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Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

Former Highgate Chapel

Boundary wall repairs

Heritage Statement

For the London Borough of Haringey

November 2022



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1. Summary of Report

This report is to support a listed building consent for the repair of the retaining wall encircling the former Highgate Chapel in order to ensure the boundary wall is stable.

The application comprises the following works:

- Repairs to the existing brickwork, stonework and railings
- Strengthening of the retaining wall
- Removal of vegetation and trees within the vicinity where root systems and growth are impacting the wall
- Repair and redecoration of existing railings

This submission is made on behalf of the London Borough of Haringey.

This document includes a historical summary of the retaining wall and its immediate context as well as its significance in Section 3. This is followed in Section 4 by a summary of the repair proposals. A justification for the proposed works with regards to the impact on the significance of the listed asset follows in Section 5. The Heritage Statement is provided in Section 6.



Figure 1.1. Photo of the wall abutting Highgate School Chapel

This report is to be read in conjunction with the following documentation:

Donald Insall Associates:

- Existing photographic montage of wall
- Repair drawings showing the proposed alterations to the retaining wall
- Schedule of works and
- Repair specification

Cobb & Company:

- Structural report,
- Sketches
- Specification

2. Statement of Significance

2.1 The Building and its Legal Status and Policy Context

The Former Highgate Chapel boundary wall is Grade II listed and is located within the Highgate Conservation Area (Haringey Council) in Highgate.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 16 and 66 of the Act imposes statutory duties upon local planning authorities to have '*special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*'.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan applicable to the Site comprises the Haringey Local Plan (2017), draft Local Plan 2037 and the London Plan 2021.

The courts have held that following the approach set out in the policies on the historic environment in the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 will effectively result in a decision-maker complying with its statutory duties. The Framework forms a material consideration for the purposes of section 38(6). The key message of the NPPF is the concept of 'sustainable development' which for the historic environment means that heritage assets 'should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance'.

The NPPF recognises that, in some cases, the significance of a designated heritage asset can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. The NPPF therefore states that any harm or loss to a designated heritage asset 'should require clear and convincing justification' and that any 'less than substantial' harm caused to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. A designated heritage asset is defined as a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.

Former Highgate Chapel Retaining wall

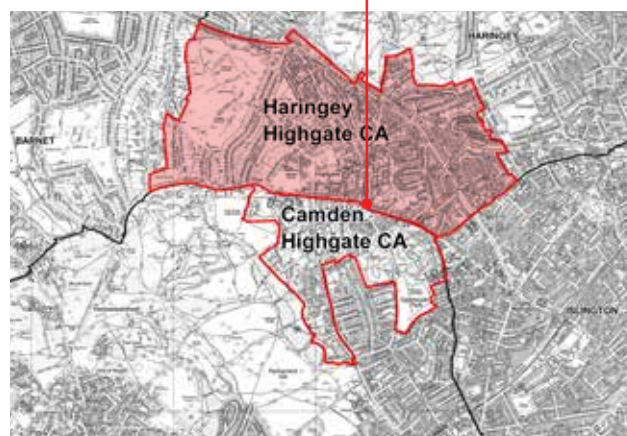


Figure 2.1. Haringey Highgate Conservation Area. The retaining wall is marked in red. Extracted from Haringey Council website.

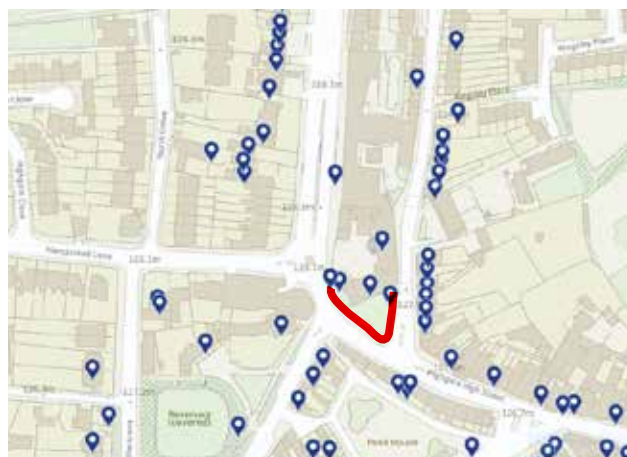


Figure 2.2. Listed Buildings in the vicinity. Historic England website.

2.2 Location

The boundary wall is located at the southern extremity of the Haringey Highgate Conservation Area, in the area of Highgate, London.

The boundary wall is approximately 60m long, and is curved running north to south on Southwood Lane and South-east to North-west on Highgate High Street. The latter is a two-way road with high traffic volume. At its highest point it is 3.4m in height.

Along the northern side of the boundary wall is the Forme Highgate Chapel (grade II listed) which is owned by Highgate High School. An area of land directly abutting the wall with graves and tombs located is of unknown ownership.

To the east side of Southwood Lane is a row of historic dwellings which are Grade II listed.

At the junction of Highgate High Street and Highgate west Hill is The Apothecary House, a Grade II* listed building.

2.3 General Description

The boundary wall comprises an exposed brickwork wall with a header course that is rendered in places. At regular intervals along the top course are Portland Stone coping stones.

A wrought iron and mild steel (assumed) railing with square-profile spiked balusters extends the length of the wall. The railing system terminates at either end with a square-profile post topped with a decorative acorn finial.

The boundary wall comprises areas of both original brickwork and later replacements, and contributes positively to the setting of the Conservation Area and should be retained.

Please see section 4 for a summary of each element of the boundary wall.

2.4 Statement of Significance

The boundary wall was listed as Grade II on 2 December 1994. The listing description under reference TQ2832387474 states:

Boundary wall to graveyard, sixty metres long. Eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with patching to Southwood Lane. Stock brick, with gate facing Highgate High Street. The Southwood Lane frontage is higher, as the land falls away, and includes thirty metres of early nineteenth century cast-iron railings, square with spear tops and classical urns. The wall is attached to Highgate School chapel (q.v) and makes an imposing contribution to the centre of Highgate village.

The majority of the railing system appears to be the original early nineteenth century cast-iron railings. The railings are square profiles with spear tops. On Southwood Lane, some railings at regular intervals have classical urn tops.

Original masonry is laid in a Flemish Bond, but there are areas of later masonry on Highgate High Street side which have a different coursing pattern. Generally, the majority of the original dark brown brickwork is found on Southwood Lane and in areas on Highgate High Street. Different brick types have been used for later works and for strengthening the wall including yellow stock, red rubbed bricks and blue/grey engineering bricks. These new additions are less significant.

Overall, the listed boundary wall contributes positively to the setting of a number of listed buildings in its vicinity and the wider Conservation Area. As such it should be retained and repaired according to best conservation practice.



Figure 2.3. Section of retaining wall with railings and stone coping

2.5 Historical development of the area

Highgate took root around a village green peppered with ponds and elm trees, at the top of a 426-foot hill on the edge of the Bishop of London's estate. It was the bishop who erected a tollgate here sometime before 1354, when Highgate's name was first recorded. Later in the same century Dick Whittington is said to have sat upon a milestone on Highgate Hill on his way back to the family home in Gloucestershire.

By the 15th century, hunting in the park had been abandoned, and the Bishop was allowing leases of land inside the park to be granted. The 'highgate' created a crossroads where the High Street and North Road and Hampstead Lane, West Hill and Southwood Lane met. The crossroads was a magnet for travellers, and a gatehouse inn was established at the crossroads and prospered.

Ancient Southwood Lane, outside the Bishop's park, continued to provide an alternative route northwards.

By the late 14th century Highgate was an established settlement. Easy communication with London and Westminster was a particular attraction for those with business in the capital. Round the green on the hilltop plateau and on the slopes looking towards London, noblemen and rich merchants bought land and built fine houses with splendid views. One of these men, Sir Roger Cholmeley, founded a grammar school in 1565 which took the old hermit's chapel into its care. This would become the renowned Highgate School.

In 1616, the School chapel and its functions grow in importance, with villagers beginning to use the chapel as their parish church. It is enlarged a century later to accommodate its increasing use. In 1865, the existing chapel was re-built with a new Victorian church built for the villagers by F.P Cockerell. The grounds around were retained as a graveyard.

From the late 17th century to the end of the 18th century Highgate became increasingly popular and affluent for



1762



1832



1863



1893



1912



1936

Figure 2.4. Historic development maps

1762- Plan of London, John Rocque / 1832 - The environs of London. Drawn & engraved by H. Waters, David Rumsey Map Collection / 1863- National Library of Scotland / 1893- London sheet XIX, National Library of Scotland / 1912- London Sheet G, National Library of Scotland / 1936- London II.9, National Library of Scotland

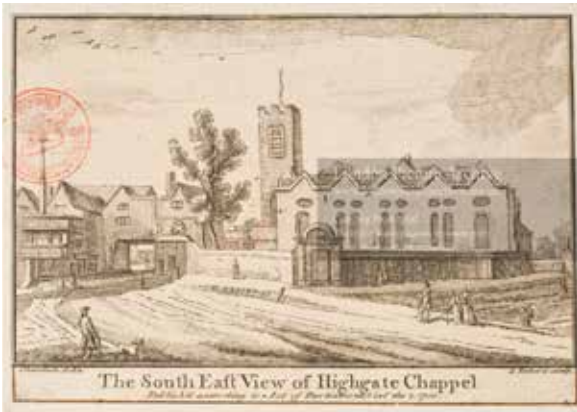
families and individuals moving out of the inner London boroughs. Many houses were built, including a row of houses along Southwood Lane which are listed.

2.6 Historical Summary of the listed asset

Some form of retaining system exists on this site as early as the mid 18th century to stabilise the differences in level on Southwood Lane. The wall was rebuilt in its current form and largely current materials

in the early 19th century. The gated access to the chapel at the apex of Southwood Lane and Highgate High Street has been closed at some point, probably in coordination with the Chapel returning to sole school use rather than shared community use.

Modern repairs have been carried out including introduction of engineering bricks to strengthen the wall. Tree removal works within the graveyard were undertaken in 2020 to safeguard the wall.



1750



1807



1830



3. Condition of Retaining wall

3.1 General Condition

The most extensive defects to the boundary wall are generally found in localised areas, particularly to the base and pockets of face loss of bricks. The whole railing is requires decorative repair but is broadly in good condition. Areas of lost brick, especially adjacent to the pavement on the road side, have exposed large visible tree roots from the mature trees planted within the cemetery.

The wall has been subject to a number of interventions and later repairs, some of which are inappropriate to the character of the boundary wall, including a long section of engineering bricks buttress up to twelve courses high on the western elevation. It is also evident that there have been long periods of no maintenance.

On the cemetery elevation, the wall is largely obscured by a raised soil level, headstones and vegetation. It is very likely that there has been little to no maintenance.

Areas of decayed brick, advanced structural movement and failed defective pointing should be repaired immediately to prevent further deterioration and more extensive repairs.

Photos in section 3.7 illustrate the current condition of the wall.

3.2 Current use

From site observation, Highgate High Street and Southwood Lane are heavily used by pedestrian traffic, especially at around the start and end of school hours. The pedestrian crossing along Southwood Lane will need to be considered as part of the implementation of the project but does not have any adverse effect on the condition of the fabric. Street furniture is either directly fixed to the wall or positioned immediately adjacent to the wall.

There is little to no pedestrian access to the cemetery side of the wall apart for tree maintenance.

3.3 Structural Condition

The boundary wall to the Chapel is made up of a series of different walls of different ages. The north west corner appears to be the oldest section in red brick, which also stands highest above the church yard. The central portion of wall on the west side is of similar height, but has been rebuilt in yellow stocks at some point in the past. The south west section of wall is in yellow stock and has been lowered to church yard level and a railing placed on top. The whole of the western boundary has had a blue engineering brick plinth repair/addition made to it, possibly in the 1980s. The same yellow brick wall with railings above

is on the southern curved boundary and about half of the eastern boundary, but without the 1980s plinth repairs. At the north east corner of the church yard the pavement has sloped down so that it is about 2m below church yard level and there are three bays of wall here which stand above church yard level without railings. These are predominantly in red brick and seem to match the older portion of wall to the west; a tree has damaged the southern-most bay of this tall section and a section above the church yard has been rebuilt in yellow stock bricks. There is evidence of multiple campaigns of historic repairs and it would seem that the last meaningful work may have been done about 30 years ago.

The trees which are planted close to the wall appear to have applied direct pressure to the back of the wall via their root ball. Tree roots are visible on the pavement side where they have pushed bricks out of the wall and presumably permeate the masonry elsewhere, albeit unseen.

In many areas the wall is leaning and bulging. Some panels have visible cracks. There are missing bricks in some sections, particularly on the south and east sides. Pointing is missing and weathered in many places. A number of structural repairs are required to extend the life of the structure.

3.3 Railings

The railing system extends along the majority of the length of the boundary wall, and comprises a horizontal top rail with square profile spear head balusters.

At bay intervals the end post is a square-profile end post topped with an lidded urn finial.

There are typically 17No. balusters between each bay end post. Some bays are joined by a bolted master chain at the horizontal rail.

The curved boundary wall end of the railings is bedded in a concrete kerb stone on top of the capping stone. Elsewhere the railings are bedded directly into the capping stone.

There is some rust throughout to the balusters, rails and posts along the whole length of the railing system.

The deterioration of the railing system throughout is generally limited to the paint system; there are only a few instances where the baluster and support posts have been bent or finials are missing, which will need to be repaired. A full strip and re-coating with an exterior grade paint system is required, and the support posts need to be re-bedded into the retaining wall.

See section 4. for more detailed proposals and specification.

3.4 Coping

The top course of the boundary wall is formed of stone slabs, accommodating approximately eleven railing balusters. Raked capping bricks are used as coping along the buttress sections of engineering brick.

The coping along the entire length of wall has at least some vegetative growth and is bedded directly in soil in some locations.

3.5 Masonry

The height of the masonry section of the wall varies in height from approximately 1m at the wall's northern end, to a maximum height of approximately 3.4m at the junction with Highgate School Chapel.

The coursing pattern of the bricks is laid in a Flemish Bond along the length of the wall. Brick types and colour vary depending on the prevalence of original fabric. Generally, the majority of the original London stock brickwork is still visible. Strengthening to the base of the wall has been carried out with modern blue engineering bricks with slopped capping brick on Highgate High Street side only. The wall has a patchwork appearance, due to the application of later brick and mortar repairs.

The greatest deterioration in the brickwork is generally to the areas of original brickwork, and to the lower courses of the wall, as shown in photos 3.3 and 3.5, particularly on the side of Southwood Lane.

There is extensive surface calcium carbonate staining, but limited to areas of later brickwork.

3.6 Pointing

Areas of original masonry have a recessed joint. Later brickwork has been pointed in a variety of pointing designs with no overall consistency.

The condition of the pointing is generally good throughout, and areas of sound pointing can be retained. However, there are localised areas of missing or loose pointing that should be re-pointed.

3.7 Movement

Bays 1 to 3 (North east corner of the site) are tall wall panels with signs of historic bulging and movement, but no recent monitoring results to indicate if movement is ongoing and/or a problem which requires repair.

In order to provide greater understanding of the movement of the wall and preventing unnecessary intervention to the listed fabric, it is proposed to implement a scheme of monitoring.

This monitoring will be introduced to bay 2 and bay 3 and maintained for a period of 18 months. The results of the monitoring will confirm wall and foundation strength and in turn whether the wall is still moving. These results will determine any next steps for intervention, to be submitted as part of a separate application in the future.

3.8 Photos of current condition - Road side

A selection of recent photographs (July 2022) show areas of concern or typical defects which have been located on the drawings which accompany this Heritage Statement.



Figure 3.1. Campaigns of repair

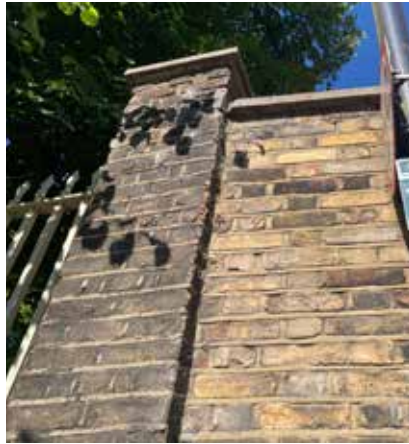


Figure 3.2. New brickwork panel at high level

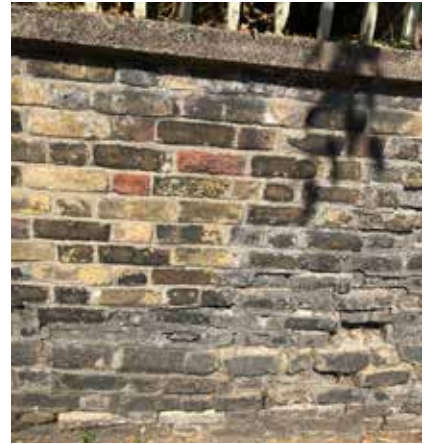


Figure 3.3. Missing bricks and odd new bricks



Figure 3.4. Poor jointing between brickwork



Figure 3.5. Missing bricks beneath coping



Figure 3.6. Concrete pad on top of coping



Figure 3.7. Layers of repair to wall



Figure 3.8. Loss of face to High Street elevation



Figure 3.9. Vegetation growth on coping

3.9 Photos of current condition - Grave side



Figure 3.10. Opening joint between brick panels



Figure 3.11. Degrading paint finish on railings



Figure 3.12. Level soil on graveside with railings



Figure 3.13. Loss of brick face



Figure 3.14. Cementitious pointing



Figure 3.15. Open joints and missing pointing

4. Repair Proposals

4.1 Structural repairs

An options study was prepared in September 2022 by Cobb & Company which considered a range of works from Minimal, Moderate to Extensive Repairs. The minimal repairs option focussed on removal of trees; minor crack repair and movement monitoring for 18 months. Moderate repairs consisted of pollarding trees and cutting back roots; crack repair including Helibar stitching to strengthen damaged panels and movement monitoring. Both of these options included light touch repair work to the railings. The Extensive repair option involved pollarding trees; integration of a root barrier, Helibar stitching and a full refurbishment of the railings.

This project seeks to balance the desire to protect and maintain trees where possible and minimise wholesale demolition and rebuilding of the listed structure. Following discussion with the client it was decided to progress the Moderate repair scope of works (subject to agreement of principles and method statements with the tree officer):

- Pollard all trees - reducing crown and maintaining their height with regular maintenance
- Replace all spalled and failed brickwork. Leave sound pointing in place even if cementitious.
- Where bricks are missing and tree roots visible, allow for roots to be cut back and treated with a root inhibitor before stitching bricks back into the wall.
- Retain existing copings and railings in-situ. Replace copings where missing. Redecorate railings and point up cracks in the concrete copings.
- Introduce brick stitching to strengthen areas of cracked brickwork (including the tall panel of wall on the north east corner of the site).
- Remove vegetation from the masonry.
- Install movement monitoring and take readings every 2 months for 18 months. Given the sensitive nature of the graveyard all works will be undertaken from the Highway side of the structure so as not to disturb consecrated ground

Omitted from the scope of works were the following items which may form the basis of a future package of work should the movement monitoring indicate need:

- Lower section of high wall and introduce railings
- Improve drainage along the south and east elevations only by adding weep holes at increased centres, say 1.2m.

4.2 Brickwork

To the areas that were visible, a complete replacement of the existing brickwork is not required. Existing sound masonry and pointing should be retained in situ, and repairs limited to like-for-like replacement of defective material. New fabric is to match the existing.

Inappropriate repairs that are sound should not be removed, as further invasive work to the wall will cause further damage to the historic fabric.

Sound bricks should be retained in situ, and where bricks have decayed, are considered not sound or are missing, these should be carefully removed and individually replaced to match using salvaged bricks.

Inappropriate and failing pointing should be raked out and replaced using lime mortar. Open joints should be re-pointed in lime mortar.

4.3 Masonry repairs

The copings are generally in sound condition. Where they have been chipped or are cracked, these should be repaired in-situ using a localised mortar repair to match the stone. More substantial repairs may require a stone indent to match existing. Some stones are loose and will need to be re-bedded into the wall in lime mortar.

To the south end of the boundary wall where it is curved, a concrete pad stone has been applied on top of the coping stone, embedding the railings in. The reason for this is uncertain, however it has been decided to retain this pad stone as the harm it would cause to remove it, both to the railings and stone copings, cannot be justified against the aesthetic visual improvement.

4.4 Railing repairs

The existing railing system should be retained, repaired and redecorated in situ, and refixed into the wall.

Damaged and bent posts, balusters and rails will be repaired in-situ where possible by heating locally and using jacks and hammers.

New balusters, where they are missing, will be formed in wrought iron with the same profile to match existing. Where tops of historic posts are missing, new heads will be formed in wrought iron and welded to the posts.

All metalwork will be wire brushed by hand and in some of the bad areas rotary wire brushes and grinders will be used to get back to solid steel for the paint system to work effectively.

The paint system will be applied by hand (not sprayed). A zinc based primer is to be applied to prevent corrosion and to adhere to the surface. The finishing coat will be a weatherproof paint in invisible green.

4.5 Vegetation removal

The wall, due to its adjacency to the cemetery, has extensive vegetation growth, especially to the coping stone on the road side and extensively across the entire wall face on the graveyard side. This vegetation is predominately ivy or low level suckers from the mature sycamore trees. This is periodically removed by the London Borough of Haringey maintenance team, but as part of this project will be removed entirely back to ground level.

There are proposals too for the pollarding of all trees within the cemetery adjacent to the wall and cutting back of all roots growing within the wall structure.

Live roots are found in the Bays 7-9 and are sizeable. Concern has been expressed regarding the potential ongoing movement the retention of the roots within the wall will enforce. The proposal will involve tracing live roots back to the edge of the area of brick repair and cut off. Enlarge a hole in the masonry to create a clear zone extending 100mm all around the end of the cut root and so that this mortar is not visible on the face of the wall/always at least half a brick from the facings. Pack this area with Limetec Eminently Hydraulic Lime Mortar (NHL5) to form a 100mm thick barrier around the cut end. These areas will then be covered by reclaimed bricks to the wall plane.

5. Commentary on Repair Proposals

5.1 Summary Impact on the Listed Building and its setting

The general works will be carried out in a sympathetic manner using traditional repair techniques and materials in order to best suit the breath-ability and appearance of the listed asset.

The overall impact will be negligible.

5.2 Structural works

The stabilisation of the wall will be discrete and concealed and will therefore have little to no impact on the existing wall.

5.3 Repairs

The repairs will be limited to those areas which are most in need of work and which will be at risk of further damage or decay. Where repairs cannot be prevented, these will follow a strict methodology and specification to be reviewed by the conservation architect.

Repairs will be visible but discrete. In some cases, they will enhance the appeal of the listed building by removing unsightly and inappropriate previous interventions which are harmful to the wall or by fixing damaged sections or missing elements which are unappealing.

5.5 Justification and Conclusion

The proposals are minor in nature and it is considered that they would not cause any harm to the significance of the listed structure. The proposals would sustain the significance of the listed asset and its surrounding context in accordance with paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Moreover, it is considered that the proposed works would preserve the special architectural and historic importance of the listed asset, in accordance with the statutory duties set out in Sections 16 and 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and also allow the listed asset to be removed from the Heritage at Risk list.

The proposals would also accord with Policies 7.8 of the London Plan 2021; Policy DH2 and SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan (2013).

The proposals are therefore considered acceptable in heritage terms and they will improve the stability, longevity and appearance of the retaining wall and its immediate surroundings.

6. Statutory Listing Description

Retaining wall along Highgate Hill between street pavement and higher paved walk leading to numbers 104 to 110 (even) and the cottage, and houses farther west

Grade: II

Date Listed: 10 May 1974

English Heritage Building ID: 1079237

Details

HIGHGATE HILL N6 (North Side) Retaining wall along Highgate Hill between street pavement and higher paved walk leading to Nos. 104 to 110 (even) and "The Cottage" and houses farther west.

II Probably. C18 red brick wall of Flemish bond. Wrought iron railing above, probably C19. Portland stone blocks inserted at intervals in top courses.

Listing NGR: TQ2870087327

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:

201367

Legacy System:

LBS

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.