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Subject: Comments on 2023/[REDACTED] & 2023/1156/P: 6 Bacon's Lane, London N6 6BL

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2023/1151/L & 2023/1156/P: 6 Bacon's Lane, London N6 6BL

The Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust objects to the part of this planning and listed building consent application which relates to the proposed wooden fence to be erected on top of the brick boundary wall with Highgate Cemetery. It is an inappropriate and insensitive design which would fail to preserve or enhance the Highgate Conservation Area, and it would detract from views within the area.

Highgate Cemetery is listed Grade 1 in the Historic England 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England'. Registration is a material consideration in the planning process, meaning that planning authorities must consider the impact of any proposed development on the landscape's special character. The application fails to consider the effect of the proposed fence on the character of Highgate Cemetery and so should be refused.

The fence will cause harm as it is obtrusive by virtue of its size and solidity, and will detract from the character of the landscape by reducing the sense of openness. Although the wall is presently partly screened by trees within the Cemetery, it is nevertheless in a prominent location between the North Gate entrance and the Grade II*-listed Terrace Catacombs and not far from a major pedestrian route. The proposed fence will be visible during the winter months, and the effects of ash dieback and subsequent landscape management will make it even more so.

The Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal states: 'The installation of insensitive and inappropriate boundary treatment including excessively high entrance gates, impermeable designs, non-authentic detailing, security grilles, barbed wire, broken glass, excessive security measures all help to create a hostile and visually negative environment which harms the character or appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area will be resisted by the Council.'

The Trust understands the security concerns which prompted this application and would not object in principle to the height of the wall being raised. But the setting of the Cemetery would be compromised by a jumble of different boundary treatments, each representing the wishes of their separate landowners for the time being. Instead, the boundary treatment should be visually coordinated and of a light, plain design so that it would be a recessive feature.

An extension of the existing and satisfactory railings nearby forming the boundary to Old Hall and No. 4 Bacon's Lane would be a more appropriate solution. These are of traditional construction and character, and are so minimal as to be virtually invisible, yet perfectly functional. These can be seen in Application No. 2020/3048/P which was granted on 5 January 2021.

The drawing 2216-600 is insufficient to understand the construction of the wall, in particular how it is to be supported.

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