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PRELIMINARY REPORT NO. 2 - 1 June 1982

R I A L T O B U I L D I N G

Survey of existing exterior fabric including the roof

Brief: H.B.P.C's Permit No. 436, Schedule B, Item 9 (external only)

Team: Richard Falkinger, Meredith Gould, Robert Stavrinides,
Andrew Corpe

Aim: As stated in Preliminary Report No. 1

Method: As stated in Preliminary Report No. 1

Percentage of Survey Completed: Roof 95%
Windows, external doors 95%
North, south and west elevations 20%

Drawings and Condition Reports of Fabric submitted with Report No. 2:

1. East, North, West and South Elevation 1:100
(marking areas of completion of survey)
2. Condition of Render
3. Report on Previous Painting Schemes
4. Roof Bay Survey Drawings
5. Summary of Recommendations

2. CONDITION OF RENDER

Collins Street Elevation and East Elevation Return

The following is a summary of the condition of the render based on the surveys taken over the past two months, details of which are recorded on the 1:50 survey drawings and described in the condition reports of the fabric.

The extent of the survey deals with the area of the ground level and opinions given on the condition of the upper floors can only be of a general nature.

On the ground level, the render is generally in good condition, there is little or no drumminess and it appears to adhere well to the brickwork behind. Some previous render repairs have occurred which are only of adequate quality and can be seen relatively easily under the paint. Numerous previous fixings are evident. Some of these may be permitting the entry of water to the face of the brickwork and this may eventually lead to further decay of the render. From street level, the upper floors appear to exhibit the same sound conditions.

A significant proportion of the render is made unsightly by flaking and peeling paint. This problem is worst on and below string courses and adjoining faulty downpipes. Application of paint over such an uneven surface would result in a surface texture incompatible with fine detailing and elegant execution of the original design. In some areas, particularly on the ground floor level, an excessive build-up of paint layers degrades much of the fine detailing of the render work.

It is recommended that unsound areas of paint work be removed by application of methylene chloride and steam, and that the whole of the rendered surfaces be then repainted.

It is estimated that 40% of the total rendered surface will require chemical removal of paint.

3. REPORT ON PREVIOUS PAINTING SCHEMES

In the course of the determination of the previous painting schemes for the Rialto building, 50 samples have so far been collected and analysed, using an Olympus 620x12.2 microscope with an Intralux 100H.L. Volpa light source. It is expected that many more samples will be collected and analysed before a final recommendation as to the original colour scheme is made.

The evaluation of paint colour by sampling and microscope examination, can give a very accurate finding for an early paint layer as it appears today. However, in the time since its application, fading or darkening may have occurred, and it is necessary to take such discolouration into account when specifying the original colour. Chemical analysis of the components of the paint or a visual estimation can be used to compensate for discolouration, the latter of which has been used in the study of the Rialto. Visual analysis will closely approximate the colour as it was originally applied, but cannot exactly match it. In this report, the Munsell colours specified have taken account of darkening and fading when matching the original colour.

Throughout the text "f.c." denotes a probable finishing coat.

A. Windows and Doors, Eastern Elevation

Separate tenancy of the floor space within each floor and between each floor has resulted in a variation in the colour of existing exposed painted surface and the total number of layers, from one bay to the next. Six samples have been taken so far, only two of which exhibit the same system. All but one, however, have the same base layer. A sample from each of the lower ground and first floor levels is given below.

Sample 5. Lower ground sash and frame
 Top layer 1 grey f.c.
 2 indian red f.c.
 Timber

Layer 2 is very thick and variable in colour. Nearest Munsell colour classification: 7.5R 3/4

Sample 15. Lower ground doors and jamb
 Top layer 1 grey f.c.
 2 grey
 3 white f.c.
 4 grey
 5 indian red f.c.
 6 primer (orange)
 Timber

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 5: 7.5R 3/4

Sample 15. First floor, door jamb
 Top layer 1 indian red f.c.
 2 grey
 3 indian red f.c.
 4 grey
 5 white
 6 indian red f.c.
 Timber

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 6: between 10R 3/6 and 7.5R 3/4

Sample 16. First floor, sash
 Top layer 1 grey f.c.
 2 red f.c.
 3 grey
 4 indian red f.c.
 5 indian red
 6 grey
 7 indian red (very thick and variable in colour)
 Timber

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 7: 7.5R 3/4

Probable Recommendation:

For all windows and doors on the eastern elevation: Indian red 7.5R 3/4.

A significant proportion of the joinery on the lower ground and the basement levels is presently indian red. This joinery is yet to be sampled, however, it is expected that some may be the original coating.

B. Rendered Sills to Windows

One sample only has been taken.

Sample 7. Lower ground, sill
 Top layer 1 black f.c.
 2 plaster filler (not constant over whole surface)
 Render

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 1: N 1.5/2.0R

Probable Recommendation:

Almost all window sills have the black layer described for sample 7, and it would seem probable that this surface is an extant original coating. Some sills are cracked or chipped and will require repair and for these sills repainting with N 1.5/2.0R is recommended. For sound sills, washing of the existing coating will be investigated. It is hoped that a reasonable proportion of sills will not require repainting.

C. Windows and Doors, Collins Street, Ground Level Elevation

The woodwork on the Collins Street ground level elevation has been painted much more frequently than that on the eastern elevation, possibly because of its exposed position. Eight samples have so far been collected and analysed. As for the eastern elevation, separate tenancies have resulted in a variation in systems for each shop. However, a group of brown f.c., grey or indian red f.c., grey layers, is consistent for all samples taken. One sample 21 has five such pairs of layers, five samples have four pairs of layers, and the remainder have three or less (the latter were possibly either burnt back or subject to greater deterioration before application of the more recent layers).

Sample 21. Collins Street, jamb RN75
 Top layer 1 white f.c.
 2 cream
 3 brown f.c.
 4 grey
 5 brown f.c.
 6 grey
 7 indian red f.c.
 8 grey
 9 indian red f.c.
 10 grey
 11 indian red f.c.
 12 grey
 Timber

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 11: 7.5R 3/4

Sample 12. Collins Street, column base RN73
 Top layer 1 dark grey f.c.
 2 dark grey
 3 white f.c.
 4 dark green f.c.
 5 grey
 6 white f.c.
 7 pink
 8 brown f.c.
 9 grey
 10 brown f.c.
 11 grey
 12 pinkish transparent filler
 13 indian red f.c.
 14 grey
 15 indian red f.c.
 16 grey
 Timber

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 15: 10R 3/6

The system for this sample from layer 8 on almost exactly matches that for sample 21 from layer 5 onwards.

Probable Recommendation:

For woodwork to ground level Collins Street elevation, indian red either 10R 3/6 or 7.5R 3/4 or a combination of both.

D. Balcony Railing, East Elevation

All members of the railing, except the cyclone wire are presently painted indian red.

Sample 8.	Lower ground railing
Top layer	1 indian red f.c.
	2 off white
	3 cream
	4 indian red
	Metal

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 4: 10R 3/6

Sample 31.	1st Floor, remnant of previous balcony wire, copper tie.
Top layer	1 indian red f.c. (very thick)
	2 cream
	3 cream (not consistent)
	4 green copper salts
	Wire

The previous balcony wire is described in Report No. 1, 1st May 1982. The sequence of layers on this sample matches the upper three layers for sample 8, the balcony railing itself. However, the lowest coat, 4 of indian red on sample 8 does not appear on the copper tie wire. This does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the previous wire on the balcony railing was not an original feature. It is not yet established that layer 4 of sample 8 is a finishing coat. No distinct dirt layer is present between layer 3 and 4 and it may be possible for layer 4 to have been a shop priming coat. Should this be the case, the matching schemes of samples 8 and 31 would suggest that the previous balcony wire was an original feature. At the very least, the results indicate that the wire was applied very early in the life of the building.

Further samples will be taken before a final conclusion is reached on this matter.

Probable Recommendation:

For balcony railing indian red 10R 3/6.

E. Balcony, Cast Iron Brackets, Edge Beam and I Beams

These have not yet been sampled, however, they are presently painted indian red, and in the light of the confirmed use of this colour in other parts of the building, it is expected that future sampling will reveal indian red as the original colour. Some of the paint to the cast iron brackets is in good condition and should it be found that the extant top layer is also the original layer, it is hoped that some brackets can be simply washed and not repainted.

F. Corrugated Iron Ceiling Lining to Balconies

These have not yet been sampled. They are presently painted a light creamish green. It is expected that future sampling will isolate a similar light colour to be the original.

G. Corrugated Iron Toilet Block to Ground Level Balcony, Exterior,
Corrugated Iron

One sample has been collected and analysed. Further samples will be taken, however, it is expected that each floor level will follow the same pattern.

Sample 39. Corrugated Iron, ground level toilet
Top layer 1 dark grey f.c.
2 indian red f.c.
3 greenish grey
4 indian red f.c.
5 greenish grey (probable f.c.)
Metal

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 5: 5GY 7/1

Probable Recommendation:

Corrugated iron to toilet blocks, exterior, greenish grey, 5GY 7/1

H. Corrugated Iron Toilet Blocks to Ground Level Balcony, Exterior,
Architrave to Door

One sample has been collected and analysed. Further samples will be taken. However, it is expected that each floor level will follow the same pattern.

Sample 41. Architrave, ground level toilet door
Top layer 1 grey f.c.
2 indian red f.c.
3 pale green
4 indian red f.c.
5 pale green
6 indian red f.c. (very thick)
7 pale green (not consistent)
8 pale grey (very thick)
Timber

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 6: 7.5R 3/4.

Four finishing coats are isolated in this sample. It is expected that the same number of finishing coats would be applied to the corrugated iron walls (sample 39) and to the door architrave, affixed to the iron which strengthens the conclusion that layer 5 of sample 39 is the earliest finishing coat.

Probable Recommendation:

Architraves to toilet doors, indian red 7.5R 3/4.

I. East Elevation, 3rd Floor, Gutter and Fascia

These have not yet been sampled, however, they are presently painted indian red, and, in the light of the confirmed use of this colour in other parts of the building, it is expected that future sampling will isolate indian red as the original colour.

J. Cast Iron Downpipe, West Elevation, Basement Level

The corrugated iron and accompanying lead flashings are presently painted bright red. Two samples have been taken, however, no conclusion has yet been reached as to whether the iron and flashings were painted before completion of construction.

Sample 36. Lead Flashing to Roof
Top layer 1 bright red f.c.
Lead

Considerable fading has occurred. No colour matching has been undertaken.

K. Roof Flagpole

The paint remaining on the flagpole is extremely weathered and little remains. No samples have yielded conclusive results. Further samples will be taken.

L. Western Elevation, Windows, Basement Level

Sample 49. West elevation, sash and jamb basement
Top layer 1 indian red f.c.
2 mid grey
3 indian red f.c.
4 grey
5 indian red f.c.
Timber

Probable Recommendation:

Joinery, western elevation, indian red. The window and door reveals on this whole elevation have remnants of the application of a white plaster finish. This will be further investigated.

M. Cast Iron Gutter found in Roof

This gutter was found in the roof space and matches the extant cast iron gutter on the western elevation. Samples for the latter cannot be taken.

Sample 38. Cast iron gutter from roof space
Top layer 1 indian red
Metal

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 1: 7.5R 3/4.

Probable Recommendation:

Cast iron gutters, indian red 7.5R 3/4.

N. Timber Fascia to Skillion Roof on Terrace

Sample 43. Terrace fascia
 Top layer 1 indian red
 Timber

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 1: 10R 3/4

Probable Recommendation:

All timber fascias, indian red.

O. Timber Panelling to Lift

One sample has been taken from the ground level. Further sample will be taken, however, it is expected that all levels will follow a similar pattern.

Sample 47. Lift panelling, ground level
 Top layer 1 indian red f.c.
 2 grey ?
 3 pale grey
 4 indian red ?
 Timber

Probable Recommendation:

Exterior lift woodwork, indian red.

P. Render Collins Street Elevation, Ground Level

Four samples have been collected and analysed thus far, all are similar in their earliest layers, sample 3 is typical.

Sample 3. Render G.F.
 Top layer 1 grey f.c.
 2 pale blue f.c.
 3 pale pink f.c.
 4 cream f.c.
 5 greenish cream f.c.
 6 " f.c.
 7 " f.c.
 8 salmon pink f.c.
 9 white f.c.
 10 greenish pink f.c.
 11 greenish pink f.c.
 12 yellow cream f.c.
 13 pinkish cream f.c. ?
 Render

Nearest Munsell colour classification for layer 12: 10YR 7/6 and for layer 13: 10YR 7/4.

Probable Recommendation:

It has not yet been decided whether layer 12 or layer 13 is the first finishing coat. Nor has it yet been determined what the chemical compositions of the layers are. Further samples will be investigated.

Q. Render Collins Street Elevation, Ground Level

Sample 29. Render 1st floor, south elevation
 Top layer 1 pale green f.c.
 2 pale pink f.c.
 3 pale pink f.c.
 4 pale green f.c.
 5 yellow f.c.
 6 pale yellow
 7 pale pink ?
 8 yellow (thick) f.c.
 9 creamy pink f.c.
 10 creamy pink f.c.
 Render

There are heavy dirt layers between layers 7 and 8, 8 and 9, and 9 and 10. Layer 10 is the earliest finishing coat and matches layer 13 of sample 3.

Probable Recommendation:

A creamy pink is expected to form the bulk of the colour to the rendered surfaces, however, samples have not been taken from decorative mouldings and window reveals to determine whether other colours may have been used in conjunction with this colour.

R. Bluestone Plinth Below Rendered Surfaces

Two samples have been collected and analysed. Sample 1 is typical.

Sample 1. Plinth Collins Street G.L.
 Top layer 1 dark grey f.c.
 2 pale grey
 3 charcoal f.c.
 4 pale grey
 5 tan f.c.
 6 tan
 7 pale grey f.c.
 Bluestone

Probable Recommendation:

This sample identifies only four finishing coats, significantly less than for the render above (sample 3). It seems probable therefore, that the bluestone plinth has been painted only in the later years of the life of the building, and that the bluestone was originally intended to be left unpainted. It is recommended that the paint be removed from the bluestone.

5. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Cleaning of Brickwork and Paintwork

Tests have been arranged on the east elevation and north elevation to assess the two methods of cleaning under consideration. We expect to submit our report by the end of this month.

Render

It is our intention to repaint rendered surfaces. We recommend that unsound areas of paintwork be removed by application of methylene chloride and steam and any drummy or decayed areas of render be made good.

Paintwork

Based on our examinations, a pattern of the likely 'original' colour scheme is now emerging. The adoption of these colours will completely alter the present appearance of the building and requires the most careful consideration. We recommend that a series of test panels be established to allow a visual assessment of these colours on site.

Roof Gutters/Downpipes

We have not been able to fully examine in detail the make and condition of all gutters and downpipes; used on the Rialto Building. It is recommended that a decision is deferred until after the erection of scaffolding to allow a proper on site assessment.

General

The external, original bluestone paving of various sizes should be surveyed and, if possible, retained as an important feature of the new Rialto precinct. We recommend that our brief is extended to include this work.