

2nd May 2017

Attention: Michael Wilson

Eskbank House Heritage Centre

[REDACTED]

RE: Eskbank Railway Station



Dear Michael,

Thanks for the opportunity to offer our services to ensure the longevity of this once proud, now neglected heritage building.

I consider the most prudent method to restore this important example of rail infrastructure is to turnaround the conditions that are causing its accelerated deterioration.



Priorities in the Conservation and Restoration of Eskbank Railway Station

1: Safety

- (a) Install temporary fencing, barricading to ensure safety of restoration workers by isolating any egress to railway tracks and also ensuring safety of Rail Corp, NSW Trains staff from building site dangers.

████████████████████

- (b) Inspect electrical wiring, switches, fuse box to ensure electrical safety.
Isolate and provide construction power supply with Earth leakage circuit breaker.

████████████████████

The long term objective would be to upgrade electrical supply, wiring, switches etc. to current standards, whilst utilising original or matching heritage electrical hardware.

2: Ground levels

Much of the deterioration to Eskbank Station is occurring due to excessive ground moisture (rising damp).

Timber floors are rotting and suffering from white ant damage due to damp ground conditions.

I would advise to regrade external ground levels to ensure rain water runoff falls away from building.



Sub floor vent 'buried' under increased ground levels



The Long term objective would be to remove all concrete and bitumen paving to ground level external to building and also remove all concrete slab floors within the building. It seems where the original timber floors have rotted out they have been replaced with concrete.

Concrete and bitumen seals the ground; this stops ground moisture from evaporating at ground level and forces excessive moisture into porous sandstone and brick walling. This excessive moisture held within walls then causes exfoliation and fretting of sandstone, damage to jointing and also causes wall plaster and render to become drummy, paint to peel, timber to rot etc.

I would advise a trial excavation to look for original ground level and original paving probably buried under concrete and bitumen.



After the trial excavation we can decide on the most beneficial and cost effective method of reinstating external paving levels back to original levels and surface finishes.

We can then also price for the external excavation cost.

Once we have decided on the extent of internal flooring to be reinstated back to timber flooring, I can then price this component.

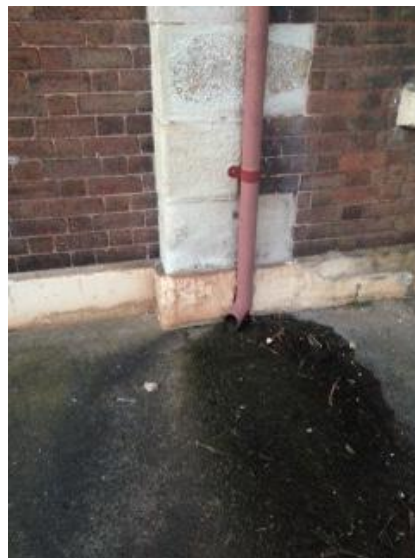
3: Rainwater

Leaking rooves, gutters, down pipes, storm water pipes, all contribute to excessive ground moisture.

I would recommend to:

- * inspect roof areas
- *refasten loose roofing iron and ridges
- *repair flashings to chimneys
- *clear gutters of blockages, repair as required
- *clear downpipes of obstructions, refasten where loose, replace where missing or leaking
- *clear storm water lines of blockages, establish outlet positions
- *provide additional storm water lines to downpipes currently out letting onto ground at base of walling

All downpipes to discharge into grated sumps connected to storm water. This will allow future access to downpipes and storm water lines for routine maintenance to clear blockages.



4: Coatings

In many areas sandstone and brick walling has been coated in cement render and/or painted.

These coatings seal the surface and stop the porous masonry from 'breathing' forcing rising damp further up walling and increasing the area of walling suffering from fretting etc.

All of these coatings should be removed from external face of walling.



5: Reinstatement

The original brick and stone wall at the western end of station building has been demolished and a weatherboard addition built.

To remove the weatherboard addition and build in brick and stone end wall to match original design would reinstate the symmetry and return the building to its original design.



After the before mentioned works are carried out I would then propose to cut out severely fretted base course stones. New matching sandstone blocks would be laid on 20kg/m² lead flashings to reduce rising damp issues.

Cost dependent on extent of replacements.



One of the chimneys has lost its sandstone chimney capping. To supply, shape and install capping to match original, I would [REDACTED].



Missing chimney capping (second from left)

New chimney capping made to match existing



After the before mentioned items of work are carried out then further works can commence, such as:

External –

- *repair and replacement of joinery items including – doors, windows, fascias
- * preparing and painting
- * repointing of joints to stone and brick walling

Internal –

- * repalstering of walls

- * painting and repairs
- * reinstatement of joinery
- *reinstatement of flooring
- * glazing repairs, etc.

Hoping these recommendations give a direction to halt the ongoing deterioration of this once grand building and return it to its former glory.



Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Please note all amounts are estimates excluding GST

Kind regards

Ron Lodewijks

Stone Mason, Builder
Builders License Number 38402

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