

ROBBEN ISLAND MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON 'A' SECTION: URGENT REQUIREMENT FOR REMEDIAL ACTION TO CONSERVE THE TANGIBLE FABRIC

INTRODUCTION

This report is part of a larger survey on the state of conservation of the 'A' Section of the MSP on Robben Island. The defects shown here are endemic to the MSP and the Island. To ensure the conservation of the interior fabric the exterior of any structure must remain as intact as possible. The exterior of the MSP was extensively renovated in 2007/2008. This was the culmination of a long reiterative process started in 2001. The lack of maintenance to essential elements of the exterior since 2008 has seen the deterioration of this protective envelope and endangers the interior.

METHODOLOGY

Two aspects of urgent repair and maintenance were identified. The first deals with exterior fabric in a state of disrepair that has little or no effect on the interior and the second deals with exterior fabric in a state of disrepair that has a direct effect on the interior fabric.

A problem area that is not part of this urgent repair is the ablutions in the N-S corridor. Moisture has affected the adjacent cells but more invasive investigation will be required to isolate the source. [see images 6640 to 6643.

EXTERIOR PROBLEMS NOT DIRECTLY AFFECTING THE INTERIOR

1. Exterior yard walls.

These walls are constructed from friable soft red clay bricks with a hard splatter plaster. The splatter plaster is subject to peeling from the soft brick as the materials are not compatible. With the 2008 repairs the splatter plaster was redone. The plaster was renewed regularly during the prison period as it protects the soft inside bricks. Small patches of plaster are deteriorating and require urgent attention before further deterioration. See images 5076 and 5077.

2. Exterior yard gates.

The gates are rusting and all have seized on their hinges. This has resulted in either the hinges detaching from the frame or the collapse of the frame. See images 5110, 5113 and 5114.

The eastern wall visitor exit gate adjacent to the SE tower has seized in place. This threatens the security of the space as well as allowing animal ingress. See image 4895.

EXTERIOR PROBLEMS DIRECTLY AFFECTING THE INTERIOR

1. Recreation area door leading to exterior.

One panel of the double door of Recreation Area 01 has come off its hinges and is stored on its side. The bullet hinges were placed on the windowsill at the time of the photographic survey. These were handed to the collections staff for safe keeping. The opening places the interior at risk from weather and animals.

The second panel is still functional but the hinges are rusting and are at risk of detaching. Images 5894, 5895, 5925, 5932 and 5933.

2. Windows

A number of windows have rusted and seized in place in the open position. See images 5932 for the recreation area, 6568 and 6569 for cell windows.

3. Gutters

Gutter seams need to be resealed. Distinct drip lines can be seen under each gutter seam. There is no provision for runoff and water drains into the soil close to the walls. See image 6545, 6546, 6550, 6551, 6556.

A section of gutter on the southern facade of approximately 2 metres has fallen off the fascia. The gutter has been placed between the wall and water tank. [Images, 6558, 6559, 6560, 6561, 6562] Water drains directly into the soils. The concrete platform for the water tank and the garden retaining wall has the effect of damming up water. [See images 6563 to 6567] The result has been rising damp on the interior of the southern walls of cells 12 and 13. [Images 6570 to 6574]

4. Downpipes

Down pipes on the western and southern side sides have no runoff and water seeps straight into the soils adjacent to the walls. This may be one of the causes of the damp outside and inside the walls. Longer term remedial action requires the installation of water channels. While this may affect the authenticity of the elements the longer term conservation of the fabric must be considered. [see images 6553, 6554, 6555]

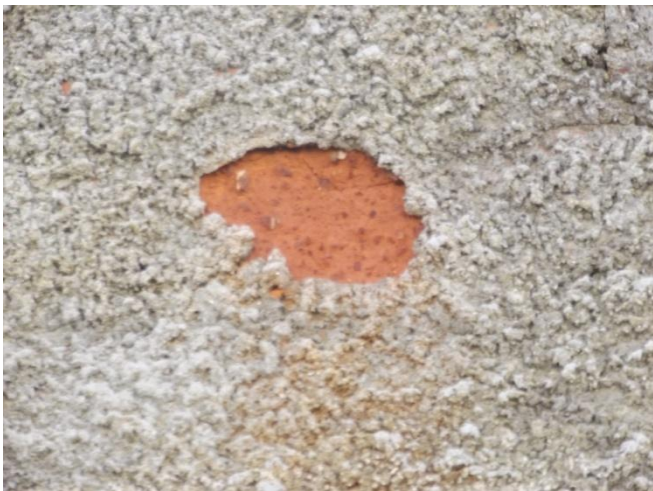
Down pipes on the northern side courtyards are leaking and are causing acute damage on the interior corners of cells 04, 06, 16, 18, 29 and 31. [See images 6622 to 6640]

EXTERIOR YARDS

DSCF 4895



5076



5077



5110



5113



5114



RECREATION AREA

5894



5925



5932



5895



5933



EXTERIOR WALLS AND GUTTERING

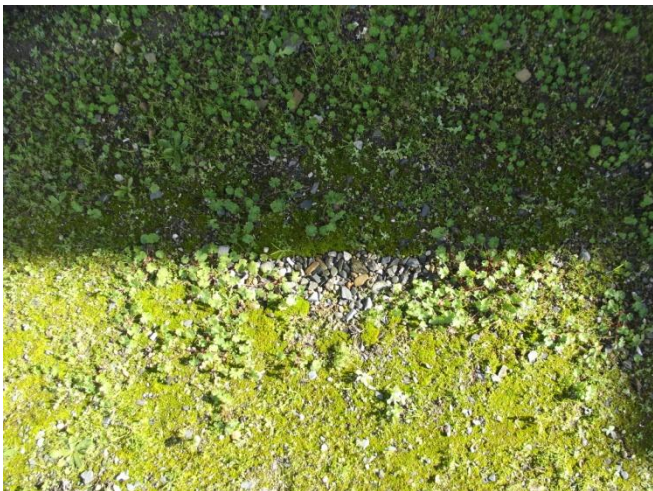
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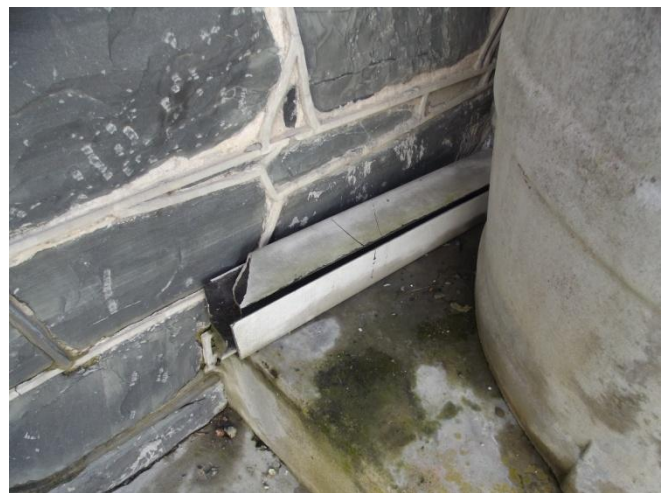
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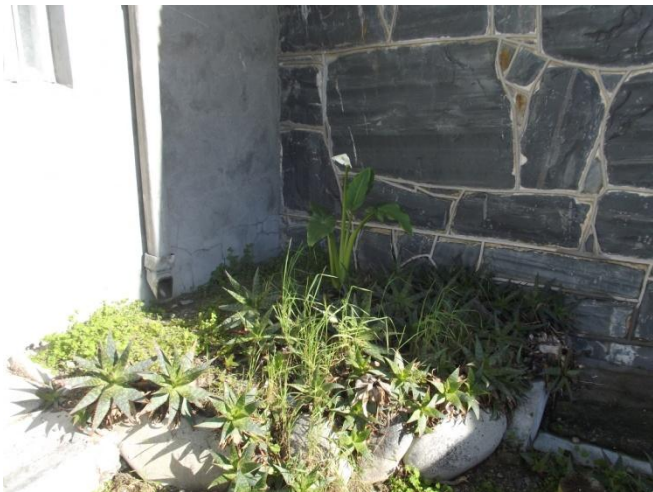
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6573



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6574



6622



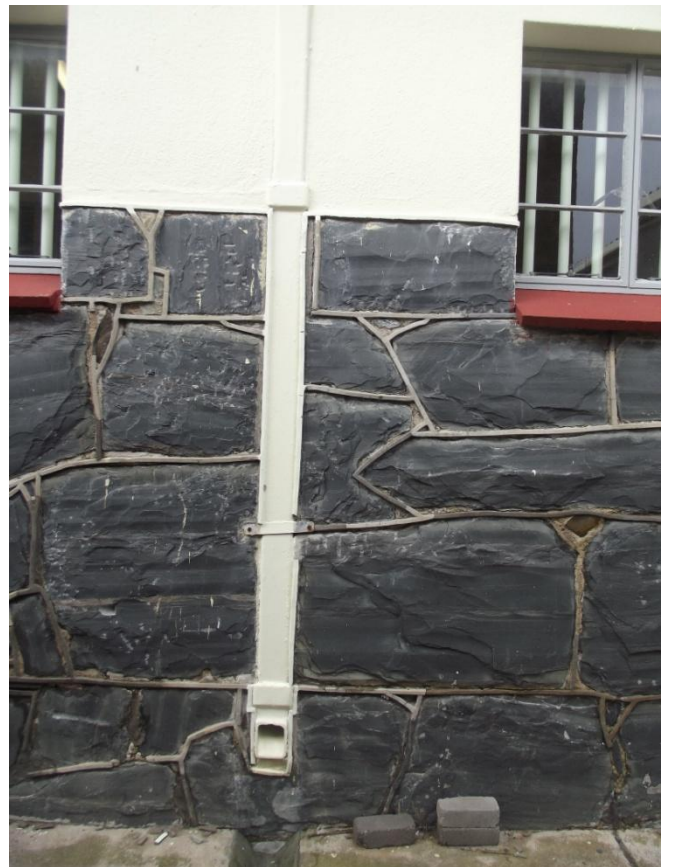
6624



6623



6625



6626



6628



6627



6629



6630



6632 CELL 29



6631



6633



6634



6636 CELL 31



6635



6637



6638



6641 ABLUTIONS IN N-S CORRIDOR



6639



6642 CELL 28



6640 CELL 27



6643

