

Historic Impact Assessment



IMPLEMENT SHED, HORTON COURT

PARTIAL DISMANTLING AND BOUNDARY WALL REPAIRS

Horton Court, Horton, Chipping Sodbury, Glos BS37 6QR



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Contents:

Introduction

Description of Building/Structure/Garden/Landscape

Significance of Heritage Asset

Proposed Works

Impact of works on heritage asset

References

Photographs



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Introduction

A few months ago, the structural condition of the northern extension of the Implement Shed at Horton Court became a matter of concern following some vegetation clearance around the building. A structural engineer inspected the structure and recommended that as the wall was in an unpredictable state it required immediate attention. Repairs were discounted as the core of the fabric had lost all its mortar leaving little ability to bind to any stitching. Temporary propping was also discounted due to its proximity to the road. Therefore, the only feasible option was to take down the unsafe sections.

Due to the urgency of the works, permission was given by South Gloucestershire Council, under Section 9(3) of the P(LBCA)Act 1990, to do this initial work without obtaining Listed Building Consent. This application now seeks to regularise this work and to agree the finished 'consolidated' appearance of the remains of the structure. In addition, the boundary wall adjacent to the structure requires repair.

Description of Building

The Implement Shed is located at the 20th century entrance to Grade-I listed Horton Court. The main part of the building runs west to east and was repaired as part of the refurbishment of Horton Court completed in 2018. Behind the building lies a smaller, now roofless, extension that was not repaired at that time due to its advanced state of disrepair.

The northern extension has roughly coursed rubble limestone walls, with a brick lined doorway in the east elevation and a timber window in the north elevation. Vegetation growth has steadily been taking over the extension to the point where until recently it was difficult to see any of the structure. Once some of this vegetation was cut back, a significant crack was revealed in the masonry and loose high-level stones became apparent.

The boundary wall between the northern extension and the Church has a retaining function (approx. 850mm high on the garden side and 175mm high on the roadside). It has been affected by the growth of woody vegetation. Mortar has been washed out and the wall is now bulging in the section closest to the Implement Shed.



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Significance of Heritage Asset

The Implement Shed is not listed in its own right, but is located within the curtilage of Grade-I listed Horton Court. According to the 2010 Conservation Management Plan, the building was once part of Horton Court Farm. It is not shown on the 1840 tithe map but does appear on a 1903 map in the north-west corner of the farmyard. Its original purpose is unknown; it was possibly a cart shed, although the roof overhang seems a little low for that. At one time there was another long animal shelter/cow shed attached to the northern extension that ran from its east wall along in line with the existing boundary wall adjacent to the road, although nothing is left of this now.

The northern extension has some historic and evidential significance, however any aesthetic or communal significance is somewhat limited by its dilapidated state and the fact that much of it remains covered and entwined in vegetation.

The current boundary wall is a re-build from when the animal shelter/cow shed was removed.

Proposed Works

Some urgent works have already been carried out to make the northern extension safe, particularly in relation to its proximity to road and pedestrian traffic. This involved the careful removal of vegetation that was growing in and around the north-east corner and the dismantling of unstable high-level masonry. The eastern wall has been left with a raked wall head and the northern wall has been taken down to a roughly horizontal level in line with the top of the window. The 3 no. decayed timber lintels above the window have been removed.

Following this work an assessment has been made of the remaining structure and we have concluded that the ivy that is growing over the wall appears to be so bound into the structure of the wall that it is safer to leave it in situ and manage the vegetation at the current extent.

The exposed wall heads have been temporarily protected for the Autumn/Winter, pending the outcome of this application for consent to install a longer-term wall capping. For durability, it is recommended that a relatively coarse mortar is used for this and the proposed mix is as follows:



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- 1: NHL 3.5 lime
- 1: Dust to 14mm aggregate
- 2: Chard sand
- 1: Holm sand

The adjacent boundary wall also requires repair and this will involve partially dismantling and re-building approximately 6m of the wall. New weep holes will be included at the base of the wall on the roadside to facilitate drainage of water from behind the wall. Woody vegetation that is growing into the wall will be removed. Existing cement mortar will also be removed where possible and replaced with lime mortar. The proposed replacement bedding and pointing mix is as follows:

- 1: NHL 3.5 lime
- 2: Chard sand
- 1: Warmwell sand

The boundary wall currently has a cement mortar capping and this will be replaced with a new lime mortar capping using the same mix as for the Implement Shed wall capping consolidation.

Impact of works on heritage asset

The agreed approach within the NT for the northern extension to the Implement Shed is one of 'managed decline'. Too much of the building is already missing to make it worthwhile restoring. The proposed wall capping will help to consolidate the wall and extend its life. In time the ivy is likely to cause further damage and further periodic dismantling will be necessary. In the meantime, it is proposed to fence the structure off to deter unauthorised entry by guests staying at Horton Court. Should unexpected collapses take place this fencing will ensure that there is no risk to members of the public. A 1m high timber post and rail fence is proposed which will not rise too much above the height of the existing boundary wall and will consist of round posts and 2 no. half-round rails in keeping with fencing adjacent to the site. This will be visually less imposing than alternative forms of fencing. Monitoring of the north wall will be carried out regularly as this cannot easily be fenced off; the reduced height of this wall considerably reduces the risk to passing vehicles and pedestrians.



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Further re-pointing repairs along the boundary wall will be required over the coming years but it is hoped that these can be done without further significant dismantling and rebuilding.

References

Horton Court Conservation Management Plan 2010

Photographs



Northern extension after initial vegetation clearance showing large crack



North wall (internal) showing unstable masonry and decayed window lintels



East wall after vegetation clearance and dismantling



North wall after dismantling



6m section of boundary wall that needs rebuilding (garden view)



6m section of boundary wall that needs rebuilding (roadside view)





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Close-up views of boundary wall showing current condition of 6m section that required re-building