

Planning and Heritage Statement

330 The Street, Holt, Trowbridge, BA14 6QH

Replacement and Repair of Existing Retaining Wall

Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for planning permission for the replacement and repair of an existing stone retaining wall at 330 The Street, Holt, Trowbridge, BA14 6QH.

Site Context and Proposed Development

No. 330 The Street is a residential property situated on the northern side of The Street within the village of Holt. The application relates to the existing stone retaining wall which forms the southern boundary of the property adjoining the pavement and highway.

The existing boundary comprises a rubble stone retaining wall which retains the higher garden and driveway levels within the property and incorporates an existing pedestrian gateway. The land immediately behind the wall comprises areas of lawn, planting, gravel and hardstanding.

The site lies within the Holt Conservation Area. The Environment Agency surface water flood mapping identifies areas at risk of surface water flooding within the surrounding area, including along part of the adjoining highway, although the mapped area does not extend into the application site.

The existing wall has deteriorated over time. A structural inspection undertaken by M2 Civil and Structural Ltd in November 2025 identified that the section of wall to the west was found to be generally in good condition, although with localised areas of loose and missing stone, frost damage, cracking and deterioration. The eastern section was identified as being of greater concern in terms of its overall stability, with the wall noticeably leaning and resting against an old lamppost. The engineer recommended a number of options including rebuilding.



Photos of the existing section of wall to be reconstructed

Planning permission is therefore sought to undertake the necessary repair and rebuilding works. Approximately 13.3m of the existing retaining wall would be removed and rebuilt, together with an approximately 2m return tying into the existing wall on the house side. A further approximately 11.5m section would be retained, raked out and repointed using suitable lime mortar.

The replacement wall would have a maximum height of between approximately 1.2 and 1.35m. It would comprise a new retaining structure faced with approximately 200mm of rubble stone. Stone reclaimed from the existing wall would be reused and blended with new stone selected to match. The external stonework would be laid to reflect the existing character, coursing, jointing and general appearance of the section of wall being reconstructed. The stone pattern shown on the submitted construction details is illustrative and is not intended to represent a different form or character of walling.

The construction detail incorporates free-draining stone behind the retaining structure and a 100mm perforated land drain. The existing garden level behind the wall would be retained. The existing pedestrian gateway and the remainder of the boundary wall would remain in their existing positions.

Planning Analysis

The proposal is limited to the demolition and reconstruction of part of the existing boundary and retaining wall. The need for the works has arisen from the deteriorating condition of the existing structure and, in particular, concerns regarding the stability of the eastern section of the wall. The proposal provides an opportunity to address these structural issues whilst retaining the established position, scale, materials and overall appearance of the existing boundary.

There would be no change to the residential use of the site or existing access arrangements. The principal planning considerations therefore relate to the design and appearance of the replacement wall, its effect upon the character and appearance of the Holt Conservation Area, its relationship with the adjoining highway and surface water flood risk.

Design and Heritage Statement

The existing rubble stone wall is an established feature of the frontage of the property and forms part of the street scene along The Street. Its traditional materials and relatively modest height provide an appropriate boundary treatment within the village setting.

The proposal has been designed to retain these characteristics. The replacement section would follow the existing boundary, retain a height of between approximately 1.2 and 1.35m and continue to have the appearance and character of the existing rubble stone wall. Reclaimed stone from the existing structure would be incorporated into the rebuilt wall and supplemented with new stone selected to match. The stone would be laid and finished to replicate, as closely as practicable, the character and appearance of the section of wall being removed. The adjoining retained section, which is of a somewhat different construction and appearance, would remain in situ and would be repaired and repointed as necessary using suitable lime mortar.

The site lies within the Holt Conservation Area and regard must therefore be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance. The significance relevant to this proposal principally relates to the contribution made by the traditional village street scene, including its established buildings, boundary treatments and use of traditional materials.

Although a section of the existing wall would be removed, this is to facilitate its reconstruction in the same position and at substantially the same height and external form. The reuse of existing stone, supplemented by carefully selected matching rubble stone laid to reflect the character and appearance of the existing wall, would ensure that the reconstructed section retains the traditional appearance of the existing boundary when viewed from The Street. There would be no introduction of a materially higher, more prominent or visually incongruous form of enclosure.

The works would consequently preserve the established character of the frontage and the contribution that the wall makes to the street scene. The character and appearance of the Holt Conservation Area would therefore be preserved and no harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset is identified.

Highway and Flood Risk

The existing retaining wall immediately adjoins the pavement and public highway and has occupied this position for a considerable period. Indeed, the structural engineer's review indicates that the wall predates the existing dwelling. The proposal does not seek to establish a new boundary treatment or alter the existing relationship between the property and highway. Rather, it involves the necessary rebuilding of part of an existing wall along its existing alignment.

There would be no alteration to the existing pedestrian gateway or access arrangements and the replacement wall would not project further towards the highway than the existing structure. Accordingly, the proposal would not introduce any new obstruction or materially alter existing visibility conditions.

In these circumstances, it is considered that the proposal should be assessed as the repair and replacement of an established highway boundary rather than as the introduction of a new boundary feature. Whilst visibility and highway safety are

material considerations, the development would maintain the existing relationship between the site, pavement and carriageway. There is therefore no reason to consider that the replacement wall would result in any adverse highway safety impact in comparison with the existing situation.

The Environment Agency mapping identifies an area of surface water flood risk close to the site, but not extending within the application site itself. The Council's surface water flood mapping identifies a similar area of risk, which again does not extend into the application site.

The proposal would not create additional built floorspace or materially increase the amount of impermeable surfacing within the property. The replacement wall also incorporates drainage behind the retaining structure to manage water within the retained ground. The development would therefore not increase the vulnerability of the site to flooding or materially increase surface water run-off.

Conclusion

The application proposes the repair and partial rebuilding of an existing stone retaining wall forming the highway boundary of 330 The Street. The replacement section would retain the established position, scale and appearance of the existing wall, with reclaimed rubble stone reused and supplemented by matching stone, laid and finished to reflect the character and appearance of the wall being replaced.

The proposal would preserve the traditional appearance of the boundary and the character and appearance of the Holt Conservation Area. It would not materially alter the relationship of the site with the adjoining highway and would not increase flood risk.

Overall, the proposal represents an appropriate and sympathetic replacement of an existing boundary feature, which would preserve the character and appearance of the Holt Conservation Area without giving rise to any adverse highway or flood risk impacts. It is therefore hoped that the Council will support the proposal and grant planning permission.