

PLANNING NOTES

I thought it might be helpful if I jotted down a few notes which have been distilled from my experience over the last few months in obtaining planning permission to replace our front wall at 130, Victor Road. However pleasing the end result, this did not come without some adventures with the planning process. It could be that some of the points I am going to make are already known to those reading this – if so, my apologies. I did however encounter what for me – and perhaps for others - were some unexpected twists and turns on the way.

My discoveries included the following:

1. The general rule is that the removal of a wall of less than 1 m in height and its replacement by a wall of no more than 1 m in height in an area covered (such as ours) by an Article 4 Declaration does not require conservation area consent. What it does need, however, is householder's planning consent. The application is therefore made on a 'Householder Application for Planning Permission for works or extension to a dwelling' form. The form 'Householder Application for Planning Permission for a works or extension to a dwelling and conservation area consent' should not be used.
2. The rather tortuous 'Design and Access statement' which can be required in conservation area applications does not need to be submitted initially. I was originally given incorrect advice in this regard by the planning department and I was only pointed in the right direction after I had submitted fully completed 'conservation area' application forms and a Design and Access statement!
3. In the end, the paperwork I was obliged to submit (with the requisite copies) was as follows:
 - (a) The application on the 'Householder Application' form.
 - (b) An up to date plan identifying the location of 130 Victor Road (scale 1:1250) which I downloaded from the Stanfords website ([www.stanfords.co.uk/business mapping](http://www.stanfords.co.uk/business_mapping)). I had to pay a registration fee of £1.80 and the map cost £29.10. There are other mapping websites which offer a similar service which may be cheaper or, indeed, more expensive.

- (c) A block plan showing the location of the existing wall (scale 1:100). I used the Stanfords map to 'scale up' an outline of the property boundaries, the house and the wall. A north point has to be shown together with dimensions of the wall and its location in relation to the house and driveway. The planning department referred in one letter to the provision of an existing 'floor plan' – when I queried this, I was told that this simply meant, in this particular, case the provision of a 'birds eye view' of the existing wall location.
 - (d) A block plan showing the location of the proposed new wall (scale 1:100). I managed to do this simply by adapting the plan showing the existing location.
 - (e) Photographs of the existing wall annotated with details of its height and length. The initial request had been for a drawing of 'existing elevations' but I was able to agree with the planning department that these photographs would suffice.
 - (f) A drawing (scale 1:20) showing the side elevation and dimensions of the proposed new wall. I showed a 'detail' on this showing the proposed bonding of the bricks and the proposed materials.
 - (g) Another drawing (scale 1:10) showing the side elevation (the 'thickness') of the proposed wall.
 - (h) A further set of clear photographs of the proposed area of works. I took a series of photographs showing the existing wall in relation to the wall next door and also the driveway.
4. No planning fee was payable since the need for application arose simply from the fact that the property is in an 'Article 4' area.
 5. The planning process was inflexible to the extent that it appeared to take no account of the fact that the existing wall had been 'demolished' by a delivery van and the need for the application had therefore been forced upon me.

6. The bonding I proposed for the bricks (and which was accepted) reflected the bonding on the 'original' walls in the vicinity. This comprises a sequence of three stretchers and a header, three stretches and a header etc.

7. I think it is almost inescapable that the materials to be used are re-used yellow stock bricks. This was written into my planning consent. There are a number of websites offering the bricks for sale. There is some price variation and it is therefore worth shopping around.