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civil & structural engine

Structural Survey Report

of

The Britannia Inn
London Road
Headington
Oxford
OX3 7AA

for

Mitchells & Butlers Plc

223043/April 2023

Structural Survey Report

STRUCTURAL SURVEY AT:	The Britannia Inn, London Road, Headington, Oxford, OX3 7AA
CLIENT:	Mitchells & Butlers Plc
DATE OF SURVEY:	17th March 2023

BRIEF

We have been instructed by our Client, Mitchells & Butlers Plc, to carry out a structural inspection of the external wall condition of both the premises and boundary wall. In addition the roof structures to the original rear part of the property are to be inspected further to issues of ongoing water ingress being noted.

Our inspection was non-intrusive and limited to areas that could be safely accessed.

DESCRIPTION

The property historically dates back to the 1770's and was originally a coaching inn and is of a traditional stone build. The back section is the oldest part of the building and has historically undergone wall restraint remedial works. More recently temporary timber shoring works were carried out.

OBSERVATIONS

Please refer to photographs 1 to 37.

External Boundary Wall

The boundary wall to the side of the premises within the beer garden is a low retaining wall between the beer garden and a car park area to the adjoining property.

The wall is constructed from the local stone and has historically been repaired in places. See photo's 1 & 2.

In one section the stonework has collapsed leaving a large cavity in the side of the wall. The ground level to the car park side was noted to still be stable with no signs of dipping being noted. See photo's 3 & 4.

External End Wall and Side Wall to Kitchen

On the right hand side of the end corner of the building the bottom corner stone has broken away and there is a crack in the stonework extending up a couple of corner stone courses. See photo 5.

Due to moisture the bottom of the wall has signs of moss build up.

On the wall elevation facing the car park area at low level close to the disabled ramp there is an area of heavy mortar loss and some stone loss. See photo's 6 & 7.

External Original Main Building Walls (Dining Area)

This part of the building is constructed in stonework but has historically been propped with both masonry raking piers as well as raking timber shoring.

Tie rods with external plates have also been introduced.

The rear elevation faces the car park and has an escape stair to the side of it.

The wall is propped in one location with a timber raking shore that was provided to give restraint to some higher level bulging within the wall.

This shoring is blocked out with timber packers in places but this does not appear to be proving full restraint.

On the side corner there have been some more recent crack repairs carried out with a cementitious mortar.

In the area of the escape stair there is a pocket within the wall that has a loose timber. See photo's 8 – 11.

On the side elevation (gable end) the wall is heavily bowed and out of plumb particularly at 1st floor level.

There is a masonry raking pier that appears to have separated slightly from the main wall at high level. See photo 12.

On this elevation there are 2 windows and a door at ground floor level that are provided with exposed timber lintels over. These lintels were showing signs of rot resulting in the stonework over to show signs of cracking.

Some historic mortar repairs were noted to be cracking in places. See photo's 13 &14.

To the left hand side at ground floor level the window is a newer window that has been formed to the corner with the rear elevation there is a vertical crack between older and newer stonework. See photo 15.

At first floor level there is a window and door opening. The door is located directly above one of the rotten lintels.

To the front elevation there is a raking masonry pier to the corner next to the side elevation. On the elevation there were no signs of distress to the wall. See photo's 16 & 17.

To the elevation at the top of the escape stairs there have been historic patch repairs with some being cementation repairs. The general condition of the wall was sound. See photo 18.

Walls to Front 2 Storey Building

On the rear elevation of the section of the building the wall is exposed stonework.

This was in a sound condition but it was noted that in one location a balustrade has detached from the wall. See photo 19 & 20.

Most of the walls to this 2 storey front section of the building have been rendered and appeared to be in sound order.

The elevation facing the beer garden was left as exposed stonework similar to the rear elevation. See photo's 21 – 24.

Roof Over Kitchen Area

This roof is a slate tiled roof that could be seen to undulate over its length.

The tiles were in a generally good order.

Internally a visual inspection of the roof space showed this to have historically been plaster at rafter level. Where we were able to observe there were no indications of water ingress or distress. See photo's 25 – 28.

Within the kitchen the ceiling was noted to have a crack developing across it. See photo 29.

Flat Roof Area

The escape stairs extend to a flat roof that provides an escape route from the front 2 storey section of the property. The flat roof was felted and appeared to be in sound order.

Roof Over Dining Area

This roof was currently undergoing repairs as a result of defective flashing around a vent which had resulted in damp issues to the ceiling in the dining area. See photo's 30 & 31.

Internally to the front part of the roof the main roof structure appeared sound. The original first floor structure has been removed over the dining area and only has a suspended ceiling. Some of the rafter had signs of water staining with the back half of the roof retaining a floor area that was used as a spirits store. See photo's 32 – 35.

Within the dining area there were signs of further damp ingress issues to both the side elevation and back corner. See photo's 36 & 37.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

From our observations there are a number of elements that should be addressed.

As a priority the boundary retaining wall that has a large pocket within it should be reinstated with new stones that is fully embedded with a mortar matching the existing. As this is a boundary retaining wall appropriate approvals should be sought with adjoining owners.

The walls to the kitchen building should have a new stone cut and placed for the corner repair along with some remedial Helical ties to stitch the crack that has developed.

The mortar and stone loss at low level to the elevation of the kitchen should have new stone and mortar introduced with effective bonding.

The rear elevation wall to the restaurant area should have the loose timber removed and the pocket infilled with a new piece of stone and mortared in place.

The timber raking shore should have additional timbers packers introduced to ensure full bearing between the wall and timber shore is provided.

Where there is the vertical crack at the junction of the older and new masonry this should be tied on the corner with Helical ties over its length.

On the side elevation to the restaurant area the existing timber lintel that are currently showing signs of excessive rot should be replaced with new grade D40 oak of matching size.

The masonry raking pier that is separating slightly at its head should be retied to the wall with Helical ties.

The water ingress close to this elevation could be the result of water migrating laterally on the joint line of the window lintels.

We would recommend this area I stripped back to fully understand the cause prior to a solution being given.

The side wall at 1st floor has an extensive belly this will not have been aided with the removal of the original 1st floor. Internally the restraint of this wall seems limited and would recommend consideration is given to providing so additional back propping can only be realistically assessed if the current suspended ceiling is taken down.

In the area of the flat roof fire escape the handrailing that is currently not fixed to the wall should be reconnected with appropriate bolts.

End of Report.

[redacted]

Appendix: Site Audit Photographs

The Britannia Inn
Site Survey Photographs

Photo 1

Photo 2

Photo 3

Photo 4

Photo 5

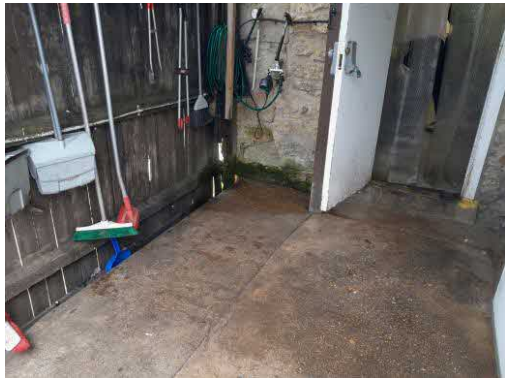

Photo 6

Photo 7

Photo 8

Photo 9

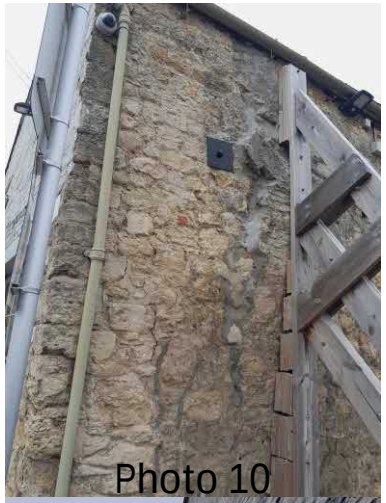

Photo 10

Photo 11

Photo 12

Photo 13

Photo 14

Photo 15

Photo 16

Photo 17

Photo 18

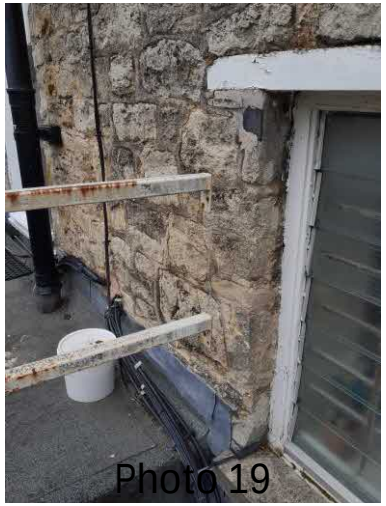

Photo 19

Photo 20

Photo 21

Photo 22

Photo 23

Photo 24

Photo 25

Photo 26

Photo 27

Photo 28

Photo 29

Photo 30

Photo 31

Photo 32

Photo 33

Photo 34

Photo 35

Photo 36

Photo 37