

The Whitworth retaining wall – PN 8529
Meeting to review railings

A site meeting was held on 10th February 2026 at 08:30am with Paul Mason (MCC), Emily Booth (MCC), Jo Wavish (UoM), Ben Webber (M&CC) and Patrick Osborn (The Whitworth) to review the proposed treatment and colours for the railings.

Paint analysis

Hirst Conservation carried out analysis of paint samples from the railings and produced a report – Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester Results of Architectural Paint Research, dated 28/10/2025.

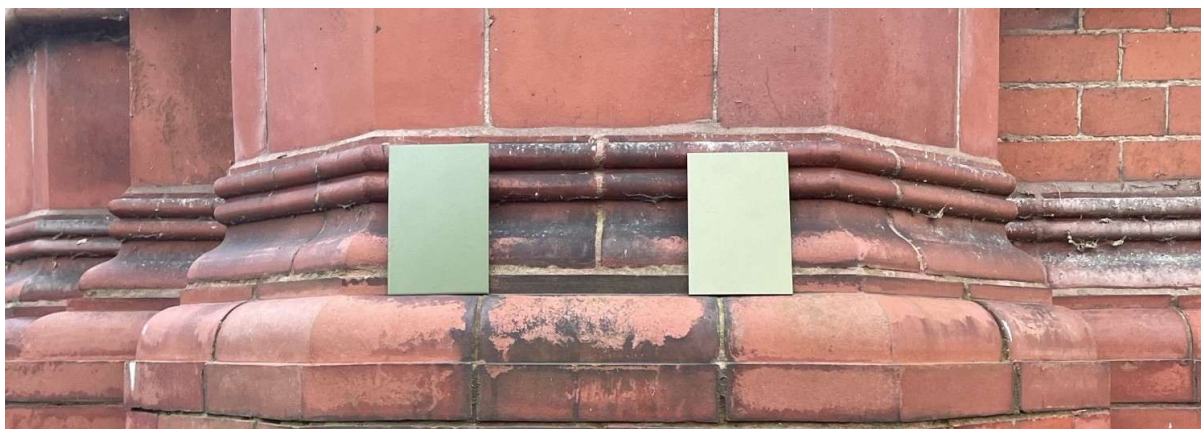
The report advised that photomicrographs of the paint samples revealed a number of green colour schemes before changing to a single application of black, and then adopting a grey colour scheme, with a number of grey schemes evident.

Hirst Conservation provided several RAL options representing the original green colour schemes. The Whitworth preferred Antique Green (RAL 110 40 20). Paul Mason asked for samples of Antique Green, Fern Green (RAL 6025) and Cactus Green (RAL 120 40 20) to be made available on site for review.

Proposed railing colours



Samples were prepared of the three green colours.



After review and discussion in the site meeting, Fern Green was felt to be too bright and different from the visual image in the report.

Cactus Green and Antique Green were therefore mounted against the external wall of the Whitworth.

The preferred colour was Cactus Green, the sample on the left-hand side of the photos above.



Proposed contractor

The proposed contractor is Safe Industries Ltd. They have carried out similar redecoration works to historic railings at the University and are currently carrying out redecoration works to a metal fire escape at Dover Street, a Grade II listed building.

Proposed treatment for the railings

The proposed paint specification is:

- Apply 2 coats of Sherwin-Williams Macropoxy C400v3 primer/intermediate, totalling 150 microns.
- Apply 1 coat of Sherwin-Williams Acrolon C137v2 Finish to 50 microns.

The proposed treatment for the railings would be to blast clean using an iron silicate abrasive to a profile of around 75 microns, followed by the application of 2 coats of c400 (primer) and c137 (top coat). An abrasive is being used as per the coating manufacturer's specification.