

15/04/2023

APPEAL TO PLANNING APPLICATION HGY/2022/3531

Beth and John Keaveny
66 Cromwell Avenue
N65HQ

Description of work:

Erection of retaining red brick wall in front of 66 Cromwell Ave.

Site Address:

66 Cromwell Avenue,
London, UK N65HQ

PreApplication Advice:

Yes. pre/2021/0168

Date of meeting: 11/7/2021

Original application submitted in November, 2022

Description of Resubmission:

This submission contains an edited proposal, CAD drawings, and detailed description of the front retaining wall at 66 Cromwell Avenue, N65HQ in Highgate, London.

Contents of this submission include:

- 1) Revised proposal of the brick wall. Much consideration and suggestions have been incorporated from Haringey and the Historical Conservation Area (see below).
- 2) CAD drawings
- 3) Pictures of nearby retaining walls on Cromwell Avenue that support the design, brick choice, and height amongst other aspects of the proposal.

Materials:

Waresley Red Brick, with restored bricks.

Original Pillar Stones

Pre-Cast Pillar Stones by Lonsdale Stone Precast LTD if needed.

Angular Plinth Stones

*Pictures of materials are attached

Revised proposal for front yard retaining wall at 66 Cromwell Ave. The owner's intent is to rebuild a front retaining brick wall that matches the original wall built during the late 1800s along Cromwell Ave., both in terms of design and size and dimension. The Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee, which is contesting the original application for this wall, describes the front garden walls along Cromwell Avenue as 'red brick walls used as retaining walls with

prominent features'. It continues to say they have 'recessed panels and stone coping stones and brick piers...that contribute to design cohesion". This is consistent with our presented plans and intent, which is to keep a red brick retaining wall that runs along the front yards of the Victorian era built homes on Cromwell Avenue which respects the design of other homes in this area and the original designs of these walls. The aim is to rebuild a brick wall with early original details, such as recessed bricks, columns of appropriate height, and red plinth bricks to connect different brick depths on the vertical wall. These details, in some form, can be found in a plethora of retaining walls found along Cromwell Avenue. This rebuild incorporates all of the Victorian details found along the avenue, and therefore helps continues the "design cohesiveness" from one end of Cromwell Avenue to the other. Note that there are many rebuilt and restored brick walls along Cromwell Avenue. Some of these have no detail, others with some Victorian detail, and still others with their own modern interpretation. The presented design respects the original details found on retaining walls near and around the property at the upper end of Cromwell Avenue. It includes prominent features, like the 5cm recessed rectangular shape inside the 1.8 meter columns and "red brick" that the Highgate Conservation Society points to in its literature. This design is period appropriate and more fitting than the version it is replacing. While there are variations on the details of these walls in this area, the owner is very clearly following the most common and original design for this area, which illustrates the owner's intent to build the wall in a manner that respects the historic origins of the neighborhoods architecture. This design, including the original details, are reflected in the attached CAD designs, that are attached and supported by the photos of other walls in the neighborhood. The CAD drawings are of a professional quality as was requested.

This proposed brick retaining wall will replace what was believed to be a 1960's compromised version of the original retaining wall. This mid century rebuild was far inferior to the original design in both scale and victorian detail. It lacked the "prominent features" of the Victorian era and did not create design cohesiveness, like the Highgate Society is requesting be maintained. For example, the middle brick column stood just 1m high, or .83 meters shorter than any column in the vicinity, including the walls on either side of the property. The owner's design is consistent in height and dimension with the walls both to the right and left of the property. It is important to note that the wall we are replacing was crumbling, dilapidated and in need of repair. We should also note that the owners have rebuilt the home, investing significant amounts of money, in a way that received all necessary approvals and is consistent with and respectful of the neighborhoods Victorian homes and principals of the Highgate Society. The rebuild of the retaining wall is being done consistent with this process, and the investment is being made to compliment the work and investment done to the property as a whole. The supporting documents for this proposal clearly present this, and this can be seen instantly by anyone who physically visits the property. The owners had contracted a reputable design architect to advise on the construction and design, who advised that with respect to the wall being replaced that "layers of compromised bricks were removed from one of the columns and never rebuilt." The plinth bricks had been removed and replaced with rectangular bricks. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the height of the old retaining wall was left at a level equal to the soil level it was meant to retain, thus causing soil and water to runoff along the sidewalk, particularly during heavy rain, and not performing the principal function of the retaining wall. Due to decades of neglect, part of the wall was eroding and shifting, creating another opening for loose soil and debris to find its way through the wall and onto the sidewalk of Cromwell Avenue. In addition to becoming an eyesore, the wall has to be replaced for the safety of neighbors who use this walkway daily. This proposal addresses the problem by increasing the height of the retaining

wall slightly to a level above the soil it is meant to retain. As we said, this design is completely consistent with the walls on either side of the property (no higher than either side).

Highgate Conservation Society requires that “red brick” be used. We have chosen Waresley red brick from MP Morans, which is of high quality, not synthetic and consistent with the society requires. The original stone caps will be restored where possible for the top of the brick pillars. If restoration is impossible, molds of the originals will be made from a reputable company that has done work for other homes on Cromwell Avenue, including the recent rebuild at 32 Cromwell Avenue. I confirm the brick already used to build the brick base and columns is in fact Waresley red stock brick, and not a semi-engineered brick the Highgate Society suggested it might be.

The Highgate Society also notes that metalwork relating to a sliding black iron gate should be addressed. This comment is made in error, as there is no metal work being proposed in relation to the front retaining wall.

We would like to reiterate that the work being done to replace the retaining wall is coming at significant expense, with the sole motive being to enhance the aesthetics of the neighborhood (by replacing a dilapidated and run down wall with a new wall that is wholly consistent with the historic designs of the neighborhood) and ensure the safety of pedestrians. The significant delays created from the appeal of this project have materially increased the cost of the project and denied inhabitants of a more aesthetically pleasing and safer wall. We ask that this project be approved as soon as possible.

Furthermore, no less than 5 neighbors have offered to write letters to Haringey and the Highgate Society supporting and promoting the proposed wall. They have all agreed that the quality of work done both inside and out at 66 Cromwell Avenue has been a huge improvement to both the property and neighborhood.

Kind Regards,
Beth and John Keaveny