

Heritage Statement

Bratton House, Melbourne Street, Bratton, Wiltshire

August 2026

Proposed Works to the Eastern Boundary Retaining Wall

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent and, where required, Planning Permission, relating to repair and associated works to the retaining walls located along the eastern boundary of Bratton House, Melbourne Street, Bratton, and 1 Flowers Mead.

The statement has been prepared in accordance with Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and Historic England's guidance on the conservation of historic buildings.

The purpose of this statement is to assess the significance of the heritage asset, identify the contribution made by the eastern boundary retaining walls, and demonstrate that the proposed works preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

2. Site Description

Bratton House is a Grade II* Listed Building dating principally from the early eighteenth century, with substantial nineteenth-century enlargement and later alterations. The property occupies a prominent position within the historic core of Bratton and represents one of the parish's most significant historic residences. The listing records the original house as dating from 1715, constructed for Philip Ballard, with enlargement in 1826 and further alterations during the early twentieth century. The building retains a high level of architectural significance through its rendered elevations, stone detailing, formal proportions and exceptionally well-preserved historic interiors.

The house is accompanied by separately listed Grade II stables and associated historic structures which together form an important historic estate complex.

The eastern boundary of the property is defined by a substantial retaining wall supporting changes in ground level between the house and adjoining properties of Flowers Mead. The retaining wall forms part of the wider historic landscape setting of Bratton House and contributes to the enclosure, hierarchy and historic character of the estate.

3. Heritage Significance

The significance of Bratton House derives from several heritage values:

Architectural Interest

Bratton House is an exceptionally well-preserved Georgian country house exhibiting high quality eighteenth-century craftsmanship together with significant nineteenth-century additions. The survival of original architectural detailing both externally and internally contributes greatly to its Grade II* designation.

Historic Interest

The house illustrates the development of a substantial Wiltshire residence over more than three centuries and reflects the changing status and occupation of the property by successive owners.

Setting

The significance of Bratton House extends beyond the principal building to include its gardens, boundary walls, terraces, retaining structures and associated outbuildings. These elements collectively create the historic designed setting of the house and contribute to an understanding of how the estate historically functioned.

The eastern retaining wall forms one of these ancillary historic structures. Although subordinate to the principal building, it contributes to the historic enclosure of the site, defines the landscaped gardens and enables the terraced arrangement of the grounds.

4. Condition of the Existing Retaining Wall

The eastern retaining wall has deteriorated through age, prolonged weathering and the continual lateral pressure exerted by retained ground.

The wall now exhibits areas of structural movement together with deterioration of mortar joints and localised displacement of masonry. Without intervention, there is a significant risk that continued movement will result in partial collapse, loss of historic fabric and potential harm to both the listed building and public safety.

The proposed works therefore represent necessary conservation works intended to secure the long-term preservation of the historic structure.

5. Proposed Works

The proposals comprise the repair and stabilisation of the eastern boundary retaining wall.

Where sections have become structurally unsound beyond practical repair, these will be carefully dismantled and reconstructed using the maximum possible retention and reuse of the existing masonry.

Works will include, where necessary:

- careful dismantling of unstable sections;
- retention and re-use of original stone wherever practicable;
- replacement stone only where individual units are beyond repair;
- reconstruction to the original line, height, thickness and appearance;
- rebuilding using appropriate lime mortar;
- installation of concealed structural reinforcement or drainage where required to improve long-term stability without altering the historic appearance;
- improvement of drainage behind the wall to reduce hydrostatic pressure.

The completed wall will match the existing historic character, materials, detailing and construction.

6. Impact on Heritage Significance

The proposed works have been specifically designed following established conservation principles of minimum intervention, repair rather than replacement, and like-for-like reconstruction wherever possible.

No alteration is proposed to the historic alignment, height or appearance of the retaining wall.

The works will preserve:

- the historic relationship between the house and its landscaped grounds;
- important views across the gardens;
- the historic enclosure of the site;
- the character of the listed building's setting.

Where rebuilding is required, this is solely to address structural failure and prevent the irreversible loss of historic fabric.

Overall, the proposals will result in a heritage benefit through the conservation of an important historic boundary structure and the safeguarding of the wider setting of Bratton House.

7. National Planning Policy Framework

Great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets.

Paragraph 215 requires decision makers to have regard to the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. The proposed works directly support these objectives by ensuring the continued structural stability and long-term conservation of an important element of the Grade II* listed property.

The proposals preserve the significance of the listed building and will not result in harm to its special architectural or historic interest.

8. Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Local Planning Authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting and features of special architectural or historic interest.

The proposed repair works fully satisfy this statutory duty by conserving an existing historic structure and ensuring its continued contribution to the significance and setting of Bratton House.

9. Conclusion

The eastern boundary retaining wall forms an important component of the historic setting of Bratton House.

Its continued deterioration presents a genuine risk to the conservation of the listed building and its associated landscape.

The proposed works represent sensitive conservation-led repairs that seek to retain as much historic fabric as possible while ensuring the long-term structural integrity of the retaining wall.

The proposals preserve the architectural and historic significance of Bratton House, enhance the longevity of the heritage asset and fully accord with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation

Areas) Act 1990, Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and recognised conservation principles.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Listed Building Consent should be granted.

Yours

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