



17th January 2025

Rylands Building, Manchester – Principles of Heritage Paint Analysis for Fenestration

Condition 5b of the listed building consent requires the need to complete a comprehensive analysis of historic paint finishes throughout the Rylands Building, stipulating:

5) Notwithstanding the drawings approved in condition 2, prior to the commencement of development details of the following shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the City Council as local planning authority:

(b) A schedule of paint sampling including all painted surfaces such as the staircases, windows, walls and ceilings and panelling (which may have originally been a exposed wood finish) as a record and in order to inform the proposed decoration;

The current Heritage Architecture Ltd 'Principles of Heritage Paint Analysis' note, dated 22nd August 2024, recommended a total of 217 sample locations throughout the interior and exterior of the building. This latest version of the note superseded an earlier version of the schedule prepared in August 2022, prior to the building undergoing an extensive programme of soft stripping, and consequent rationalising and consolidation/reduction of sample locations in order to produce a comprehensive record of the original paint schemes throughout the building.

When originally built between 1929 and 1932, the Rylands Building was fitted with Crittall, metal-framed windows to all four elevations, of varying size and light arrangement, installed within timber frames, which appear from historic photos to have been painted the same colour as the windows. Whereas the three principal elevations on Market Street, High Street and Tib Street were uniform in their fenestration, having varying size of window openings with stone spandrels, the rear, service elevation on Bridgewater Place used larger Crittall windows and metal spandrel panels.

From historic photos taken during and after completion of the building it is clear to see that the tone and shade of all windows around the completed building were the same, assumed dark bronze, colour, including the spandrel panels on Bridgewater Place. This dark bronze colour was extended across the original shopfronts and their decorative ground floor level metal cresting, and main entrance metalwork on High Street and Tib Street (see image below).

Consequently, a number of sample locations were chosen for external metalwork, including the clock on Market Street, the original main entrances, the corner tower structures, the metal ground floor cresting, a spandrel panel on Bridgewater Place and a window on Market Street (see below entries for external windows within the 22nd August 2024 Principles of Heritage Paint Analysis note).

Exterior		
Location	Element / Sample Type	No. of Samples
Market Street	Window/frame - Market Street elevation.	2no. sample from 1no. window frame and Crittall window on Market Street elevation 2no. samples total.
Bridgewater Place	Spandrel panels below / above windows	1no. samples from painted panel.

The above two sample locations for a window on the Market Street elevation and a sample from the metal spandrel panel to the Bridgewater Place elevation, is considered to be sufficient to represent the original early-1930s colour scheme of the Crittall windows, which because of the use of an assumed dark bronze colour throughout the metalwork externally originally, and the standard and repetitive use of Crittall windows throughout, this would represent a holistic single colour palate, and be sufficient to demonstrate the building's earliest colour scheme.



The Tib Street (left) and Bridgewater Place (right) elevations as seen nearing completion in 1932, illustrating the exact same use of colour tone to windows, frames and spandrels.