Structural Defects Report, Building A,Berkley Works, Primrose Hill,London NW1 8XY

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DATE; 12^h September 2024

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The Brief

We have been commissioned to ascertain the reasons for the damage to the boundary wall at Building A,Berkley Works,Primrose Hill and assess the current status.

Existing Structure and Defects

The building in question is a two storey 19th century mews building under a pitched tiled roof. The walls are solid 9" masonry and are likely founded on relatively shallow stepped masonry footings. The external wall forms the boundary to the next door property No.3 Berkley Road. According to a 1996 report the ground level at the neighbouring garden is one metre higher, thus this boundary wall retains the soil at number 3 Berkley Road. As there was no access to the neighbouring property at the time of the survey we were unable to assess the damage at this lower section of wall that retains the boundary. The section of the wall visible from inside is showing signs of substantial cracking and damage. As can be seen from the attached photos and plan there is a large tree adjacent with the trunk of the tree approximately 300mm from the wall. The base of the trunk and the roots are now pushing on and dislodging the foundations which is causing the wall to crack and be out of plumb at this location[photo attached].

Discussion

We attach a page from the report on the tree that was commissioned in 1996. The tree was identified as Tree of Heaven and at the time was 18 metres high. At that time the wall was not damaged. The report stresses the the probability of damage to the adjacent wall in the future which has now occured. As may be seen from the photographs attached the wall in question is severely cracked at the base, due to pressure from the tree trunk and roots. We understand that this tree is the subject of a tree preservation order, however although we cannot say that the stability of the wall is currently in question, this wall is severely damaged and if the cracks continue to widen the wall will be in danger, and the stability of the structure will be compromised. Discussion should be entered in to with the appropriate Council department to remove the preservation order.

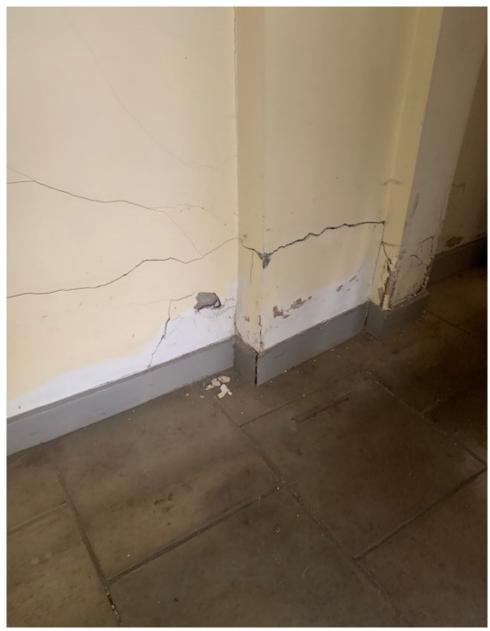
Reccommendations and Repair Works

The first and best option will be to employ a tree surgeon to remove the tree and the roots and make good afterwards. The footings will be rebuilt in reinforced concrete to allow for the collapse of soil once the roots are removed. We recommend a builder should be in attendance when the tree is removed to deal with any issues arising.

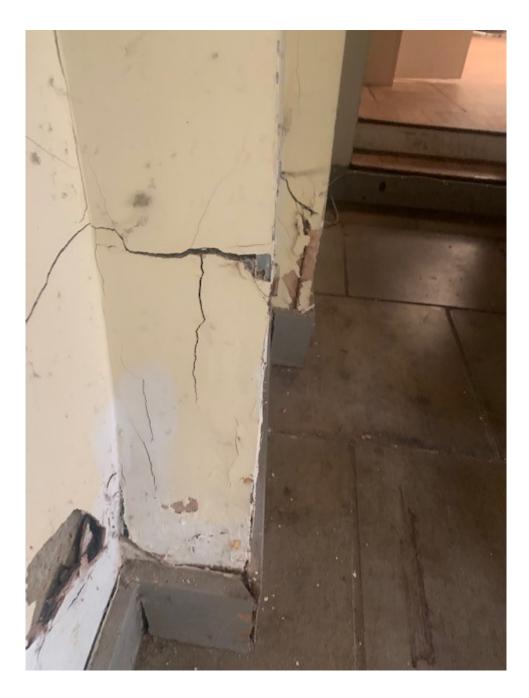
The second option would be to reconstruct the wall in reinforced concrete with similar foundations of sufficient depth. I would only recommend this if all other avenues are exhausted.

In the meantime while these issues are being resolved, the cracks should be monitored for spread on a regular basis to ensure the condition of wall is not worsening.

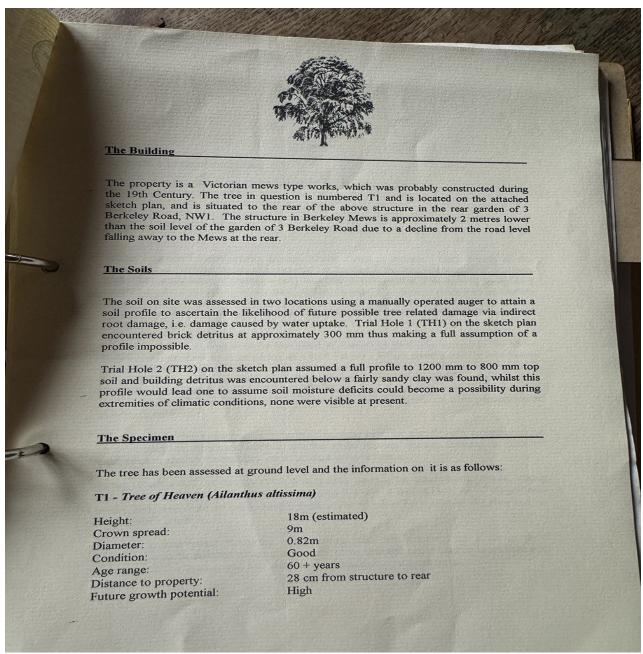
Richard Hall MSc RPH Engineering Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers



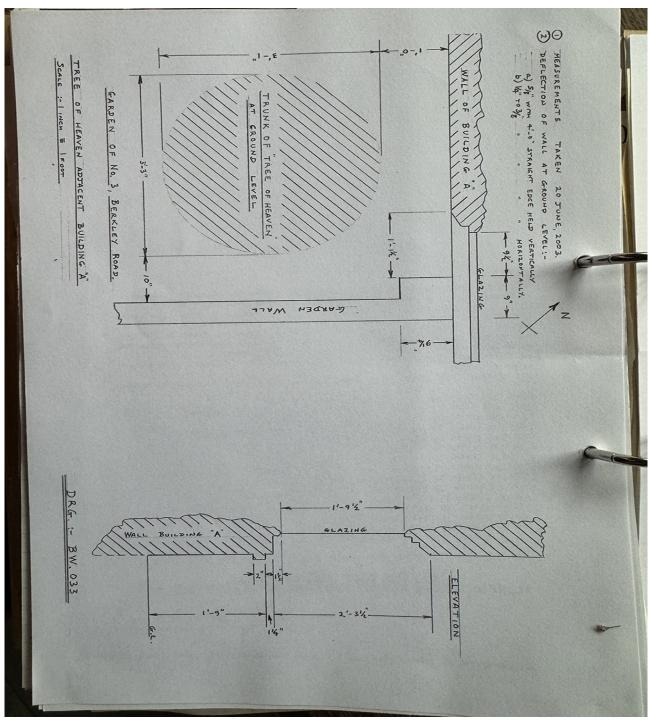
Damage to the external boundary wall



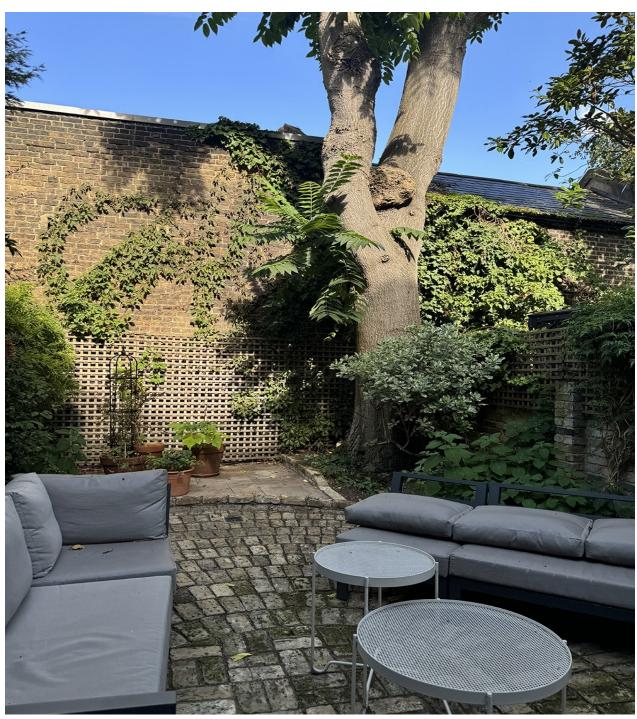
side view on damage to external boundary wall



Extract from 1996 report



location plan of tree relative to wall



Recent view from the neighbours property