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Jane Holme
Young & Co's Brewery PLC
Riverside House
26 Osiers Road
London SW18 1NH

Ref: 1343

10th September 2013

Dear Jane

Re. Spread Eagle, 141 Albert Street, London, NW1 7NB.

Further to our recent visit on 31st July 2013 to the above property, we write to outline our findings in respect of the cracking to the front elevation and the use of part of the first floor as a function room for customers use.

Observation

The property is a Grade II Listed building formed from three separate buildings all having been connected together to form one Public house with staff accommodation on the upper floors over. The property is located on the corner of Albert Street and Parkway.

The property is built over four storeys including a basement and construction of masonry external wall with painted render, timber floor and roof structures. On the corner of the property where two elevation walls meet they are connected with a curved wall section. The elevation at ground floor level on Parkway and part of Albert Street is formed of large picture windows with stall risers and the remaining section is traditional sash windows and masonry piers. The upper floors on both elevations have large sash windows and masonry walls with French doors onto a narrow balcony at first floor level on the curved section.

From our inspection it could be seen that numerous cracks were observed to the Parkway Elevation. These cracks appear to be in the region of 1 to 3m wide and are all located at the heads and cills of the windows to this elevation. Further cracking was observed approximately 1 to 3mm to the parapet wall which conceals the roof behind.

The second window from the left at first floor has a vertical crack rising from the centre of the solider course arch up to the window above. At the crack location the arch appears to have dropped slightly to the left hand side.

All the cracking to the external Parkway elevation are dirty in colour and show no signs of fresh cracking or movement. We have observed these cracks in the past during previous visits and they appear to be similar in nature and therefore historic.

Little or no cracking was seen to the Albert Street elevation other than the curved corner wall.

Internally no major signs of cracking where observed to correspond to those on the exterior although the window heads are relatively close to the ceiling and cracks maybe within the floor zone which we did not inspect.

1 to 5mm cracking was observed on various places internally to the curved wall to the stairs from first floor to second. The curve replicates the profile of the stairs but is set against the flat front elevation on Parkway. The wall is constructed of the original studwork to form the curve with a lathe and plaster finish. The cracking has been caused by the deterioration of the lime mortar which was seen to be very loose and crumbly.

With the proposal to introduce customers to a function room in the front room at first floor level, we carried out an inspection of the existing floor joists. The size of the joists was 50 x 185mm at 350mm centres. As this would have originally been a domestic residence at first floor the floor joists would have been designed for such use. Now that the intention is to make this a customer area consideration should be given to strengthen the existing floor to cater for the additional loading.

Conclusion

From our inspection we conclude that no recent movement has occurred and that the cracks are historic. The cracking is more pronounced now as the cracks are dirty and that the external walls of the property have not been redecorated at first and second floor for some time.

Therefore we would recommend that a program of repair works and redecorations be carried out during the next project in order to preserve the existing wall, to repair the cracking and prevent any possible ingress of water into the cracks.

Recommendations

The following works should be carried to preserve the property and enhance it structural capabilities.

- Carry out small section removal of existing pointing and mortar to confirm if lime mortar is present.
- All external cracking to painted face painted should have paint removed along the crack to expose the crack. Mortar joints along crack to be raked out by 35mm in depth and repointed in lime mortar (or epoxy mortar), with any cracked brick repaired with epoxy mortar.
- All external cracking to the render walls is to have the render removed in a narrow 'V' slot along the crack to expose brickwork behind. Repair crack as above and refill notch with render to match existing.
- Cracking to internal wall of staircase to have existing lime mortar removed retaining the existing lathes and applying new lime render internally to suit the curve.
- Strengthening works to the works would involve temporary removing skirting boards, lift existing floor boards, bolt new timbers to the side of the existing joists, relaying floor boards and refix skirting boards.

We trust the enclosed meets your current requirements. If you require further assistance please contact our office.

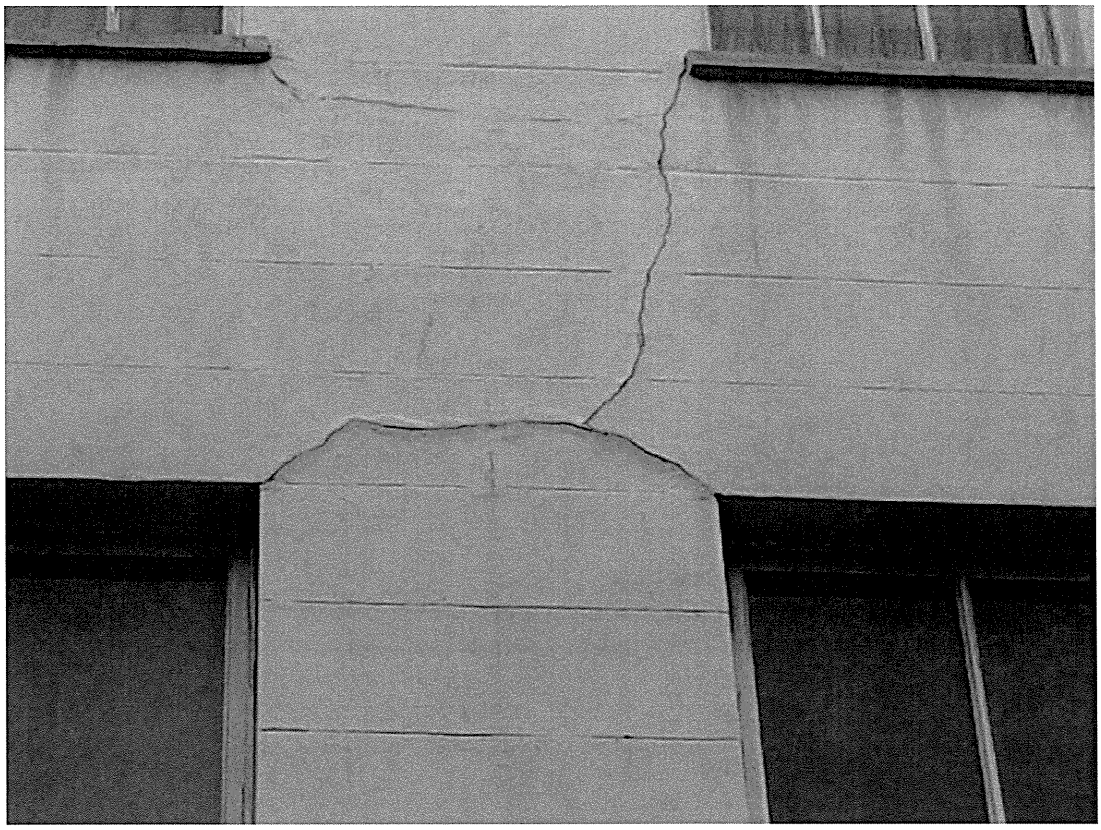
Yours sincerely,

PETER LANG BEng(Hons) CEng MIStructE
Director for
MERVYN BROWN ASSOCIATES LTD.

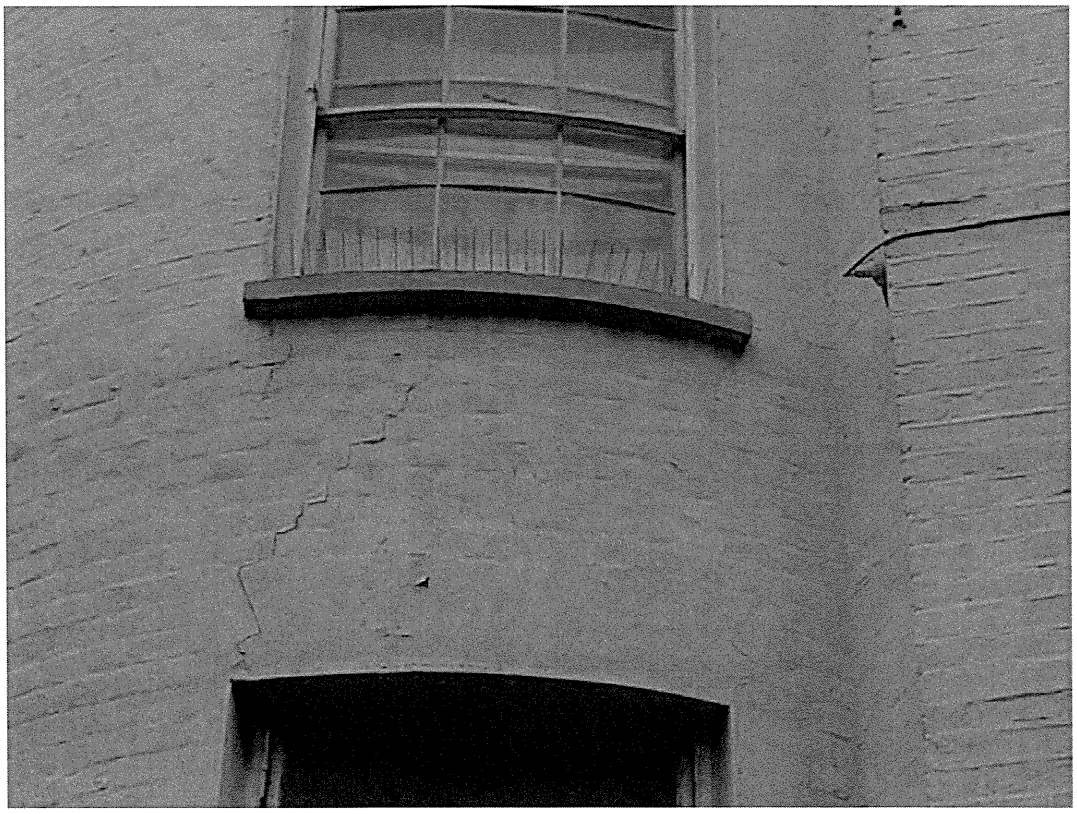
Photograph 1 – Parkway Elevation

Photograph 2 – Left side Parkway Elevation

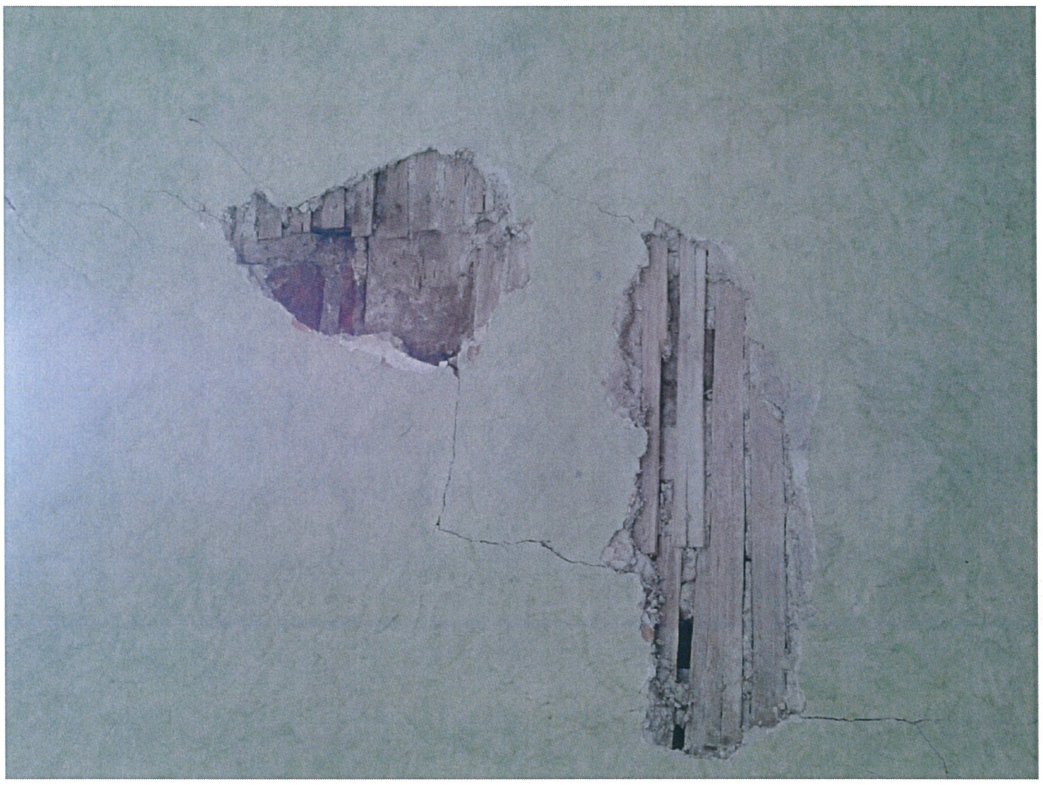
Photograph 3 – Right side Parkway Elevation



Photograph 4 – Cracks in render over windows at first floor



Photograph 5 – Cracks in painted brick over windows at first floor



Photograph 6 – Cracks in render internally to curved wall at brick junction

Photograph 7 – Further cracks in stairwell