Derwent River Wall Repairs Matlock, Derbyshire

Photographic Recording and Archaeological Watching Brief

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wessexarchaeology

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Document Information

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Document subtitle	Photographic Recording and Archaeological Watching Brief
Document reference	281330.04
Commissioned by	Jackson Civil Engineering Group Ltd
Address	30 White House Road Ipswich Suffolk IP1 5LT
Client name	Environment Agency
Address	Aqua House 20 Lionel Street Birmingham B3 1AQ
Site location	North of Matlock Derwent Bridge, Matlock, DE4 3AT
County	Derbyshire
National grid reference (NGR)	429771 360239 (SK 29771 60239)
Planning authority	Derbyshire County Council
Museum name	Buxton Museum and Art Gallery
OASIS Id	wessexar1-517892
WA project name	Matlock Derwent River Wall Repairs
WA project code	281330
Dates of fieldwork	Photographic recording: 25 May and 2 June 2023 Archaeological watching brief: 5 June 2023
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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Jackson Civil Engineering Group Ltd, on behalf of the Environment Agency, to undertake a programme of photographic recording and archaeological watching brief, with a 'toolbox talk', prior to and during emergency reinstatement works following the collapse of a section of a river wall in February 2022. The monitoring and recording covered approximately 50 m of riverside wall centred on NGR 429771 360239, at Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AT.

The monitored works were located on the east bank of the River Derwent, to the rear of the Mad Hatter restaurant on Bakewell Road and 50–60 m north of Matlock Bridge on Snitterton Road. The recorded section of riverside wall measured approximately 2.5 m in height and approximately 54 m in length. The wall comprised a mixture of regularly coursed rubble at the northern end and uncoursed and coursed random rubble stonework in the central and southern sections. The stone appeared to be a mixture of gritstone and limestone, which is a local stone type for the area. The condition of the wall varied considerably, with the central and southern sections appearing to be in relatively poor condition having lost most of their visible pointing, and with large areas having been colonised by vegetation growth which had resulted in loose and collapsed sections of masonry. There was some evidence of crude repair in the central section, although it was obscured by vegetation, which made interpretation difficult.

This stretch of river wall is of unknown date, although it appeared to be multi-phase: the northern section was of a regular construction and probably built in the 20th century, whilst the central and southern sections were of a more irregular build and potentially date to the development of the site in the late 19th century when the buildings fronting onto Bakewell Road were first constructed with gardens backing onto the river. The northern section of wall had two phases of construction, though the relationship between them was not clear.

No archaeological remains were recorded during the archaeological watching brief.

The photographic recording met its aims and objectives, providing a record of the wall prior to its dismantling and restoration. The watching brief was unable to meet its aims and objectives, due to the lack of archaeological features and deposits.

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Jackson Civil Engineering Group Ltd, for commissioning the photographic recording and archaeological watching brief, in particular Gareth Baugh. Wessex Archaeology is also grateful for the advice of the Planning Archaeologist, who monitored the project for Derbyshire County Council, and to the Jacksons staff for their cooperation and help on site.

Derwent River Wall Repairs, Matlock, Derbyshire

Photographic Recording and Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Jackson Civil Engineering Group Ltd, on behalf of the Environment Agency, to undertake a programme of photographic recording and archaeological watching brief with a 'toolbox talk' prior to and during emergency reinstatement works following the collapse of a section of a river wall in February 2022. The monitoring and recording covered approximately 50 m of riverside wall centred on NGR 429771 360239, at Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AT (Fig. 1).

1.1.2 Initial reinstatement works comprised the dismantling of the riverside wall in several sections, each no more than 1.5 m in width. Invasive trees and other vegetation were removed from the structure, and residual roots treated. The stone wall will be reinstated at the end of the works in keeping with the original style and finish.

1.1.3 The Environment Agency previously undertook repairs to another section of riverside wall, on this occasion adjacent to Matlock Bridge (Grade II* Listed and Scheduled Monument; LB1247890/SM1004596). This earlier work occurred in 2022 following the collapse of a section of the existing river wall. An archaeological watching brief and photographic recording was carried out during the repair works (Wessex Archaeology 2023a). The recent works took place upstream from the collapsed section of the river wall with no overlap with the previous works.

1.1.4 The photographic recording and watching brief with which this report is concerned were undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed (Wessex Archaeology 2023b). The county archaeologist approved the WSI, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), prior to fieldwork commencing. The photographic recording took place on 25 May and 2 June 2023. The watching brief was undertaken 5 June 2023.

1.2 Scope of the report

1.2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a brief written account of the photographic recording and the results of the watching brief, to interpret the results within their local or regional context (or otherwise), and to assess their potential to address the aims outlined in the WSI, thereby making available information about the archaeological and heritage resource (a preservation by record).

1.3 Location, topography and geology

1.3.1 The monitored works was located on the east bank of the River Derwent, to the rear of the Mad Hatter restaurant on Bakewell Road and 50–60 m north of Matlock Bridge on Snitterton Road (Fig. 4). The bank comprises the rear/western boundaries of properties fronting onto Bakewell Road (A615), characterised by sheer walls of differing heights, ages, construction, and materials.

1.3.2 The wall is not statutorily or locally listed, although the site is situated within the Matlock Bridge Conservation Area.

1.3.3 Existing ground levels range from 97 m OD at river level, to 100 m OD at street level.

1.3.1 The bedrock geology is Limestone of the Eyam Formation, which is overlaid by superficial alluvial deposits of clay, silt, sand, and gravel. (British Geological Survey 2023).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological and historical background was assessed in a technical note (Arup 2022), which considered the recorded historic environment resource within the immediate environs of the reinstatement works. A summary of the results is presented below.

2.2 Previous investigations related to the development

Photographic recording and watching brief (2023)

2.2.1 A photographic recording survey and watching brief was conducted by Wessex Archaeology (2023a) during repair works on a section of riverside wall adjacent to Matlock Bridge. Phasing of the bridge, a set of steps and the riverside wall was noted.

2.3 Archaeological and historical context

2.3.1 Matlock Bridge (NHLE 1247890/SM1004596) is the oldest surviving structure within this area of Matlock. Prior to its construction it is believed that a ford located downstream provided a crossing point over the River Derwent. This location may be referenced in the AD 1086 Domesday Survey with the placename ‘Mestesforde’; the river crossing and settlement associated with Nestes mine, now known as the Heights of Abraham. By the 13th century a bridge ‘Pontem de Matelocke’ stood upstream of Mestesforde. It is likely that the oldest, downstream surviving sections of the current structure date to the 15th century.

2.3.2 In the late 19th century, the town became a popular spa destination, and a survey of traffic in August 1894 recorded around 1000 vehicles and 9000 people were crossing the bridge daily. In 1904 the bridge was widened on its upstream side to accommodate two-way traffic. It was restored to one-way traffic in 2007 with a widened pavement to accommodate footfall travelling from the station into the town centre.

2.3.3 It is assumed that the canalisation of the Derwent through Matlock is likely to be a 19th-century development and the retaining walls may well originate in this period. However, if Matlock Bridge is the location of the early ford at Matlock there could be earlier structures and evidence for river management in the banks.

2.3.4 The 1848 Tithe and First Edition 1880 OS maps (not reproduced) depicted the riverbank in the location of the reinstatement works as a small field labelled ‘Croft’. The field had been developed by the late 19th century, shown on the 1899 Ordnance Survey map as buildings fronting onto Bakewell Road and their respective gardens backing onto the river. It is probable that the rear garden retaining walls were first constructed at this time.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims and objectives for photographic recording

3.1.1 The aims and objectives of the photographic recording, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023b) and as defined in the Historic England *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (Historic England 2016) were to create a photographic record, with interpretation of sequence and relationships where possible, of the riverside wall and stone access steps prior their dismantling and reinstatement.

3.2 Aims and objectives for archaeological watching brief

3.2.1 The aims of the watching brief, as stated in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023b) and as defined in the CIfA *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014a), were to:

- identify any archaeological or geo-archaeological deposits revealed by the removal of the wall; and
- report on any findings.

3.2.2 In order to achieve the above aims, the objectives of the watching brief, also defined in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023b), were to:

- determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, deposits, structures, artefacts or ecofacts within the specified works area;
- record and establish, within the constraints of the works, the extent, character, date, condition and quality of any surviving archaeological remains (a preservation by record);
- place any identified archaeological remains within a wider historical and archaeological context in order to assess their significance; and
- make available information about the archaeological resource on the site by preparing a report on the results of the watching brief.

4 METHODS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methodology set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023b) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in CIfA guidance (CIfA 2014a and 2014b). The methods employed are summarised below.

4.2 Unmanned aerial vehicle survey

4.2.1 Due to access constraints, an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) was used to create an accurate, detailed, photogrammetric plan of the riverside wall to ensure dimensional accuracy, along with high detail and resolution of the stonework.

4.2.2 The survey was undertaken with a DJI Mini 3 UAV equipped with a 3-axis gimbal stabilised 48-megapixel camera. The UAV successfully recorded features to a ground sampling distance of <2 cm/px in line with the standards established in *Metric Survey Specifications for Cultural Heritage* (Historic England 2015).

4.2.3 The aerial photography was georeferenced by establishing a series of ground control points (GCPs). GCPs were located using a Real Time Kinematic Global Navigational Satellite System, which provides an accuracy of +/-30 mm in accordance with metric survey specifications laid down by Historic England (2015).

4.2.4 All work was conducted in the Ordnance Survey National Grid, with heights calculated as distance above Ordnance Datum (Newlyn), as defined by OSGM15 and OSTN15.

4.2.5 Processing was undertaken with the latest iteration of Agisoft Metashape Professional software or a similar software package. Photogrammetric survey and processing were conducted in line with guidance provided by Historic England in *Photogrammetric Applications for Cultural Heritage* (2017).

4.3 Ground based photography

4.3.1 The detailed photographic record comprised:

- general views of the riverside wall and stone access steps;
- the overall appearance of the riverside wall and stone access steps;
- any details, structural or decorative relating to the riverside wall and access steps design, development and use, with scale where appropriate;
- dates or other inscriptions; any signage, makers' plates or graffiti which contribute to an understanding of the riverside wall and access step;
- general views of the structure in its wider setting or landscape; and
- the structure's external appearance.

4.3.2 High quality digital images were taken with a Canon EOS 5D Mark II full frame digital camera (with 21-megapixel capability). A photographic scale of appropriate size was included in all general and specific detailed views, except where considered inappropriate or prevented by on-site conditions or safety concerns.

4.3.3 All photographs comply with relevant Historic England guidance (Historic England 2015 and 2016).

4.3.4 Due to vegetation growth and a lack of accessibility to the base of most of the wall to enable this vegetation to be cleared, several sections of the wall were largely obscured from view, which limited the extent of recording and understanding of the wall's development.

4.3.5 Except at the southernmost end of the wall, where temporary access had been extended out into the river, no access was possible to much of wall including the central and some of the southern sections. This meant that close inspection of these areas was not possible during the recording phase in advance of the dismantling works.

4.4 Watching brief

General

4.4.1 The monitoring archaeologist was present on the first day of groundworks and watched the preparation of the area due to be worked on, though no dismantling of the wall or machine excavation took place.

4.4.2 Due to the non-occurrence of any ground works on that day, no photographs were taken during the monitoring, and site records comprise notes taken on a daily record sheet.

4.4.3 The monitoring archaeologist provided a 'toolbox talk' to alert the site staff to any significant archaeological features that may have been uncovered during the course of the works. The site staff were instructed to inform Wessex Archaeology or take photographs should it be required. No communication was received.

4.5 Finds and environmental strategies

4.5.1 Strategies for the recovery, processing and assessment of finds and environmental samples were in line with those detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023b).

4.6 Monitoring

4.6.1 The county archaeologist monitored the watching brief on behalf of the LPA. Any variations to the WSI, if required to better address the project aims, were agreed in advance with the client and the county archaeologist.

5 PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDING

5.1 Description

5.1.1 The recorded section of riverside wall measured approximately 2.5 m in height and approximately 54 m in length (Fig. 2). The wall comprised a mixture of local gritstone and limestone, which appeared as regular coursed rubble at the northern end and uncoursed and coursed random rubble stonework in the central and southern sections. At the northern end of the relevant section of riverside wall, a small flight of steps provided pedestrian access down from the upper bank to the riverside (Fig. 5).

5.1.2 Due to the length of the wall and differences in composition, the description has been divided into 'southern', 'central' and 'northern' sections, which are described below. Only the southernmost extent of the southern section of the wall could be directly accessed during the recording visit.

Southern section

5.1.3 The southern section of the wall consisted of approximately 13 courses of coursed rubble of varying sizes that appeared in relatively poor condition with missing pointing throughout and evidence of localised collapse and vegetation growth. Some remnant pointing, which was mid-grey and appeared to be hard and cementitious in nature, was visible between some of the stones.

5.1.4 Extensive rubble wall material from previous collapse episodes was present within the river and at the base of the wall. A remnant drainage hole 0.2 m in width was observed in the southern section approximately seven courses up from the base (Figs 6–7). Several young trees had established themselves throughout the upper part of the wall and resulted in disruption of the masonry (Figs 8–9). There were no apparent signs of repair, although visibility was partial due to vegetation. The wall abutted a taller wall of 15–17 courses in the neighbouring property beyond the watching brief area to the south (Fig. 6), from which it was separated by an open straight joint measuring 0.05 m in width.

Middle section

5.1.5 The middle section of the wall appeared in similar condition to the southern section. Like the southern section, it consisted of approximately 12–13 courses of coursed and

uncoursed random rubble, although of more varying sizes, with larger stones and some areas of collapse that appeared to have been repaired. There were two medium-sized trees growing out of the top of the wall and one medium-sized tree at the bottom that had created structural issues in the form of missing masonry (Figs 10–11). Despite the trees, there was less vegetation growth and moss throughout this section of the wall.

Northern section

5.1.6 The northern section of the wall appeared to be in good condition, consisting of 20–24 courses of coursed stonework separated into two main phases. A lower section of coursed random rubble with stone quoins was overbuilt with 11–12 courses of regular coursed blocks, although the steps appeared to be from an earlier phase. The lower course of the wall had been repointed and the upper courses appeared to be a later addition as shown by the regular, formal stonework and pointing. There was a large expanse of ivy growth to the south end of the wall that covered the upper courses, and some signs of vegetation growth throughout this section, although it had not created any structural issues or loose masonry (Figs 12–13). There were two modern 'HAM BAKER' flap valves located in the upper course of the section of wall, one at the southern end and the other central/north end.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 This stretch of river wall is of unknown date, although it appeared to be multi-phase: the northern section was of a regular construction and probably built in the 20th century, whilst the central and southern sections were of a more irregular build and potentially date to the development of the site in the late 19th century when the buildings fronting onto Bakewell Road were first constructed with gardens backing onto the river. The northern section of wall had two phases of construction, though the relationship between them was not clear.

5.2.2 The condition of the wall varied considerably, with the central and southern sections appearing to be in relatively poor condition having lost most of their visible pointing, and with large areas having been colonised by vegetation growth which had resulted in loose and collapsed sections of masonry. There was some evidence of crude repair in the central section, although it was obscured by vegetation which made interpretation difficult. A quantity of stone was observed to have fallen from these sections into the river, although this may have provided some scour protection to the base of the wall during flood events.

5.2.3 The photographic recording has met its aims and objectives, providing a record of the wall prior to its dismantling and restoration.

6 WATCHING BRIEF

6.1 Description

6.1.1 No archaeological remains were recorded during the reinstatement works. The monitoring archaeologist viewed only the cleaning up of the area around the riverside wall, as well as some removal of ivy. No archaeological remains were reported by the site groundworkers during the repair works.

6.2 Finds evidence

6.2.1 No finds were recovered during the watching brief.

6.3 Environmental evidence

6.3.1 No deposits meeting the criteria for environmental sampling set out in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2023b) were encountered.

6.4 Discussion

6.4.1 Due to the lack of archaeological or geoarchaeological features, structures or deposits found, the aims and objectives of the watching brief were unable to be met.

7 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

7.1 Museum

7.1.1 The archive resulting from the watching brief is currently held in the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Sheffield. The site falls within the collecting area of Buxton Museum and Art Gallery.

7.2 Preparation of the archive

Digital archive

7.2.1 The digital archive generated by the project, which comprises born-digital data (e.g., site records, photographs and reports), will be deposited with a Trusted Digital Repository, in this instance the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), to ensure its long-term curation. Digital data will be prepared following ADS guidelines (ADS 2013 and online guidance) and accompanied by metadata.

7.3 Selection strategy

7.3.1 It is widely accepted that not all the records and materials (artefacts and ecofacts) collected or created during the course of an archaeological project require preservation in perpetuity. These records and materials will be subject to selection in order to establish what will be retained for long-term curation, with the aim of ensuring that all elements selected to be retained are appropriate to establish the significance of the project and support future research, outreach, engagement, display and learning activities, i.e., the retained archive should fulfil the requirements of both future researchers and the receiving Museum.

7.3.2 The selection strategy, which details the project-specific selection process, is underpinned by national guidelines on selection and retention (Brown 2011, section 4) and generic selection policies (SMA 1993; Wessex Archaeology's internal selection policy) and follows CIfA's *Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives* (2023). It should be agreed by all stakeholders (Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists, local authority) and fully documented in the project archive.

7.3.3 Project-specific proposals for selection are presented below. These proposals are based on recommendations by Wessex Archaeology's internal specialists and will be updated in line with any further comment by other stakeholders (local authority). The selection strategy will be fully documented in the project archive.

Digital data

7.3.4 The digital data comprise: day record; orthographic plan; photographs; reports. All will be deposited, although site photographs will be subject to selection to eliminate poor quality and duplicated images, and any others not considered directly relevant to the archaeology of the site.

7.3.5 The table below summarises the recommended selection and deposition strategy.

Table 1 Archive selection and deposition strategy

Class	Element	Quantification	Depository	Format
Digital archive	Report	1 (11 MB)	ADS	.pdf
	Scanned day record	1 (c. 178 KB)	ADS	.pdf
	Images	c.34 (319 MB)	ADS	.jpg
	Orthographic plan	1 (1 KB)	ADS	.tfw
	Processing report and metadata	7 MB	ADS	.pdf

7.4 Security copy

7.4.1 In line with current best practice (e.g., Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

7.5 OASIS

7.5.1 An OASIS (online access to the index of archaeological investigations) record (http://oasis.ac.uk) has been initiated, with key fields completed (Appendix 1). A .pdf version of the final report will be submitted following approval by the county archaeologist on behalf of the LPA. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) ArchSearch catalogue.

8 COPYRIGHT

8.1 Archive and report copyright

8.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.

8.2 Third party data copyright

8.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g., Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 OASIS summary

OASIS ID (UID): wessexar1-517892

Project Name: Watching Brief, Photographic Recording at Derwent River Wall Repairs, Matlock, Derbyshire

Activity type: Watching Brief, Photographic Recording

Sitecode(s): 281330

Reason for Investigation: Emergency recording

Organisation Responsible for work: Wessex Archaeology

Project Dates: 25-May-2023 - 05-Jun-2023

HER: Derbyshire County Council

Coordinates: SK 29771 60239 LLNGR12 fig

Administrative Areas:
Country: England
County: Derbyshire
District: Derbyshire Dales
Parish: Matlock Town

Project Methodology: An unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) was used to create an accurate, detailed, photogrammetric plan of the riverside wall. Additionally, a detailed photographic record was produced using high quality digital images. Photographs were taken of general views of the riverside wall, along with any details. A watching brief was conducted on the first day of works, and a toolbox talk was provided to the ground workers on site, so they could look out for any potential archaeology.

Project Results: The wall was photographically recorded prior to dismantling. It was determined that the riverside wall measured approximately 2.5 m in height and 54 m in length. The wall comprised a mixture of regular coursed rubble at the northern end and uncoursed and coursed random rubble stonework in the central and southern sections. The condition of the wall varied considerably, with the central and southern sections appearing to be in relatively poor condition having lost most of their visible pointing, and with large areas colonised by vegetation growth which had resulted in loose and collapsed sections of masonry. There was some evidence of crude repair in the central section, although it was obscured by vegetation which made interpretation difficult. This section of river wall is of unknown date, although it appeared to be multi-phased with the central and southern sections potentially older and of similar age and construction, while the northern section was more regular and probably recently (20th century) constructed. No archaeological remains were uncovered during the watching brief.

Keywords:
Subject/Period: River Defences: 20TH CENTURY
FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types

Archive:
Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;

Reports in OASIS:
Jackson-Slater, C. and Coughlan, P., (2023). *Derwent River Wall Repairs, Matlock, Derbyshire: Photographic recording and archaeological watching brief*. Sheffield: Wessex Archaeology. 281330.04.

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Coordinate system: OSGB 1936 British National Grid

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Figure 1: Site location

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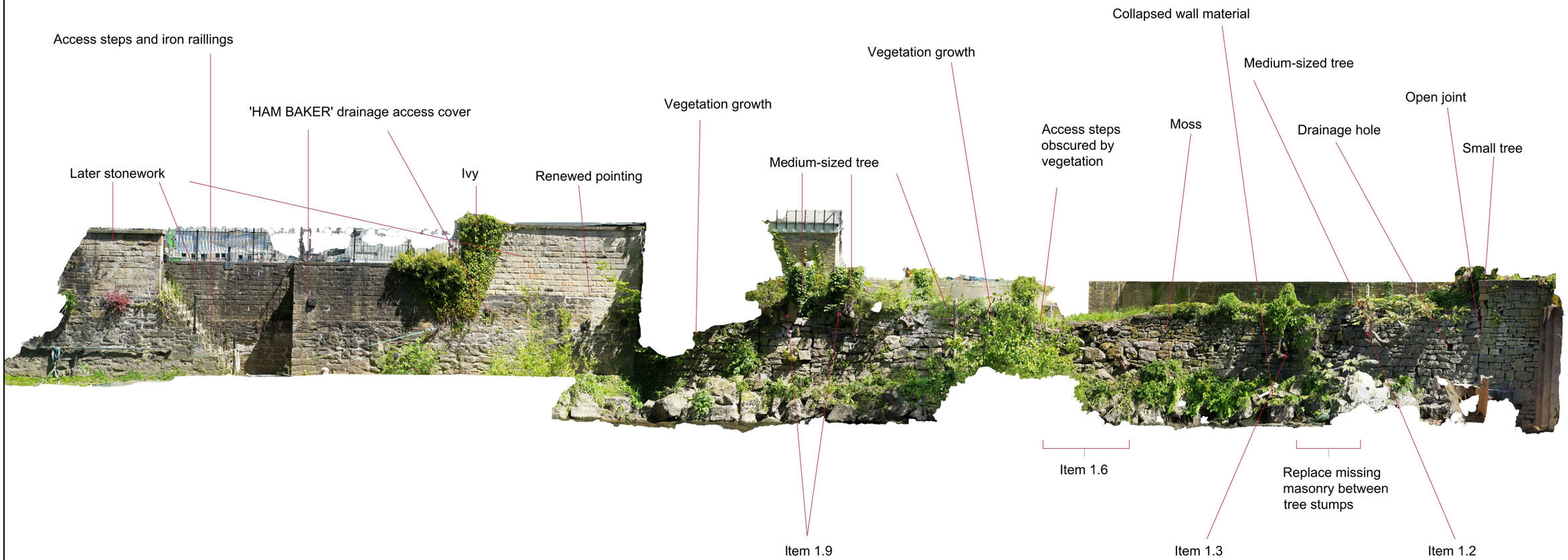
Northern section

Central section

Southern section



1 0 5 m

3 0 15 ft

Repairs
Items 1.2, 1.3 and 1.9
Masonry disrupted and wall compromised by tree growth
Repair = dismantle the wall around tree stumps, cut back the tree stumps and rebuild; and
replace small amount of masonry missing between tree stumps at 1.2 and 1.3

Item 1.6
Wall downstream of obscured access steps in very poor condition with a considerable amount of loose masonry present.
Repair = dismantle and rebuild this part of wall

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Figure 2: Matlock River east bank wall, west facing elevation

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Figure 3: River wall, view from the south-east

Figure 4: River wall in proximity to Matlock Derwent Bridge, view from the north-west

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Figure 5: Access steps and iron railings in northern section of the river wall, view from the south-west

Figure 6: Southern section of the river wall, view from the south

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Figure 7: Drainage hole in the southern section of the river wall, 0.2 m scale

Figure 8: Small tree in the open joint of the southern section of the river wall, 0.2 m scale

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Figure 9: Medium-sized tree in the southern section of the river wall

Figure 10: Two medium-sized trees and vegetation growth at the middle section of the river wall, view from the south-west

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Figure 11: One medium-sized tree and vegetation growth at the middle section of the river wall

Figure 12: Access steps and ivy at the northern section of the river wall

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Figure 13: Access steps and vegetation growth at the northern section of the river wall

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