

Boundary Wall at 39-52 Bushell Close,
London SW2 3LL

Structural Engineer's Report

Prepared for:
Lambeth Housing Management

April 2024

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IDB-2071

Report Revision Sheet

**PROJECT TITLE: Lambeth Housing / Boundary Wall at 39-52 Bushell
Close, London SW2 3LL**

PROJECT No: 5344 / IDB 2071

Revision	Report issued	Prepared by	Reviewed by
00	April 2024	SCS	SKM

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 London Borough of Lambeth instructed Sir Frederick Snow and Partners Ltd (SFSP) to undertake a structural engineer's inspection of a boundary wall at 39-52 Bushell Close.
- 1.2 The Structural Investigation Request, which is included in section 7.0 of this report, was received on 6th of February 2024, and the survey was carried out by Simon Smith on 19th of February and was limited to a visual inspection of the wall. No opening up works were carried out during this inspection and therefore no comments can be made on parts of the structure that were covered or remained inaccessible.
- 1.3 The wall is accessible from public areas and no arrangements for inspection were necessary.
- 1.4 This report is for the use of Lambeth Housing Management only and other parties rely upon it at their own risk. It should not be copied or distributed except in full.

2.0 General Description

- 2.1 The boundary wall is a brick wall that runs along the north-west boundary of a grassed area alongside 39-52 Bushell Close. It separates the Bushell Close site from a residential development around Presentation Mews.
- 2.2 The wall is approximately 1.75m high above the grassed area and is a 215mm thick wall with widely spaced piers (see photographs 6.1 and 6.2 in this report).
- 2.3 There are a number of tree stumps in the grassed area, close to the wall (see photographs 6.1 and 6.2), and several trees on each side of the wall (see photographs 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 6.6 and 6.9-6.11).
- 2.4 British Geological Survey data indicates that the site is underlain by London Clay, with superficial deposits of Head, comprising clay, silt sand and gravel, above the clay.

3.0 Observations

- 3.1 The wall was seen to be in relatively poor structural condition, with loose and missing bricks (see photographs 6.3 and 6.7), extensive areas of eroded pointing (see photographs 6.3, 6.5, 6.7-6.10), and much foliage growing on, or out of, the wall.
- 3.2 The wall was seen to be leaning inwards significantly in an area in which trees are growing close to the wall on the Presentation Mews site (see photograph 6.6). The wall leans inward at a slope of approximately 1 in 8.
- 3.3 Towards the north-east end of the wall, in an area in which a group of trees is growing close to the wall on the Presentation Mews site and the wall is leaning into the Bushell Close site, two remedial buttresses, one of which has fractured, were seen to have been constructed next to the wall (see photographs 6.11-6.13).
- 3.4 Viewed from the Presentation Mews side of the wall, it was seen that the trees seen in photograph 6.6 are growing in a verge next to a car-parking area (see photograph 6.14). Ground level in this area on the Presentation Mews side for the wall appeared to be higher than the ground level on the Bushell Close side, although heavy undergrowth prevented a clear view of the wall height above the ground.
- 3.5 Viewed from the Presentation Mews side of the wall, it was seen that the trees seen in photograph 6.10 are growing in a rear garden area of properties in Presentation Mews (see photograph 6.15).

4.0 Comments and Conclusions

- 4.1 The wall is generally in fairly poor structural condition and in need of remedial work, including removal of foliage and repointing.
- 4.2 BRE's Good Building Guide 14 provides guidance that a 215mm brick boundary wall can generally be safely built to a height of 1925mm in London, if the difference in ground level across the wall doesn't exceed 430mm. However, in locations where trees on the Presentation Mews side of the wall exert pressure on the wall, via trunk or roots, the wall could not be expected to be structurally adequate and is leaning over into the Bushell Close site.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 We recommended, in an email dated 19th February, that Lambeth installs Heras fencing to prevent people from getting close to the wall in the area in which the wall is leaning significantly into the site. It is understood that this has been done.
- 5.2 It is recommended that Lambeth checks the legal ownership of the wall and legal responsibility for its maintenance.

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- 5.3 It is recommended that Lambeth checks whether there is any insurance in place covering this wall. If such insurance is in place, it is recommended that Lambeth notifies its insurers of the damage that has occurred. If insurers accept liability for the damage, they may wish to determine the steps to be taken to repair the wall.
- 5.4 Subject to any input from insurers, we recommend that Lambeth approaches the relevant adjoining owners with a view to having the trees that are causing the wall to lean over into the Bushell Close site removed, so that lengths of wall that are leaning over can be re-built vertical.
- 5.5 If trees close to the wall on adjoining sites remain in place, then Lambeth may wish to consider the building of further remedial buttresses, and the repair of the fractured buttress, though these measures may not achieve long-term stability of the wall. Alternatively, a fence could be provided on the grassed area (which would permanently reduce it in width) so that stability of the wall would be of less concern.
- 5.6 Subject to input from insurers, if the wall is to remain in place in the long term, it is recommended that it is repointed, missing bricks are replaced, loose bricks are properly bedded into the wall, and roots that are growing into the wall are removed.

6.0 Photos



6.1 View looking north-east along the wall. Note that parts of the wall are visibly out of plumb. Also note the presence of tree stumps



6.2 View looking south-west along the wall. Note the tree close to the wall and tree stumps.



6.3 South-west end of wall. Note loose brick and eroded pointing



6.4 Tree growing close to the wall. Note also foliage growing on and over the wall.



6.5 Eroded pointing and foliage growing out of the wall



6.6 Wall significantly out of plumb near trees on the other side of the wall.



6.7 Eroded pointing, missing bricks and damage apparently caused by rootlets.



6.8 Eroded pointing.



6.9 Tree growing close to the north-east end of the wall. Note eroded pointing



6.10 Group of trees on the other side of the wall, in the rear garden of a property in Presentation Mews. Note eroded pointing and remedial buttress.



6.11 Remedial buttress. A second remedial buttress can be seen beyond the group of trees



6.12 Fractured remedial buttress near north-east end of the wall.



6.13 Fractured remedial buttress near north-east end of the wall.



6.14 View from car-park area off Presentation Mews. These are the trees also shown in photograph 6.6.



6.15 View looking over towards the rear gardens of properties in Presentation Mews.

7.0 Structural Investigation Request

Unique Property Identification No. (UPRN)		Lambeth Housing - Technical services Structural Engineers Chartwell Building, Chartwell Business Park 61-65 Paulet Rd, London SE5 9HW Tel:- 020 7926 5240 Fax:- 020 7926 3056			
Housing Strategic Area					
North	South	Central			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Structural Investigation Request					
To be used for requesting structural investigation of Properties which have undergone initial inspection by the initiator.					
Please send the completed form to: Carla Piedade					
Property Address		Bushell Close (39-52), Bushell Close, London,			
Post Code		SW2 3LL		Contact Telephone No	
Resident's Name				Mobile No	
Tenure (Click Box)		<input type="checkbox"/> Tenanted <input type="checkbox"/> Leasehold		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other(Please specify) Brick wall behind the block	
Requesting Organisation		Lambeth Council		Request made by	
				Carla Piedade	
				Telephone No	
Address		South Area Housing Office		Fax No	
				e-mail	
Post Code		SW16 3HB		Date of request	
Approved by*		Carla Piedade		* Borough Responsive Repairs should complete this section	
Job Title*		Structural surveyor			
Telephone No*		07872052227			
Has anyone from your organisation inspected this property?				Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (Click box)	
Inspected by		Job Title Surveyor		Date	
<p style="color: red;">Please provide a brief description of the defects observed or reported (Please wright only with in the space provided)</p> Structrual survey required to the boundary wall behind the block – photos provided					
Type of Report Required: Provide structural investigation report - type as set out below with schedule of works for recommended remedial works					
1. Attend site & inspect defects. If defects can be diagnosed , compile a report with recommendations and schedule of works for remedial works- Structural Investigation Report-Type -1 (Report on observations of structural defects, causes of failure, comments on findings, conclusion , recommendations & schedule of works for remedial works – includes relevant drawings/sketches and photographs, material specification & product data sheets etc.					
2. If the defects cannot be diagnosed without further exploratory works. Compile a preliminary report and recommend exploratory works as per LL-Structural Engineer's Brief. Structural Investigation Report-type 2					
3 Carry out exploratory works. Compile final report as per LL-Structural Engineers Brief. Structural Investigation Report-Type 3					
4 Prepare specification, schedule of works, drawings/sketches for scheme/project					
IDB No:					

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