodiment of the invention in which an additional layer 6 is provided between the fluid impervious foil sheet 4 and the fluid impervious tape 5. The layer 6 comprises a scrim layer, which in the present example is formed of woven fibre glass or polymer such as polyester. In the embodiment illustrated in Figure 2, the scrim layer is a separate layer that is attached to the foil sheet 4 by a suitable adhesive. The adhesive may be provided on the underside of the scrim layer or on the outer side of the foil sheet. In either case, the adhesive would be covered with a peel off layer covering the adhesive until it is required. As an alternative to a scrim layer, the layer 6 may be a tape, such as non-permeating tape. Typically, such a non-permeating tape would have adhesive to one side thereof.

The function of the layer 6 is to protect the foil 4 from forces exerted thereon by the tape 5 during its application, which forces might tear the foil 4.

The function of the non-woven grid material 3 together with the layers of material between which it is sandwiched is to provide a monitorable interstitial space. Monitoring is typically achieved by applying a vacuum to the interstitial space and monitoring the vacuum. If the wall 1 of the tank or the outer layer of the composite material is compromised the vacuum will fail.

Figure 3 illustrates another alternative embodiment of the invention. In this embodiment the foil sheet 4 is omitted. The tape 5 is therefore applied directly over the non-woven grid material 3.

In Figure 4 it can be seen that the layer 4 extends beyond the layer of non-woven grid material 3. The foil sheet is pressed on to the adhesive provided by the layer 2, thereby encapsulating the layer 3. In the embodiment illustrated in Figure 3, where the foil sheet 4 is omitted, the tape 5 would extend beyond the end of the layer 3, encapsulating this layer.

By encapsulating the layer 3, a sealed interstitial space is formed to which a vacuum may be applied.

The layers 2, 3, 4 and 6 may be applied either in the form of sheet material or each layer may be formed of tape. The advantage of providing each layer as a tape is that the application of each layer to the pipeline may be performed using tape applicators. This is also the case for the fluid impervious tape 5. The function of tape applicators, also known as tape wrappers is known in the art.

The advantage of using a fluid impervious tape is that application of the tape can be carried out in almost any weather conditions and either without specialist equipment or with specialist equipment that is simple to operate and can be used in most weather conditions.

Figure 5 illustrates an insulated pipeline where a layer of insulation 7 is situated to the outside of the fluid impervious tape 5.

By providing a vacuum between the insulation 7 and the outer surface of the pipeline 1, condensation on the outer surface of the pipeline 1 is very much reduced because the moisture containing air is evacuated from the air space adjacent the outer surface of the pipeline 1.

Figure 6 illustrates an embodiment of the invention where the apparatus is applied only to a small part of a pipeline 1. The apparatus comprises a layer of adhesive 2, a layer 3 of spacer material and fluid impervious and weather proof tape 5. The adhesive layer 2 extends beyond the peripheral edge of the layer 3 of spacer material. The tape 5 is held down by the adhesive 2. The adhesive layer 2 may extend beneath the layer 3 or may simply surround the layer 3. Where the latter is the case, the adhesive may be provided on the underside of the tape 5. The tape may be wrapped around the pipeline, but the monitorable interstitial space only may only be provided for a small part of the pipeline. In such an embodiment the adhesive layer 2 and the layer 3 of spacer material would be as shown in Figure 6 but the tape 5 would be as shown in Figure 1.

In all the above-described embodiments, where a surface is corroded, the corrosion would be repaired before applying the apparatus of the invention. This may involve blasting, grinding or sanding back to bare metal and may also involve a protective paint or resin.

All of the features disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings), and/or all of the steps of any method or process so disclosed, may be combined in any combination, except combinations where at least some of such features and/or steps are mutually exclusive.

Each feature disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings), may be replaced by alternative features serving the same, equivalent or similar purpose, unless expressly stated otherwise. Thus, unless expressly stated otherwise each feature disclosed is one example of a generic series of equivalent or similar features.

Claims

1. An apparatus for providing an interstitial space to the surface of a wall, the apparatus comprising:

- i. an adhesive layer;
- ii. a layer of fluid impervious and weather proof material in the form of a tape, the tape partially overlapping itself;
- iii. a layer of spacer material situated between the surface of the tape facing the wall and the surface of the adhesive layer distal from the wall;

and wherein the spacer material has ends which are encapsulated, the apparatus providing a sealed interstitial space.

2. An apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the sealed interstitial space is monitorable.

3. An apparatus according to Claim 2, further comprising a monitoring means for monitoring the integrity of the sealed interstitial space.

4. An apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the sealed interstitial space is subjected to a vacuum.

5. An apparatus according to Claim 4, wherein a vacuum monitoring means is connected to the sealed interstitial space.

6. An apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein apparatus may comprise a layer of fluid impervious material between the fluid impervious and weather proof tape and the spacer layer.

7. An apparatus according to Claim 6, wherein the fluid impervious material is a foil.

8. An apparatus according to Claim 6 or 7, wherein the fluid impervious material is in sheet or tape form.

9. An apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the adhesive layer is provided by a material that is impregnated with adhesive.

10. An apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein adhesive is be sprayed or otherwise applied to the surface of the wall, or the adhesive is applied to the side of the spacer layer that is to face the outside of the wall, either as a pre-applied adhesive or during construction of the apparatus.
11. An apparatus according to any of Claims 6 to 10, comprising a reinforcement layer situated between the fluid impervious foil and the fluid impervious and weather proof tape.
12. An apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the reinforcement layer is a scrim layer or a non-permeating tape.
13. An apparatus according to Claim 12, wherein the scrim layer is of fibre glass or polymer.
14. An apparatus according to any preceding claim, wherein the fluid impervious and weather proof tape is a self-amalgamating tape.
15. An apparatus according to any preceding claim, further comprising a layer of insulation provided to the side of the apparatus distal from the wall to which the apparatus is applied.
16. A method of providing an interstitial space to the surface of a wall comprising the steps of building up the elements of the apparatus according to any of Claims 1 to 15 on the surface of a wall.
17. A method according to Claim 16, wherein the method comprises applying a vacuum to the interstitial space.
18. A method according to Claim 17, including the further step of monitoring the vacuum.
19. A wall having an apparatus according to any of Claims 1 to 15 applied thereto.
20. An apparatus and/or method substantially as shown in, and as described with reference to, the Drawings.



Application No: GB1505498.4

Examiner: Dr Peter Aspinall

Claims searched: 1-20

Date of search: 17 June 2016

Patents Act 1977: Search Report under Section 17

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance
X,Y	X: 1, 2, 9, 10, 16-19 Y: 3-5	JP H112385 A (NITTO DENKO CORP) See EPODOC Abstract and WPI Abstract Accession Number 1999-126229
Y	3-5	JP H0972489 A (KUBOTA et al) See EPODOC Abstract and WPI Abstract Accession Number 1997-231983
Y	3-5	US 2003/116214 A1 (MELI et al) See whole document; in particular paragraph [0014]

Categories:

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.

Field of Search:

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC^X :

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC

B32B; E04B; E04C; E04F; F16L

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report

WPI, EPODOC, RM25, RM26



International Classification:

Subclass	Subgroup	Valid From
B32B	0003/14	01/01/2006
B32B	0001/08	01/01/2006
B32B	0003/18	01/01/2006
E04B	0001/76	01/01/2006
E04B	0002/00	01/01/2006
E04C	0002/00	01/01/2006
E04F	0013/08	01/01/2006
F16L	0058/00	01/01/2006
F16L	0058/10	01/01/2006
F16L	0059/00	01/01/2006