Greenhouse Wall Condition Report

Old Parsonage Gardens Greenhouses, Old Parsonage, Manchester, M20 2RQ

UPRN: 010090241101

Job Reference: LP/45321 Old Parsonage Gardens - Survey of Greenhouse Walls

Report Date: 29th March 2022 by Robert Hutchison / Updated and amended 9th Jan 2026 by Aidan Watson.

Introduction

Capital Programmes and Procurement have been appointed by Manchester City Council Parks, Leisure, Events and Youth Service, Neighbourhoods Directorate to undertake a visual condition survey of the walls at the rear of the Greenhouses in the Old Parsonage Gardens to identify any remedial works necessary to ensure reasonable and safe standards of accommodation are met.

A survey was undertaken on Tuesday 22nd March 2022 at Old Parsonage Gardens Greenhouse, including, both sides of the wall at the rear of the greenhouses and the wall around external door opening shared with the neighbouring site (Philip Godlee Lodge). The purpose of the survey was to undertake initial investigations of these walls, including checking the current condition of the walls, to report on the condition and make recommendations.

A further survey was conducted in December 2025 by Aidan Watson.

From studying the photographs taken at the site and the notes made during the survey, please see below information related to the building's construction type, observations, conclusions, and recommendations.

The attached photographs should help illustrate the highlighted issues.

Information Provided by Client

Here is some contextual information from the friends of Parsonage Gardens group sent to Minor Works team prior to the site inspection:

The side wall of this greenhouse is deteriorating quite significantly with more and more growth of ivy and jasmine, and very persistent buddleah growing through the wall from the other side. The wall is continually wet; some parts are bulging, and the mortar is deteriorating.

We presume (but cannot be sure) that this wall is the responsibility of the City Council.

Last autumn, and with the approval of the directors of the adjoining property, Philip Godlee Lodge, two committee members inspected the wall from the other side where there is a mature and well-established border along its length. There are a significant number of plants growing on and through the wall from this side, causing much of the damage and adding to our concerns.

We understand that Philip Godlee Lodge is owned or managed by Realty Management Ltd; the director who approved our inspection is named Dean Barlow.

Construction Type

Greenhouse Wall

The boundary wall at the rear of the Greenhouse is made of clay brick and is English Bond with brick sizes 70x230mm, the walls thickness is 350mm (1 ½ brick thick). The height of the wall varies inside the gardens and on the neighbouring site, in the greenhouse the wall changes from 2400mm to 2600mm, and the height of the wall on the neighbouring site is 2100mm, so in some areas the wall is a supporting/retaining wall.

The existing Sandstone copings on the boundary wall are 450mm width x 65mm thickness in size and vary in length.

The wall appears to have been increased in height at the greenhouse location so to accommodate the greenhouse roof and structure. This has been undertaken by installing 2.5 to 4 courses of newer brick, with a wall thickness of approx. 250mm (1 brick thick) on top of the coping stones along the length of the wall that accommodates the greenhouse.

Door Opening (Shared Access)

The wall surrounding the shared access point/door opening to the neighbouring property is made of clay brick and is English Bond with brick sizes 70x230mm, the walls thickness is 350mm (1 ½ brick thick). The opening has a steel lintel 1400mm length supporting four courses of brickwork & coping stone above with the door opening measured at 1100mm width x 2110 height. The door itself is timber with a timber frame and is permanently locked shut to stop access from either side.

Observations

The observations taken from photographs and the visual inspection include the following.

Greenhouse Wall

- Invasive vegetation growing above and below the coping stones at various points along the greenhouse wall (more visible from the neighbouring site) which is causing excessive damage to the wall including pushing the brickwork on the coping stones upwards, this appears to be causing them to lean inwards on the greenhouse side of the wall where cables are attached.
- Missing mortar to the brick joints to most of the wall on the adjoining property elevation due to age and prominent vegetation/ivy growth attached and growing through the joints of the brickwork.
- The wall has many spalling bricks, particularly to the high-level newer brick courses built on top of the walls original coping stones.
- The PVC gutter is in poor condition, visible cracks can be seen and vegetation growth inside gutter on greenhouse roof, visible from the neighbouring site.
- The metal flashing detail positioned on top of the brickwork and to the underside of the greenhouse roof is damaged due to the movement of the bricks.
- The wall on the inside of the greenhouse is wet in various locations and has brick joints that have missing mortar.

Door Opening (Shared Access)

- The brickwork around the opening is in very poor condition with displaced bricks and missing mortar throughout.
- The steel lintel is very badly rusted, and the lintel swelling has caused the movement of the brickwork and the cracking of the mortar joints surrounding it.
- Invasive vegetation growing below the coping stone at the head of the wall and at various locations to the surrounding wall.
- The UPVC gutter on the greenhouse adjacent to the door opening is broken.

Greenhouses

- The glazing to the greenhouse is assumed to be of annealed glass and not safety glass, polycarbonate or Perspex.

- Within the greenhouses, electric power sockets are fixed to the boundary wall. The lack of weatherproofing of the greenhouses has the potential for water to contact with the power sockets which would present an electrical hazard to occupants.

Conclusions

- The annealed glass and electrical power sockets are a health and safety concern.
- The continuous growth of the invasive vegetation and ivy throughout.
- The blocked and broken rainwater gutters to the greenhouses.
- The missing mortar joints to the brickwork and coping stones throughout.
- The further swelling of the steel lintel above the door opening.

Recommendations

The following is recommended in connection to the greenhouse wall and door opening shared with the neighbouring site.

Greenhouse Wall / Greenhouses

- The greenhouses should be removed as these contain annealed glass to the walls, roof and doors (this is assumed and yet to be tested) if broken the glass has the potential to cause a laceration. Before any action is taken, it would be worth testing a small pane (safely) to see how it fractures when broken.
- Corporate health and safety should assess the associated hazard risk to occupants and the potential breaches of health and safety legislation if someone was to be injured.
- Repair work is required to the boundary wall which would involve removing unstable brick courses, vegetation removal, repointing and isolated rebuilding.
- There is a reasonable assumption that the boundary wall is a Party Fence Wall under The Party Wall etc. Act 1996 and that a party wall notice would require serving on the neighbouring property owners to establish if consent is to be granted to repair the wall.
- MCC Estates Team should advise on the boundary line to determine if the boundary wall is a party fence wall.
- The greenhouses are located within the curtilage of a listed building and within a Conservation Area and may be protected by planning and listed building legislation.

Enquires should be made to the local planning authority to establish if there are any restrictions on undertaking the demolition works, boundary wall repairs.

Door Opening (Shared Access)

- The section of damaged brick wall around the door opening needs to be removed and rebuilt soon.
- This would involve removing the existing coping stones, timber door and door frame for reinstatement, removing all damaged and affected bricks around the opening and rebuilding the wall with new bricks to match the existing wall. A new precast concrete lintel should be installed in place of the rusting steel lintel.

Photographic Schedule



Photo 1 - Greenhouse wall viewed from side of Philip Godlee Lodge (Neighbouring property/site) shows large area of ivy and vegetation growing into boundary wall adjacent to the greenhouse



Photo 2 – Visible missing mortar and displaced brickwork on original wall height coping stones built up to support greenhouse structure



Photo 3 – Taken from neighbouring site showing invasive vegetation growing through brick and coping stone joints, visibly pushing the brickwork and coping stones upwards

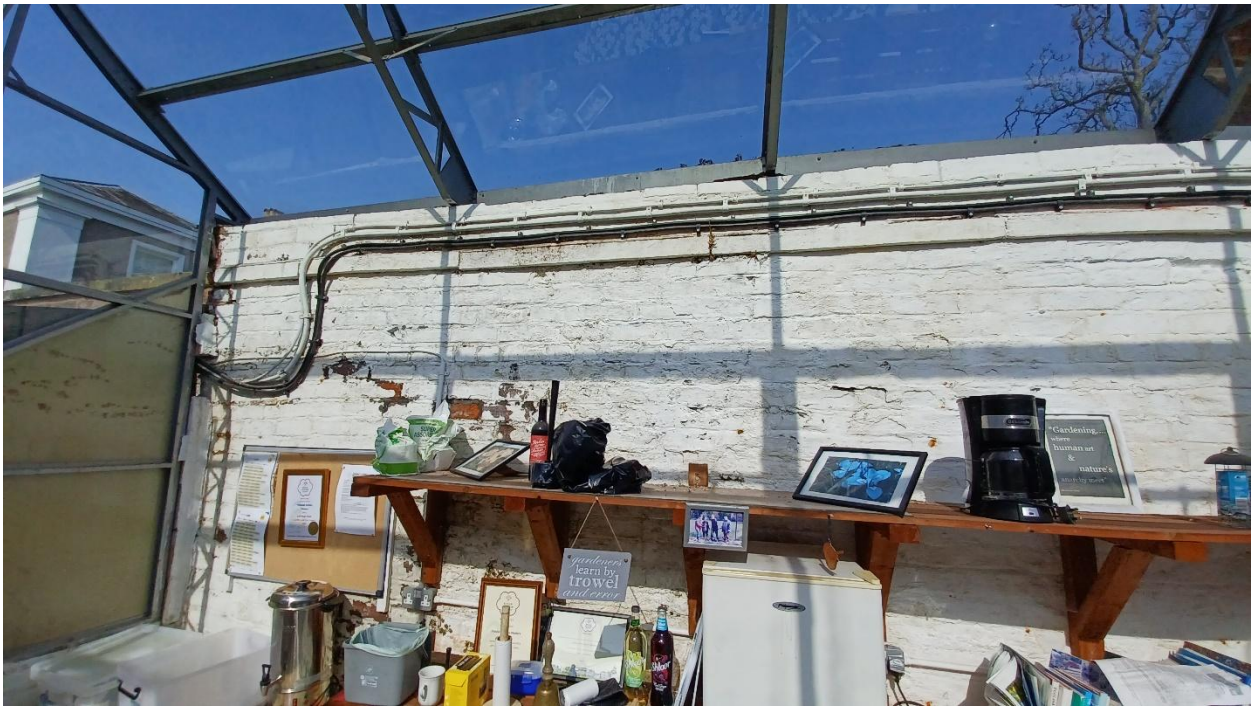


Photo 4 – Taken from inside the greenhouse showing boundary wall painted white with cables attached to additional brick courses on top of coping stones



Photo 5 – Image shows cracking to brickwork at top of wall due to adjacent invasive vegetation shown in photograph 3, wall is starting to move/lean inwards



Photo 6 – High level wall at rear of greenhouse that requires top 6-8 courses of brickwork removing along with all invasive vegetation to prevent future collapse



Photo 7 – Image shows the blocked and broken rainwater gutters to greenhouse and the defective/damaged cavity closure fixed at top of wall



Photo 8 – Door opening shared with neighbouring site; photo taken on neighbours' side of boundary



Photo 9 – Image shows rusted lintel to door opening and damaged brickwork surround



Photo 10 – Image shows the damaged rainwater gutter and pipe located adjacent to door opening