

5 February 2026

Samuel Fitzgerald

Third Design
Unit F15, Temple 1852
Temple Campus
Bristol BS1 6QA

Dear Sam,

Inspection to GALES COTTAGE, 56-58 HIGH STREET, STEEPLE ASHTON, BA14 6EU

Following your instruction, I attended the site on Monday 26th January 2026 to review damage to the external stone wall forming part of Gales Cottage, located at 56–58 High Street, Steeple Ashton, BA14 6EU.

The external wall is approximately 850mm thick and is constructed of stone masonry comprising an inner and outer stone skin with an internal cavity. The wall is considered to be load bearing, supporting the first-floor structure, which appears to be of timber joist construction. No opening-up works were carried out. This was a visual inspection only.

The damage has been caused by a point loading resulting from an impact by a passenger vehicle. The vehicle struck the side elevation of the building adjacent to the entrance door. As reported by the property owner, the initial damage was not clearly visible externally, other than localised cracking to the stonework. However, the damage was significantly more evident internally, where the inner skin of the stone wall collapsed into the room. Temporary propping was installed immediately following the incident to support the first-floor joists bearing onto the damaged wall. Over time, loose sections of masonry detached, resulting in the formation of a substantial opening and further cracking, as shown on the photographs provided.

The adjacent external wall forming the front elevation exhibits a diagonal crack extending from the top corner of the window opening. In addition, a minor horizontal crack is visible internally along the ceiling line. We inspected the first-floor rooms located directly above the point of impact and found no visible cracks or signs of structural movement. All wall and ceiling finishes were intact, with no evidence of distress. It is noted that these rooms have been recently renovated, and therefore any cracking or movement would be clearly apparent.

It should also be noted that a large area of black mould growth and staining is present on the external face of the side wall, directly above the impact location. The mortar in this area appears to be heavily weathered and degraded, and several cracks have formed as a result of the impact. Notably, the cracking appears to terminate at the point where the black staining ceases, beyond which the stone and mortar return to their natural colour and are consistent with the remainder of the elevation.

We were not able to inspect the main floor joists bearing onto the wall, however, in our view the damage is confined to the stone masonry wall only, and therefore the remainder of the property structure should be free from defects.

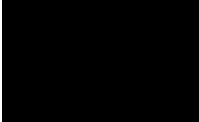
We recommend that the damaged section of the external stone wall is demolished and reinstated. As noted above, cracking has developed extensively within the stonework affected by black mould and staining. Due to the extent of cracking and the overall poor condition of the mortar, we recommend that the entire section of wall affected by the black staining is demolished and rebuilt, rather than undertaking localised repairs.

The crack to the internal face of the external front wall should be further inspected by the main contractor on site to confirm whether it is limited to surface finishes only or penetrates deeper into the stone wall construction. The findings should be reported back to MG Structures to allow an appropriate repair methodology to be advised. The new wall panel should be adequately tied back to the remaining section of the side wall. The lintel over the entrance door should be inspected and assessed for suitability for reuse; if found to be damaged or inadequate, it should be replaced on a like-for-like basis. Temporary propping must be provided to support the existing first-floor structure for the full duration of the construction works.

Access to the affected area should be restricted immediately and maintained throughout the remedial works.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely



Marcin Golda



Appendix A - Photographs



1. Collapsed section of the side wall with visible black mould and staining.

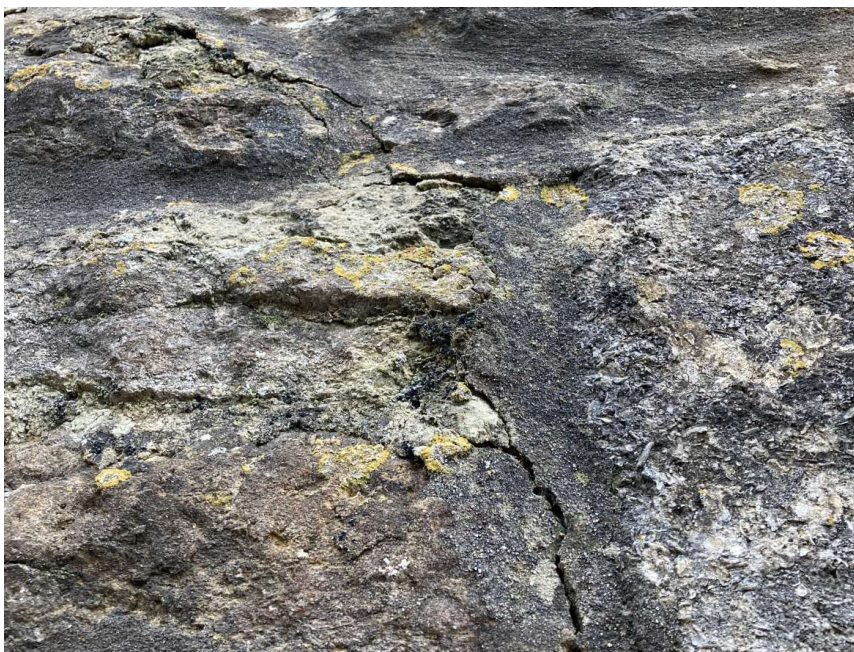


2. Temporary propping installed internally.





3. Diagonal crack on the internal face of the external front wall



4. Cracking at the section of wall affected by black mould and staining.

