



FAÇADE CONDITION REPORT SYDNEY & MELBOURNE BUILDINGS

Melbourn Building, London Circuit

Prepared by



For

City Renewal Authority

Issue C (Revised paint specification)

13 September 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This condition assessment has been prepared for the City Renewal Authority (CRA) in preparation for the repainting of the façades of the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings, which are included on the ACT Heritage Register. The repainting of the facades is to be undertaken in accordance with the Draft Revitalisation Plan for the Sydney and Melbourne buildings which was prepared in response to a direction of the Chief Minister in November 2022.

The repainting works are to be undertaken/managed by individual owners with the support of the CRA, with the intent that a consistent colour scheme be used across the facades of both the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings. The overall vision for the project is to support building owners in the repainting of the facades, setting the benchmark for the ongoing standard of façade condition in line with the buildings’ heritage significance. The works are also intended to contribute to quality urban outcomes for the city centre, acknowledging community expectations that the ACT Government ensures that they are well maintained.

1.2 Location of works

The façade repainting works that will be financially supported by the CRA consist of the repainting of the prominent outer elevations of both the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings facing Northbourne Avenue, London Circuit, Alinga Street, East Row and West Row. Repainting of the rendered returns that flank the entries to Verity and Odgers lanes is also included.



Aerial photograph showing the extant buildings on the subject site (Source: ACTmapi, showing July 2022)

More specific detail on the location of repainting works is provided on the Façade Repainting drawings prepared for each owner. In general, elements that are to be repainted consist of rendered elements, eaves linings, timber rafter ends and eaves gutters and downpipes.

This condition assessment focuses on these elements, though it should be noted that the condition of other areas (such as the roof and associated flashings) has the potential to impact on the longevity of the new paint finish.

1.3 Relevant documents

Both the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings Conservation Management Plan (**CMP**) prepared by Philip Leeson Architects (approved by the ACT Heritage Council, February 2022) and the draft Revitalisation Plan – Façade Painting, Sydney and Melbourne Buildings (the **Revitalisation Plan**) also prepared by Philip Leeson Architects (October 2023), are relevant to the proposed works. Engagement with the building owners has been undertaken during the preparation of both of these documents.

A report on the condition of the external street elevation of the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings was also prepared by Lewis Consulting Engineers in February 2021 (referred to as the **Lewis Consulting Engineers report**). This was prepared following an inspection of the buildings at height using an elevated work platform and includes information on the condition of the roof, the flashings, gutters and other elements that are not readily visible from ground level.

Defects and observations are listed in the Lewis Consulting Engineers report, according to the relevant elevation. Where these defects relate to elements that are to be repainted, relevant commentary has been included in the condition schedules appended to this condition report. It is, however, recommended that individual owners refer to the Lewis Consulting Engineers report which provides information that has not been reproduced in this report, including details on the condition of the roof, parapet flashings etc.

1.4 Approach

As previously noted, this condition assessment focuses on the elements that are to be repainted with the support of the CRA. A separate condition schedule has been prepared for each owner, focusing on elements that are generally in poor condition or are showing signs of deterioration. For elements that are in poor condition, rectification will generally be required in order to achieve a reasonable finish and/or to prevent the premature deterioration of the new paint finish.

A list of works that are included or excluded from the funding provided by the CRA is provided in the Revitalisation Plan.

Hazardous materials

A key challenge when undertaking works to historic buildings is that hazardous materials are often present, including lead paint. Where render repairs are required or removal of existing paint finishes is needed to adequately prepare the surface for repainting, there is the potential that paint containing lead will be disturbed. Given this risk, testing for the presence of lead paint should be undertaken by a specialist hazardous materials consultant prior to undertaking repair or repainting works. Depending on the findings of this testing, a hazardous materials consultant may also need to be engaged to develop appropriate methods and controls for the works, including potential removal of lead containing paint.

1.5 Priority of Works

This condition assessment identifies visible defects to relevant areas of the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings and provides high level guidance on addressing these defects as well as recommendations for areas of further investigation. These defects and observations are recorded in the separate condition schedule for each owner and are also generally indicated on the accompanying drawings/elevations.

Each of the works have been assigned a priority level which are defined in the table overleaf. Further guidance on appropriate repair actions is contained in Section 2 (works) of this report, focusing on common issues across the two buildings.

Priority	Time frame	Details
Urgent	As soon as practicable (prior to repainting works)	These works are required to address an immediate safety concern. Generally, works that are designated an urgent priority may be at risk of seriously injuring the public (for example loose material falling from the building).
Essential	Prior to/as part of preparation for repainting works	These works are required to either obtain a reasonable finish when repainting or a likely to be needed to prevent the premature deterioration of the new paint finish.
Desirable	Could be undertaken prior to repainting or at a later date	This category of works is not crucial to the ongoing preservation of the place and typically relates to reinstating original details. These works are not considered essential though would serve to improve the presentation of the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings.

1.6 Limitations

This condition assessment has been informed by a visual inspection of the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings from street level. This inspection did not include any invasive investigations and focused on the external façades, which are the areas that are to be repainted.

The following conditions restricted access/impacted on the ability to view the building:

- The inspection only covered the readily accessible areas to the exterior of the Sydney and Melbourne Building façades.
- Review of the buildings at height was not conducted. Whilst reference was made to the Lewis Consulting Engineers (February 2021) report, which was informed by an inspection at height, it should be noted that this report was completed over three years ago and conditions may have changed since that time. The authors of this condition assessment were not involved with the 2021 report and therefore its accuracy is unknown.
- Parts of the façades were obscured by the street trees, planter beds, signage, furniture and fixtures as well as other structures associated with the tenancies. The size and close proximity of the street trees together with the size and location of some of the outdoor dining areas obscured parts of the façades.
- The proximity of some of the façades to the road, particularly on London Circuit and East Row, also made it difficult to assess the condition.

1.7 Approvals

As noted in the Revitalisation Plan, further approval from the ACT Heritage Council is not required for repainting the Sydney and Melbourne Building if undertaken in accordance with the approved colour scheme. Works that are scheduled in the approved CMP, such as the removal of intrusive signage, can also be undertaken without heritage approval. Any works that are not set out in the approved CMP require approval from ACT Heritage before commencement.

Other works, such as structural repairs, may require both heritage approval and Building Approval, some works may also require Development Approval.

2. Works

Owners are responsible for obtaining relevant permits, approvals and other authorisations prior to undertaking works.

- **Order of work:** Complete the work of other trades as far as practicable before painting.

2.1 Access

General requirements:

- Maintain safe access for occupants of the building and arrange work to minimise nuisance to occupants and the public, and for their safety.
- Protect occupants and the public against weather, dirt, water, nuisance and hazards.
- Accessways, services: do not obstruct or damage roadways and footpaths, drains and watercourses and other existing services in use or adjacent to the site.
- Do not interfere with or damage trees.
- Do not interfere with or damage property adjacent to the site, including adjoining property and street infrastructure.

2.2 Repainting

- **Scope:** Refer to the Revitalisation Plan and the relevant drawings/elevations for scope of repainting works that are covered by the funding provided by the ACT Government.
- **Selections:** As specified in the Revitalisation Plan, Dulux paints are to be used for the repainting works. Evidence of use of this paint brand (such as receipts/invoices/orders) shall be provided to the CRA to ensure that painting works will be undertaken in accordance with the Revitalisation Plan. **Use Dulux paints** as specified in the attached Paint Specification and as summarised below, including products and number of coats. Only use products which are colour tinted by the manufacturer or supplier. Textured paints or textured render finishes must **not** be used.

Exterior Substrate	Coat	Selection
New Render	Prep Coat	Dulux Acratex Green Render Sealer
Existing Painted Render	Primer	Dulux Precision High Opacity Stain Blocker
	1 st Coat	EMER Emer-Clad Façade Matt
	2 nd Coat	EMER Emer-Clad Façade Matt
Existing Painted Timber Under Soffits	Primer	Dulux Precision High Opacity Stain Blocker
	1 st Coat	Dulux Weathershield Low Sheen
	2 nd Coat	Dulux Weathershield Low Sheen
Existing Painted Galvanised Gutters	Spot Primer	Dulux Precision All Metal Primer
	Primer	Dulux Precision Maximum Strength Adhesion Primer
	1 st Coat	Dulux Weathershield Semi Gloss
	2 nd Coat	Dulux Weathershield Semi Gloss

Exterior Substrate	Coat	Selection
Existing Unpainted PVC Pipes	Primer	Dulux Precision Maximum Strength Adhesion Primer
	1 st Coat	Dulux Weathershield Semi Gloss
	2 nd Coat	Dulux Weathershield Semi Gloss

- Substrate preparation:** Refer to *Section 2.3 Render repairs* below for render repair requirements. Generally, prepare substrates to receive the painting system in accordance with relevant Australian Standards:

 - Preparation of a substrate in good condition: To AS/NZS 2311 clause 7.4.
 - Preparation of a substrate in poor condition: To AS/NZS 2311 clause 7.5.
 - Preparation of steel substrates with protective coatings: To AS 2312.1 Section 8 and AS 1627.1.
- Make good:** a smooth surface is to be provided for the new paint finish. Remove all non-original redundant fixings including wall plugs, bolts, brackets, saddles, conduits, pipework, sign mounts and electrical fixtures. Remove all dirt, birds and wasps nests from areas to be repainted. Safely remove damaged and flaking paint as well as salt deposits.
- Where hazardous materials exist,** methods are to be in accordance with those prepared by hazardous materials consultant.
- Painting conditions:** apply the first coat before contamination of the substrate can occur and apply subsequent coats after the manufacturer’s recommended drying period has elapsed. Coats are to be applied in accordance with the manufacturers recommended conditions, including humidity and surface temperature.
- Primers:** use primers suitable for the various substrates (render, steel, timber, existing paint etc.). All primers to meet the relevant Australian Standard. Do not combine products from different manufacturers in a system.
- Putty and fillers:** are to be in accordance with the recommendations of the paint system manufacturer and suitable for the substrate as well as compatible with the primer.
- Protection:** Before painting, clean the area and protect it from dust contamination. Use drop sheets and masking agents to protect other surfaces during painting.
- Substrate moisture content:** Paint only when the moisture content of the substrate is at or below the recommended maximum level for the type of paint and the substrate material.
- Wet paint warnings:** Place notices in a conspicuous location and do not remove until the paint is dry.
- Anti-graffiti coating:** An anti-graffiti coating is not covered by the grant program, though can be applied by owners if desired. If an anti-graffiti coating is to be applied, use a coating compatible with the specified paint finish and suitable for pre-painted surfaces. Coatings are to be clear, low sheen or flat in finish. The application of an anti-graffiti coating should be co-ordinated with adjoining owners to achieve a consistent finish. If applied, the coating should be located to the lower portion of the façade, up to the top of the ground floor column capitals and the underside of the central openings to the portals (see image below).

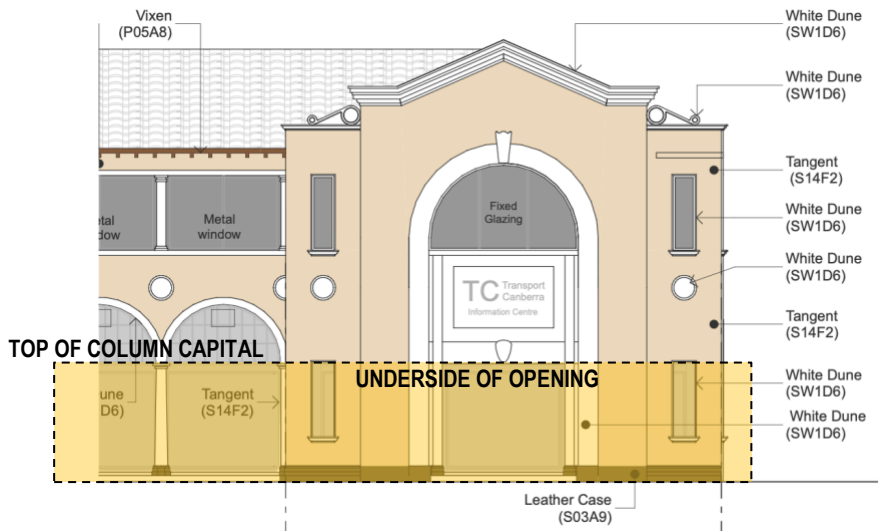


Diagram showing portion of façade to be painted with an anti-graffiti coating (if coating is desired by building owner – this is not covered by the CRA grant program)

- **Completion:** Prior to completion, clean and repair any damage caused by the work or use of temporary work and restore existing areas used during construction to original condition.
- **Notices:** Give notice to the CRA after the application of the final coat to arrange for inspection of the works by the Heritage Architect.

2.3 Render repairs

- **Materials:** New render must be no harder than the existing render to the façades of the Sydney and Melbourne Buildings (note: this like varies across the buildings).
Use all hydrated lime, cement and other proprietary products strictly in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.
- **Performance:** Render repairs to be:
 - Free of irregularities and consistent in texture and finish to the existing.
 - Firmly bonded to the substrate.
 - Without obvious shrinkage cracks.
 - Where new and existing render abut, ensure new render is flush and level with adjoining.
- **Execution:** Work should be undertaken under suitable weather conditions to minimise the effect of undue suction and to ensure that the works are not affected by excessive heat or frost. If suction is excessive, control it by dampening, but avoid over-wetting.
Before re-rendering, make good the substrate surface. Surfaces are to be free from deleterious materials, vegetation, dirt etc. If substrate is not sufficiently rough to provide a mechanical key, roughen by scabbling or the like.
All new render shall be carefully and fully cured to prevent crazing and cracking.
- **Drummy render:** Remove all drummy render back to sound substrate and apply new multiple coat render (building up in layers) to match existing. If substrate is not sufficiently rough to provide a mechanical key, roughen by scabbling or the like. All damaged and drummy rendered copings to parapets and sills should be replaced with new render with sufficient fall to allow for rainwater runoff.
Render removal shall be kept to a minimum and shall not reduce the structural integrity of the structure. Edges of render shall be cut an angle of >90° to avoid undercutting and a maximum angle of 135° to reduce the possibility of de-bonding. **Note:** Render replacing badly damaged mouldings will need to be run in situ, building up in layers to match the profile of the original.

- **Crack repairs (where chasing out):** Approaches to the repair of larger cracks will need to be developed in consultation with a structural engineer and specialist heritage advice. As for drummy render, render removal shall be kept to a minimum and shall not reduce the structural integrity of the structure. Edges of render shall be cut an angle of $>90^\circ$ to avoid undercutting and a maximum angle of 135° to reduce the possibility of de-bonding.
- **Crack repairs (minor filling of fine cracks):** Clean out cracks (e.g. with a compressed air jet or thoroughly with low pressure water) to remove all loose material and dirt. Allow to thoroughly dry prior to filling with compatible render.

2.4 Rainwater goods

- **Materials:** Rainwater goods to be galvanised steel as per the original with joints sealed in accordance with the manufacturer's specification. **Z600 Heritage Galvanised** is recommended for its durability/longevity when compared with standard galvanised products.
- **Gutter profile:** All new gutters are to be **Ogee profile** to match the original.
- **Downpipe profile:** Downpipes to match the original profile which generally consisted of:
 - Round downpipes to first floor, between the portals
 - Round downpipes adjacent to portals (where these are not embedded in the portal wall)
 - Rectangular downpipes to the soffit of the ground level colonnade, between the portals.
- **Incompatible metals:** Prevent direct contact between incompatible metals, and between green hardwood or chemically treated timber and coated steel.
- **External downpipes:** Prefabricate downpipes to the required section and shape where possible. Connect heads to gutter outlets and arrange feet to discharge into rainwater drains. Provide supports and fixings for downpipes.
- **Cleaning:** Remove debris, metal swarf, sealants and unused materials. Clean out spoutings, gutters and rainwater pipes after completion.