LOCKER & RILEY

ARTISANS IN PLASTER

DISCOTHEQUE ROYLE

233 High Street|Uxbridge|Hillingdon|UB8 1LD

HISTORIC FIBROUS PLASTER INSPECTION & CONSERVATION METHODOLOGY

LOCKER & RILEY (HERITAGE) LTD

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Project Title:

Locker & Riley (L&R) Inspection & Conservation methodology for historic fibrous plaster interior fabric to the main auditorium of Discotheque Royel

Site:

Discotheque
223 High Street
Uxbridge
Hillingdon
UB8 1LD

Location & Date of Site Visit:

Site Visit Discotheque Royal Main Auditorium 13-12-24

L&R Contract Number

H24526

Report Details

Report checked by: -Mr Gary Buckley MICWCI

Distribution:

Mr Neil Manek-Director-Harrow Habitat Ltd

Date: ……19/12/24……

Signed: gary Buckley……

Mr Gary Buckley MICWCI

on behalf of

LOCKER & RILEY (HERITAGE) LTD

Contents

1. History of the building

1.1 The Discotheque Royale Uxbridge Hillingdon London

1.1.1 This Grade II* building which was formerly listed by Historic England as:- HIGH STREET (North east side) The ABC Regal Cinema Former Regal cinema, which was constructed 1930-31 for Uxbridge Entertainments Ltd. The building was originally used as a cinema with further changes to discotheque, nightclubs. The interior of the Discotheque Royal long foyer, originally with restrained decoration, leads to a large auditorium of the stadium type. The key features of the main auditorium are the richly scalloped three- dimensional fibrous plaster ceiling in the Art Deco style and a curvaceous proscenium. The main elevational fibrous plasterwork consists of dado and splayed ante-proscenium grills in quasi-Chinese mode, set in stepped-up panels. They stand on monumental fibrous plaster false balconies of horizontal banding, between superimposed torcheres over circular banded terminals and flanked by fluted pilasters. Similar pilasters also divide up the side walls, which are enlivened with low relief cloud-like formations and sun bursts (some of it pierced for ventilation grilles)with fibrous plaster cornice of broad fluting. There are particularly elaborate treatments for the surrounds to the side doors in the form of Egyptian sun disks flanked by stylized Iyriform horns, which are then connected beneath the disks. In addition, there are two vomitory entrances in the raised seating area. The main auditorium is a fine example of a 1930s super-cinema, having an interesting facade in the Egyptianising taste and an exceptional interior.

1.1.2 The Mesari Group/Harrow Habitat Ltd are developing The Discotheque Royal Uxbridge for alternative use in conjunction with planned agreement and listed building consent from the Local Authority.

1.1.3 Locker & Riley are to provide a detailed fibrous plaster inspection methodology & typical conservation methodology/scope of works, in conjunction with guidance from Historic England and their relevant guidance document HEAG-269-*Historic Fibrous Plaster in the UK-Guidance on its care & management and advised guidance documents noted in the report.*

1.1.4 The aim is to provide a clear and detailed guidance document on the inspection process methodology and probably plaster conservation works after the full inspection/survey is completed. This should assist in the consent, planning, historic fabric retention/removal, budgeting, and coordination of the decorative fibrous plaster conservation remedial works. For compliance with the Building Safety Act 2022 all guidance documents provided by Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment, Health & Safety Executive guidance, Historic England, Institute for Historic Buildings & Conservation, ABTT Guidance Note 20,FIS (Finishes & Interior sector guidance documents on fibrous plaster),The Institute of Licensing, Collaborative Reporting on Safer Structures UK (CROSS-UK) and The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health should all be fully complied with by the duty holder.

1.1.5 The inspection currently will be to the 4no wall elevations of the main auditorium only, to record fibrous plaster conditions at the time of the future inspection and provide a comprehensive baseline of the fibrous plaster fabric. As part of the inspection, an allowance should be made for opening of the fibrous plaster fabric to assess condition of support substrate and review any structural degradation profiles for discussion with other building specialists if discovered. L&R are aware of historic water penetration to the main auditorium.

1.1.6 Locker & Riley would advise the duty holder review the L&R ABTT Guidance Note 20 reports from 2018 and ensure full compliance with the Building Safety Act 2022 is achieved to enable the provision of a Ceiling Safety Certification in compliance with ABTT GN20 & HSE guidance.

2. Introduction to the historic plaster inspection and conservation methodology.

2.1 About the scope of works

2.1.1 Mr Manek, Director for Mesari/Harrow Habitat Ltd sent an instruction to Locker and Riley (Heritage) Ltd to provide a fibrous plaster wall inspection/scope of works/methodology and typical fibrous plaster conservation methodologies for the main auditorium of The Discotheque Royel only.

2.1.2 Locker & Riley have previous knowledge of The Discotheque Royal fibrous plaster ceiling as part of the previous duty holders' legal responsibilities for compliance with health & safety guidance documents ABTT Guidance Note 20 & Historic England guidance on fibrous plaster (Mortar Renders & Plasterers 2011)& HEAG-269 and numerous guidance documents after the **Apollo Theatre ceiling collapse in December 2013**.

2.2 Aim of the inspection

2.2.1 The aim of the fibrous plaster moulding inspections is to provide clear guidance on how to complete the inspections safely and detail the inspection methodologies required to ensure suitable assessment of the fibrous plaster conservation works. Inspections will be relevant to the historical significance and condition of the fibrous plaster wall elevations including advisory recording of structural support systems for further review by competent persons.

2.2.2 L&R inspections and conservation works are based on the following British Standards Codes of Practice, Statute and Non-Statutory guidance documentation and competency requirements: -

- BS 7913:Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings.
- Historic England: Practical Building Conservation Series (Mortars, Renders & Plasters) 2011.
- ABTT Guidance Note 20.
- HEAG 269:Fibrous Plaster in the UK-Guidance on its care and management.
- BS EN 15319- general principles of design of fibrous (gypsum) plaster works. The main aim of BS EN 15319 is to the best industry guidance to ensure gypsum materials contribute to the structural integrity and reliable protective coatings of construction works. BS EN 15319 applies to both new constructions and to the refurbishment, restructuring or conversion of existing buildings.
- All Plaster Inspectors/Plaster conservators to comply with Building Safety Act 2022 competency requirements.

2.3 Limitations of the inspection

2.3.1 This guidance document is the property of Locker & Riley (Heritage) Ltd and is confidential to the client designated in the report. Whilst it may be shown to their professional advisers, the contents are not to be disclosed to, or made use of, by any third party, without express written consent. Without such consent we cannot accept no responsibility to any third party.

2.3.2 Locker & Riley (Heritage) Ltd certify that they have carried out the guidance document contained herein with due care and diligence to their best belief and knowledge based on the time and information available.

2.3.3 This guidance document is made on behalf of Locker & Riley (Heritage) Ltd. By receiving it and acting on it, the client-or third parties relying on it-accepts that no individual is personally liable in contract, tort, or breach of statutory duty (including negligence).

2.3.4 Old fibrous plasterwork ceilings and high wall elevations can represent a hazard and collapses are not uncommon, all structures degrade with time and ceilings are a cause of particular concern. Cascade failure modes can result from minor initiating events.

2.4 Locker & Riley Inspection staff and assistants with Plaster Scope Methodology

2.4.1 Mr Gary Buckley - Principal Plaster Inspector | MICWCI | City & Guilds Plastering
Mr Robert Ritchie - Conservator| MSc Historic Building Conservation

3. Historic Plaster moulding inspection methodology

3.1.1 For assessing the condition of the existing historic fibrous plaster wall mouldings in the main auditorium, suitable safe access should be installed for compliance with the working at height regulations 2005. The platforms should be installed to enable a hand on tactile and tug inspection and where required material characterisation inspection by the plaster inspector/conservator. As part of the on-site discussions, it was agreed a tracked spyder lift would provide the most safe and effective access solution.

3.1.2 For assessing the condition of the fibrous plasterwork, the first conservation objective should be for minimum intervention where least means possible is employed to ensure the original historic fabric is retained. In certain circumstances, where, for example, elements of plasterwork are missing from an otherwise complete interior, it would be appropriate to renew those elements as part of the repair and restoration of the interior. As part of the provisional site visit on the 13th December 2024, Locker & Riley recorded areas of the historic fibrous wall plasterwork are missing.

3.1.3 It was noted certain ornamental decorative feature are missing from the decorative grilles with signs of historic water ingress recorded at certain wall elevation locations.

3.1.4 The inspection methodology should commence with a detailed photographic survey of each elevation which contains the historic plasterwork. Detailed site notes should be recorded on the extent of missing plasterwork features with detailed information on how reinstatement works will be employed. Simple visual only plaster inspection will reveal much, but it will probably be necessary to open the fibrous plaster carefully in local areas to determine the method of fixation, manufacture methods and overall thickness, and number of plaster coats. Small digital borescope should be used for initial intrusive assessments, then the use of small 35mm core holes which should be taken in areas of minimal impact to the historic fibrous plaster (plain undecorated areas). The core holes & samples should provide evidence of construction methodologies i.e., scotch brackets, timber laths condition, thickness of coats, layers of hessian, lath on edge, lath flat and principal substrate condition.

3.1.5 Locker & Riley would recommend provisionally 1no inspection hole/core sample is completed to each elevation for basic plaster fabric construction information and further assessment, to ascertain required additional inspection core samples to assess areas of failure and/or visible degradation.

3.1.6 The Locker & Riley provisional site visit recorded extensive applied paint finishes to the decorative fibrous plasterwork and we would advise paint stripping is reviewed/implemented after the basic structural assessments are completed. This will enable the full decorative relief of the historic mouldings to be assessed and restored to their original C1930 condition. The paint removal will enable assessment of existing failure modes obscured by the painted coatings such as cracking, crazing, separation of coats, separation from background, bulging, partial or possible collapse, friability, efflorescence, staining, fungal growth and historic dampness-(discussion point).

3.1.7 The conservation paint stripping works will also enable any required squeeze/reverse moulds for new replacement works to be manufactured by capturing of the original C1930 Art Deco architectural detail ((discussion point).

3.1.8 Further discussions should be held with the Local authority conservation officer to review the planned works contained within the planned Listed Building Consent and any effect it may have on the historic fibrous plaster. If major works are planned prior to any conservation works commencing. The recording of fibrous plaster sections/profiles should be discussed and implemented to record the historic detail and pattern repeats prior to any removal. Dependent on the planned construction phase works, a review of temporary propping should also be discussed for additional protection to the fibrous plasterwork in conjunction with the conservation surveys.

3.1.9 Prior to any plaster surveys being commenced on site, the duty holder must provide full details of the current Asbestos Refurbishment & Demolition Survey to the plaster consultants. This will enable a detailed assessment

of any potential asbestos risk in conjunction with the plaster surveys and planned conservation work. All back of ceiling inspections should have clear guidance on asbestos risks in conjunction with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR).Locker & Riley advise in 2018 the previous duty holder carried out asbestos inspections and removal of asbestos in the main auditorium ceiling void. Locker & Riley would advise attempts are made to find the inspections and company involved for full verification of asbestos removal works completed. Locker & Riley have received an Asbestos Report from the duty holder which will require a review and approval prior to any fibrous plaster surveys commencing.

3.1.10 Prior to any historic fibrous plaster inspection being commenced to the back of the main auditorium ceiling, all areas should be pre assessed by the duty holder for cleanliness and satisfactory safe access. It is very common to find historic debris, insulation, and general deleterious materials located to the back of the ceiling. Locker & Riley advise the duty holder to assess the specific areas prior to the plaster inspector/consultant being commissioned to commence onsite inspections.

3.1.11 If cleaning works to the back of the ceiling is required to enable an assessment of the back of the historic ceiling, careful consideration should be given to a competent contractor with experience in cleaning historic plaster backgrounds for compliance with ABTT Guidance Note 20 & Historic England HEAG269.

3.1.12 As part of the back of fibrous plaster inspection, it would be prudent to have a competent structural engineer engaged with the project. They can assess historic timber support systems for any signs of wet rot, dry rot, and mycelium growth and structural failure modes. Historic properties can be susceptible to failed joists at the junction of solid masonry brickwork wall construction. Solid walls can be susceptible to moisture penetration affecting timber substrate and secondary & tertiary plaster support substrates. Locker & Riley will include moisture readings of relevant timber/plaster components within any future survey reports for assessment.

3.1.13 Locker & Riley have assumed the building will remain empty until the refurbishment works commence and would advise 2no operatives should be engaged with the onsite survey works for compliance with the company lone working policy. This compliance procedure should also be aligned with duty holders lone working policy.

3.1.14 All survey reports should be completed in conjunction with BS:7913 Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings.

3.1.15 The use of MEWPS should be carefully planned for any building inspections in-conjunction with 1999 Management Regulations-Risk Assessments provision. Full assessment of ground conditions, floor loadings and ground stability must be reviewed by competent person with full RAMS sign off before works commence.

3.1.16 The duty holder should advise of all health & safety proposals for maintaining safe working/health & safety procedures whilst the plaster surveyors/consultants are based on site.

4. Historic fibrous plaster moulding replacement & conservation methodology.

4.1.1 As part of the future planned historic fibrous plaster inspection, fully detailed location drawings must be provided for all proposed repair of the historic plaster, the historic plaster consultant should arrange a meeting with the local conservation officer to fully brief the areas of missing plaster, areas of repair and reasons for removal and reinstatement. Conservation methodologies can consist of localised patch repairs, ranging from surface defects to full depth fibrous plaster reinstatement. Suitable tabulated records for each repair must be recorded in the body of the detailed reports. The report should also contain reference to the requirement for relevant drawings, detailed scope of works document (specific to the works package) detailed specification, relevant drawings, sub contract terms & conditions, relevant drawings, competency and compliance guidance.

4.1.2 Renewal of fibrous plaster mouldings and profiles will require specific materials such as zinc template for matching the profiles of the original plaster moulding. The use of small and large silicone site squeeze should be used to capture the historic profile and decorative ornamentation to ensure all details are recorded relevant to

the ceiling & wall line which should be marked clearly on the zinc template. For all significant decorative plaster mouldings, paint stripping should be assessed to ensure all original crisp hand modelled details are captured as part of the replacement works. Sympathetic eco based paint strippers should be specified to ensure no further chemical damage occurs to the historic plasterwork.

4.1.3 Removal of failed sections of fibrous plaster mouldings should be carefully removed and all unsuitable substrate assessed for reinstatement or replaced as required. To remove existing damaged/failed fibrous plaster the extent of the failed area should be removed trying to limit the extent of damage to timber lathing by cutting with hand saws and multi tools with temporary surface restraint washers installed to secure stable plasterwork. The defective plaster section can be removed by carefully levering it away from the substrate.

4.1.4 For small section of surface fibrous plaster repair, the use of insitu zinc running template can be used, mounted on a wooden horse which is run along the line of the moulding guided by a wooden rod fixed temporarily to the wall or ceiling line. This conservation process requires the substrate and base layer of the fibrous plaster to be of satisfactory condition.

4.1.5 For larger sections of missing decorative fibrous plaster, full size reverse moulds will require forming off site in a fibrous plaster workshop. The reverse moulds can be formed in either silicone, plaster or glass fibre and will be used to produce new fibrous plaster casts using the same techniques and traditional methods employed by fibrous plaster contractors C1850,when the production method was patented. There are 3no main components used in the manufacture of fibrous plaster, Gypsum (plaster of Paris) Jute hessian and timber lathing. All new fibrous plaster components must be carefully lined in and levelled up to the existing plaster before fixing and stopping in. On occasions where the repair works is of only small areas the works can be produced on site. This will involve setting up a small workshop on site for craft operatives to manufacture and fix small plaster section.

4.1.6 Certain areas of historic fibrous plaster which have suffered from degradation may be able to be repaired with insitu methodologies with the use of specialist plaster conservation processes like alpha plaster lamination and multi axial reinforcement with new steel wire and timber reinforcement supplementation.

4.1.7 For the fixing of new pre cast fibrous plaster units, suitable robust backgrounds and substrate will be required to provide fixation points. All fixing works should be compliant with FIS guidance documents. The use of steel framing with either/or timber supplementation should be used. Assessment by structural engineer may be required for safety certification.

4.1.8 Fibrous plaster C1930 often used only jute hessian and plaster of Paris for plaster wadding, which was a common site-based process for suspending ceilings and decorative features. It is a common view for plaster specialists to advise that jute hessian is susceptible to degradation and large reduction in tensile strength can result in wadding support failure, such as the Apollo Theatre Ceiling Collapse in 2013. As part of the plaster inspections an assessment of plaster wadding methods will be carried out where installed.

4.1.9 Locker & Riley have referenced in the appendices the previous L&R reports completed as part of the duty holder compliance for ABTT Guidance Note 20 in 2018.

5 Site record photos from 2018 ABTT Guidance Note 20 inspection

(1 above)-(2 below) cleaning of back of ceiling in progress for ABTT GN20 ceiling inspection-2018-(above and below) for assessment of stability & Integrity-Duty Holder C2018-Duty Holder removed all dangerous asbestos from the main auditorium ceiling void under instruction from previous duty holder.

(3)-Inspection of plaster hessian wadding in main auditorium ceiling void with metal detector (Koltec Cover Meter)-ABTT GN20 inspection-further details of inspection report to be reviewed in 2018 Locker & Riley ABTT GN20 report-The back of ceiling of the main auditorium consists of 5no distinct bays-Duty Holder instructed 1no bay to be fully cleaned with all obstructions fully removed (insulation & chicken wire)-Remaining 4no ceiling bays have not received any formal ceiling inspection-Duty Holder to review compliance with Building Safety Act 2022 before opening main auditorium to general public.

Appendix A - Official Advice from Historic England

Official list entry
Heritage Category:
Listed Building
Grade:
II*
List Entry Number:
1080111
Date first listed:
15-Nov-1976
Date of most recent amendment:
05-Oct-2000
List Entry Name:
DISCOTHEQUE ROYLE
Statutory Address 1:
DISCOTHEQUE ROYLE, HIGH STREET
The scope of legal protection for listed buildings
This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

Understanding list entries

Corrections and minor amendments

Location
Statutory Address:
DISCOTHEQUE ROYLE, HIGH STREET
The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:
Greater London Authority
District:
Hillingdon (London Borough)
Parish:
Non-Civil Parish
National Grid Reference:
TQ 05895 83954
Details
804/21/478 HIGH STREET 15-NOV-1976 (North east side) Discotheque Royle

II* Formerly listed as:- HIGH STREET (North east side) The ABC Regal Cinema Former Regal cinema, constructed 1930-31 for Uxbridge Entertainments Ltd. (a company controlled by the cinema speculator A.E. Abrahams). Architect: E. Norman Bailey. Faience frontage. Rear walls in a combination of stock brick and brown facing brick. Roof not seen on entrance front but from the rear, the pitched roof of the auditorium is visible. Stadium auditorium with small stage, behind long foyer. EXTERIOR: Symmetrical, two-storey, Egyptianising faience facade, consisting of one wide and two narrow flanking bays. Four original doors, over which is a cantilevered canopy. Above are five tall windows (stepping-up in the centre),

standing on a shallow balcony. There is one tall window in each of the flanking bays. The parapet trim is of multi-coloured faience, culminating in a keystone of the same material. The name of the cinema, REGAL, appears in faience over the tall central windows. Chevron glazing to all windows. The returns are hemmed in by adjacent property. On one corner there is a stair tower expressed as a canted bay, with rendered dressings to the windows and doorways and a stepped-up parapet. INTERIOR: A long foyer, originally with restrained decoration, leads to a large auditorium of the stadium type, ie, where the rear seating is raised on stepping rather than having a supported balcony. The main features of the auditorium are the richly scalloped three- dimensional ceiling in the Art Deco manner (there were no light fitments, all lighting being indirect) and a curvaceous proscenium. Over a dado, the splayed ante-proscenium grills are in quasi-Chinese mode, set in stepped-up panels. They stand on monumental false balconies of horizontal banding, between superimposed torcheres over circular banded terminals and flanked by fluted pilasters. Similar pilasters also divide up the side walls, which are enlivened with low relief cloud-like formations and sun bursts (some of it pierced for ventilation grilles). Cornice of broad fluting. There are particularly elaborate treatments for the surrounds to the side doors in the form of Egyptian sun disks flanked by stylized lyriform horns, which are then connected beneath the disks. In addition, there are two vomitory entrances in the raised seating area. The Compton cinema organ survives, although the console is no longer in its original position in the orchestra pit. Shallow stage. ANALYSIS: A fine example of a 1930s super-cinema, having an interesting facade in the Egyptianising taste and an exceptional interior, which the author David Atwell refers to as' one of the most highly developed exercises in Art Deco attempted in any cinema'. The finest surviving work of the cinema architect E Norman Bailey. The building closed as a cinema in 1977.

SOURCES: David Atwell, Cathedrals of the Movies, The Architectural Press, London, 1980, pages 11-111, 101 and 104-105. Bridge Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner: The Buildings of England -London 3: North West, Penguin Books, London, 1991, page 365. Allen Eyles, ABC -The First Name in Entertainment, Cinema Theatre Association, Burgess Hill, 1993, pages 25 and 156. Richard Gray, Cinemas in Britain, Lund Humphries, London, 1996, pages 114-5 and 136.

Listing NGR: TQ0589583954

Legacy
The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:
203040
Legacy System:
LBS

Appendix B – Competency of report author for historic fibrous plaster guidance in conjunction with FIS guidance & Building Safety Act 2022.

- Basic & Advanced City Guilds in Plastering-Solid & Fibrous-Formal Apprenticeship.
- CITB-award-British Gypsum Plastering Award-Plastering Apprenticeship Coursework.
- Regional (Southern England) Apprentice-Blue Circle Award-Plastering Apprentice.
- Construction Crafts-City Guilds-Supplementary Studies.
- CSCS-Academically Qualified person.
- CSCS-Proffessionaly Qualified Person.
- Member of The Institute of Clerk of Works & Construction Inspectorate of Great Britain.
- CSCS-Heritage Fibrous Plastering.
- CSCS-Heritage Solid Plastering.
- HNC-Building Studies.
- Licentiateship of the City Guilds-Building & Construction.
- SMSTS-Site Manager Safety Training Scheme.
- 46 years in Construction-(Conservation Project -New Build-Refurbishment-Civil Engineering-Fibrous Plastering projects)
- Provision of technical assistance for Historic England guidance document on Fibrous Plaster.
- Provision of technical assistance for Bath University guidance document on Fibrous Plaster.

Appendix C – Further Reading

Locker & Riley-Deltic Ltd, Limited Baseline Fibrous Plaster Ceiling Inspection for Uxbridge Night Club
Gary Buckley
Published by Locker & Riley-2018

Plastering, Plain and Decorative
William Millar
Published by Hans eBooks Oct. 2017 (2017)
ISBN 10: 3337369197 ISBN 13: 9783337369194

CITB Building Plasterer Standard Scheme of Training BE 330 Second Edition
Revised 1977, reprinted with Amendments MAY 1980

Plastering: An Encyclopaedia
Brian Pegg, W. D. Stagg
Published by Wiley, 2007
ISBN: 140515604X, 9781405156042

Plastering
J. B. Taylor
Published by Longman Scientific & Technical, 1990
ISBN: 0582056349, 9780582056343

Practical Building Conservation: Mortars, Renders & Plasterers
Alison Henry & John Stewart
Published by Ashgate Publishing, 2012
ISBN: 0754645592, 9780754645597

Historic England Guidance-HEAG-269
Alison Henry & John Stewart
Publication Date-June 2019