



Method Statement

Repointing Masonry Wall Using NHL 3.5 Lime Mortar

1. Scope of Works

The works involve the raking out and repointing of existing masonry joints using Natural Hydraulic Lime (NHL 3.5) mortar to improve structural integrity, weather resistance, and maintain the breathable characteristics of the wall construction.

2. Materials

- **NHL 3.5 Natural Hydraulic Lime**
- Washed, well graded sharp sand (matching original mortar colour and texture where possible)
- Clean potable water
- Hessian sheeting or breathable protective coverings
- Hand tools for raking and pointing

Typical mix ratio:

1 part NHL 3.5: 2.5–3 parts sharp sand

(The mix may be adjusted slightly to match the existing mortar.)

3. Tools and Equipment

- Plugging chisels
- Lump hammer



- Joint rakers / hand tools
 - Stiff bristle brushes
 - Water spray bottles / low pressure sprayers
 - Pointing irons appropriate to joint width
 - Buckets and mortar mixing equipment
 - Dust sheets and protection materials
 - Access equipment (scaffolding or platforms where required)
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4. Preparation

1. Inspect the wall and identify defective or loose mortar joints.
 2. Protect surrounding areas including windows, doors, and adjacent surfaces.
 3. Erect safe access equipment if working above ground level.
 4. Carefully rake out existing mortar joints to a depth of 2–2.5 times the joint width, typically 20–25 mm.
 5. Use hand tools only to avoid damage to masonry units.
 6. Remove all loose debris and dust using a stiff brush.
 7. Lightly dampen the joints using a fine water spray prior to repointing.
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5. Mortar Mixing

1. Measure materials accurately.
 2. Dry mix the sand and NHL 3.5 lime thoroughly.
 3. Slowly add clean water while mixing until a workable but firm consistency is achieved.
 4. Allow the mortar to rest (fatten) for approximately 10–15 minutes before use.
 5. Remix before application without adding excess water.
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6. Application

1. Pre-wet the masonry joints lightly to control suction.
 2. Apply the mortar using a pointing iron in layers where necessary for deeper joints.
 3. Compact the mortar firmly into the back of the joint to eliminate voids.
 4. Ensure full contact with masonry surfaces.
 5. Finish the joint profile to match the original finish (typically flush, slightly recessed, or brushed).
 6. Allow mortar to partially firm up before lightly brushing for texture if required.
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7. Curing and Protection

Proper curing is critical for lime mortar.

1. Protect newly pointed areas from:
 - Direct sunlight
 - Wind
 - Frost
 - Heavy rain
 2. Cover work with damp hessian sheeting where necessary.
 3. Lightly mist the wall periodically in warm or dry conditions to prevent rapid drying.
 4. Maintain protection for at least 3–7 days depending on weather conditions.
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8. Quality Control

- Mortar colour and texture to match existing historic mortar where required.
- Joints to be fully filled and well compacted.
- No mortar smearing on masonry faces.
- Work to be inspected regularly during application.

9. Health & Safety

- Operatives to wear appropriate PPE including:
 - Gloves
 - Eye protection
 - Dust masks when raking out joints
 - Follow manual handling procedures for materials.
 - Ensure safe use of access equipment and scaffolding.
 - Lime is alkaline; avoid skin and eye contact.
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10. Environmental Considerations

- Minimise dust during raking out.
- Dispose of waste mortar responsibly.
- Use breathable lime mortars to maintain building fabric performance.