

Design and Access Statement  
&  
Heritage Statement

Perimeter wall & associated works  
34 Brookfield Park  
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### *The site and surrounding area*

34 Brookfield Park is an acute-angled corner block on the south-east corner of the intersection of Brookfield Park and St Albans Road. On it is a detached, two-storey 1930's house, with a detached garage and storeroom. The house is set at an angle to the rest of the street. Surrounding the entire site is a wall with a short fence section (described further below) averaging 1.75m in height.



34 Brookfield Park

Numbers 1 to 33 Brookfield Park are large semi-detached Edwardian houses, two storeys high, most having a mansard above. Numbers 35-37 Brookfield Park do not exist. After no 34, the next house on Brookfield Park is no 38, which is on the other side of St Albans Road from no 34. It is a detached three-storey house from about 1954. It, too, has a wall around the site, approximately 2.0m high.



The wall around 38 Brookfield Park

The houses on St Albans Road display a mixture of architectural styles: some

substantial detached houses, some blocks of apartments, some semi-detached properties and some two-storey cottage-style maisonettes. Most date from the first half of the 20th century, with a few more modern developments and a few earlier properties.

Both Brookfield Park and St Albans Road are moderately busy, with the westbound C11 bus turning into Brookfield Park from Swain's Lane for a short distance before turning into St Albans Road, some cut-through traffic avoiding the Highgate Road, school-related traffic (particularly to La Sainte Union School) and people walking to the bus stops (including the C2 terminus) on the corner of the Highgate Road and St Albans Road. St Albans

Road is moderately wide and Brookfield Park slightly less so. The part of St Albans Road adjacent to 34 Brookfield Park has generously wide pavements, with the pavement on the side adjacent to 34 Brookfield Park being 3.7m wide at the point of its entrance gate, increasing to 4.25m at the point of its garage forecourt gate.

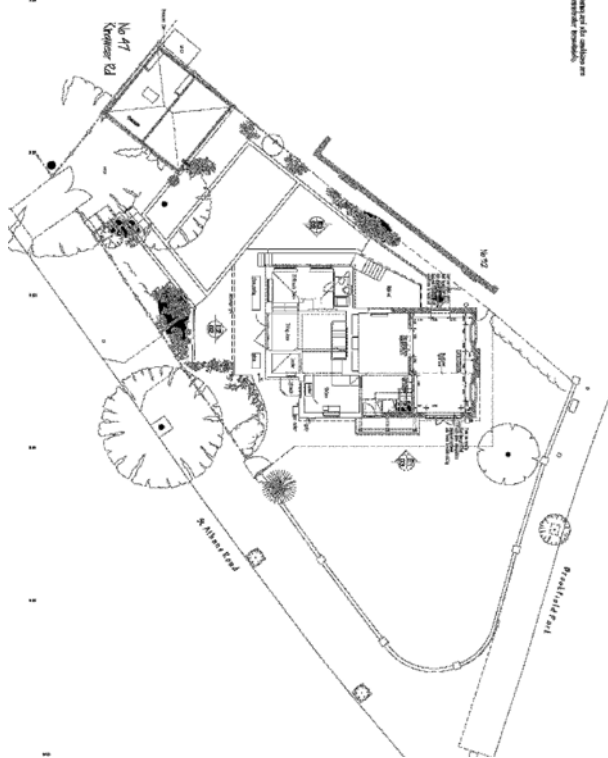


Pavement on St Albans Rd, adjacent to 34 Brookfield

All of Brookfield Park is in sub-area 8 (St Albans Road) of the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. Immediately to the east of 34 Brookfield Park (i.e. further east up St Albans Road) is sub-area 6 (The Brookfield Estate).

### *The existing garden wall*

The existing garden wall surrounds the entire site. The wall height (measured from the level of the adjacent pavement) varies from 1.67m to 1.83m. The average height is 1.75m. The material of the existing wall varies, although it is predominantly concrete of one sort or another in appearance. A garden wall within the perimeter of the property along the current line of the wall would appear to have been in existence since the house was laid out in the 1930s. There is nothing to suggest that it was not the height of the current wall, which is confirmed by the lack of any separate planning permission for the wall.



Site plan, 34 Brookfield Park



First section of the wall, with 32 Brookfield Park to the right edge of the photograph

Starting from where 34 Brookfield Park adjoins the neighbouring 32 Brookfield Park, the wall goes north-west along Brookfield Park, towards St Albans Road. This first section is made from unfinished concrete blockwork, some of which is obscured by

mature vegetation on the garden-side of the wall drooping over onto the street side.

The second section of the wall, still in Brookfield Park but further north-west towards St Albans Road, comprises a short section comprising a lower layer of unfinished blockwork, varying in height between 350mm to 660mm, and an upper layer of dark brown painted wooden palings on top of the blockwork.



Second section of the wall, showing wooden palings on top of blockwork

Most of the wooden palings are covered with a vine which has its roots in the garden.

The third section of the wall is a resumption of the unfinished concrete blockwork,



Third section of the wall, from St Albans Rd

some of it appearing to be more recent than the remainder (having a more uniform grey colour than the rest). This third section curves around into St Albans Road and continues in a north-easterly direction up St Albans Road until it gets to the entrance gate to 34 Brookfield

Park. Mature, dense foliage from the garden of 34 Brookfield Park sits on top.

The fourth section of the wall runs in a north-easterly direction along St Albans Road from the entrance gate to 34 Brookfield Park to the gates leading to the forecourt and detached garage of 34 Brookfield Park. Along this section, the wall is made from slotted concrete posts into which horizontal pre-cast concrete panels spanning between the posts have been inserted. The spans between the concrete posts are uneven, varying from 1.23m to 1.71m (measured between posts). Between one of the sets of posts the panels have been replaced with rendered blockwork.



Fourth section of the wall, including the section made from rendered blockwork.

The wall adjacent to St Albans Road does not quite form a straight line and the unevenness is made more pronounced by differing amounts of leaning of the posts and of the panels within them. The lean of the posts has caused some of the panels to come out of their slots. So far none have fallen out, but pedestrian safety is becoming an issue.



At the north-east end of fourth section of the wall there is a double wooden hinged gate, allowing access to the garage and standing in front of it. Each gate is attached to a slotted concrete post.



The gates are in an advanced state of decay.

Gates leading to forecourt and garage

The wall then changes direction. The fifth section (and for the purposes of this



Fifth section of the wall, St Albans Rd to left, garage to right

application, the last section) of the wall is a section that separates 34 Brookfield Park from the property at 47 Kingswear Road (owned by LB Camden) until it reaches the

garage on 34 Brookfield Park. This section of the wall is also made from concrete posts and panels. It is partly covered by foliage.

The fifth section of the wall is also leaning considerably, with a number of concrete



panels well out of their slots and jutting beyond the face of the posts. Occupier safety is an issue.

Panels on the fifth section of wall clear out of slotted post

The existing face of the wall has long served to delineate public and private space. The acute angle of the corner that is 34 Brookfield Park necessitated the original walling.

The significant amount of pedestrian traffic on both Brookfield Park and St Albans Road adds to the need for a safer structure.

The dating of the existing wall is unclear. Judging by its wear, the concrete post and panel wall would appear to date from at least the early 1950s, but possibly from when



the house was built. The blockwork would seem to be from the early 1970s. The wooden palings may have come, or at least been replaced, later. The blockwork section in the middle of the concrete post and panel section is a replacement about 4 years' old.

As is apparent from the above, there is no uniform style to the materials or appearance



of the wall. The drab and rough materials are in contrast to house itself, which is rendered neatly, and the garden wall's appearance is only softened because of the dense, mature foliage which grows over and above it, supported in part by trellises.

The wall looking down St Albans Rd towards Brookfield Pk

The forecourt to the garage is made from rough, unscreeded, in-situ concrete in an

advanced state of deterioration, with significant cracking and spalling evident



Garage forecourt

There is a double compost bin made from concrete blockwork adjacent to the wall where it meets the gate.



Compost bins

### *The proposal*

So far as the perimeter wall is concerned, the proposal is:

- to retain the line and height of the existing garden perimeter wall,
- to retain the blockwork section of that wall, repointing and repairing where required,
- to replace the concrete post and panel sections with close-textured finish blockwork;
- to replace the wooden palings section of the existing wall with close-textured finish blockwork;
- to paint it an ivory colour with textured masonry paint; and
- to replace the existing swing gate with a sliding painted steel gate, remotely operated.

The current perimeter wall mars the streetscape. The objectives of the proposal are:

- to remove the part of the structure that is getting dangerous;
- to unify the wall by replacing the jumble of materials and styles with a single material and style; and
- to give the wall a finish that complements the exterior of the house and enhances the streetscape.

As a matter of safety, both to the public using the footpath on St Albans Road and to occupiers and visitors to 34 Brookfield Park, the slotted post and panel sections of the wall need replacing. This is evident from the photographs. The concrete panels are very heavy and are capable of inflicting considerable injury. It is unlikely that they will give any warning before collapsing.

As a matter of design, the clean lines and consistent material of the proposed replacement wall will make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness

of the neighbourhood. The retention of existing dimensions will continue what has been a feature of the Dartmouth Park built environment and streetscene for over 80 years, whilst maintaining site security and privacy. A coping to the top of the wall will provide an enhanced architectural detail. High quality materials and design, together with a wall built according to a specification of a structural engineer, will ensure a pleasing and worthy addition to the area.

There are no adverse effects on views or sightings. There is no loss of boundary walls. The replacement wall will be parallel to the pavement on the incline on St Albans Road, with no step-downs and positioned within the land of 34 Brookfield Park. The design will remove the erratic widths between posts and the uneven jumps in panel heights which are a prominent and visually jarring feature of the existing wall.

The material and colour of the replacement gate to the garage are intended to complement those of the house (the black wooden frames to the steel casement windows contrasting with the light-coloured render). The simple linear design avoids embellishment with unnecessary features, consistent with the design of the house. The sliding gate is the same height as the wall, thereby continuing the line of the wall as well as enabling better use of the garage forecourt (as there is little room to close swing gates with a vehicle in the forecourt area). The opening mechanism will comply with all safety requirements (pressure strips, 24V operation and photocells).

So far as the other work is concerned, the proposal is:

- to replace the existing concrete in the forecourt of the garage with granite sett paving; and
- to re-build to the same dimensions and in the same approximate position the composting containers.

These are both minor works of improvement. At the moment, the garage forecourt is made from cracked rough concrete area and is undrained. The replacement will be level, a superior surface and drained into the garage system (rather than across the pavement into the gutter, as at present). Both materials and drainage will be an enhancement. The replacement compost bins will be properly ventilated to ensure rapid decomposition.



Philip Coppel

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#### DOCUMENTS SUPPLIED WITH PLANNING APPLICATION

1. Site plan.
2. A1@1:100 Plan 094-WD-03 (Oct 2014) showing current and proposed perimeter wall.
3. Photographs (all taken on 7 September 2014)
  - (1) 34 Brookfield Park, looking at it across St Albans Rd.
  - (2) 34 Brookfield Park, looking at it from intersection of St Albans Rd and Brookfield Park.
  - (3) 38 Brookfield Park, looking up St Albans Rd.
  - (4) 34 Brookfield Park, looking at it from intersection of St Albans Rd and Brookfield Park.
  - (5) Paling fence section of existing wall.
  - (6) Brookfield Park section of existing blockwall.
  - (7) Brookfield Park section of existing wall, join of blockwall and paling fence.
  - (8) Existing blockwork wall on St Albans Rd.

- (9) Existing concrete post and panel garden wall, St Albans Rd and entrance gate.
  - (10) Existing concrete post and panel garden wall, St Albans Rd.
  - (11) Existing concrete post and panel wall, St Albans Rd, and garage gates.
  - (12) Garage gates detail, St Albans Rd.
  - (13) Looking down St Albans Rd footpath, 34 Brookfield Pk to left.
  - (14) Detail of existing concrete post.
  - (15) Existing concrete post and panel wall between 34 Brookfield Park and 47 Kingswear Rd.
  - (16) Detail of existing concrete post and panel wall.
  - (17) Detail of join between post and gate.
  - (18) Existing compost bins.
  - (19) Existing garage forecourt concrete slab, looking to garage.
  - (20) Existing garage forecourt concrete slab, looking to St Albans Rd.
  - (21) Detail of existing concrete post bottom.
  - (22) Detail of existing concrete post top.
4. Plan showing where photographs were taken from.
  5. Gate specification. and photo of similar design to proposed gate
  6. Structural engineer's specification and drawing (RPH Engineering NW5-SK2A).