

# SPECIFIC DEFECTS REPORT

## Party Wall S.E. London



**Mr XXXXX**

Marketing by:  
[www.1stAssociated.co.uk](http://www.1stAssociated.co.uk)  
**0800 298 5424**

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## **INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTION**

We have been instructed by Mr XXXXX to prepare a report on the Party Wall at XXXXXXXX.

We have carried out a visual inspection of the property on XXXXXXXXX.

The weather was cold and raining at the time of our inspection.

We are Independent Chartered Building Surveyors. We are registered with the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and are members of the Independent Surveyors Association.

The work has been carried out as per our standard Terms and Conditions of Contract which have been emailed to you as part of the confirmation of our instructions. If you would like further clarification please do not hesitate to contact us.

## **SYNOPSIS**

Mr and Mrs XXXXX wish to carry out work to the rear boundary wall and have asked for advice on this.

The boundary wall is also a boundary wall to:

XXXXXX  
XXXXXX

This wall falls under the Party Wall etc Act 1996 and will be defined as a party wall that stands astride the boundary of land belonging to two or more different owners that relates to diagram 1 and diagram 3 of the Party Wall etc Act 1996, and possibly diagram 4 depending on how the boundary sits. We would refer you to the Party Wall articles on our website.

Reference: [1stAssociated.co.uk/disputes3.asp](http://1stAssociated.co.uk/disputes3.asp) – within this section we have articles on Party Walls; we would refer you to Party Wall Basics.

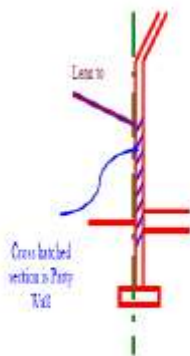
## PARTY WALL DIAGRAMS



- 1) A wall that's part of one building on the boundary line (but could be used by a neighbouring owner)



- 3) Party Fence Wall – not part of a building but separates different owners



- 4) Wall wholly on owners land but is used by two (or more) owners to separate the buildings





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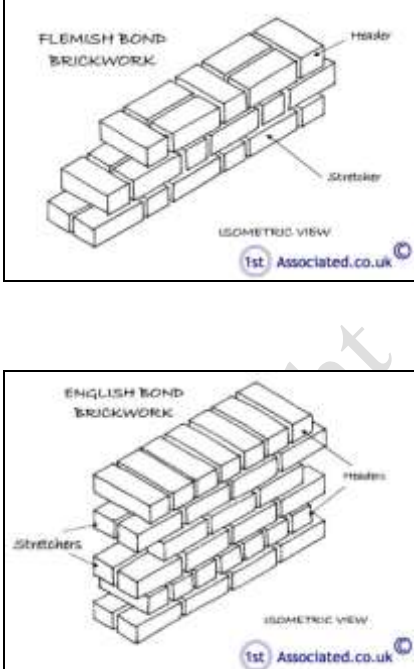
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## CONSTRUCTION SUMMARY - WALL

<p><b>Coping stone:</b></p>	<p>There is a coping stone to the very top</p>	
<p><b>Upper parts:</b></p>	<p>Machine made and wire cut bricks</p>	
<p><b>Mid to lower parts:</b></p>	<p>Older brick, likely to be handmade.</p>	
<p><b>Mortar:</b></p>	<p>A lot of the wall is bedded in a lime and earth mortar mix. The upper parts are in cement mortar. There has also been some repointing in cement mortar.</p>	
<p><b>Paint:</b></p>	<p>The wall has been painted in various types of paint.</p>	

<p><b>Wall Construction</b></p>	<p>It is difficult to be certain of the wall construction. We noted areas that we believe to be Flemish Bond construction and also areas that we believe to be English Bond construction.</p>	
<p><b>Foundation:</b></p>	<p>Likely to be shallow if there are any foundations at all.</p>	

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## **LOCATION**

The wall forms a boundary wall to XXXXX. The adjacent newer wall forms the inner wall of XXXXX and also a shared garden area to XXXXXX

We have not seen any deeds to the property so we cannot confirm where the legal boundary line is.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Executive summaries are always “dangerous” as they try and encapsulate relatively complex problems in a few precise and succinct words. Having said that here is our executive summary and recommendations:

The wall falls within the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996. If you wish to remove it, you will require Party Wall approval which is a process that we are more than happy to carry out. However if you wish to repair it or alter it then we would recommend that you liaise with the adjoining parties, in this case they are at:

XXXXXX  
XXXXXX

(Contact details are in the Appendices)

and follow the principles of the Party Wall etc Act 1996. We have found in our experience the Party Wall etc Act 1996 is a very good way of reducing potential disputes. We would recommend the following course of action:

### **ACTION REQUIRED:**

1. Key contact details are agreed. We assume this is simple with the freehold properties however for the shared freehold properties the key contact and their authority level needs to be established.
2. That the enclosed Schedule Agreement needs to be agreed by all parties.
3. That an agreed timescale is taken for work and the work times are agreed by all sides as it requires work to all sides to be effective.
4. Investigations are carried out to establish historical value of the wall. We have carried out initial investigations. Further investigations are recommended via the Local Authority.
5. Agreement to be obtained before work is carried out. We recommend a recorded delivery letter to this end.
6. It may be worth at this time to take the additional step to agree exactly where the boundary line is within the wall.



# **INSPECTION**

Our inspection has been specifically related to the party wall issues detailed below:

## **Visual Inspection**

Our inspection has taken the format of a visual inspection:

1. We have viewed:
  - i. Front of wall that forms the boundary of your garden
  - ii. The rear of the wall that forms the boundary of XXXX
  - iii. We have not viewed the inside wall within the freehold apartment at XXXXXX
  - iv. We have viewed roof level side of the wall to number XXXXX

We have had the benefit of an x 16 lens on a digital camera

## **Front of wall**



Front left hand side



Front of wall

## Rear of wall



Rear right hand side of wall



Close up of top of rear right hand side of wall



Base of rear right hand wall



Close up of base of rear right hand wall

## 2. Surrounding areas

- i. We have been within the gated area of XXXX
- ii. We haven't had access to XXXX
- iii. We have had the benefit of talking to XXXXXXXX of XXXXX who advised us that he is one of the directors with regard to the shared freehold management of XXXXX development

## References

1stAssociated.co.uk – see articles on 1stAssociated.co.uk/disputes3.asp – within this section we have various articles on Party Walls, we have already referred you to Party Wall Basics section but there is other information there that may be of use to you with regards to this matter.

# SURVEY FINDINGS

The boundary wall would benefit from work by all parties who have a shared ownership of the wall.

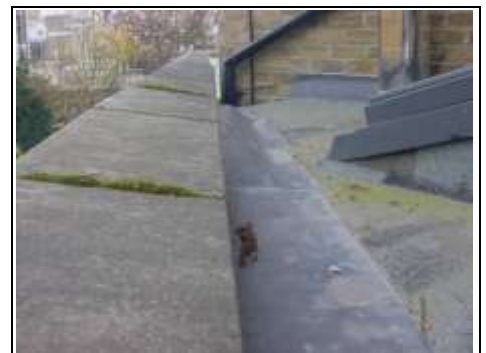
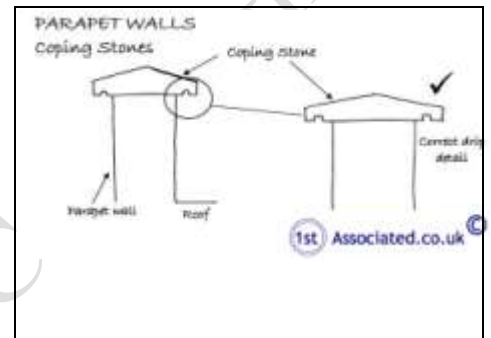
## XXXX

We have discussed various options with Mr XXXX and would recommend the following if the decision is to retain the wall:

### Retaining the wall:

#### Specification of the coping:

1. A check to see if the existing coping stone has a damp proof course and that the drip is correct to the neighbour's side.
2. Removal of the concrete capping to the top of the wall and replace with coping stone if one of the right size can be found. It may not be possible and the cement mortar will have to remain.



Close up of coping stone

#### Specification to wall:

1. Remove all paint with a soft brush. This is a gradual process and we would recommend you take at least three months over it.
2. Removal of cement mortar and repointing it in a lime based mortar or a lime based render if you decide to finish it in this way (but remember that then you would need to have Local Authority approval as this is more than just a repair).

We would expect the drying out process to take a minimum of one year depending upon how much sunlight the wall gets.



Concrete capping just below coping stone

## **Removal of the wall**

If the wall is to be removed we feel this would fall under the Party Wall etc. Act 1996. Although there would be some debate over it, we feel it would be best to follow the procedures set down within this as we would with regards to repair to the wall mentioned above.

## **XXXXXX**

Only a small proportion of the wall has been inspected (approximately five percent)

### **Works specification:**

The coping stone repair work as specified above.

The flashing needs to be checked and ensured it is watertight.

### **Inside XXXXX:**

We have not had the benefit of inspecting this area but it is likely to be a gypsum plaster which is very susceptible to dampness so additionally this needs to be checked and recorded. We recommend photographic evidence is taken and agreed by all.

## **XXXXXXXX**

### **Works specification:**

Coping stone repair as specified above.

### **Wall specification:**

Painted render wall finish – The paint is blistering and looks to be plastic based (from a visual inspection it is impossible to be 100% certain). The paint needs to be removed and replaced with a breathable microporous paint or water based paint.

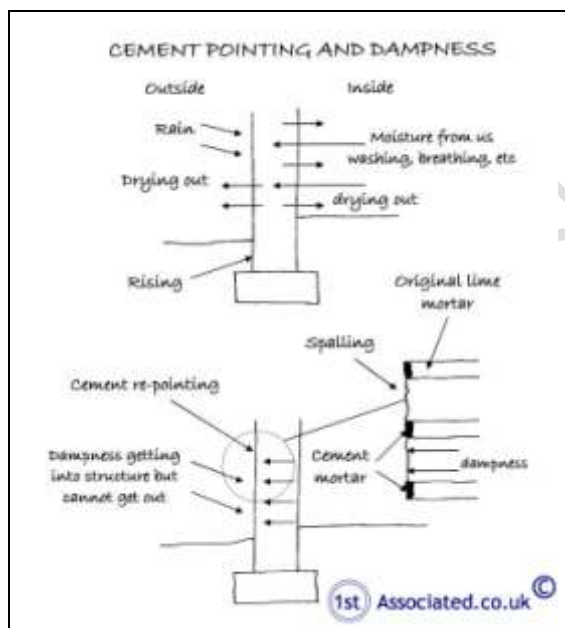
The render looks to be cement based render which if on a new wall then it is appropriate; if it is on an older wall then it is inappropriate and should be replaced with a lime based mortar.

# HISTORY OF THE WALL

For our brief informal research we have contacted XXXX who is a long term resident of the central London area. She has spoken with Southwark archivist Patricia Dark. Please see the report in the Appendix.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** We would recommend that a formal enquiry is sent to the Local Council Conservation Department.

## More general information about historic walls



## **SUMMARY UPON REFLECTION**

The Summary Upon Reflection is a second summary so to speak, which is carried out when we are doing the second or third draft a few days after the initial survey when we have had time to reflect upon our thoughts on the property. We would add the following in this instance:

We feel that the best way forward bearing in mind that you are currently extending the property is to repair and make good the wall rather than resurface it and remove the paint finish which is coming away of its own accord. We would recommend that you also remove the cement mortar to allow the wall to breathe and dry out.

The boundary is a two wall construction, a newer rear wall and a thicker front wall facing your property. The thicker front wall, given its age, may not have what we would term a standard construction. We have shown sketches within this report of Flemish Bond and English Bond. This may be what appears to be on the outer surface however within is often a rubble wall construction which is literally an infill of any materials they had to hand. There is no way of knowing this without opening up the wall but we do need to warn you and advise you of this in case you do decide to take down any part of the wall as you may affect the structural integrity of the wall bearing in mind that it will be built on shallow or no foundations.

If you would like any further advice on any of the issues discussed or indeed any that have not been discussed! Please do not hesitate to contact us on 0800 298 5424.

# APPENDIX

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## Five different party walls:

- 1) A wall that's part of one building on the boundary line (but could be used by a neighbouring owner)



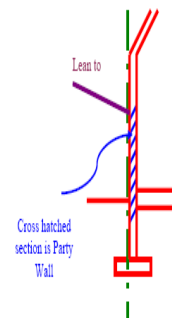
- 2) A wall that separates two buildings on the boundary line



- 3) Party Fence Wall – not part of a building but separates different owners



- 4) Wall wholly on owners land but is used by two (or more) owners to separate the buildings



- 5) A wall or floor separating buildings or parts of buildings by a separate stairs or entrance (example flats)





**CONTACT DETAILS**

XXXXX

Telephone: XXXXXX  
Mobile: XXXXXX

XXXXXX

Mobile: XXXXXX  
Email: XXXXXX

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# **LIMITATIONS**

## **Specific Defects Report**

### **1. Conditions of Engagement**

Please note: references to the masculine include, where appropriate, the feminine.

Subject to express agreement to the contrary (which in this particular case has been none) and any agreed amendments/additions (of which in this particular case there have been none), the terms on which the Surveyor will undertake the Specific Defects Report are set out below.

Based upon a visual inspection as defined below the Surveyor will advise the Client by means of a written report as to his opinion of the visible condition and state of repair of the specific problem or problems only. In this instance we have only looked at what we have been advised is the boundary wall.

### **2. The Inspection**

#### **a) Accessibility and Voids**

The Surveyor will base this report on a visual inspection and accordingly its scope is limited. It does not include an inspection of those areas, which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible. Our visual inspection will relate to the specific defects shown to us only.

#### **b) Areas not inspected**

The Surveyor will have only inspected those areas identified within the report. His report will be based upon possible or probable defects based upon what he has seen together with his knowledge of that type of structure. If you feel that any further areas need inspection then please advise us immediately.

#### **c) Specific Defects Report**

As this is a report upon a Specific Defect we do not offer any comment or guidance upon reactive maintenance and/or planned or routine maintenance items.

#### **d) Whilst we have used reasonable skill and care in preparing this report, it should be appreciated that the Chartered Surveyors cannot offer any guarantee that the property will be free from future defects or that existing defects will not suffer from further deterioration;**

### **3. Deleterious and Hazardous materials**

- a) Unless otherwise expressly stated in the Report, the Surveyor will assume that no deleterious or hazardous materials or techniques have been used in the construction of the property. However the Surveyor will advise in the report if in his view there is a likelihood that high alumina cement (HAC) concrete has been used in the construction and that in such cases specific enquiries should be made or tests carried out by a specialist.

### **4. Contamination**

The Surveyor will not comment upon the existence of contamination as this can only be established by appropriate specialists. Where, from his local knowledge or the inspection he considers that contamination might be a problem he should advise as to the importance of obtaining a report from an appropriate specialist.

### **5. Consents, Approvals and Searches**

- a) The Surveyor will assume that the property is not subject to any unusual or especially onerous restrictions or covenants which apply to the structure or affect the reasonable enjoyment of the property.
- b) The Surveyor will assume that all bye-laws, Building Regulations and other consents required have been obtained. In the case of new buildings and alterations and extensions, which require statutory consents or approval the Surveyor will not verify whether, such consents have been obtained. Any enquiries should be made by the Client or his legal advisers.

Drawings and specifications will not be inspected by the Surveyor. It is the Clients responsibility to forward any drawings and specifications that he has or knows the whereabouts of to us to include information in our report. If these are not forthcoming we will make our best assumptions based upon the information available.

- c) The Surveyor will assume that the property is unaffected by any matters which would be revealed by a Local Search and replies to the usual enquiries or by a Statutory Notice and that neither the property nor its condition its use or intended use is or will be unlawful.

### **6. Fees and Expenses**

The Client will pay the Surveyor the agreed fee for the Report and any expressly agreed disbursements in addition.

**7. Restrictions on Disclosures**

- a) This report is for the sole use of the Client in connection with the property and is limited to the current brief. No responsibility is accepted by the Chartered Surveyors if used outside these terms.
- b) Should any disputes arise they will be dealt with and settled under English law;
- c) This report does not fall under the Third Parties Rights Act.

**8. Safe Working Practices**

The Surveyor will follow the guidance given in Surveying Safely issued by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

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