



Oxford University Press

Proposed cleaning and repair works to K Wing
Great Clarendon Street boundary wall

Herritage Statement &
Methodology Statement

Oxford University Press – K Wing Great Clarendon Street boundary wall

A recent Condition Survey carried out upon the Oxford University Press site in Oxford highlighted the generally poor condition of the K Wing Great Clarendon Street boundary wall and the need for priority remedial works to prevent injury from spalling stonework and to prevent further general deterioration.

Given the Listed nature of the buildings, the works will all be carried out using materials and methodology sympathetic to the historic fabric.

It is proposed that Specialist cleaning and repair works will be carried out by messrs OG Stonemasonry contractors Ltd, of Witney, who have considerable experience of the site and its buildings.

An initial survey of the wall has been carried out and has revealed the following typical defects;

- a. Excessive sulphate action and resulting friable stone surfaces,
- b. Stained stone surfaces due to atmospheric pollution,
- c. Longstanding replacement in situ cast concrete coping to centre wall section, without drip throats or expansion joints,
- d. Vegetation (buddleia etc) to upper parapet stone courses and resulting loose stonework immediately beneath copings to centre wall section,
- e. Longstanding patch pointing in cement/sand mortar and resin type materials, with the pointing having been carried out as a thin skim to unprepared joints,
- f. Small number of random severely laminated stone sections.

The cleaning work is proposed to be by the use of DOFF and TORC systems, with sample areas to be approved by the Conservation Officer.

The stonework is to be carefully tooled back, to remove loose and friable material and take the stone back to a sound base.

Stone repair is to be restricted to a small number of complete replacement stone sections (where long term damage has rendered the individual stones beyond repair), indents and repointing of deteriorated areas in a lime mortar, again with sample areas to be approved by the Conservation Officer.

Following the initial survey of the wall, it is envisaged that at least 70-80% will require to be repointed.

The central cast concrete coping will be carefully removed and the loose course of stone immediately beneath carefully taken down and cleaned for reuse. Vegetation will be removed.

It is intended to replace the central concrete padstone with a weathered stone padstone, to match the size and detailing of the original adjacent sections. The copings would be in Clipsham stone as the colour, texture and density of such would more closely match the existing wall masonry than lighter coloured stone which is the norm elsewhere on the site.

By adopting a like for like approach, using sympathetic materials and methodology and where replacement is necessary, using new materials that match the original, it is considered that the proposed remedial works will improve both the condition and general aesthetic of the wall and ensure that it is put in good external order for a considerable period to come.

Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings

There are no Scheduled Monuments within the area of the proposed works, there are nine Listed Buildings within the wider area, Three of these buildings are Grade II* . The University Printing house dates from 1820s while nos. 40 & 41 St Giles are 16th – 17th century in date, the remaining structures are Grade II. None of these buildings would be affected or have thier settings changed by the proposed works.

Conservation and Archaeological potential

The proposed work is located within the Oxford City Council Jericho Conservation Area, Conservation Areas have been established across Oxford in order to protect and preserve areas of special architectural or Historical interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance.

The site is located on a gravel spur positioned between the river Thames and Cherwell within what appears to be a prehistoric landscape, prehistoric funerary along with a Early Saxon settlement and cemetary which have been recorded at the Radcliffe Hospital, c 100 metres to the north east of the site, while further prehistoric and Saxons finds have also been made in the south. The site appears to have been crossed by a section of Civil War defences that were constructed around Oxford in 1644. A school building, noted on the 1st edition OS map of 1878, once occupied the site the mid-19th century. The construction of OUP press itself (a Grade II* Listed Building) immediately to the north west of the site took place in the 1820s

Wall Construction

The existing boundary wall is generally of random coursed stonework, with a section to the Great Clarendon Street/Walton Street end being in dressed ashlar.

The stone is generally of a darker and denser type than elsewhere on the main buildings of the site, typically exhibiting properties similar to Clipsham stone.

The wall has a weathered stone coping, with drip throats to both inner and outer wall faces. The main central section of the coping has been replaced in cast concrete, finished flush with the wall faces, at some time in the past.

K Wing boundary wall (from Great Clarendon Street/Walton Street junction)



K Wing boundary wall (from Great Clarendon Street looking towards Walton Street)



Transition original stone coping to central wall cast concrete



Stained and friable wall surface (sulphates and rainwater)



Friable surfaces/unsuitable patch repair and pointing materials



Cement/sand repointing



Prepared by

David Barrington FCIQB CEnv Dip NDEA

David Barrington Ltd

Building Surveyors

March 2021