



Title: Gnoll House Ruins – Site Visit Report

Date: 01 Sept 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared as an element of our role as Consulting Structural Engineers to the client Andrew Scott in respect to the re-development of the Gnoll House Ruins which is part of the overall re-development works for Gnoll Country Park.
- 1.2 Jubb conducted a site visit on the 11th of August 2023 to the Gnoll County Park in Neath to review the condition of the overall site including the existing Visitor Centre, the Gnoll House Ruins, the Kitchen Garden extension and other aspects of the site.
- 1.3 This report focuses on the visual survey of the Gnoll House Ruins. The Gnoll House Ruins site is located in the western side of the park as shown in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Overall view of The Gnoll Country Park showing The Gnoll House Ruins Highlighted.

2.0 Scope and Method of Survey

- 2.1 This report has been prepared exclusively for the use of Andrew Scott.
- 2.2 This report should not be transferred to any other parties without the express consent of Jubb Consulting Engineers Ltd. The report contents, views and conclusions should not be used or relied upon by any third parties without the express consent of Jubb Consulting Engineers Ltd.
- 2.3 This report contains an outline survey of the structural elements witnessed during a site walkover. The scope of the report is to provide observations on the structural integrity of the ruins basement and a general overview of the condition of the basement.
- 2.4 The survey took the form of a visual inspection only from inside and outside of the Gnoll House Ruins. The inspection did not involve an examination of any part of the structure which was otherwise covered or inaccessible and we cannot, therefore, report on these elements.
- 2.5 The photographs taken are not exhaustive, but they provide a good general idea about the condition of the Gnoll House Ruins.

- 2.6 During the survey no intrusive investigation, concrete testing, trial pits or testing of materials were conducted.

3.0 Existing Ruins and Proposals

- 3.1 The Ruins comprises of partially demolished historic walls accompanied with a mix of gravel and soft landscaping. The Gnoll House includes a basement area containing eight rooms interconnected by corridors and stairs providing access to the ground level above.
- 3.2 There are known bats within the basement area. The bats and their roosts are legally protected hence special care is required when working in these areas. Advice is to be sought from an ecologist in regard to proposed works where bats could be present.
- 3.3 Gnoll Park is classified as a Grade II* parkland and it is therefore quite important that the historical significance of the existing structures is persevered.
- 3.4 The proposals for the Ruins comprise constructing new raised platforms to create an outdoor performance space/ cinema with new surfacing and outdoor seating areas.
- 3.5 The proposals also comprise the removal of the timber truss and steel deck roof, shortening the walls to align with the existing external Ruins walls, and introducing a new roof/floor made of beam and block construction. This new structure will be supported by steel beams resting on the stone wall of the Ruins.
- 3.6 Internally, the plans involve utilising a portion of the basement area for public access, which will include welcome interpretation rooms and a space equipped with seating for interpretive films and educational purposes. The remainder of the basement will be partitioned off and left as it is to create roosting areas for bats.

4.0 Observations and Recommendations

- 4.1 No apparent significant structural issues have been noticed in the walls of the Ruins basement. The walls appear to be reasonably plumb without major structural cracking and issues.
- 4.2 The basement walls are predominantly made of a combination of brick and stone. The walls appeared to have a white wash/ painted finish and although no significant cracking was apparent, we couldn't visually inspect the masonry.
- 4.3 Rooms 01, 02 and Corridor 01 (Refer to Appendix A) have a timber truss supporting a metal deck roof which is visible at external ground level. The rest of the basement has a combination of Arched masonry roof and a flat roof believed to be an RC slab. There are also localised areas with roof comprising of steel beams, timber joists and pre-cast concrete lintels.
- 4.4 The steel beams supporting Corridor 02 appear to have significantly rusted and delaminated due to water ingress (Refer to Appendix B). Jubb is preparing a report for the repair/ replacement of these beams. We would recommend further investigations to determine the extent of deterioration and would allow for replacement of existing beams.
- 4.5 Rotten timber joists have been identified at the ceiling of Room 06. Refer to Appendix D. Similar to the steel beams we would recommend further investigations to determine the extent of deterioration and would allow for replacement of existing beams.
- 4.6 The arched roof of Corridor 03 towards Corridor 04 appears to not be adequately supported at the edges. Refer to Appendix C. We recommend an allowance for packing up gaps between the Arch and the wall and making good.

- 4.7 Room 01, Room 02, and Corridor 01 feature modern paving flooring, while the remaining areas of the basement are equipped with flagstone flooring. The basement has open channel drainage system at the base level.
- 4.8 During the site visit a bat was encountered in Room 04.
- 4.9 Several localised areas of the existing stone wall will require pointing and masonry consolidation/ rebuilt. Refer to to Jubb report “2080-01-JUB-S-RP-00002-S2-P1” for best practices repairs summary.
- 4.10 The majority of the walls inside where damp to touch but not excessively dripping in water. Room 08 however had water dripping continuously. It is to be noted that the site visit took place in summer during a not so wet period. Winter and rainy conditions could lead to more water ingress through the walls.

Project Name: Gnoll Park, Neath

2080-01-JUB-S-RP-00001-S2-P1

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Appendix A - 2080-01-JUB-S-DR-SK001

