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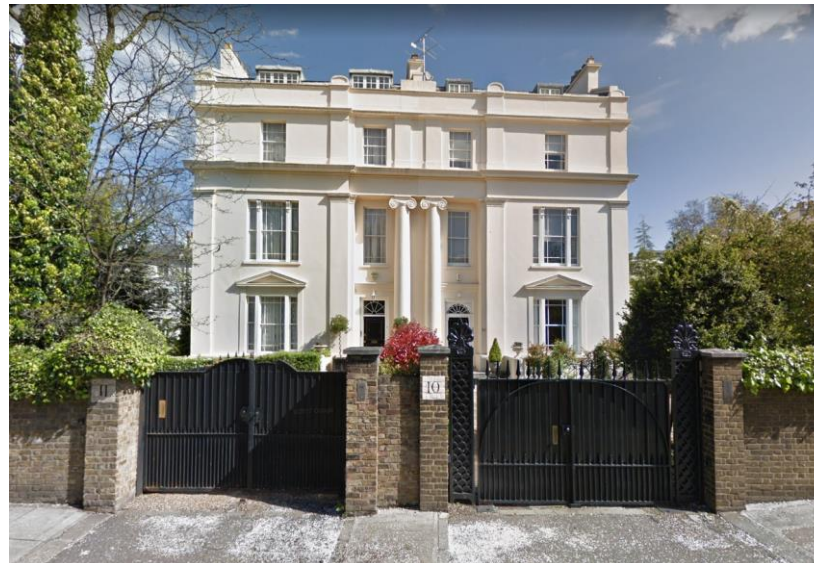
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Project: 1604 - 11 Prince Albert Road – PL8 application

Design, Access & Heritage Statement - Works to Boundary Walls

11th October 2018



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Introduction

Report format

For brevity the design, access, and heritage statements for this simple application have been combined into a single report. The design statement details the proposals, and the Heritage statement assesses the impact on the significance of the listed building. This follows the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, which prescribes that *"in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance"*.

This report must be read in conjunction with (a) The Structural Engineer's report and drawings (b) the contractor's method statement which the project arboriculturalist has endorsed; both of which accompany this application.

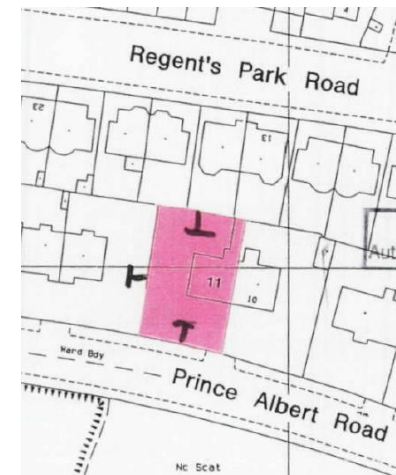
Background

11 Prince Albert Road is a semi-detached mid-nineteenth-century Victorian villa, one of street of similar properties, probably built by J Guerrier & P Pearse, and currently used as a private family home. It was entered on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural & Historic Interest at Grade II in 1974, and sits in the Primrose Hill conservation area, overlooking the Regent's Park in Camden. It was owned by the Crown Estate for many years, and the Estate still has some controls over the property by means of a covenant. The property is currently empty with construction works underway under existing permissions which were granted in recent years.

It has become apparent that the boundary walls to the site are now unstable and suffering from a number of defects. The walls are considered to fall within the curtilage of the Listed Building, therefore we seek listed building consent for the remedial and rebuilding works.

The building sits in a respectable garden with several mature trees, including a large willow tree in the southwest corner of the site. An arboricultural survey was undertaken for both the recent prior permissions, from which root protection areas were established as indicated on the drawings.

Below: Land registry map recording ownership of boundary structures.



Existing Condition & Design Proposals

Please refer to Appendix A for photographs of defects

Generally

Our structural engineer has undertaken a survey of all three boundary walls, and produced a report on their condition, which is included within his report. This establishes the necessity of undertaking stabilisation works to these structures. Each structure has been considered separately, as below. Essentially the problems have derived from a lack of adequate foundations and therefore the works seek to address this.

Our client's arboriculturalist has worked with the contractor and engineer to develop a working method statement which considers the tree roots on the site, allowing improved foundations to be provided without adversely affecting the trees. The Arboriculturalist has endorsed the method statement by letter, included with the application.

South boundary wall

The front (south) boundary wall is out of plumb along the whole of its length, which has deflected in the middle and cracked in two places. A photographic survey of the wall has been undertaken and accompanies this application showing the extent of the problem. A trial pit identified the wall has negligible foundations, in addition to sitting next to two large trees.



Our structural engineer has prepared a report, recording the wall's current condition, analysis, and proposed remedial works which include careful deconstruction and rebuilding with more suitable foundations. He has confirmed that ground movement has affected the wall to the point it is now unstable and unsafe, necessitating these works.



It is proposed to carefully dismantle the Flemish bonded wall, salvaging as many of the buff bricks as possible. New footings will be created using small piles, following the method statement which has been developed with and endorsed by our Tree Specialist to ensure that no damage is caused to the nearby tree roots. The wall would then be rebuilt in lime mortar with the original bricks, plus any additional ones necessary chosen to match – either reclaimed from other sources or new handmade stock bricks.

West boundary wall

The west boundary wall between No 11 and No 12 Prince Albert Road is also affected by cracking. It has been identified that the 'front garden' section of this wall has little in the way of foundations, whereas moving back further into the site, the wall has deeper foundations due to an older wall below (believed to derive from when the ground in the wider area was 'made up' at the time the houses were built). This difference in foundations is expressed clearly in the cracks which have appeared – a vertical crack at the point where the foundations change, and a long horizontal crack across the front garden section of the wall. The wall has been pointed in cementitious mortar at some point in recent history.



It is proposed to carefully dismantle the existing front-most portion of the Flemish bonded wall, salvaging as many of the buff bricks as possible, and rebuild on new foundation, in the same manner as described above for the south wall. A movement joint would be created at the line of the existing



vertical crack, where the foundation changes, to allow for future differential movement in this location. To the retained portion of wall, it is proposed to remove the cement pointing wherever found and repoint the wall, including the minor cracks, in a lime mortar.

North boundary wall

The red brick north boundary wall sits between No 11 Prince Albert Road and the properties along Regents Park Road at the rear of the site. Land registry records confirm this wall is owned by and the responsibility of the owner of No 11. The wall has 3 slender piers on the south side and disconnected perpendicular walls to the north dividing the neighbouring gardens. A recent survey has confirmed the north boundary wall has developed a pronounced lean along its length, into the site. A trial pit has confirmed that this wall has only a tiny stepped foundation.



It is proposed to carefully dismantle the Flemish bonded wall, salvaging as many of the red bricks as possible. New footings will be created using small piles, again following the method statement to ensure that no damage is caused to the nearby tree roots. The wall would then be rebuilt in lime mortar with the original bricks, plus any additional ones necessary chosen to match – either reclaimed from other sources or new handmade stock bricks. The brick piers would be replicated in the same position.

Access for works

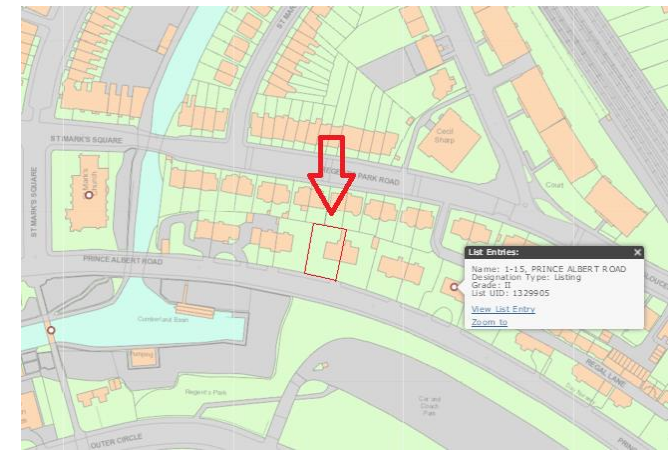
Access to neighbouring land for works to boundary structures is permitted under the Party Wall Act 1996, and following planning & listed building consent from Camden, discussions with the relevant neighbours about this would be undertaken as necessary.

Heritage Statement

Together with its neighbours, 11 Prince Albert Road was entered on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural & Historic Interest at Grade II in 1974, list entry Number:

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1329905. The text description is extensive due to covering 15 properties –the only reference to No 11 describes the house itself.

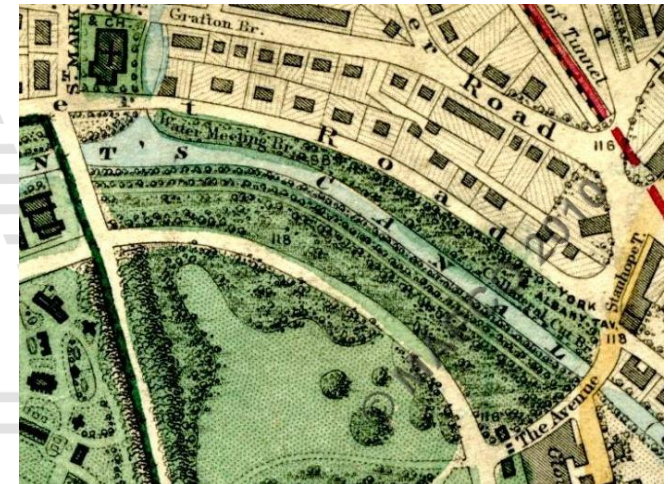
A Listed Building includes any pre-1948 structure which was within its curtilage (property boundary) at the time of listing, including boundary structures.

Significance of the heritage asset

The significance of historic fabric reflects a judgement against a number of criteria, including (but not limited to) such as (taken from BS 7913-2013) architectural value, townscape value, aesthetic value, cultural value. The age of the fabric is not the sole factor of relevance.

Externally this building – under its current scaffolding – appears to be a well presented villa, albeit in need of some attention, works for which are ongoing. It is significant mainly as part of a set of similar period buildings in a formally laid out streetscape around The Regent's Park, contributing to the wider conservation area and local identity. Camden's Conservation Area Statement identifies that Prince Albert Road was part of Nash's original plan for Regent's Park. Like most old buildings generally, it is significant on principle because of its relative rarity and corresponding cultural importance, as well as more specifically because of its external group presence with respect to The Regent's Park boundary.

Each of the villas in the group sit in reasonably sized gardens with mature planting, the properties facing towards The Regent's Park across the former Cumberland Market arm of The Regent's Canal (closed 1942 and since infilled). The gardens each sit behind an approximately 5'6" wall to ensure privacy of the residents in the gardens, but also allow the taller elements of soft landscaping to be visible from the south across the street – the walls are generally built in similar stock bricks of similar heights along the street, but have been clearly subject to different degrees of attention and rebuilding over the years. Where they are pairs of semi-detached houses (as with No's 10-11), the front gardens between the pair are typically divided by railings, (notwithstanding the brickwork street boundary wall), with planting providing further privacy.



Walking along Prince Albert Road, it is apparent that many of the neighbours boundary walls are suffering from similar issues to those recorded at No 11. It is also evident that a few have been rebuilt in recent years, these are generally distinguishable by their slightly cleaner state and improved verticality. Typically these boundary walls have poor or negligible footings, and are therefore vulnerable to any forces applied to them.

It may be that the long dry summer periods now becoming more common due to climate change are having an especially adverse impact on the soils generally, particularly given the number of mature trees nearby demanding water throughout the summer season.

Proposed works

Description, & impact on the heritage asset

The proposed works once complete will visually have no impact on the heritage asset. Garden walls generally are noted as being one of the more vulnerable kinds of masonry structure, due to their slenderness, weather exposure (both sides), and reliance on often variable ground conditions, as well as often minimal footings. Dismantling and rebuilding is in some cases necessary, and if carried out with appropriate care, as proposed, does not diminish the value of the whole. The existing Flemish bonded boundary walls do not include any ornate masonry detailing or features which might necessitate special care to record and replicate, they are simple plain Flemish bonded walls, except the north wall which features small buttresses (which will be reinstated). These works have been developed in accordance with the general good practice as set out in BS 7913 (2013) *Guide to the conservation of historic buildings*, weighing the necessity and appropriateness of the works on the grounds of safety as justified by the structural engineer. Consideration was given to whether the walls could be stabilised in situ, but given their nature and vulnerability it was felt this was not viable.

As a property formerly in the Crown Estate, a further licence from the estate to permit undertaking these further works will have to be sought.

Conclusion

The remedial proposals above will ensure the boundary walls remain visually unchanged and remain in good order, for the continued safety of residents and members of the public, and that the setting of the listed building is not compromised by disrepair.

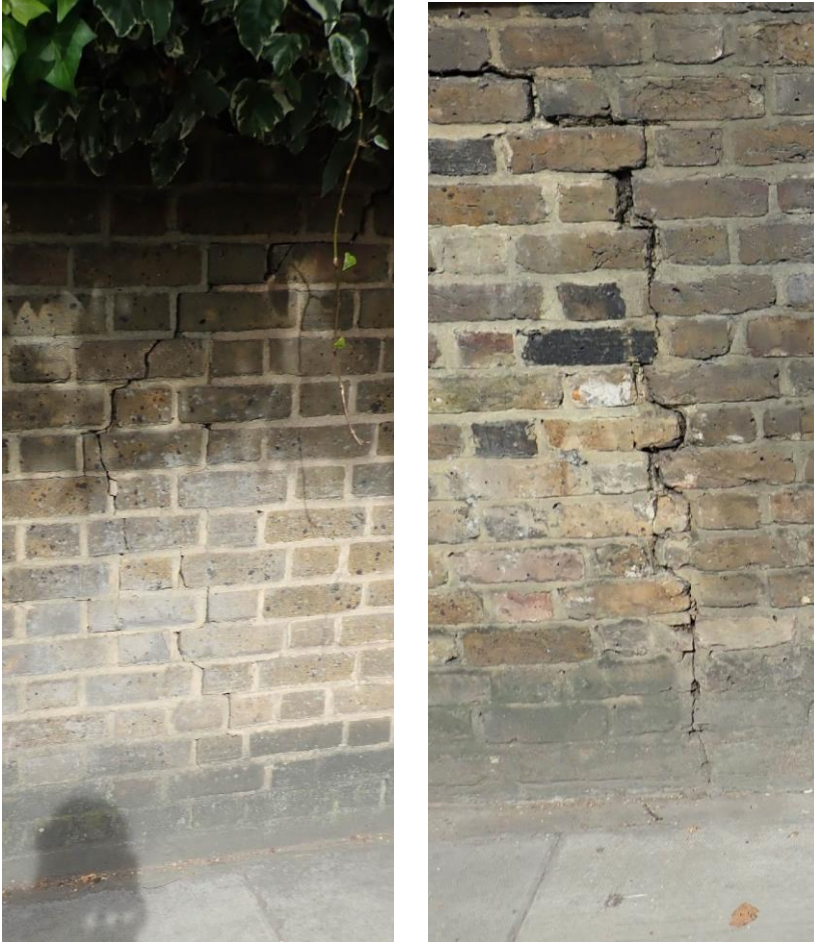
Impact on neighbouring heritage assets

The works have no impact on neighbouring heritage assets.



Appendix A - Relevant Site Photographs

Left: and Centre: cracks in street-side south boundary wall.



Right: Deflection to north (rear) boundary wall.





Left: vertical crack in west boundary wall at point where foundations change -position of future movement joint (left of this line proposed for careful deconstruction and rebuilding)

Right: Longitudinal crack in west boundary wall adjacent to front garden. Crack runs right through wall – upper portion is detached.

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