

Officer's Report

Application Number	HGY/2023/1122
Type	Demolition in a conservation area
Location	65 Bounds Green Road, Wood Green, London, N22 8HB
Proposal	Restoration of side boundary wall to its original dimensions with re-used and new matching bricks on the side facing Park Avenue.
Case Officer	Daniel Kwasi
Valid Date	24/04/2023
Applicant	Mr Anthony Whitehead
Agent	Mr Anthony Whitehead

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposed Development

This is an application for demolition of a garden wall on the side boundary to be rebuilt to the same dimensions. The wall is proposed to be built to the same dimensions as the original, whereby it would be 1.6m above pavement level from the sliding gate in the south to the wall post in the north of the site. As many of the original bricks would be reused.

Site and Surroundings

The application site is a side boundary wall belong to the no.65 Bounds Green Road, which is a Dental Surgery. Bounds Green Road is busy road that connects the site to Wood Green to the southeast, Bounds Green to the northwest, and Alexandra Palace via Park Avenue. The property is within the Trinity Gardens conservation areas, listed buildings, relationship to surrounding area etc. The surrounding area is predominantly residential and open spaces at Trinity Gardens and Nightingale Gardens.

Relevant Planning and Enforcement History

The most recent planning history in relation to the site is as follows.

APP/Y/5420/A/01/1079069 GTD Formation of two car spaces and one disabled car space.

HGY/2001/1360 REF 29/11/2001 Formation of two car spaces and one disabled car space.

HGY/2001/0691 REF 04/7/2001 Demolition of existing garage at rear and creation of four car parking spaces with access on to Park Avenue.

Internal Consultation Comments

LBH Conservation Officer: The property & its garden boundary wall is deemed to positively contribute to the character of the Trinity Gardens Conservation Area. Before partial demolition in February 2023, the wall conditions had deteriorated to the point that it was unstable, and a large section was bowing out towards the pavement thus posing a danger to the public. Both a

Development Management manager and the conservation officer visited the site together with the property owner and their builder to ascertain the conditions of the surviving wall and of the salvaged bricks and to advise about the planning process to re-erect the partially demolished boundary wall. The meeting was not a formal pre-application discussion, no formal pre-application advice was provided. However, the applicants were informed by email about the type and format of information necessary for any future planning application for the walls restoration to be supported. Detailed advice was provided regarding the need for the applicant to provide material specification, replacement brick samples, existing and proposed mortar composition, the importance of retaining as much of the remaining wall and its foundations as possible. While photographs of the proposed brick samples have been submitted as part of the application, no material specification, mortar sample or brickwork panel has been provided or made available for viewing on site.

This overdue application is welcome in principle from a heritage conservation perspective, however the proposed total dismantling and reconstruction of the wall to build concrete foundations is contrary to key heritage conservation principles of retention of original fabric and forms and is not justified by any sound, professional assessment of the conditions of the wall. Likewise, the proposed cementitious pointing mortar mix, which is incompatible with the original materiality and appearance of the historic wall, as well as being contrary to the conservation officer's advice to replace the original mortar like for like, raises concerns about the risk of further damage to and loss of original brickwork.

The proposed works risk to harm the surviving fabric of the historic wall that positively contributes to its heritage setting and does not provide a sufficient level of information about the proposed brickwork. In its current configuration the application cannot be supported from the heritage stance.

LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

One representation has been received from neighbours, local groups, etc in response to notification and publicity of the application.

The following issues were raised in representations:

1 I am very pleased to see this application for rebuilding this significant boundary wall in the Conservation Area.

2 My 'objection' is friendly and not to obstruct the application.

3 The mortar specification is completely inappropriate and could even lead to early failure of the wall (refer to Historic England advice) due to inability to expand and contract leading to early cracking of the wall.

The proposed mix is a very hard Portland cement based rich mortar, one part cement to three sand to 0.25part lime. This mix is totally inflexible and impervious. It would render this long wall incapable of expansion/contraction and the brick materials could not eventually be reused, as it is possible with bricks retrieved from the part of the old wall that has been taken down. Cement renders brickwork incapable of being dismantled. Cracking in part of the old wall is visible due to use of cement in previous 'repairs' also resulting in glued together bricks that cannot be reused. Heritage England and other conservation bodies would recommend a mortar mix such as 1part medium hydraulic lime to 2.5 aggregates (good sharp sands) or similar. The mortar mix greatly determines the appearance of the finished work. Cement produces a dark grey finish whereas lime allows the aggregates to show.

4 The mortar type and workmanship is the most crucial part of the work.

5 I offer this as friendly comment in support of a good result for my neighbour's project.

6 I ask the Conservation Officer to review this aspect of the application in furtherance of a long-lasting rebuild.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

- Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area; and
- Impact on neighbouring amenity.

Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area

London Plan Policy HC1 seeks to ensure that development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings, should conserve their significance. This policy applies to designated and non-designated heritage assets. Local Plan Policy SP12 and DPD Policy DM9 set out the Council's approach to the management, conservation and enhancement of the Borough's historic environment.

DPD Policy DM9 states that proposals affecting a designated or non-designated heritage asset will be assessed against the significance of the asset and its setting, and the impact of the proposals on that significance; setting out a range of issues which will be taken into account. In relation to extensions or alterations to residential buildings, including roof extensions, Policy DM9 requires proposals to be of a high, site specific, and sensitive design quality, which respect and/ or complement the form, setting, period, architectural characteristics, detailing of the original buildings, including external features such as chimneys, and porches. The policy also requires the use of high-quality matching or complementary materials, in order to be sensitive to context.

The Council's Conservation Team were consulted. Their comments are set out above. In summary, the cement ratio for the brickwork mortar is proposed to be 3 parts sand, 1 cement, with 0.25 lime, which is proposed to maintain a pale colour in keeping with the pointing of brickwork in the surrounding area. The Conservation Officer stated that this proposed mix is considered incompatible with the original materiality and appearance of the historic wall, as well as being contrary to the conservation officer's advice to replace the original mortar like for like, which raises concerns about the risk of further damage to and loss of original brickwork. This issue was also raised by a member of the public whose comments are summarised above.

The Conservation Officer concluded that the proposed works risk to harm the surviving fabric of the historic wall that positively contributes to its heritage setting and the application does not provide a sufficient level of information about the proposed brickwork and the application cannot be supported from a heritage stance.

The proposal is welcome in principle from a heritage conservation perspective, however the proposed total dismantling and reconstruction of the wall to build concrete foundations is contrary to key heritage conservation principles of retention of original fabric and forms and is not justified by any sound, professional assessment of the conditions of the wall. Therefore, due to the proposed dismantling and reconstruction the wall and proposed cementitious pointing mortar mix, the proposal is deemed to be unsatisfactory and incompatible with those employed with the construction of the original wall and surrounding properties and would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

London Plan Policy D6 outlines that design must not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding housing, in specific stating that proposals should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, while also minimising overshadowing. London Plan Policy D14 requires development proposals to reduce, manage and mitigate noise impacts.

DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' states that development proposals must ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for a development's users and neighbours. Specifically, proposals are required to provide appropriate sunlight, daylight and aspects to adjacent buildings and land, and to provide an appropriate amount of privacy to neighbouring properties to avoid overlooking and loss of privacy and detriment to amenity of neighbouring resident.

The proposed development is not considered to have impact neighbouring amenity.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered not acceptable in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area

All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Planning permission should be refused for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE PERMISSION For the following reason(s):

Refusal Reasons:

Insufficient information has been submitted to demonstrate that the further dismantling of the remaining wall and its foundations are necessary and acceptable from a heritage conservation perspective, insufficient information has been provided with regard to the acceptability of the proposed replacement bricks, and the proposed mortar mix is unsatisfactory and incompatible with that employed in the construction of the original wall and surrounding properties. The proposal would therefore fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area, contrary to Policy SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan 2017, Policy DM1 of The Development Management DPD 2017 and Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021.

Informatives:

- **INFORMATIVE: Pre- application Advice**
Taking the reason(s) for refusal into account, you may wish to prepare a revised proposal for comment prior to submitting a further planning application. To do so we strongly recommend you seek pre-application advice and refer you to our Pre-Application Planning Advice (PAPA) Service.
<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning>