

Heritage statement

History

Cobham lies in a mature landscape with a traditional village centre characterised by early brick, flint and timber buildings. Located in a conservation area, the wall forms part of the protected streetscape.

The wall forms part of the historic setting of the village pump, a well known landmark in Cobham and a small but important example of 19th Century estate improvement.

The present arrangement dates from circa 1848 when the pump and its screen were moved and rebuilt by Lord Darnley commemorated by a stone plaque to the rear.

Although modest in scale the wall significantly contributes to the historic character of the street which retains in the main an 18th century village form

Cobham has long been associated with the Earls of Darnley who exercised considerable influence in Victorian era and before.

Historic mapping including the 1895 Ordnance survey confirms the presence of the pump structure and the broader settlement pattern in which the wall sits.

Although ancillary features may have altered the overall footprint the public prominence of the pump location have remained consistent for over 170 years.

In the last decade the local archaeology team further explored the underground reservoir that sits beneath the meadow to the rear

We will be working within good conservation practice with emphasis on

Retention of original fabric wherever possible

Lime based materials to be reinstated for mortar repairs to preserve breathability.

Minimal intervention when addressing defects.

Avoidance of cement mortars, waterproof coatings or modern impermeable systems

Following repairs implementation of cyclical maintenance programme,

Annual Maintenance

- . Maintain vegetation control throughout the length of the wall.

- . Incorporating the wall base into general grounds maintenance to prevent soil and leaf accumulation

- . Monitor east pillar (rebuilt in last 50 years) for any tree root damage.

Periodic gentle cleaning of the plaque to manage recurring biological staining.

Asset Significance

Essential value

The structure retains material evidence of mid-19th Century construction particularly in the use of flintwork, hand-made bricks. Lime mortars and the carved stone plaque. These elements contribute to understanding local building craft traditions and estate sponsored village improvements.

Historical Value

The pump and wall commemorate the Darnley family involvement in village life. Parish pumps were vital public utilities, and Cobham's example is a well-documented and photographed survivor, noted in the work of the Kent Archaeological Society, whose research highlights the cultural importance of parish pump across the county.

Aesthetic value

The gentle sweeping curve, flint inlay and symmetrical detailing create a composed and visually distinctive feature in the streetscape. The structure frames the pump recess in a deliberate and decorative manner, intended to provide a distinctive feature on the village landscape.

Condition Assessment

The brickwork shows weathered faces, open joints and surface erosion with some bricks showing freeze thaw deterioration > A number of brick show deeper softening or cavity erosion.

Isolated patches of cement repointing are present, now cracked or detached particularly above the flint panels and on upper courses. The cement repointing in some locations as caused reduced breathability and caused adjacent bricks to deteriorate more rapidly.

The wall head has lots of plant growth including moss and lichen consistent with long term moisture retention. Vegetation and leaf litter are present all around the base of the wall.

Flintwork panels are a mix of original 19th century flintwork and later patch repairs. Several areas to the rear of the wall have lost small areas of flint. Vegetation is growing through

joints in several panels particularly on the rear side and ivy stems have travelled behind and between the flint in places.

Mortar within some of the flintwork has eroded with open joints, crumbling lime, and areas of part cement repointing now cracked or separating from the surrounding fabric.

There is a pattern of bulging around the pump recess and along the brick piers consistent with on term weathering, thermal movement and the flexible behaviour of the mixed brick and flint construction. These forms of movement are typically slow and long standing rather than indicative of sudden structural instability.

At the east pier the presence of a large tree directly adjacent to the wall suggests that root pressure has contributed to lateral displacement. Incremental root expansion against the base is capable of producing the mild outward lean observed. The cement repointing in some locations has reduced breathability and caused adjacent bricks to deteriorate more rapidly.

Central plaque



Information supplied by , Joe Wilson Assoc RICS,ACABE And , Appollo Brickworks