

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2024/3601/P	Stephen Hayward	22/09/2024 18:49:00	COMMNT	<p>A key challenge for this proposal is the need to balance the aesthetic and the practical for it concerns a prominent historic feature -a picturesque boundary wall in the vicinity of Keats House-that is in need of remedial repair and strengthening. The removal of the moss and weathering by jet washing (see photos) -presumably for reasons of inspection - has already altered the aesthetic integrity of this feature, and there is more than a chance that the replacement of stone copings and brickwork in order to embed the helibar reinforcements (as described on the plan) will disturb the existing bonding pattern and deaden the profile of the wall. Indeed there is the suggestion that one of the most picturesque aspects of this historic wall -the gentle undulation- will be subject to 'vertical realignment'. Hence the risk of an over-zealous renovation.</p> <p>The acknowledged experts in the field -the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings -recommend that the imperfections of an historic structure are part of its biography, and that repair is invariably preferable to replacement; while the consequences of the opposite approach- wholesale rebuilding using new materials, albeit of a hand made appearance- are vividly demonstrated on the opposite side of Keats Grove. The effect of the rebuilt perimeter wall of No 12 Keats Grove -a listed building- might be best described as inauthentic and monotonous.</p> <p>To avoid any further diminution of this part of the conservation area it is important that the works proposed for Keats Close are carried out with sensitivity and close supervision. In this respect it will be important to engage a contractor with an expertise in conservation work. This should avoid the tendency to 'over-straighten' the wall. An experienced craftsman will have the confidence and the skill to follow -and respond- to the curvature of the existing building line.</p> <p>At this stage the application addresses a structural problem with a technical solution. However in the light of the heritage value of this location, the SPAB perspective is relevant. For example it is important that the repairs are limited to areas where, for structural reasons, they are strictly necessary. That existing materials should be reused as much as possible. That lime mortar be used and the existing bonding pattern preserved. That the repairs should blend-in with their surroundings. It will be noted how, prior to the jet washing, the different areas of the brickwork were harmonised by the overgrowth of moss.</p> <p>Finally, the application includes a new element, a semi-circular railing, as seen in elevation 2. In the context of the conservation area this will be a prominent feature - at the threshold of Keats Grove- and it is important that the choice of materials and detailing are given full consideration. As a consequence it would be useful to have more precise details as to the form and appropriateness of the design.</p>

2024/3601/P	Edward Bace	21/09/2024 10:42:09	COMMNT	<p>Hopefully the repairs will remain in keeping with the existing walls and railings. However, the yellow notice placed on Keats Grove (on lamppost in front of no 6 Keats Grove) shows the wrong plan. The plan on that notice identifies no 6 Keats Grove, when it ought to be 1 & 6 Keats Close, at the bottom of the road.</p>
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