

Detailed Condition Report

Railings at 7 Fitzroy Square

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6 June 2014

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1. Introduction

The report was prepared following a detailed evaluation of the railings at 7 Fitzroy Square. The evaluation was carried out by Robert Oakes, a qualified blacksmith, who is experienced in restoration work.

The evaluation of the railings was carried out with the brief to:

- 1) Preserve or restore as much as possible of the original railing.
- 2) Use materials consistent with the original as far as possible i.e. wrought iron, rivets.
- 3) Replace finials with castings taken from the original.
- 4) Carry out works on site.

The objective of the site visit was to obtain a detailed evaluation of the extent of the damage, the possibility of repair/restoration and the potential challenges that might need to be overcome.

Photographs taken on site are included in this report.

2. General Comments.

The detailed report highlights particular areas where extra attention is required. At a general level, there is wastage to a varying degree on the existing wrought iron, missing finials, and problems arising as a result of previous attempts at restoration that have not always been successful.

The full extent of the wastage cannot be ascertained until all the layers of paint have been removed. In general, the proposed method of restoration of wasted areas is as follows:

- 1). Remove all paint and clean back to expose bare metal. This can be done in situ using localised descaling.
- 2). Prime.
- 3). Build up wasted area to required level with approved epoxy filler.
- 4). Repaint with build coat and 2 x top coat.

Finials can be replaced by removing a good quality existing finial and using this as a pattern for a casting. This to be carried out by a specialist architectural casting company.

It will be necessary to break out some of the stone work on the walls and the concrete base to enable the descaling and restorative processes to be carried out. This will need to be reinstated by a stone mason or builder.

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3. Detailed Condition Report



1. Front Railing Left Hand Panel.



2. Front Railing – Gate
Palings 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Right Hand Side Stile 9

Railing	Condition	Recommendation
1. Panel at left hand side of gate, paling 1,2,3 (gate stile).	<p>1.1 Wastage on lower top rail.</p> <p>1.2 Paling 3 is gate stile, railing finial is missing.</p> <p>1.3 Lozenges sound and secure.</p>	<p>See General Comments.</p> <p>Replace finial with casting from good quality existing finial.</p>
2. Gate – palings 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, Side Stile 9.	<p>2.1 Gate has dropped.</p> <p>2.2 Original gate lock is missing, a modern lock has been fitted to inside of gate behind horizontal bars of original lock box.</p> <p>2.3 Severe wastage on top face of lower top rail, where each paling goes through the bar, worst at paling 8.</p>	<p>Remove upper securing plate. Lift out gate to clean and repair. Extend hinge pin. Raise gate to required height, reposition and secure.</p> <p>Remove new lock and replace if possible with a mortise lock of a correct size to fit within the original lock box frame. (TBC if this is possible).</p> <p>Replace approximately 150mm of lower top rail at paling 8.</p>

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	<p>2.4 Minor wastage on top rail of gate, mostly at No. 8 paling.</p> <p>2.5 Lead securing palings into rail has been pushed up /down in places.</p> <p>2.6 Side Stile 9 lock keeper.</p> <p>2.7 All lozenges secure and intact.</p>	<p>See General Comments.</p> <p>Dress to match existing.</p> <p>Remove later addition lock keeper and reinstate original.</p>
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Close up of lock on gate showing original lock frame and newly added modern lock on the inside.

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3. Front Railing – Palings 10 – 18, Support Post 19

4. Front Railing – Palings 20 -30

Railing	Condition	Recommendation
3. Front Railings Palings 10-18. Support Stile 19.	<p>3.1 Top rail is sound. All lozenges intact and fixed.</p> <p>3.2 Lower top rail is wasted on front edge but sound.</p> <p>3.3 Support Stile 19 is missing large finial in style of corner post finial.</p> <p>3.4 Support Stile 19 (imperial 1.5" square) is broken through at fixing point for back stay. Back stay is missing.</p>	<p>See General Comments.</p> <p>Replace with finial from casting of corner post.</p> <p>Replace missing back stay with forged wrought iron stay to match existing on adjacent buildings. At the railing end of the back support stay, use support/bracing plate and attached this to the broken support stile using mechanical fixings to secure the break.</p>
4. Front Railing. Palings 20 -30.	<p>4.1 Top rail fairly sound, some wastage at base of finials.</p> <p>4.2 Lower top rail is sound. All lozenges are intact and secure.</p> <p>4.3 All palings are sound.</p>	<p>See General Comments.</p>

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Close up of break at Paling 19, where back stay should be.



Proposed Style of Back Support for replacement at paling 19.

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5. Front Railing Palings 31- 36, Corner Support Post 37.

Railing	Condition	Recommendation
<p>5. Palings 31- 36. Corner Support Post 37</p>	<p>5.1 Top rail sound, minor wastage at base of finials. Lozenges on palings 31-35 fixed and intact.</p> <p>5.2 Lozenge between paling 36 and corner support post 37 is damaged probably as a consequence of attempt to weld into position on support post 37.</p> <p>5.3 Top and lower top rail are not securely fixed to corner support post 37. Previous attempts to weld have failed.</p> <p>5.4 Horizontal bars have been fixed to the outside of palings 35, 36, 37 probably in an attempt to stabilise the railing, but not actually providing any structural support.</p> <p>Corner post 37 disappears into the step, which is badly cracked in this area.</p>	<p>Remove evidence of failed welds. Dress to match original profile and secure using mechanical fixings.</p> <p>See 5.2.</p> <p>Remove horizontal bars.</p>

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Evidence of previously unsuccessful attempts to weld and fix lozenge and rails.



Stone Repairs will need to be carried out once the restoration work is complete.

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Missing photo.

6. Railing along left hand side of path. Palings 38 - 48

Railing	Condition	Recommendation
6. Palings 38- 47. Paling 48 where railing extends into house wall.	<p>6.1 Top rail and lower top rail are sound and lozenges are secure and intact.</p> <p>6.2 There is evidence of movement and wastage at base of finial at paling 48, where top rail and lower top rail extends into the house wall. Most likely due to rust causing expansion of the rails.</p> <p>6.3 Lozenge between paling 47 and 48 has been replaced. The replacement is of poor quality and not securely fixed.</p> <p>6.4 All palings have been securely grouted into later addition stone step and there are no signs of wastage.</p>	<p>See General Comments.</p> <p>Replace complete lozenge.</p>

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7. Railing at right hand side of front entrance palings 49 – 58.

Railing	Condition	Recommendation
7. Railing at right hand side. Palings 49 – 59. Paling 60 where rail extends into house wall.	7.1 Corner post 49 has been cut and later welded to next door railings.	No action required.
	7.2. Top rail is sound. Minor wastage at base of finials.	See General Comments.
	7.3 Lozenge between paling 52 and 53 is broken, with residual part in situ.	Replace complete lozenge.
	7.4 Lozenge between paling 55 and 56 is broken and bottom half is missing.	Replace complete lozenge.
	7.5 Lower top rail is completely wasted. There is evidence of previous attempts to repair with widespread remains of epoxy filler along the whole length of this rail with extensive rust. Very little of this rail is likely to be salvageable.	Replace whole length of rail on this section.
	7.6 Palings are in satisfactory condition and secured into recently added stone steps with cement based grout.	
	7.7 Lozenge between paling 59 & 60 is broken with the bottom half missing.	Replace complete lozenge.

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Railing on the right hand side entrance is in a very poor state



Stone restoration work will need to be carried out at the front entrance and the pillars.

4. Challenges arising as part of the restoration

Consideration should be given to the following:

- Method of descaling – complete shot blasting or localised needle gun descaling.
- Approved materials for epoxy filler, primer, build coat, top coat.
- Likely damage to stone work and restoration required as a result of the restoration.
- Feasibility of obtaining mortise lock to suit.
- Open ended unpredictable nature of the restoration process.

5. Conclusion.

Repair and restoration of the front railing and side railing on the left hand side looking from the road, is possible. The right hand side railing will need the top lower rail replacing. The finials and can be replaced using castings of the original. Wrought iron can be used for replacement lozenges and lower top rail on the right hand side. A suitable lock needs to be sourced. Descaling poses a particular challenge. The time taken to complete the restoration is open ended and only a best estimate can be given at this stage.