

Methodology for Paint Removal, Masonry Repairs, and Window Decoration at 113-119 Portland Street, 127-133 Portland Street, and Oxford Place (Thread Works Cluster), Manchester.

This methodology relates to external fabric works to the listed buildings at 113–119 Portland Street, 127 Portland Street and Oxford Place, Manchester. The works comprise the removal of non-original paint from masonry surfaces, localised masonry repairs including making good former signage fixing holes, and associated window preparation and redecoration where affected.

Paint removal will be undertaken using the DOFF steam cleaning system manufactured by Stonehealth Ltd. The DOFF system operates using high temperature steam (up to approximately 150°C at the nozzle) delivered at low pressure, typically within a range of 40–100 bar depending on substrate condition. The system uses superheated water in vapour form which softens and lifts paint coatings while minimising saturation and mechanical stress to the underlying masonry. This method is widely accepted for use on historic buildings due to its controlled and non-abrasive nature.

Prior to commencement of full cleaning works, a discreet trial panel will be undertaken on each building or façade area as required. The temperature and pressure settings will be adjusted to the lowest effective levels necessary to remove the paint. The results of the trial area can be made available for inspection by the Local Authority Conservation Officer if required. Works will proceed only once an appropriate cleaning standard has been established.

All adjacent materials, including glazing, timber elements and surrounding finishes, will be protected as necessary. The lance will be held at an appropriate distance from the masonry surface to prevent abrasion. Pressure and temperature will be continuously monitored and adjusted in response to the masonry condition. No aggressive mechanical scraping or abrasive methods will be used. Stubborn areas will be treated through repeated controlled passes rather than increasing pressure beyond appropriate levels.

Although the DOFF system uses relatively low volumes of water, care will be taken to control run-off. Application will be carefully managed to avoid overspray and excessive saturation. Where necessary, run-off will be collected and drainage points protected to prevent contaminated water entering surface water systems. The masonry will not be subjected to prolonged soaking.

Following completion of paint removal, former signage fixing holes and other minor defective areas will be prepared for repair. All loose material will be carefully removed

using hand tools only to avoid unnecessary enlargement of holes or damage to surrounding masonry. The prepared areas will be lightly dampened prior to the application of mortar to control suction and improve adhesion.

Repairs will be undertaken using a proprietary restoration mortar system manufactured by Remmers, selected to be compatible with the existing historic masonry. The mortar will comprise a pre-formulated mineral restoration mortar, such as Remmers Restoration Mortar, chosen to match the existing masonry in strength, colour, texture and aggregate grading.

All defective, loose, or deteriorated masonry will be carefully cut out and the repair areas prepared in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance. The restoration mortar will be mixed and applied strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The material will be firmly compacted into the prepared areas in layers where required and finished flush with the surrounding masonry unless the existing profile dictates otherwise. Repairs will be carefully tooled and finished to achieve a close visual match with adjacent surfaces. Newly completed repairs will be protected from rapid drying, frost, and adverse weather conditions, and sufficient curing time will be allowed in accordance with the product specification.

Where window areas are affected by the masonry works, surfaces will be lightly prepared by hand. Any loose or flaking paint will be removed. Redecoration will be undertaken in a colour to match the existing. No alteration to historic window fabric is proposed as part of these works.

All works will be carried out with due regard to the preservation of historic fabric and in accordance with conservation best practice. Pedestrian access along Portland Street and Oxford Place will be maintained at all times. Barriers and appropriate signage will be installed where necessary to ensure public safety. Access equipment, including scaffold or mobile towers where required, will be erected by competent operatives. All operatives will comply with current health and safety legislation. Waste generated by the works will be removed from site and disposed of in accordance with relevant regulations.