**Heritage Statement for**

**Tall Trees, Chipstead Lane,**

**Chipstead, Sevenoaks, Kent**

Assessment of the bricks piers to each side of the vehicular access

1. Introduction

This assessment has been commissioned following the removal of a brick pier forming part of the listed wall fronting Tall Trees.

2. Location

Sevenoaks is a market town which was surrounded by a number of large estates, one of which was Chipstead Place. This property was located on the south side of the section of Chipstead Lane that connects Chipstead Common and the village of Chipstead. The estate possessed 3 access points off the lane, 2 of which were main entrances to the house. The original access points almost certainly serve new developments while Tall Trees was constructed between these and provided with a new opening through the Kentish ragstone frontage wall.

3. Tall Trees

Tall Trees consists of a detached house, built in the 1930’s, which has been enlarged over the years. It is fronted by a wide grass verge and a galleted Kentish ragstone wall that is typical of the estates of Sevenoaks, other examples nearby being Manor House, also in Chipstead Lane, and Montreal.

4. Vehicular access

The access to Tall Trees was probably formed as part of the development of the house. The opening formed through the original wall was dressed with brick piers that were approximately 1 brick course higher than the stone wall. The piers measured 450 x 450 mm by 1350 mm high and were capped with 520 x 520 mm copings. The gap between the piers was approximately 2.48 m.

The bricks used are similar to those in the original part of the house which can be seen to the left of the existing front door; however this panel of brickwork is to be removed in accordance with the approved plans to form a new entrance. The brick piers are not Listed Structures in their own right; they are appendages to a historic wall to which they should make a visual contribution.

The pier to the right as seen from the road has been demolished. Record photographs, taken prior to commencement of the construction work, show that this pier was partly repointed using inappropriate mortar and that the brickwork was fractured just above mid-height. There was an unattractive concrete slab coping which lacked weathering to the top surface and drip to the underside edges. This slab being of a material unsympathetic to the age of the wall was visually intrusive.

The brick rubble arising from the demolition indicates that the mortar is strongly adhered to the bricks so that materials could not be readily salvaged for reuse. It is likely that the bricks in the house are similarly unsuitable for reuse. Had the pier been retained these factors would have affected the approach to repairs that would have been necessary. A practical approach would have involved removal and reconstruction of the upper courses assuming that the bricks could be salvaged for reuse. Removal of the existing mortar would be necessary followed by repointing to match the original. In practice it is not clear that this could be achieved.

The pier to the left of the entrance is covered with thick ivy growth and hence difficult to assess without significant clearance.

5. Recommendations

Given the circumstances it is suggested that the remaining pier be removed and that a matching pair of new piers be constructed.

The bricks should be new or reclaimed, of imperial measurements as existing and of similar red/orange colouring.

The mortar should be of non-hydraulic lime mortar flushed off and subsequently brushed to expose the aggregate providing a finish consistent with the adjacent stone wall.

It is suggested that new copings are obtained, to be of stone or cast stone, with top surface weathered and underside throated. If these are obtained in standard sizes the brick pier dimensions could be adapted to suit without visual damage as long as the proportions do not deviate significantly from the existing.

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