

Supporting statement for planning application to erect gabion basket retaining wall to rear of No's 13, 15 & 16 Craven Close.

The banking to the rear of No's 13, 15 & 16 Craven Close is very unstable. There is a severe possibility of soil slip leading to parts off the banking being deposited onto the pavement and road of Summer Lane. The finish to the banking was never completed to a suitable and safe standard by the builders back in the early 1980's when the properties were erected. The shrubbery that was planted by the builder was not planted in such a way so as to add to the stability of the banking. In fact it has been planted in such a way that it has started to add to the instability of the banking as the plants are on the top of the bank and are very susceptible to cantilever action from high winds. In addition to these issues the banking to the rear of No 15 has had makeshift retaining structures inserted to prevent the banking from slipping into summer lane. These consist of a piece of chain link fence that has been laid in to the ground on the boundary with No 16 and nailed to the footings of the garage. Lengths of reinforcing mesh have been jammed into the ground at the top of the bank on the boundary of No 13 and along the rear banking. In addition to these measures two large commercial paving slabs have been inserted into the bank to help prevent the upper part of the bank from falling away. These have moved substantially and are now held in place by tree stumps. It is not known who did this but it has to be assumed, due to the age of the materials it was also the builder.

The land of No 16 was established as the site office area during the construction of the estate and therefore the banking and boundary fencing was completed at the very end of the construction of the site. This banking did not have a continuous fence but was interspersed with bushes and fence panels. The banking of No 16 has severely slipped and forced the wooden picket fence out of the ground. As a result of this damaged fencing children now use the holes in the fence as a means of access to the property and thus use the garden as a rat run to get on to the housing estate from summer lane.

At other positions along the banking children use the easy accessibility to gather during the evenings and weekends to drink.

Due to the increasing heavy rains over the last few years the banking has started to move to the point where an approximate 3m long and 25mm wide crack has appeared in the garden of No 15. In addition to the crack, the top of the bank on the boundary of No 15 & No 16 has moved significantly.

The proposal that this planning application presents is one whereby the householders of No's 13, 15 & 16 will fund the removal of the unstable banking and replace it with a structural retaining wall built with gabion wire baskets. The Gabion wall will not be constructed any higher than the current established final garden levels. The proposed design has been arrived at and approved with detailed cooperation from the Council's Highway department. The wall is to be constructed using products manufactured and supplied by Maccaferri and built to all manufacturers specifications. The council Highway department will have full and unrestricted access at all times to ensure construction meets highways department safety requirements. The householders propose to landscape the finished wall in cooperation with and under guidance and approval from the council's planning department to ensure the finished aesthetic appearance meets all stakeholder requirements. In addition an easily manageable hedge will be established along the top of the gabions to further enhance the finished structure and obscure the reinstatement of the garden walls.

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