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**From:** Glen McConnell [ | ]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 18 January 2012 12:04 a.m.  
**To:** Mark Zarifeh  
**Subject:** Report for Commission

Hi Mark, the following is a summation of my involvement in the events leading to the collapse of 116 Lichfield st (Reuben Blades)

You may want to comment on some of this:

As detailed in the emails I have sent you, & in the email provided to you by Structex Engineering, I had very serious concerns over the safety of the building & anyone in the vicinity of the building. These concerns were expressed repeatedly to the engineer who reportedly each time passed them to either or all of the insurers, council, owners & others whose names appear on the emails.

As these advices were repeatedly ignored I became more insistent & eventually went to the extent of climbing inside the roof of the dangerous building with a fellow project manager Fred Haering to take photos & draw plans of the damage. [refer to Sean's email dated 9 Feb 2010 which includes some of these pics & a plan based off the report we provided to Sean]

Fred & I agreed that the building was in imminent danger of collapse in any significant seismic event & I again passed on my concerns, this time with interior pics to support our opinion.

What eventually seemed to do the trick was when I drew up a plan of how I viewed the damaged to be affecting the south wall overhanging Vida Hair on Manchester St (also owned by the Weirsma family who owned 116 Lichfield St.

My understanding is that following the provision of this document Sean was able to persuade the Loss Adjuster to inspect the building. However I also understand that our request for authority to make the building safe was denied.

In addition & also as detailed in the provided email(s) my concerns were passed to council. We & Vincie Billante the then Head of Recovery for CCC had only recently been forced by a pressure group of local retailers to remove the cordon on Lichfield St. This group had used its connections to council senior management to force the unwise removal of this cordon.

You will note from my email provided to you by Structex that I requested a larger cordon & that it be on Manchester St. This is the area where the building did subsequently fall - killing & injuring a number of pedestrians in the process. Had my requested cordon been in place these people would have been most likely saved.

It is worth noting here that the accepted fall zone for any structure is 1.5 times it's height. In the case of 116 Lichfield St this proved quite accurate as in falling it even crushed parked cars on the far side of Manchester St [refer my provided pics taken on 23 Feb].

(I would like to point out that even now this safe fall zone principle is not always applied in ChCh - case in point being the clock tower on Victoria St which is badly fractured &, again, likely to fall in a significant event. It's cordon is only a couple of meters when it should probably be the width of the street)

On the day of the quake I took Sean to inspect our project buildings on Manchester St & as we stopped to go to lunch we again commented on the need for urgent stabilising work on 116 Lichfield St. Had Sean not had a prior engagement we would have also inspected this building again & would likely have been additional casualties when it fell.

When the quake did strike it so happened that my eldest son Brent, a Foreman in Fortis Construction, was walking back up the Street in the direction of 116 & saw it fall. He rushed to help, assisted by around a dozen of our workers.

Fred my fellow Project Manager also arrived on the scene in minutes & coordinated much of the rescue. They freed many people from the ruins, cared for the injured & held the dying.

This needless tragedy is forever etched in their hearts & minds.

I arrived after around 30 mins by which time the streets were emptying out & the Police had taken over the area.

Fred & I later spent the night inside PGC as part of that rescue - but it is Reuben Blades that forever eats at us.

My question is this:

Why were we ignored so many times, & who decided a few retailers pockets were worth the risk to so many lives, a risk that proved so fatal?

--

*Glen McConnell*

**Senior Project Manager**

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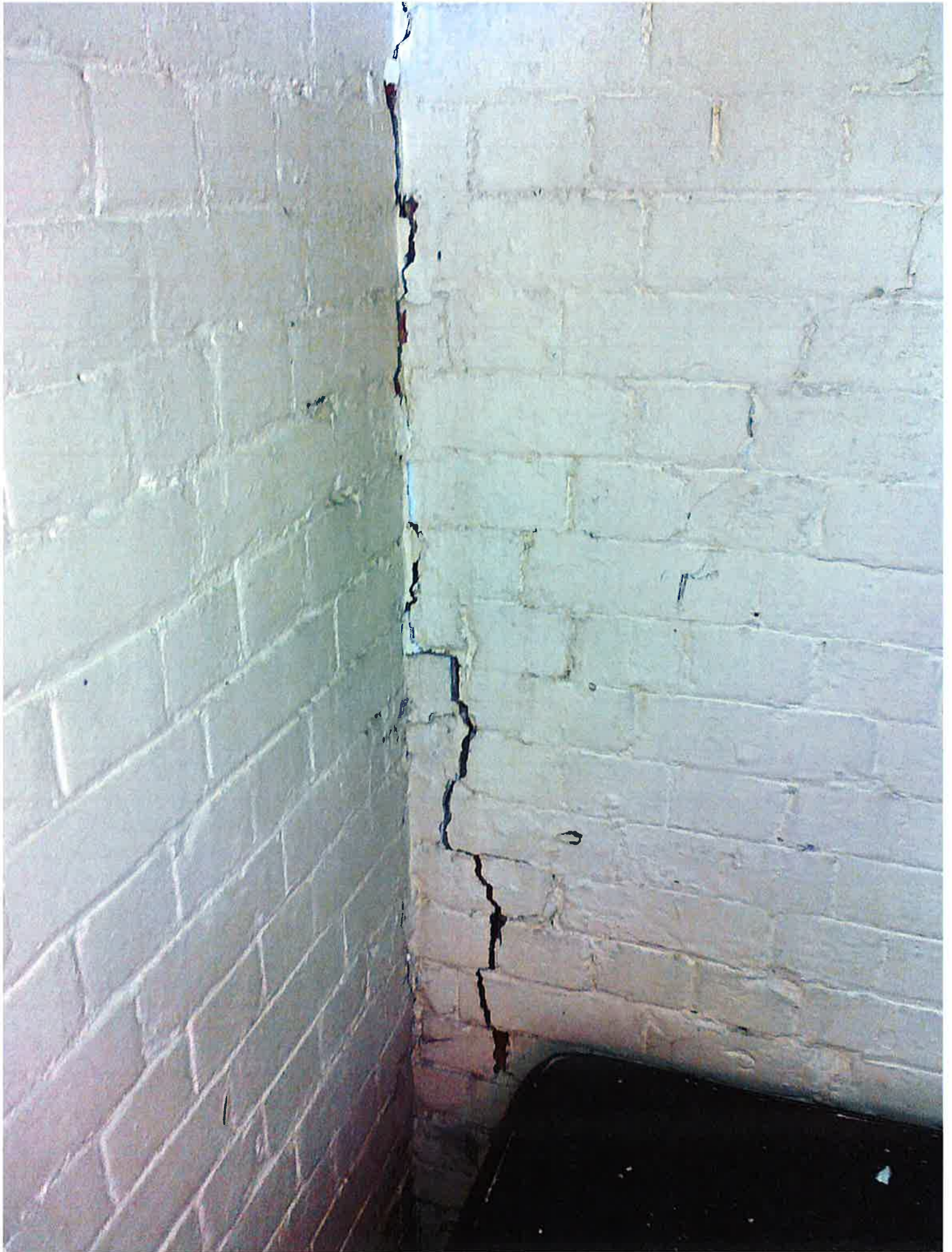
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## engineer's instruction

date 4/2/11

structex

project 116 Lichfield St.

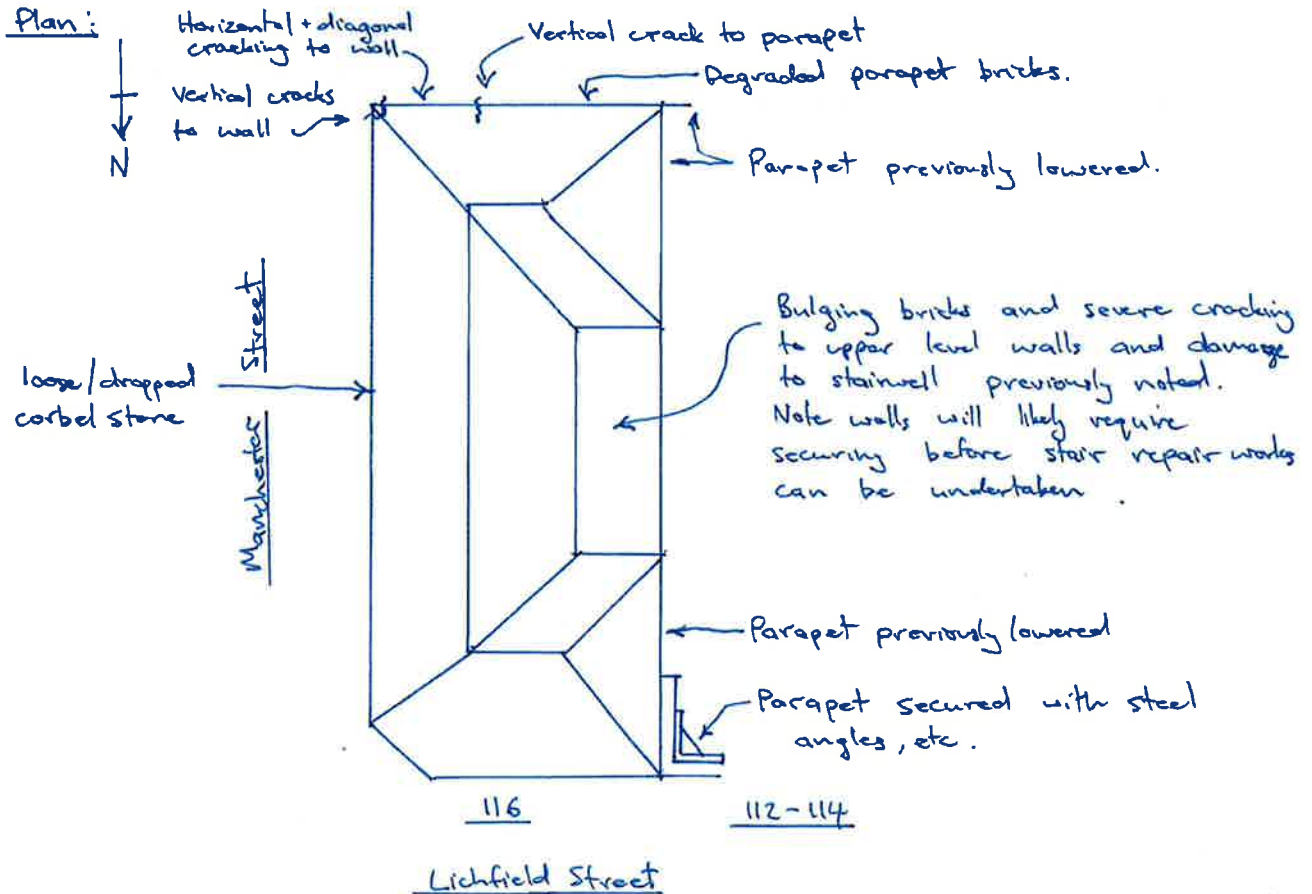
by SG

ref 5708

distribution

 Jason - Cunningham  
Lindsay
  Eelco - Owner
  Glen - Fortis  
Construction
  Andrew Bell - Seragon

Following advice from contractor we have revisited the property to view further damage from recent earthquakes.



These high level bricks and stone blocks are potential fall hazards to the areas directly adjacent and should be secured as soon as possible, (or the fall areas cordoned off).

We suggest securing works be undertaken as per attached (contractor to wait for insurer approval).



project 116 Lichfield

date 9/2/11

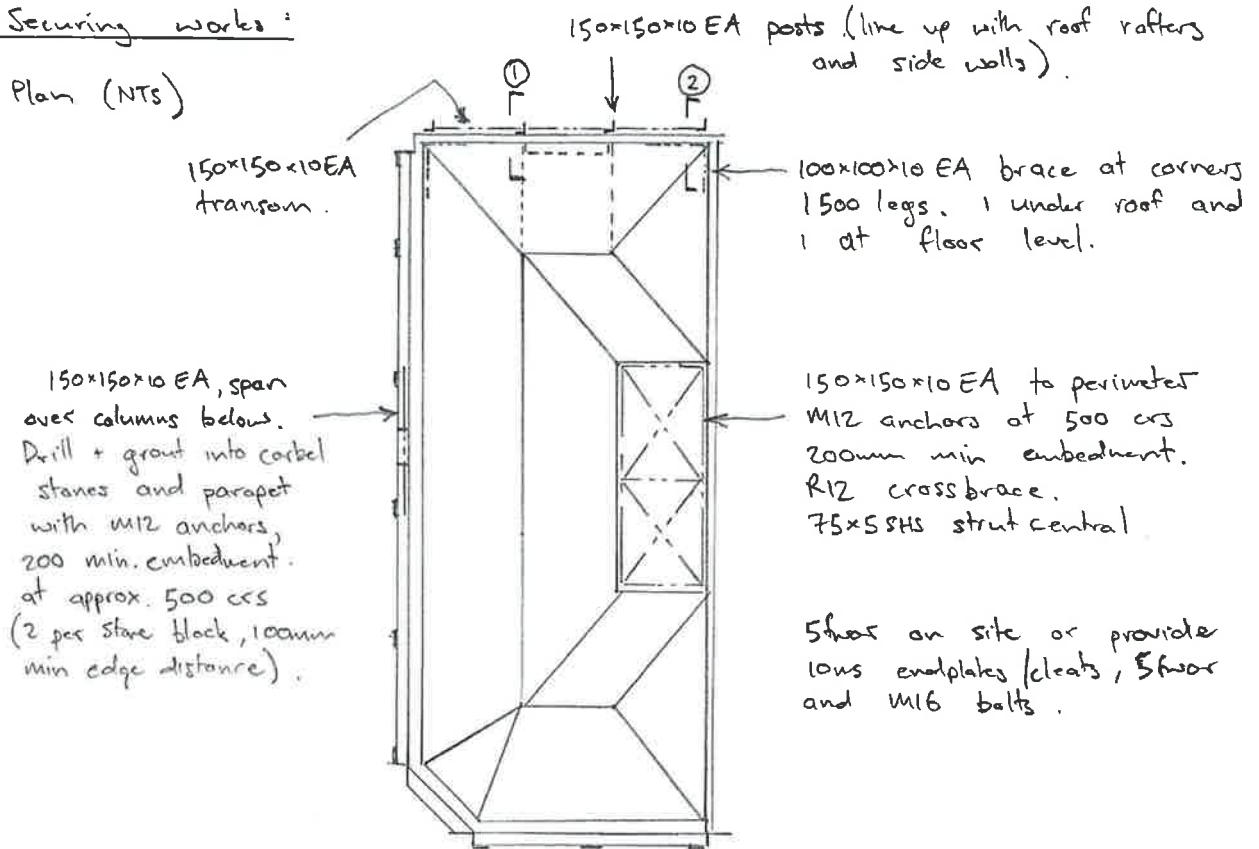
file

by SG

ref

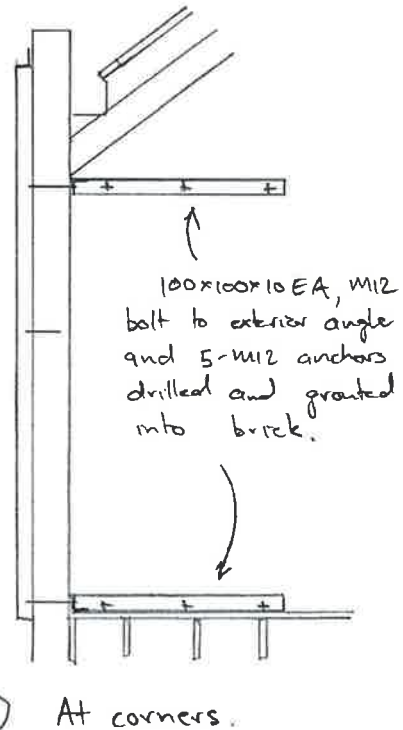
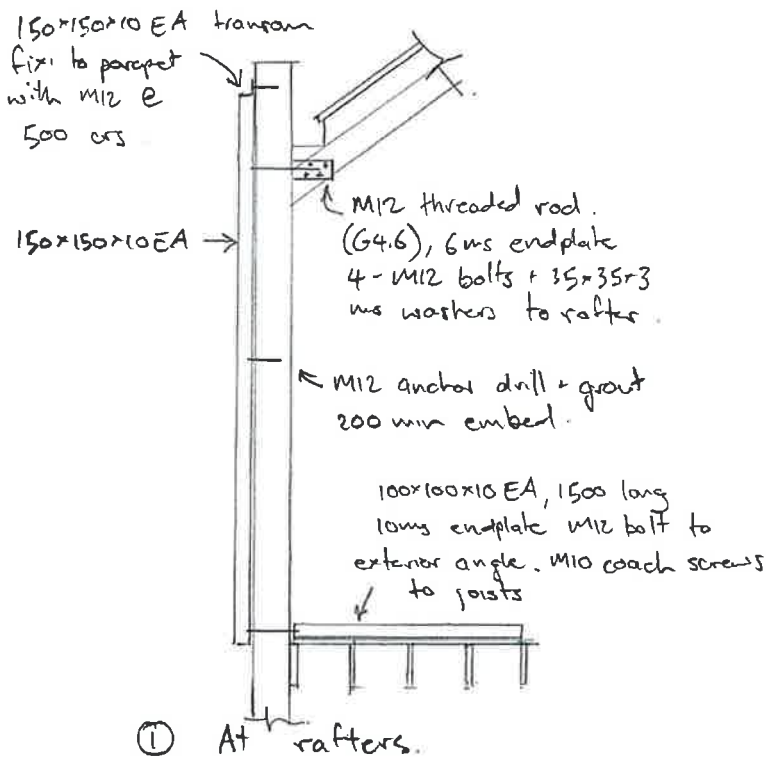
Securing works:

Plan (NTS)



150x150x10 EA transom  
fix to parapet with M12 e 500 CRS

150x150x10 EA



Refer also to marked up photos



150 x 150 x 10

cracks









150 x 150 x 10 EA + M12 anchors  
at 500 c/s to perimeter

75 x 5 SHS

R12 crossbrace



---

**From:** Glen McConnell [  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 17 January 2012 10:47 p.m.  
**To:** Mark Zarifeh  
**Subject:** Fwd: progressive earthquake damage to buildings

Mark - here's a fascinating email sent by the owner of the neighbouring 112 Lichfield St just days before the Feb quake.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Glen McConnell <>  
**Date:** 17 January 2012 22:01  
**Subject:** Fwd: progressive earthquake damage to buildings  
**To:** Glen McConnell <>

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Ernest Duval <etp@etp.co.nz>  
**Date:** 14 February 2011 12:02  
**Subject:** progressive earthquake damage to buildings  
**To:** Sean Gardiner <SGardiner@structex.co.nz>, Glen McConnell <>, John Fortis Construction <>

Hi,

I am trying to get a better understanding of what 'damage' to a building means, resulting from a single event, series of events or starting with a single event and progressing.

With some buildings, we have seen damage resulting from the Sept 4<sup>th</sup> earthquake which was a single identifiable event which specifically manifested itself on various parts of a building in the form of visible damage. Since that date, we have been advised of over 4000 aftershocks/quakes including a significant one on boxing day.

Whilst specific 'headline' quakes have caused damage we have also recorded a progressive deterioration with each aftershock. For instance, 129 and 108-110 Manchester have gradually worsened. Some buildings react differently to the signature of each quake. Eg 112 Lichfield sustained damage on Sept 4<sup>th</sup> and then completely different damage on boxing day with a weaker quake.

Effectively we have had several thousand earthquakes of differing magnitudes and characteristics. If a building is progressively deteriorating to varying degrees depending on the individual quakes then how can we ascertain when the damage occurred?

Underwriters are interpreting that damage is based on date specific events (no doubt to justify the 33% rule which was in force on Sept 4<sup>th</sup>) however subsequently, ongoing earthquakes have continued to weaken structures after when the 67% rule was instigated. If a building is shaken to the extent that part of it fails by collapse etc then the balance of the structure must have been subjected to varying degrees of damage so that overall it does not possess the same strength it had prior to the events.

So, How do you establish when the damage occurred where its both ongoing and progressive. This is likely to be a topic of discussion later in the week.

**Ernest Duval.**  
Trust Manager  
EQUITY TRUST PACIFIC  
Christchurch.  
New Zealand.  
Tel :64 3 3664 829  
64 3 3650 892  
Fax : 64 3 3653 016  
Cell : (027) 22 64 123  
E mail : [etp@etp.co.nz](mailto:etp@etp.co.nz)

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--

*Glen McConnell*

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---

**From:** Glen McConnell [mailto: ]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 17 January 2012 10:44 p.m.  
**To:** Mark Zarifeh  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: 2 pictures for you

Mark, this may have some relevance - its an email showing the strengthening we had completed on the party wall between 112 & 116 Lichfield St. This held in the quake & was later pulled apart by Southern Demolition as they removed 116 (Reuben Blades)

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Glen McConnell < >  
**Date:** 17 January 2012 21:52  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: 2 pictures for you  
**To:** Glen McConnell < >

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Sean Gardiner <[SGardiner@structex.co.nz](mailto:SGardiner@structex.co.nz)>  
**Date:** 2 February 2011 16:19  
**Subject:** FW: 2 pictures for you  
**To:** glen mcconnell < >

Glen,  
Do you have any photos of the side corbel stones, or photos from the front?  
Do you know what the "brace" is?  
Cheers

Sean Gardiner  
[sgardiner@structex.co.nz](mailto:sgardiner@structex.co.nz)  
structex  
Studio2 Limited  
6 Norwich Quay  
Lyttelton, New Zealand  
Tel: 021 462 723 Fax: 03 968 4927

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Picasa Web Albums [mailto:[picasawebalbums-noreply@google.com](mailto:picasawebalbums-noreply@google.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 2 February 2011 4:07 p.m.  
**To:** Sean Gardiner  
**Subject:** 2 pictures for you

You have been sent 2 pictures.

DSC03544.JPG

DSC03543.JPG

These pictures were sent with Picasa, from Google.

Try it out here: <http://picasa.google.com/>

--

*Glen McConnell*

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---

**From:** Glen McConnell |  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 17 January 2012 10:41 p.m.  
**To:** Mark Zarifeh  
**Subject:** Fwd: 116 Lichfield

Hi Mark, here's a copy of the report Sean sent to the Insurers asking for permission to strengthen 116 Lichfield St

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Glen McConnell < >  
**Date:** 17 January 2012 21:45  
**Subject:** Fwd: 116 Lichfield  
**To:** Glen McConnell < >

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Sean Gardiner <[SGardiner@structex.co.nz](mailto:SGardiner@structex.co.nz)>  
**Date:** 9 February 2011 10:07  
**Subject:** 116 Lichfield  
**To:** [andrew\\_bell@sergon.co.nz](mailto:andrew_bell@sergon.co.nz)  
**Cc:** Eelco Wiersma < >, Glen McConnell < >, Jason Lavington <[JLavington@cl-nz.com](mailto:JLavington@cl-nz.com)>

Hi Andrew,  
As discussed, please find attached our report and suggested securing works for 116 Lichfield.  
Kind regards,  
Sean

Sean Gardiner  
[sgardiner@structex.co.nz](mailto:sgardiner@structex.co.nz)  
structex  
Studio2 Limited  
6 Norwich Quay  
Lyttelton, New Zealand  
Tel: 021 462 723 Fax: 03 968 4927

-----Original Message-----

**From:** DocuCentre-III C2201 [<mailto:scan@nzgeoscience.co.nz>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 9 February 2011 10:58 a.m.

To: Sean Gardiner  
Subject: Scan Data from XeroxCopier

Number of Images: 5  
Attachment File Type: PDF

Device Name: DocuCentre-III C2201  
Device Location:

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*Glen McConnell*

**Senior Project Manager**

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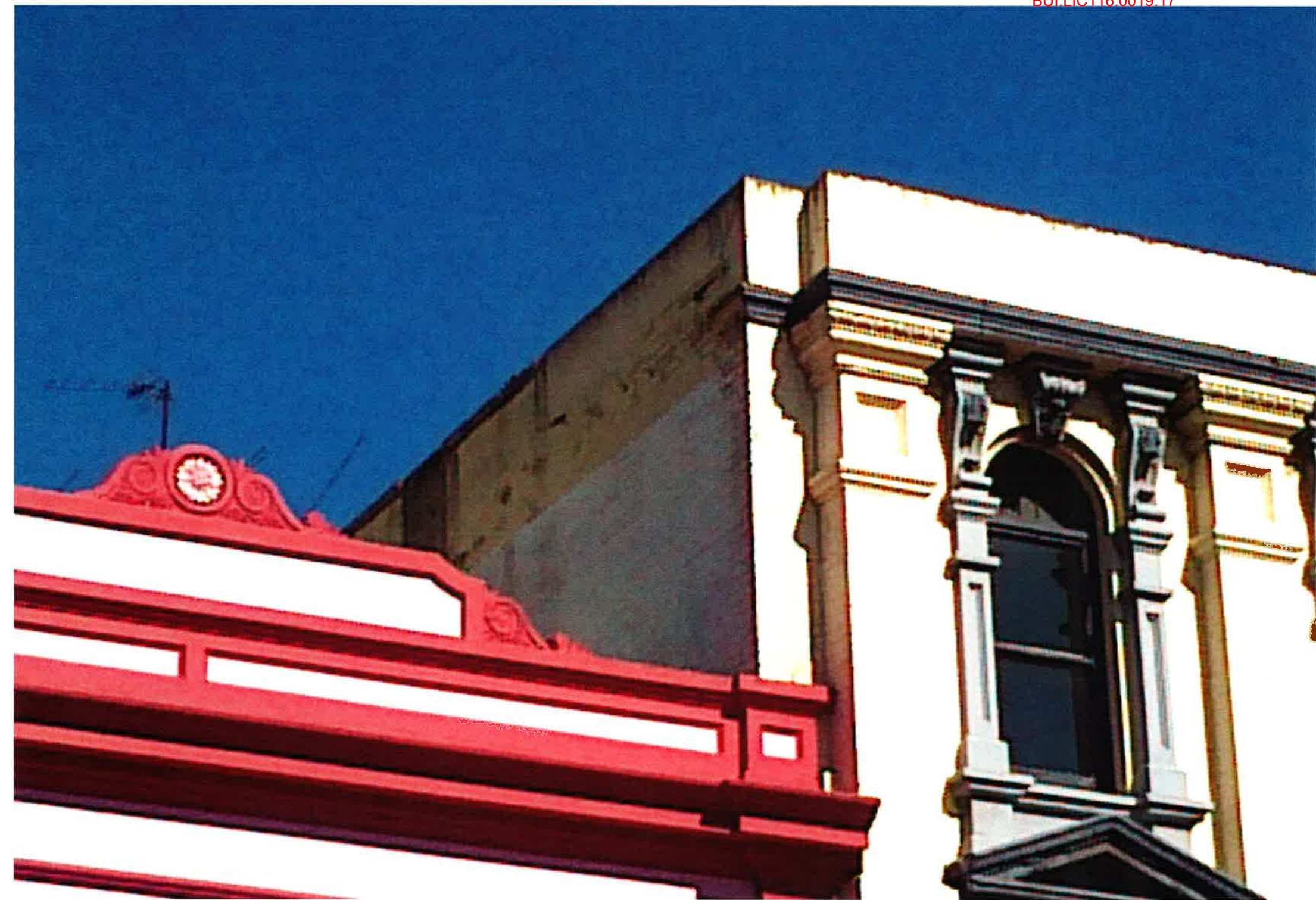
[info@aplusgroup.co.nz](mailto:info@aplusgroup.co.nz)

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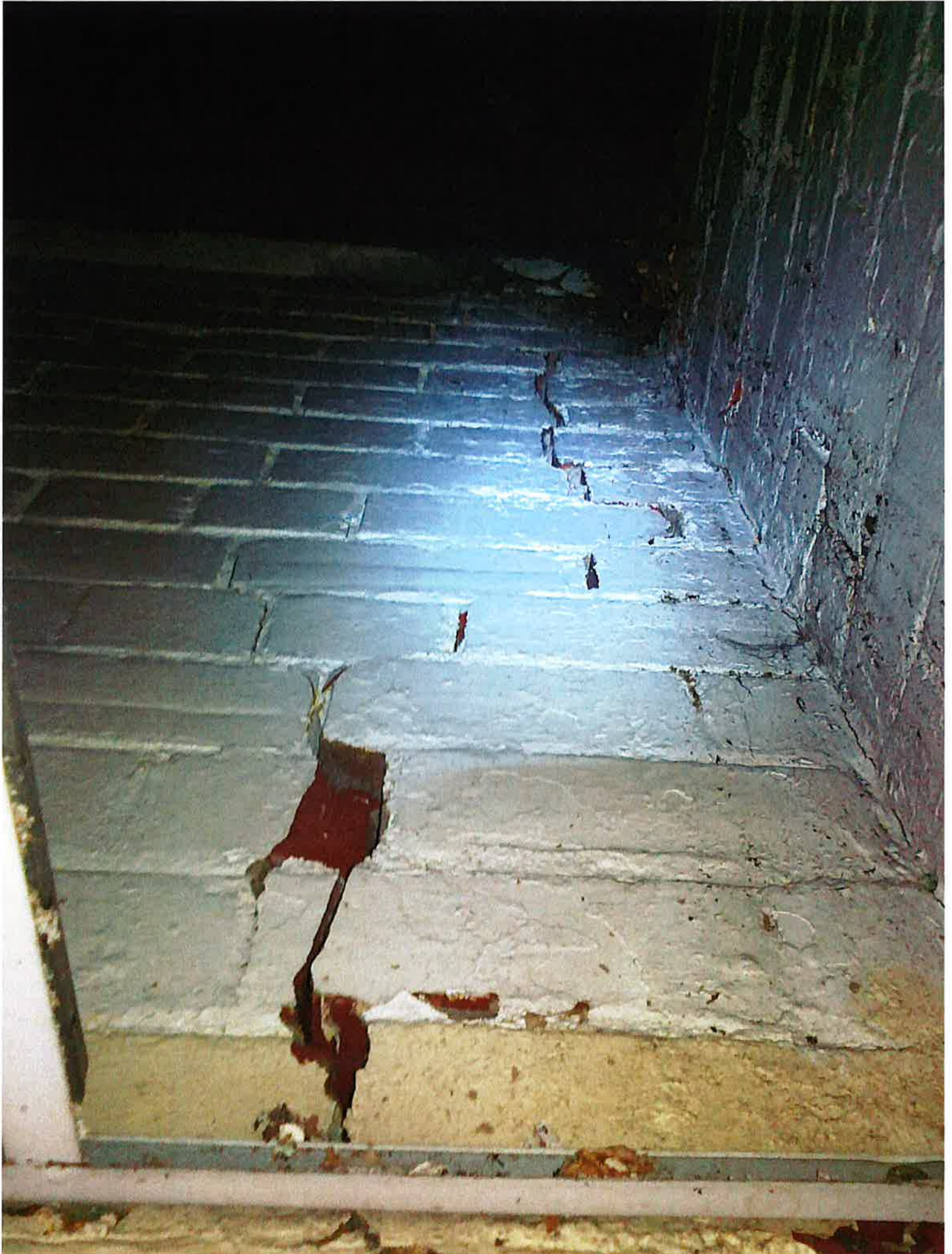




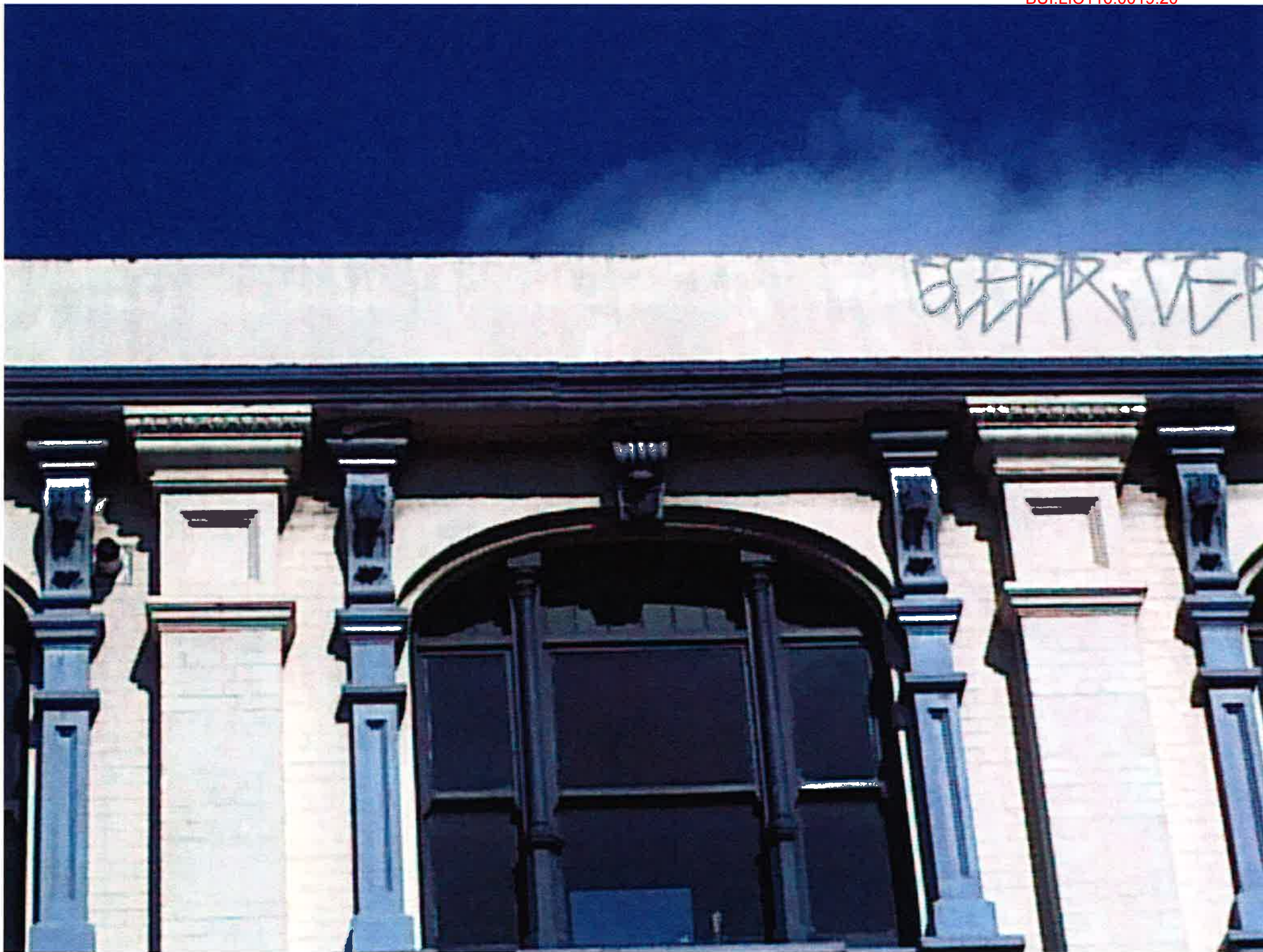




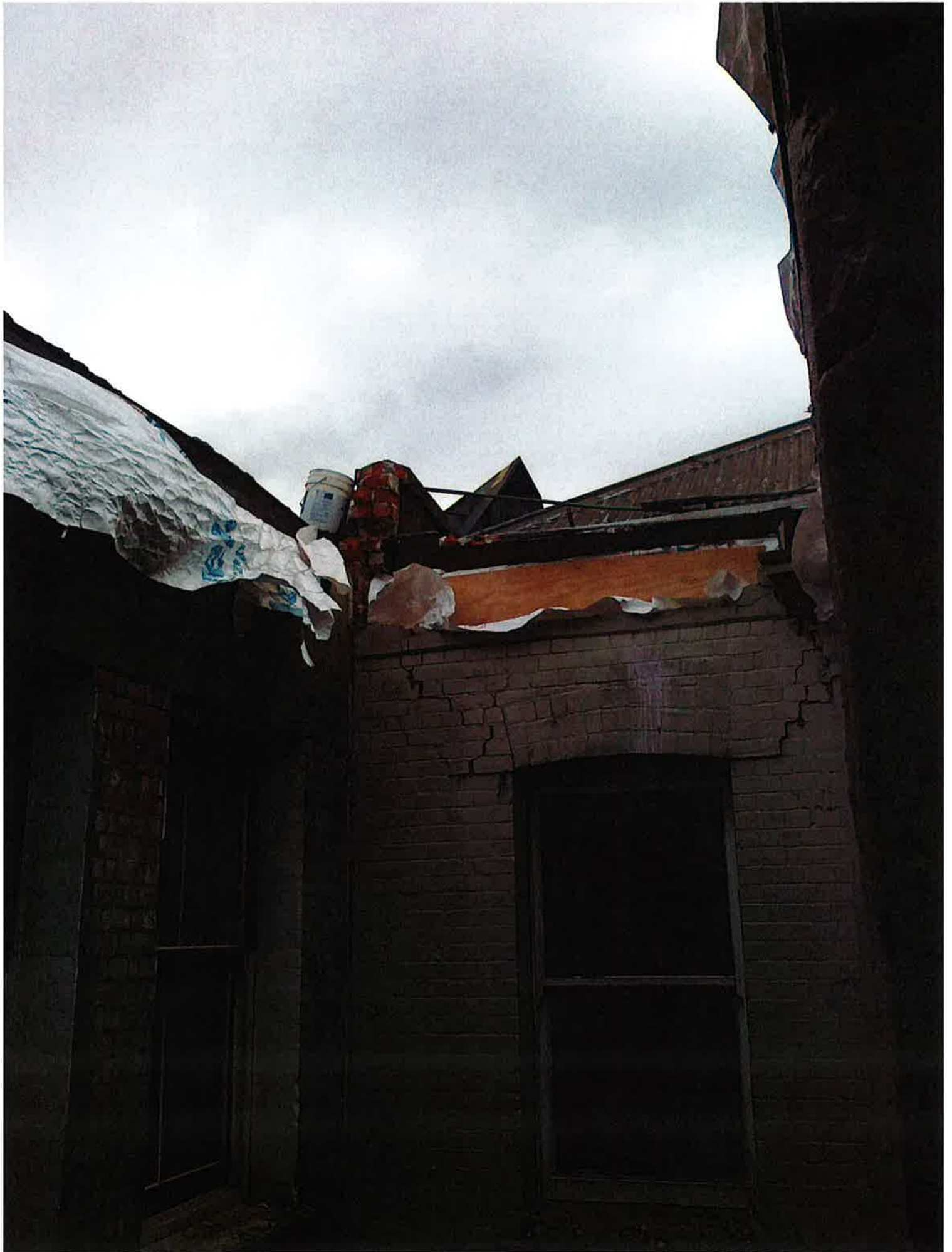
















engineer's instruction

date 4/2/11

structex

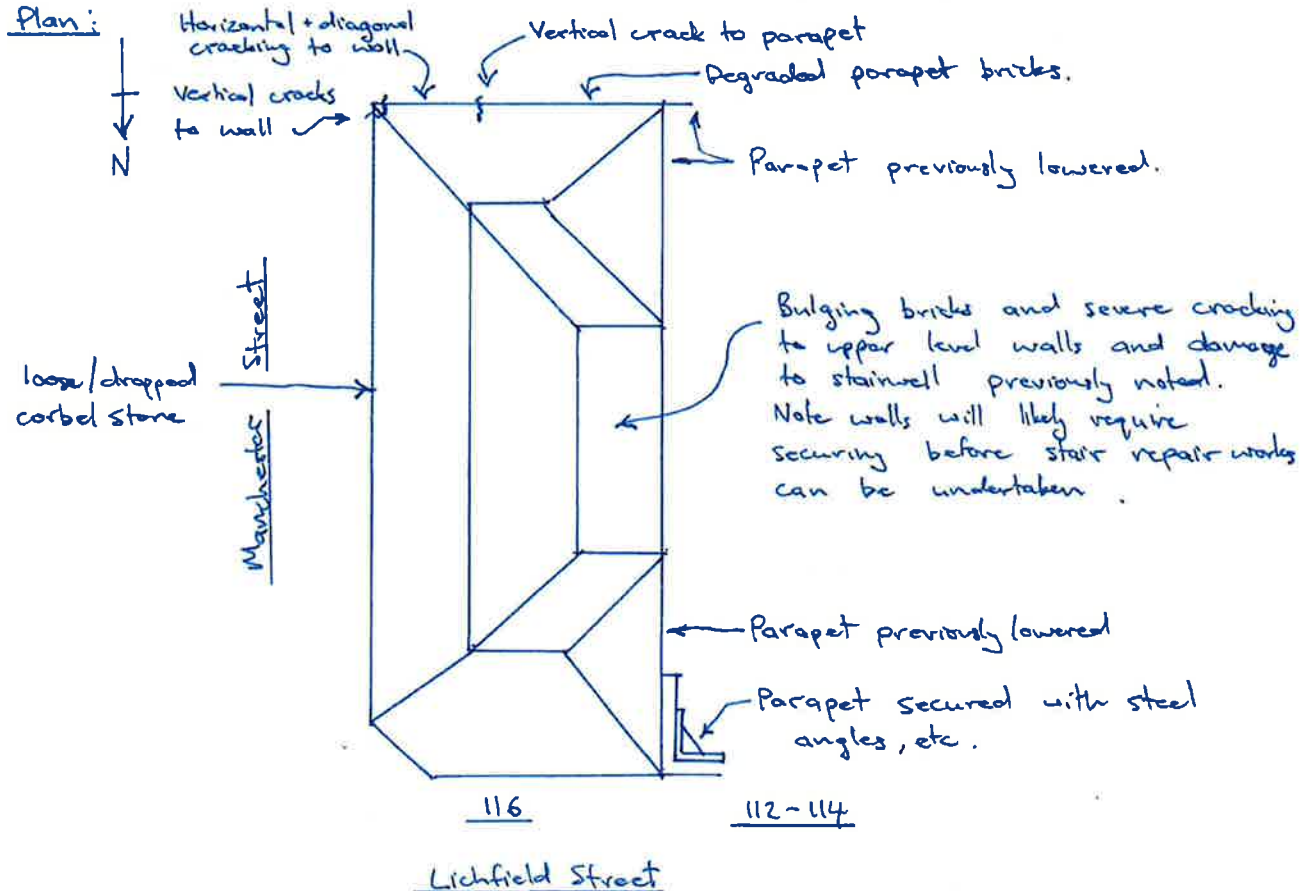
project 116 Lichfield St.

by SG

ref 5708

distribution  Jason - Cunningham Lindsay  Eelco - Owner  Glen - Fortis Construction  Andrew Bell - Sergeon

Following advice from contractor we have revisited the property to view further damage from recent earthquakes.



These high level bricks and stone blocks are potential fall hazards to the areas directly adjacent and should be secured as soon as possible, (or the fall areas cordoned off).

We suggest securing works be undertaken as per attached (contractor to wait for insurer approval).

*Jason John*

project 116 Crch field

date 9/2/11

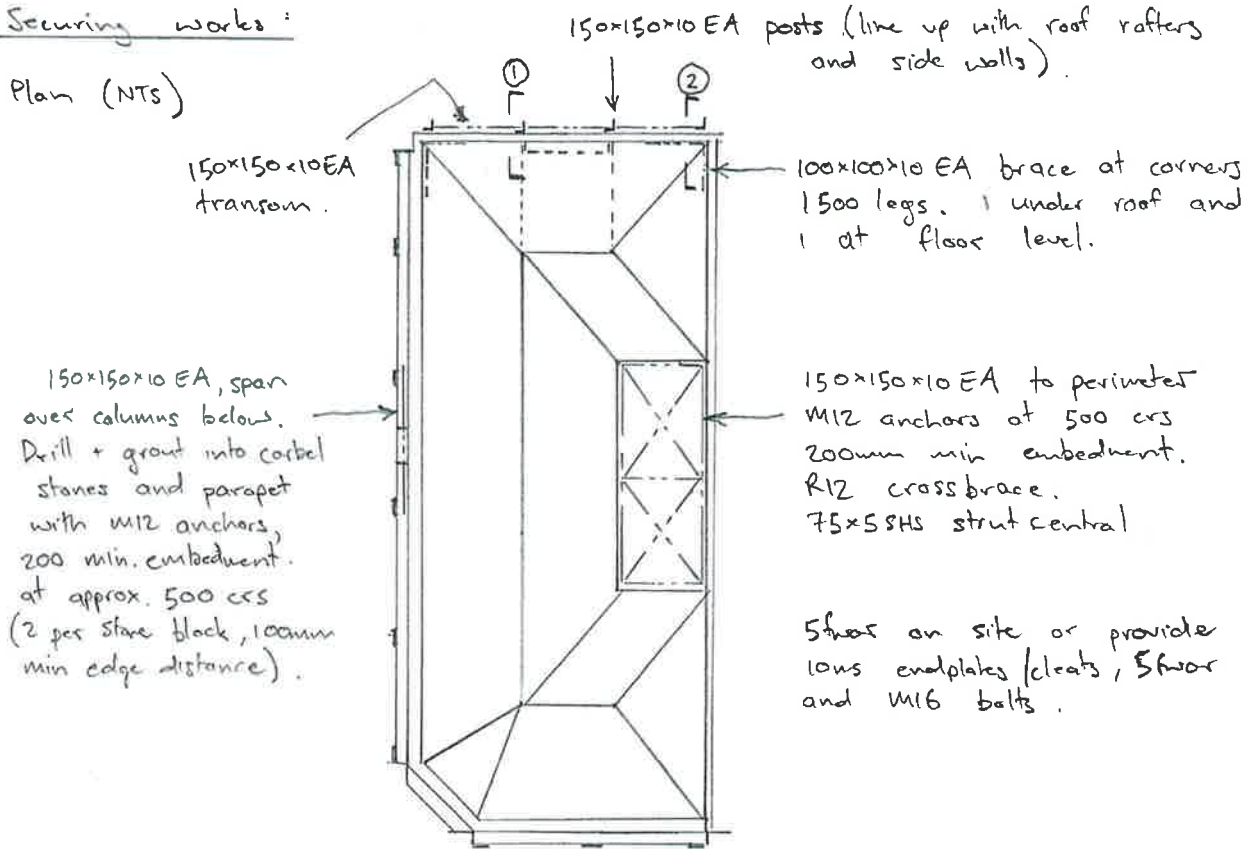
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by SG

ref

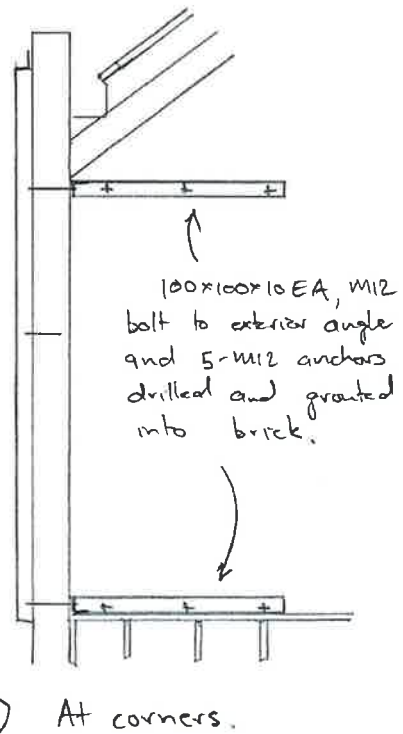
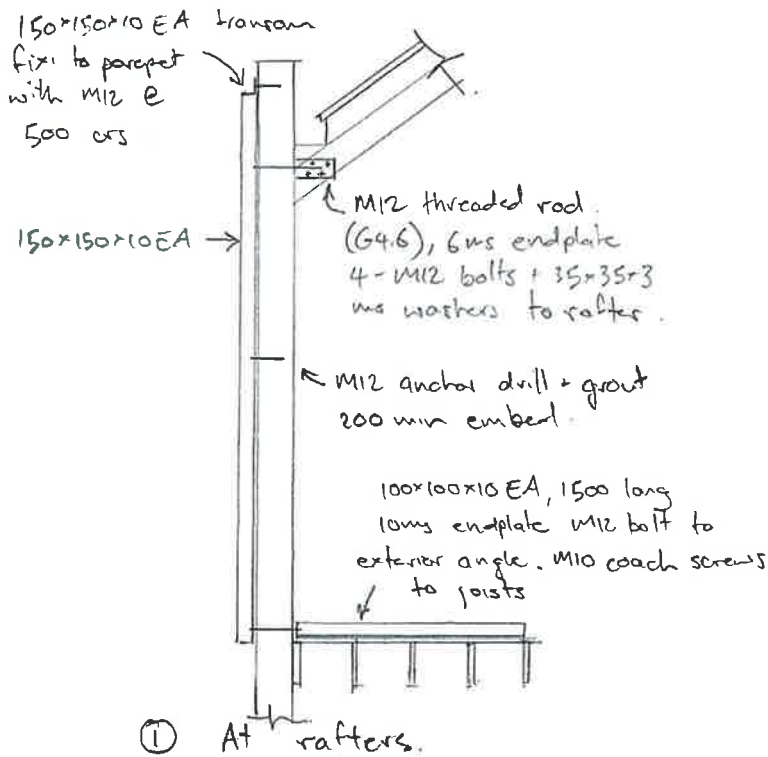
Securing works:

Plan (NTS)



150x150x10 EA transom fix to parapet with M12 @ 500 c/s

150x150x10 EA



Refer also to marked up photos.













150 x 150 x 10 EA + M12 anchors  
at 500 c/s to perimeter

75 x 5 SHS

R12 crossbrace