

DESCRIPTION & CONDITION OF THE BUILDING FABRIC

The gatehouse is a three-storey masonry building incorporated into the northwest curtain walls. It is constructed with Mercia mudstone (Keuper marl) random rubble with Douling stone dressings bedded with lime mortar (C14). It is a three bay plan consisting of a gateway flanked by two rectangular towers. These are referred to as the south west block, middle block and north east block. The roofs are copper clad flat roofs behind crenelated parapets. The building is approximately 8m tall, the walls are 4ft thick, the window surrounds are 5 inch thick.

South East Elevation

Main gateway flanked by two square blocks facing into the palace forecourt.

- Walls. Mercia mudstone (Keuper marl) coursed random rubble bedded with lime mortar. Crenellated wall top. Fair condition, except there are weak and open joints to the rubble of all parapets and the high-level walls of the east block where plants are getting established in the merlon masonry.
- Gateway. Large, Douling stone 4-centred arch. Fair condition.
- Door. Side door in the projection of the north east block south of the minor gate arch. Douling stone surround two centred pointed arch with a painted timber boarded door. Fair condition.
- Door. Douling stone surround low two centred arch with a painted timber boarded door. Fair condition.
- Door. Side door in the projection of the north east block south of the minor gate arch. Douling stone surround two centred pointed arch with a painted timber boarded door. Fair condition.
- Door. Douling stone surround low two centred arch with a painted timber boarded door built in the space under the curtain wall parapet walk. Fair condition.
- Window. 2 light mullion window with Douling stone surround, infilled with leaded lights on an iron frame. Fair condition.
- Window. Glazed two light mullion window, with Douling stone dressings. Fair condition.
- Window. Arrowslit with Douling stone surround, infilled with leaded lights on an iron frame. Fair condition.
- Window. Painted softwood framed window. Poor condition.
- Window. Glazed 4 bay oriel window with Douling stone dressings, corbelling and mullions. Sloping stone roof covered with lead. Diamond leaded lights on iron frames. Fair condition.
- Window. Glazed arrowslit, with Douling stone dressings. Fair condition.
- Window. Glazed arrowslit, with Douling stone dressings. Fair condition.

First Floor Office

Office in the original gate room.

- Ceiling. Painted plaster. Good condition
- Walls. Painted plaster on rubble stone. Good condition.
- Floor. Oak floor boards. Excellent condition.
- Door. 4 panel framed door. Good condition.
- Door. 4 panel framed door. Good condition.
- Door. 4 panel framed door with two panels glazed. Good condition

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Listing: The gatehouse is a significant historical building.

Listing: Grade I

List Entry Number: 1382876

National Grid Reference: ST5512945766 4.2

Evidential Significance

The gatehouse is highly significant:

- for the survival of a 14th century building.
- as part of a significant medieval complex of buildings associated with Wells cathedral.

Historical Significance

The gatehouse is highly significant:

- as a 14th century building.
- as part of a significant medieval complex of buildings that were the official residence of bishops that served in the neighbouring Wells cathedral.
- as part of the wall around the medieval bishop's palace. The early and late twentieth century interior of the gatehouse is not historically significant.

Aesthetic Significance The gatehouse is highly significant:

- for the survival of a 14th century building.
- as the draw bridge across the moat that defends the Bishop's Palace.
- as the gate that defensive gateway into the Bishop's Palace.
- for the tough and robust character. • for the strong symmetrical form.
- for the carved angular sculpture of the faceted blocks with parapet wall tops.

Communal Significance:

The gatehouse is highly significant:

- as the only entrance across the moat into the Bishop's Palace.
- as the feeding place for the Palace swans that live around the moat. • as part of the walks alongside the moats.
- as part of the symbolic heart of Wells.

BRIEF

A replacement four pair cable supplied by BT to follow existing route along the South East Elevation. The cable would be payed out through the office and fixed to the wall at the highest accessible point from a step ladder. The existing cable enters the office through a hole in the window pane which is not safe. BT propose to drill a 2 inch diameter hole in the South East Elevation wall at a depth of 5 inches.



Cable route, to remain unchanged



Current route through windowpane



Proposed site for cable access, 2-inch diameter hole through 5-inch-thick window surround.

PROPOSAL & SCHEDULE OF WORKS

A hole of 2 inch diameter to be drilled through the 5 inch stone window surround to safely feed cabling through supplied by BT. This work will take one day.

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED REPAIRS

Residual impact. Neutral.

ACCESS STATEMENT The gate house is approximately 700 years old and listed grade I. The main gateway is a level roadway, with flush thresholds, and provides the all ability access for everyone using the Bishop's Palace. The staff room on the ground floor has a floor that is level with the gateway, has flush thresholds and all ability access. The upper floors only have ambulant access because they are only accessible with a narrow 700 year old spiral stair, and all the internal doors are narrow.

ECOLOGICAL STATEMENT

There are no bats or birds in the building to be affected by the proposed works.