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Japan Services RENT Ltd
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Dear Sirs

Re: Hanger Hill Gardens Estate

Instruction

- 1.1 To inspect a limited number of windows and provide an opinion as to the suitability of repair/redecoration work, recently/currently being undertaken.
- 1.2 We made an inspection of certain windows serving F10 Fife Court & F11 Essex House on Thursday 5th November, accompanied by Mr Q Phillipps.
- 1.3 We have been provided with a number of relevant documents including the specification and a series of photos of typical repair work during its various stages (from another flat in the property).

F10 Fife Court

Findings

- 2.1 The window inspected within the main front facing living room comprises an eight section bay with metal casement/fixed units and metal top hung/fixed fanlights above. The glazing is in leaded light form, all single glazed.
- 2.2 The external cill has been replaced and repairs have been carried out to the lower sections of the mullions. Six fixed panes have been replaced and new beading has been fitted. The external parts of the window have been painted.
- 2.3 We understand that the work is complete, as far as the contractor is concerned.
- 2.4 The lessee complained that, in beginning to redecorate the interior of the window, she found rot at the base of one of the mullions (see photo 1 below) and she has noticed water ingress coming through under at least one of the new fixed panes, the width of the lead to the new units does not match the original and has concerns that the internal window board slopes considerably towards the outside.



Photo 1

- 2.5 Externally, we would highlight the open joint at the corner of the new cill and the fact that the other has been dry fitted (but is still reasonably tight), the apparent use of thin sections of (what appears to be un-treated softwood) to face up the mullions, the wide joint where the 'splice' has been made, the inadequate cover afforded by the beading and the general quality of the decoration. (Illustrated by photos below).



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

Red line added to indicate top of internal frame, due to lack of step in cill



Photo 5

Opinion

- 3.1 The specification does include for internal repairs to be carried out (where necessary) and clearly, despite the severity of the rot, this has not been done. It also demonstrates the seriousness/extent of the decay and indicates that the cutting back has not been taken far enough.
- 3.2 This is very clear from the photos which have been provided which show just the face of the mullions being cut back, apparently leaving rotted wood and voids behind, a thin (approx 10-12mm) section of wood being used to face up with the edges being filled and in some cases, a small cover bead applied.
- 3.3 Leaving decayed wood in the main body of the mullion is totally un-acceptable and does not, in any way, accord to the manufacturer's instructions of the Repair Care range of products.
- 3.4 The work carried out to the mullions is a 'cover up'. The specification is 'loose' but notwithstanding, the work is not up to any sort of acceptable standard. The 'splice' joint is very prominent, even from the street and should have been 'lost' in the filling process. (photo 3 above)
- 3.5 The cill replacement apparently utilises a hardwood (un-known species). The corner mitre joints appear to have been simply butted together and from shrinkage/thermal movement, one of the two joints has opened up. Water ingress over time will cause the cill to decay, at this point, unless rectified. (Photo 2 above)
- 3.6 The mitre joints should be opened up and filled with Repair Care filler.
- 3.7 This cill in question does contain a throat/drip edge although I believe that replacements elsewhere have lacked this essential detail.
- 3.8 The lead flashing beneath the cill has been disturbed in the course of the work of replacement and has not been properly re-dressed, neither has the joint between the

underside of the cill and the lead been filled, leaving the detail susceptible to driven/blown rainwater ingress.

- 3.9 One issue with the replacement cill is that its profile does not match what seems to be the original which contains a step. This results in the bottom bead not covering the inside bead which is clearly visible through the glass. (photo 4 above)
- 3.10 It does not appear that the beading to the outer face of the new glazing has been set in place with a flexible sealant (such as silicone). This 'dry' joint will therefore allow water to penetrate to the interior, as the lessee states is happening.
- 3.11 As regards the incorrect width of lead, we understand that the contractor is aware is will be correcting this.
- 3.12 The fact that the internal window boards incline to the outside is a historic issue and one which is no doubt the lessee's liability under the lease (assuming normal terms). It is an aesthetic matter and not one which the contractor should be expected to correct.
- 3.13 We have not had the advantage of seeing how the woodwork generally has been prepared and the paint applied, in the course of redecoration. However, looking at the finish, the work appears shoddy and somewhat patchy. (photo 5 above)

F11 Essex House

Findings/Opinion

- 4.1 A number of windows were inspected, primarily those to the Master (rear side) bedroom, bathroom and Dining (front) room. Although repair works were apparently undertaken many months ago, decoration is still to be completed.
- 4.2 Master (Rear/side) bedroom - the lessee thought that the cill had not been replaced in this current contract and that internal splicing was from a previous contract. It appears that the external mullions have been re-faced.



Photo 6



Photo 7

- 4.3 This work follows the same format as described above and is simply another 'cover up'.
- 4.4 It appears that some decorative work has been carried to this window but the finish indicates that preparatory work has been lacking. Unprotected softwood is visible in parts. (photo 6)
- 4.5 An item which is included in the specification relates to the fixing back of the 'mock' timbers where these have pulled away from the building. One such example is immediately above the head of this window. It could be that the timber has not be re-fixed yet or that it has come loose again after fixing. (photo 8)



Photo 8



Photo 9

- 4.5 Bathroom – The base of the frame is decayed to such an extent that filler has been forced through past the inside face of the frame. This suggests that far more extensive work is required that appears to have been undertaken.(photo 9)
- 4.6 Again the decorative finish is very poor.
- 4.7 Dining (front) room – The front window has had a new cill fitted and a number of beads replaced (we are informed between 3-6 August this year) and apart from some superficial clear sealant, has not been touched since and is still open to the elements. All replacement woodwork should have been fitted ready primed, at the very least.
- 4.8 There is decayed wood on the inside of the frame which has not been tackled. Where beading has been fitted, a mastic type seal has been applied but in places this has pulled away leaving an entry route for water penetration.(photo 10)



Photo 10

Top arrow shows decay internally,
lower arrow shows mastic having pulled away

Conclusions & Recommendations

- 5.1 It would appear that the work on these two flats (and no doubt the others on the Estate) is not being carried out to anywhere near an acceptable standard, in respect of both woodwork repairs and decoration.
- 5.2 The specification is extremely weak and very vague. It seems to be being left to the contractor to decide the extent of repair and he is clearly taking the easy/superficial route which we can only describe as a 'bodge job'.
- 5.3 It is extremely unlikely that any real longevity will be achieved from the works being carried out.

Yours faithfully


Clarke Associates