



Rochdale Town Hall

Historic Lighting Column Report

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1.0 Damaged lamppost

On Saturday 13th August 2022, a trial removal to one of the historic lighting columns to the front of the building took place. The lifting operation was undertaken by an in-house experienced qualified Slinger/Banks-person, and a qualified excavator operator. Once removed, the lamppost was to be stored safely onsite for collection by lighting specialists, Great British Lighting who are to undertake restorative and lighting upgrades on the lampposts.

The methodology for lifting the lamppost was for the bottom concrete foundation to be excavated fully around the outside, and a webbed sling to be used to lift the lamppost. This sling was to be placed in the centre of the post (half the way up), and a 13-tonne excavator would be used to lift the lamppost out. The slinger/banks-person then instructed the machine operator to lift the lamppost approx. 4 inches from the ground to ensure the load was stable and ready for moving. After about 15 seconds the lamppost separated in the middle just below the sling position, the bottom section dropped the 4 inches back to the floor and the top section then fell towards the ground. This caused the top section to break into several pieces. (As per the pictures below).

The works to remove the rest of the lampposts onsite then ceased until a different methodology for removal could be agreed. The incident was reported to the Site Manager on the Monday morning, who then informed the client/design team of the incident.





HHS have huge concerns regarding the removal and re-instatement of the historic lampposts and have engaged with different specialists for advice on how to remove them. All specialists refused to price to remove the lampposts due to the “brittle nature” of this type of lamppost.

Local historic lighting restoration company MetCraft attended site to review the broken lamppost and offer advice on the remaining ones. They said that they could undertake paint removal/repainting and lighting upgrades onsite but would need a watertight enclosure constructing, with full access around each lamppost to undertake the works. They also said it was not advisable to move them from their current position and wouldn't be able to offer any guarantees that the lampposts were structurally sound. Reviewing the broken one, and the existing ones, he commented on the visible cracks at high level, and the thickness of the cast iron to the lighting arm, which in places is “much thinner than would be expected”. They believed the lampposts were a “cheap modern recreation”, mainly due to the casting thickness and the fact that the two halves to the upper section had been cast separately and been stuck together using resin and a grub screw - and estimated that they were approx. 50 years old.

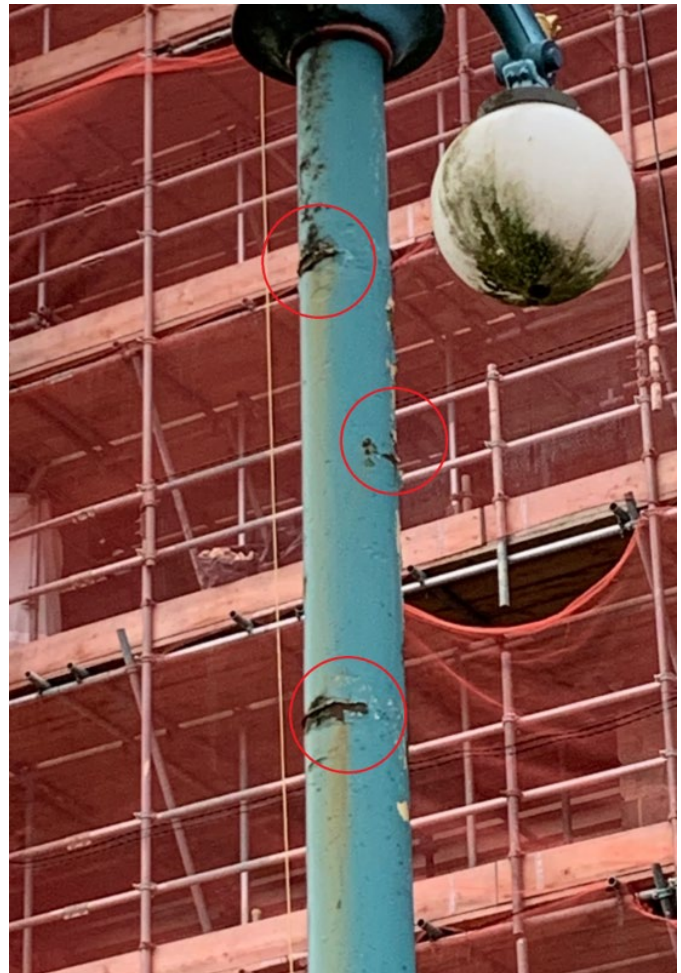
2.0 Remaining Lampposts

HHS and MetCraft have undertaken joint visual inspections from the ground and noted several defects, examples of which are highlighted in the images below.

One of the main issues with the remaining columns is the split to the light arm. The arm itself has a thin section of cast iron, which in MetCraft's opinion could fracture at any time. Hairline fractures to the column may also be hidden behind the several layers of paintwork.

Should the Client / Design team confirm they would like HHS to proceed with attempting to remove the remaining lights, HHS will take no responsibility for any damage caused during the process, nor should they fail in the future.

We enclose details of a TW Design (via scaffold & timber support frame) that we have been working on should this be required.







Thin section to Lighting Arm

2.1 TW Design/Lifting Plan

