

Baxter Glaysher Consulting
33-35 Bell Street
Reigate
Surrey
RH2 7AW
Tel: +44 (0) 1737 240241
Fax: +44 (0) 1737 240341
Email: contact@bg-consulting.co.uk
Web: www.bg-consulting.co.uk



consulting
civil & structural

Our Ref: 212054/PC/ARC

F.A.O: David Toby

WS Wright
Unit 3-5 Lochin Marine
Rock Channel
Rye
East Sussex,
TN31 7HJ

24th February 2012

Dear David,

RE: The Washington, 50 England Lane, London NW3 4UE

Brief

We have been instructed by WS Wrights on behalf of M&B to carry out an inspection of the front facade's of the building further to pieces of masonry falling off from high level onto the public footpath and carried out our inspection on 16th February.

Overview

The property is a traditional corner Public House and is located on the junction of Belsize Park Gardens and England Lane.

It is three storeys high and of traditional build and has a basement cellar level. The walls and windows on the front facades are rendered with the windows having elaborate feature moulded surrounds. Most of the areas of concern are over the 1st floor level windows and could only be inspected properly with the aid of a cherry picker.

Observations

All observations made were limited to those possible from the cherry picker hired. Please refer to sketch 1 and sketch 2 for the location elevations referencing the areas inspected.

Area 1

The rendering to the feature surround on the end 1st floor window has bad cracks in numerous places and also spalled away in large chunks. See photos 1, 2, 3 & 4.

Area 2

The rendering to the 1st floor level feature surround appears less severe than that in Area 1, but the paintwork is disguising some very poor render, particularly at the roof line. See photos 5 & 6.

Area 3

On the lower feature banding just above the ground floor doors and windows, small areas of rendering were coming away in the hand when touched.

Area 4

This 1st floor feature surround is beginning to erode further and will eventually result in the structural integrity of the whole feature being compromised. See photos 7 & 8.

Directors
R.A.J. Price, IEng, AMIStructE, AMICE P. Chappell, BSc, CEng, MIStructE
Associate
M.J.E. Reynolds IEng, AMIStructE

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Area 5

The 1st floor feature surround has signs of damage developing down its side which is not visibly apparent on any of the other surrounds. See photos 9, 10 & 11.

Areas of render were easily removed by hand from most of the surrounds inspected revealing the size of debris that could easily fall out. See photo 12.

Areas of feature rendering removed by WS Wright on 18th February

Based on our initial concerns, a thorough removal of loose rendering was carried out. This highlighted a more serious condition than that previously thought from our initial inspection. It has been established that, in some locations not only was the facing render unsound but the supporting creasing tiles and brick work behind, which form the key structural support. Please see Photos 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 taken by WS Wrights.

Conclusions and Recommendations

From our observations, the extent of deterioration of the feature surround to the 1st floor level windows and small areas of the feature banding above the ground floor windows give us immediate concern that loose debris could still fall onto the general public. An instruction was given whilst at the premises to have with immediate effect all feature surrounds and banding thoroughly cleared of all loose elements of debris to make the facade safe.

Our inspection did not highlight any issues with the overall stability of the feature surrounds and banding. This however, has now been re-reviewed further to the removal of all loose debris carried out on the 18th February.

Further to the initial removal of all loose material that has now been carried out the following long term repair measures are recommended.

Due to the severity of some of the areas of de-bonding of the masonry, we are concerned other areas currently not showing any signs of weakness may start to deteriorate in a short time frame. In view of this, we are recommending two repair procedures. One being for all feature render work that is currently regarded as being sound primarily around the 1st floor windows and the other for works where degradation has currently been noted.

Repair Procedure 1

i) For all areas of feature rendering around the 1st floor windows, we recommend the paintwork is cleaned off to clearly reveal the condition of the underlying render. Where necessary, remove any further elements of render felt to be loose.

ii) Install stainless steel helifix ties as noted on sketch Sk3, which are to be taken through any projecting masonry back into the main wall of the property.

iii) Make good any small cracks and holes for the helifix ties with epoxy grouting blended with brick/render dust.

Repair Procedure 2

i) Where areas of both render and masonry have come away, the repair procedure as shown on sketch Sk4 should be adopted.

ii) Where areas of only render have broken away, it is recommended small stainless steel dowels are drilled into sound material in the area of repair, to provide a positive key for the new repair material and that the render repair is epoxy based to ensure positive adhesion.

To the existing render substrate, should a traditional render be used, adequate keying into the existing render and control of water absorption will be essential.

Further to the repair works being carried out, a waterproof masonry paint finish should be applied to match the existing external paint colour.

We do not know if the building is in a conservation area or listed and recommend prior to any repairs being carried out, that checks are made to ensure there are no restrictions on the repair methodology being proposed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Chappell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul Chappell BSc. CEng. MStructE
BAXTER GLAYSHER CONSULTING

Cc Chris Pye - Mitchell and Butlers PLC
Cc Matthew Bull - WS Wright