



ISLINGTON




Development Management Service
 Planning and Development Division
 Environment and Regeneration Department
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DELEGATED REPORT

Application number	P2018/4231/LBC
Application type	Listed Building
Site Address	Archway Bridge, Hornsey Lane, London,
Proposal	Erection of stainless steel fencing behind the bridge parapets and removal of some of the previously installed anti-suicide features.

Constraints

iConservation Areas 170914	CA7	Whitehall Park
iConservation - Art 4 - 170914	18	Article 4(2) Whitehall Park (2)
iCycle Routes (Local) 170914	Development Management Po	Local cycle routes
iCycle Routes (Strategic) 170914	Development Management Po	Strategic Cycle Route
iWithin 100m TLRN 170914	1	Site within 100m of a TLRN Road
iWithin 50m of Conservation Area 170914	7	Whitehall Park
iRail Land Ownership - TfL Surface	20545022	20545022
iRail Land Ownership - TfL Tunnels	20546054	20546054
iRail Land Ownership - TfL Surface	20546055	20546055
iLondon Underground Zones of Interest 100417	23142962	23143064
iArticle 4 Direction A1-A2 (Rest of Borough)	45	23623111
iListed Buildings 170914	TQ2912087389	II

RECOMMENDATION	Refusal of permission	
Report date	24 April 2019	
Case officer signature	David McKinstry 	Date: 24.04.19
Report agreed by (signature)	Report agreed by: 	Date: 30.04.19
Authorising Officer signature	Authorising Officer: 	Date: 30.4.19.

1 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 1.1 The site comprises a Grade II listed building and lies within the Whitehall Park (CA07) Conservation Area.

2 ISSUES

- 2.1 The main issues arising from this proposal relate to their effect on the character and significance of the heritage asset (statutorily listed building) by virtue of the impact on its special architectural and historic interest and special character.

3 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 Listed building consent ref P2014/5019/LBC granted on 15 October 2015 for anti-suicide measures by installation of fencing to bridge parapet. This application was approved on the basis that while the proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the heritage asset, there were public benefits which would outweigh that harm, as defined under Paragraph 134 of the NPPF.
- 3.2 Listed building consent ref P2018/1482/LBC granted on 24 September 2018 for erection of stainless steel fencing (approximately 3.3 metre-high) in front of the bridge parapets and removal of some of the previously installed features including spikes and mesh. This application was approved on the basis that while the proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the heritage asset, there were public benefits which would outweigh that harm, as defined under Paragraph 134 of the NPPF.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The proposal has been subjected to a statutory consultation period of 21 days. A notice was displayed on site and in the press. No objections have been received. Internally, Building Control has been consulted and has made no comments.

5 RELEVANT POLICIES

National and Regional Policy and Guidance

- 5.1 The following national and regional policy and guidance are considered particularly relevant to this application:
- **National Planning Policy Framework (2019)**
Chapter 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- **The Planning Practice Guidance (2018)**
Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- **Conservation Principles (English Heritage, 2008)**
- **Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets (2016)**
- **Historic England GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd edition)**

Development Plan

5.2 The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan (2016), Islington Core Strategy (2011) and Islington Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Finsbury Local Plan (2013). The following policies of the Development Plan are considered relevant to this application:

- **London Plan (2016) - Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London**
Policy 7.8 – Heritage Assets and Archaeology
- **Islington's Core Strategy (February 2011)**
Strategic Policy CS9 - Protecting and Enhancing Islington's Built and Historic Environment.
- **Islington's Development Management Policies (June 2013)**
Policy DM2.1 Design; DM2.3 Heritage; DM2.4 Protected views
- **Whitehall Park (CA07) Conservation Area Design Guidelines (2002)**

6 EVALUATION

Assessment of architectural and historic significance

- 6.1 Archway Bridge is GII listed and has architectural and historic significance for the age and quality of its design, and Archway Bridge has associative and cultural value as a local landmark (many residents refer to the area as *the Archway*) which demonstrates the derivation of the area's name from the bridge.
- 6.2 The bridge has historic and evidential value of the development of infrastructure in London. A *History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 6* (1980) describes how historically the hills of Hornsey obstructed communication to the north and south until the late 19th century, when in 1809 to a project for a tunnel from Upper Holloway through which traffic would be diverted east and north of Highgate was begun. Work by the Archway Road Co. was authorized in 1810 and after the collapse of the tunnel in 1812 the company built Archway Road in a deep cutting in 1813. Hornsey Lane crossed it on a bridge 36 ft. high and the old route was rejoined at the Wellington inn. The existing bridge is a replacement for that first narrower stone bridge. The list description states:

'Bridge carrying Hornsey Lane over Archway Road, and designed to replace a bridge of brick and stone construction designed in 1813 by John Nash. Dated 1897 in panel at crown of arch, and completed 1900. By Sir Alexander Binnie, for London County Council. Portland stone, steel and iron. Portland stone piers to either side with splayed bases having vermiculated quoins, the body of the piers rusticated and vermiculated. Segmental-arched span of 120 feet, of steel and cast-iron construction with rope mouldings to archivolt and circular ornament and arabesques in the spandrels; modillion

cornice. Balustrade of Portland stone piers to either end, carrying cast iron lamp standards of the type designed by Lewis Vulliamy for the Thames Embankment in the 1860s, with the initials of the LCC on the south-eastern and north-western lamps, and the date 1897 on the other pair; smaller central piers, now painted, with lamp standards flanked by griffins; intermediate piers surmounted by ball and spike finials with spiked rail between; the cast-iron panels between with wheel motifs and scrolling ornament.'

- 6.3 Archway Bridge is included within the Whitehall Park (CA07) Conservation Area which lies immediately below the Highgate-Hornsey Ridge (which is carried over Archway Road by Archway Bridge) and the views of the bridge, especially from within the conservation area, contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area, which is designated by virtue of its important late nineteenth century development.
- 6.4 Historic England's planning note on the Setting of Heritage Assets has regard as to how setting should be assessed. The setting of a heritage asset is 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced' (NPPF, Annex 2: Glossary). Where that experience is capable of being affected by a proposed development (in any way) then the proposed development can be said to affect the setting of that asset. The starting point of the analysis is to identify those heritage assets likely to be affected by the development proposal."
- 6.5 The assets likely to be affected having been identified above, HE's planning note states that it is important to "assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated." In the case of Archway Bridge the views towards the bridge from Archway Road make an important contribution to its significance. In longer views the bridge forms an element of visual excitement in which only the iron elements are read against the skyline, the foundations being concealed. The piercing of the balustrade contributes to a sense of visual lightness on the superstructure of the bridge, dramatically punctuated by the central lamp standards. As one passes under the bridge, the masonry abutments are fully visible and the mass and structure of the bridge is appreciated in relation to the landscape which it bridges. Views looking towards the bridge along Hornsey Lane (while containing fewer recognisable landmarks than views over the City of London from the bridge) are nonetheless significant, and form part of the character of the Hornsey Lane part of the Whitehall Park (CA07) Conservation Area.
- 6.6 The views from the bridge also contribute to its setting, most notably the designated view from Archway Bridge towards St Pauls Cathedral and the City of London, but also views to the north, where Highgate Woods and areas of late Victorian townscape are visible, creating a visual counterpoint to the southerly views of the City of London.
- 6.7 Lastly, the bridge provides an important viewpoint for long views of the City from the borough and as such the view is protected in the Local Plan and designated as view LV5: View from Archway Bridge towards St Paul's Cathedral and the City.

Analysis of proposed works

- 6.8 This application is for erection of stainless steel fencing (approximately 3.3 metre-high) in front of the bridge parapets and removal of some of the previously installed features including spikes and mesh.
- 6.9 This application proposes the provision of anti-suicide measures alternative to those previously approved under P2018/1482/LBC. The measures proposed include installation of

stainless steel fencing behind the bridge parapets and removal of some of the previously installed features.

- 6.10 This application seeks to create an anti-suicide barrier which consists of curved uprights fixed to the outer balustrade posts of the bridge by saddle brackets. The uprights would support a Jakob stainless steel mesh made from 2mm s/s rope with 35mm apertures, with a floating collar to allow for clearance around the historic lamp standards.
- 6.11 The proposed steel fencing would sit on each side of the bridge and be erected over the 14 bays of the bridge baluster on each side, giving 7 bays of fencing on either side of the central lamp standard and plinth, with one smaller section or half-bay sitting in front of the lamp standards and plinths, collared to allow for the lamp standard.

Impact of the proposed works on designated heritage assets and protected view LV5

Impact on the listed building

- 6.12 The Council is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses in line with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 6.13 The bridge was designed in a robust but elegant manner, and was designed to carry road traffic and pedestrians by way of Hornsey Lane, as it still does. The bridge largely consists of masonry and cast iron, executed in a consistent architectural design. The cast iron elements of the listed bridge are modular, and the modular nature of the proposed fencing has a certain continuity with the pre-fabricated, industrial character of the listed bridge. However, the proposed upstands and fencing would be executed in stainless steel and steel mesh, materials which are not considered sympathetic to the existing structure.
- 6.14 The design of the bridge relies on ornamented construction for its architectural expression and there is a design hierarchy between the robust monumental substructure of the bridge and the more refined and elegant detail of the balustrade and lamp standards. This ornament becomes more frequent and detailed on the upper parts of the bridge, which would be obscured from Archway Road under the proposals. It is therefore considered that the proposed fencing would harm the language and proportions of this hierarchy by introducing an element which does not relate to the scale and design of the upper part of the bridge.
- 6.15 Additionally, it is anticipated that appreciation of the bridge in long and short views will be detrimentally impacted by the proposed fencing, and as such the scale and incongruous appearance of the proposed fencing would cause harm to the views of Archway bridge.
- 6.16 By virtue of the scale, design and materials of the proposed fencing the proposals are considered to be unsympathetic to the design and material palette of the bridge as originally designed. However, the proposals would not cause irreversible alteration to historic fabric, and do not propose the removal of any historic fabric. It is considered that the harm would be less than substantial.

Impact on the Whitehall Park Conservation Area

- 6.17 The proposed fencing would cause harm to the character and appearance of the Whitehall Park Conservation Area (CA07). The Council must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Although there are no specific conservation area guidelines relating to Archway

Bridge, the guidance notes that street furniture and boundary treatments should follow a traditional pattern and design. As discussed in 6.13 of this report, the proposed fencing would not use traditional materials or design and does not respond to the prevailing palette of the of the Whitehall Park (CA07) Conservation Area.

- 6.18 The guidance on contained within paragraphs 7.27 (boundary treatments) and paragraph 7.39 (street furniture) of the Whitehall Park (CA07) Conservation Area Design Guidelines, whilst not entirely relevant are indicative of the general approach for designing the material palette of infrastructure and boundary treatments. The proposals are contrary to this guidance and so would cause harm to the significance of the conservation area by virtue of the incongruous materials and the impact on the visibility of the listed bridge from within the conservation area. As the proposals do not propose the permeant removal of any of the listed structure which is a positive contributor to the conservation area, it is considered that this harm would be less than substantial.

Impact on Designated View LV5

- 6.19 Part of the significance of the bridge is the manner in which it enables pedestrians to view the vista from the bridge towards the City of London. This view is protected in the Local Plan and designated as view LV5: View from Archway Bridge. Although no visualisation of the impact of the proposed fencing on this specific view have formed part of the application documents, it is clear from the information provided that the proposed mesh fencing, and a lesser degree the steel upstands, will have an impact on the view. At present LV5 is unscreened, whereas under the proposed scheme the view will only be visible through mesh. This will clearly have an impact on the legibility of the view, and that impact will be detrimental to the appreciation of the view.

Impact on the setting of heritage assets

- 6.20 The setting of a heritage asset is 'the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced'. The chief views towards the bridge are from the Archway Road. When seen from this viewpoint, the chief vertical articulations on the bridge are the two central lamp standards and plinths. The proposed fencing would rise above the historic balustrade level, and encase part of the lamp base. Views towards the bridge and views from the bridge would also be partially obscured due to the nature of the wire mesh fencing. Views towards the bridge from within the Whitehall Park (CA07) Conservation Area would also be affected because the proposed fencing will be visible from the Hornsey Lane section adjacent to and over the bridge. The original design of the bridge will be altered and it will no longer read as a largely unaltered late nineteenth piece of design. Therefore, the setting of the bridge will be harmed by the proposals, and there will also be harm to the character and appearance of the Whitehall Park(CA07) Conservation Area.

Conclusion on level of harm

- 6.21 The proposals will cause harm to the setting of designated heritage assets (a listed building and a conservation area), the character and appearance of the Whitehall Park Conservation Area and the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building. The proposals will also have a detrimental impact on the appreciation of designated view LV5. The proposals do not include the demolition of historic fabric and the proposed elements, while envisaged as a long-term solution, would be reversible. Therefore, the level of harm would be serious, but less than substantial.

Balance of harm and public benefit arising from the proposals

- 6.22 Because the proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of designated heritage assets Paragraph 134 of the NPPF should be applied to this assessment:

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. (NPPF, Para. 134)

- 6.23 The optimum viable use of the heritage asset is the use for which it was originally designed; a road traffic and pedestrian bridge. The bridge continues to fulfil that use and there is no evidence to suggest that the bridge cannot continue to operate in this use without the implementation of these proposals. Therefore, securing optimum viable use is not a public benefit of the proposal.
- 6.24 However, the proposal has been put forward with one clear public benefit. This is the prevention of suicide and suicide attempts by persons seeking to harm themselves, and potentially road users, by jumping from the bridge into the roadway below. The bridge has a considerable history of being used for suicides, and the need for suicide prevention measures on the bridge has long been recognised. There is a clear public benefit to preventing the bridge being used for further suicide attempts, all the more so because of the potential for such attempts to result in road traffic accidents.
- 6.25 The less than substantial harm that the proposals would cause to designated heritage assets must therefore be weighed against the public benefit of creating effective suicide prevention measures.
- 6.26 The Designing Out Crime office of the Metropolitan Police have commented on the proposals:

We are supportive of the use of a glazed or polycarbonate curved-topped structure to make it harder to climb. The use of a glazed or polycarbonate screen on the outside of the bridge at appropriate access points would make it harder to move along the outer lip of the bridge.

It is noted that the proposed height may be climbable if brackets are left exposed creating footholds. If this is the case, then it would be recommended to extend the height of the curved design so that it is much harder to climb.

It is also unclear from the design if a void is created between the low level panels and the curved base of the proposed fencing that a person could get stuck in if they tried climbing (and how they would be removed from this space). If this space is created, it would be recommended that a secure mesh covering protects this space, whilst raising the height so as to not make an easy climbing aid.

The proposals from the Highgate Society (pgs 6-7) recommend the use of the curved panels between the pillars and parapets, but not covering them. Due to the easily climbable nature of the pillars, this may introduce issues of providing easier access to the external side of the bridge. Without accurate measurements of the raised banks on either side of the bridge below the pillars, it is difficult to assess how easy it would be for a person to diagonally jump from a pillar or parapet onto the road below, as the information provided only suggests a person will jump directly below where they are.

There are also recommendations of a mesh, but depending on its robust nature and the spacings between the gaps in the meshing, this could result being easily damaged or acting as a climbing aid. The use of polycarbonate and glazing provides a sheer screen that reduces handholds. Alternatively, the use of 358 weld mesh will offer similar security, but

may not provide the same level of visibility. It is accepted that the use of such materials could leave them open to criminal damage (e.g. graffiti or arson); but with correct sourced products this can be mitigated against.

- 6.27 The main concern of the Metropolitan Police comments is that by leaving the end pillars uncovered the proposals do not definitely demonstrate that the measures will adequately prevent potentially successful suicide attempts. In addition to this there are also concerns regarding the potential for a void between the low-level panels and the fencing to create a potential hazard for the entrapment and successful removal of persons attempting to climb the fence.
- 6.28 Although this application must be assessed on its own merits, the site has been subject to anti-suicide proposals in the past and consulting and testing on these measures has provided a framework of what measures are considered to be necessary and acceptable to the requirements of the relevant emergency services. The most recently consented scheme was approved under application number P2018/1482/LBC.
- 6.29 The Metropolitan Police commented that the proposed barrier could compromise the emergency services ability to retrieve any individual who succeeds in climbing over the fence when considering a sample panel of fencing designed in accordance with the panels submitted under P2014/5019/LBC. As a result, amended drawings have been submitted under P2018/1482/LBC showing a secured gate on the fence which would allow emergency services' access, and were approved. As the Metropolitan Police have stated in their comments (above), the current proposal does not demonstrate means by which anyone becoming trapped within the fence void could be recovered and this requirement is therefore not satisfied.
- 6.30 The Haringey Suicide Prevention Group have responded to the consultation on this application to note that while they continue to strongly support the proposals approved under P2018/1482/LBC and P2018/1751/OBS and P2018/4231/LBC and HGY/2019/0424 they have no comment to make on the design proposed under this application, providing it is deemed to provide effective suicide prevention measures and does not delay the implementation of effective suicide prevention measures.
- 6.31 The design of the fence submitted on the 2014 application only covered the main bridge span and stopped by the plinths. The evidence gathered from recent CCTV surveillance including that of the then most recent suicide, showed that people are able to use the plinths to scale the existing fence. An expert climber was commissioned to assess the bridge and they identified the plinths and brick walls adjoining the bridge as providing opportunities for people to climb over the existing fence. It was concluded that, in the interests of public safety, fencing should be extended to cover all of the bridge plinths and adjoining brick walls if a proposal to prevent suicides was to be successful. The proposed fencing under this proposal does not cover all of the bridge plinths and adjoining brick walls, and would therefore not address an issue that has already been considered to be necessary to prevent suicide attempts.
- 6.32 The site has been subject to previous consultation on suicide prevention measures and the expert opinion of the Metropolitan Police and other relevant bodies has given an indication of the measures needed to deliver effective suicide prevention. The current application does not contain all of the recommended measures, and contains elements which the Metropolitan Police do not consider to be conclusively preventative.
- 6.33 The proposed public benefit of suicide prevention does not contain elements which have been previously identified as necessary on this site. In particular, the proposed fencing would not prevent access to the plinths on either end of the bridge, and the Metropolitan Police

have expressed concern that these areas of the bridge could allow for dangerous and potentially fatal access. Consequently, it cannot be considered that the public benefit of the proposals outweighs the less than substantial harm caused to the significance of the designated heritage asset.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 In line with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in assessing the proposals hereby under consideration, special regard has been given to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting and any of its features of special architectural or historic interest.
- 7.2 The proposed works would cause harm to the character and appearance of designated heritage assets and would adversely affect the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building. The works would, therefore, cause harm to the significance of the heritage asset contrary to the objectives of Chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2018, Policy 7.8 (Sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets) of the London Plan 2016, Policy CS9 (Protecting and enhancing Islington's built and historic environment) of Islington's Core Strategy 2011 and Policy DM2.3 (Heritage) of Islington's Development Management Policies 2013.
- 7.3 For the reasons above this application is recommended for refusal.