



Historic Wall Condition Appraisal

Gateway Adjacent to 207 Boreham Road, Warminster

Location

This is to consider a gateway in the wall to the south side of the land that is proposed to be developed and which abuts to the north side of Boreham Road. In this location the gateway is just to the west of the west boundary wall to 207 Boreham Road, Warminster, Wiltshire.



Gateway to the west of 207 Boreham Road

This wall is listed grade II as a noted ancillary structure to 207 Boreham Road, where it is described as *a long rubble wall about 8 feet high about 60 yards long linking with No 195 [Boreham Road]*.

Description

The wall was inspected on 28 May, 2026, when the weather was dry.

The wall is effectively upright and overall in a fair condition for its apparent age and form of construction, which from the road side is approximately 2.74 m high over the west end (left looking from the road) and 3.36 m over the east side, but where on the field side the ground

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is about 0.65 – 0.75 m higher. From ground level to the shoulder of the opening the wall is 0.48 m thick, which to that point is approximately 2.2 m and which produces a slenderness ratio of 4.58, which is well inside Eurocode 6 ratio of 12. Above the shoulder of the arch the wall reduces in thickness to 0.38 m.



Gateway from the front (road)



Gateway from the rear (field)

The main fabric to the road side face of the wall is a local high silicate chert sandstone type of material laid as random rubble or roughly squared blocks in lime mortar that has been much pointed with modern cement type mortar, which shows much sign of general surface erosion, but largely stable. The field side of the wall, where visible above high nettles, is largely of brickwork that is laid as a form of English garden wall bond, with a great deal of erosion of the mortar joints as well as brick faces, mostly due to historic frost spalling of similar.



West side rear jamb



East side front jamb

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The mass of the brickwork employed in the wall, including the east quoining to the gateway is a handmade brick of a size suggesting a dating, for this area, to the early – mid 19th C, where this has a textured face and of a red / brown colour, that has weathered on the sheltered rear face almost to a red / purple. In comparison the bricks used to dress the west side of the opening are of larger format and appear to be an extruded or wirecut type of an orangey / red colour, which could suggest a date to the second quarter of the 20th C. The use of this latter brick would also suggest when the original opening in the wall, as indicated by the remnant cambered brick arch over, it was enlarged to its present configuration.

The wall is capped with natural stone coping stones, of a Bath type, which are set flush to the back face, where they are about 130 mm thick, and then taper down to an overhang at the front of about 25 mm and have a thickness of about 40 mm. These are all very severely eroded, with little or no taper and open joints between them so that water has easy access in to the head of the wall and which is likely to be resulting in further disruption and stabilisation of the fabric.



Severely eroded wall copings

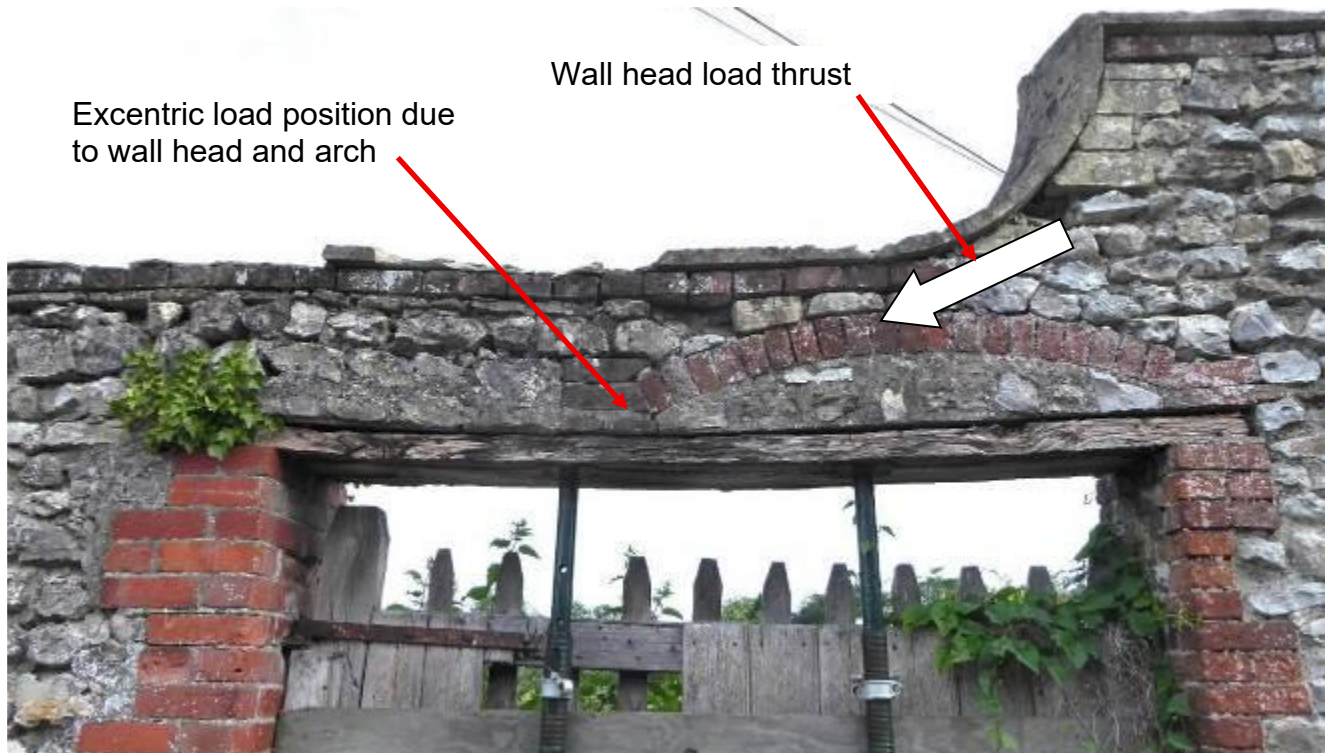
At present the gateway is spanned over a single piece of oak as a lintel, where this is only about 90 mm thick and is suffering from decay at the bearing ends as well general age related loss of strength and is presently supported on inserted metal props to prevent the risk of collapse of the upper part of the wall. A contributing factor is the un-even loading that is applied to the lintel by a combination of factors such as the manner in which the wall height diminishes over the east side and the retention of the cambered brick arch, which together introduces a point load in an almost central position. That is because the original brick arch

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would have transferred the load from the wall above in to the former west side jambe, or side of the opening, from where it would be carried down in to the ground by the masonry. However, with the widening of the opening this load was then imposed in the centre of the lintel, where it is at its weakest and so has resulted in excess loading in that position with the resultant deflection and movement has worsened as the timber has decayed.



Failed lintel and wall head

At the time of the inspection there was a timber vertical pale gate set across the opening, although with the remains of close boarding to the outer face. It was hung on simple wrought iron strap hinges, possibly of mid – late 19th C date, from a pair of pintles set in the brickwork on the west side. If a gate is needed to be retained, possibly for periodic closure if a right of way is not to be created, then the hinge pin can be left in situ for that purpose.

Remediation

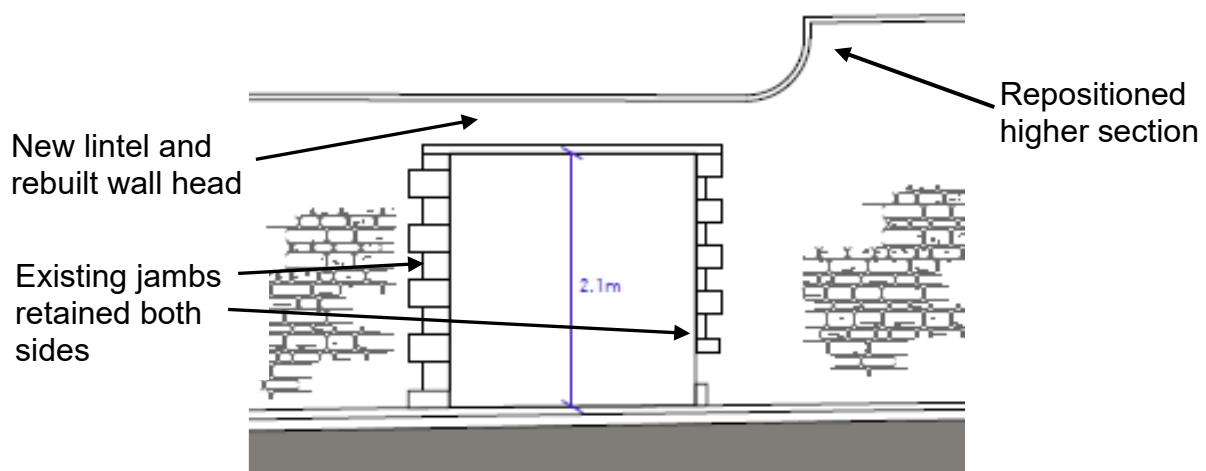
Various options as to how the top of the gateway opening and the associated section of the wall could be handled, but in any case the work involve the removal of the small cambered brick arch and the fabric above and also associate sections of wall on each side, known as wracking back, so as to ensure its stability and enable proper reconstruction to take place. Whilst the rebuilding of the upper part can be handled in several ways, it has been decided that this be carried out in a manner that largely replicates the present appearance, but

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removes some of the inherent structural problems that have contributed to its present condition.

Once the upper section of the wall has been dismantled it can be rebuilt employing a combination of reinforced stone / brickwork over a new green oak lintel. The small cambered brick arch is not envisaged as being included as it will be lost as part of the dismantling and its re-introduction would result in the eccentric loading problems from the existing structure. Furthermore, it will not enable the creation of a stable structure in this position as is necessary because there is no effective depth or weight of wall over the new lintel to provide a properly secure structure. Therefore, the incorporation of reinforcement in the masonry joints is needed so as to ensure that this part is adequately tied together and into the main wall on each side to prevent the risk of movement or displacement. In addition, the raised section on the east side (right looking from the front) will be cut back so that the downward sweep of the upper coping finishes just to the east of the opening so as to reduce the uneven loading across the new lintel.



Proposed rebuild appearance

In consolidating this opening there will be a need for some general stabilisation work to the road side stone face, extending a minimum of 2.0 m on either side, which can be undertaken by carefully raking out and repointing this in an appropriately coloured and textured lime mortar to match that of the original fabric. On the rear face of the wall there will be a need for comprehensive raking out and repointing of the brickwork, as well as cutting out and replacement of excessively eroded or defective bricks with new matching coloured, textured and sized bricks.

At the same time as any stabilisation and repointing of the main wall fabric, the top of the wall will require new coping stones along the same length that is reconstructed, if not the whole wall. This should all be in new matching stone with a profile to match the existing, including the curving sections to the wall top level change for fully replicate that element. Pointing

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mortar will need to be in lime and match in colour and texture to the stone and have a flush or only very slightly recessed joint.

It is understood that the ground level is to be lowered through gateway so as to create an easy and almost level transition from the ground to the rear on to the pavement to the side of Boreham Road. The treatment of the level change behind the wall will be dependent on the final landscape design and could have the sides to the path battered or sloped back or retained by some form of walling or other feature. How this is finished should not overly affect the back part of the wall except for how much may be exposed for stabilisation, repointing, etc.

If a gate is no longer required then we would recommend that hanging pintles are carefully removed and the brickwork restored to remove a risk of people being 'snagged' on the projections.

Works Specification

Accompanying this appraisal on the condition of the wall and the suggested remediation work is a specification for the suggested works that has been prepared for this work to be undertaken to accepted conservation standards.

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