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Planning and Heritage Statement



Project: 27 Aylmer Road, Highgate, Haringey, London N2 0BS
Subject: Planning and Heritage Statement
Date: November 2022
Client: Mr and Mrs Sinha

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A. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. This Planning and Heritage Statement has been prepared by DLBP Ltd on behalf of Mr and Mrs Sinha (“the applicant”) to support a full planning application to London Borough of Haringey (“the Council”) for the “*demolition of existing house and erection of a new detached house, comprising a basement with light wells, ground and first floor plus roof space with front roof lights, rear dormers and a car lift.*” (“the proposed development”) at 27 Aylmer Road, Haringey, London N2 0BS.
2. This application follows a previous submission made by the applicant for the demolition of the existing house and erection of a new house at the site (LPA ref. HGY/2021/2700) and responds to the reasons for refusal.
3. The proposed replacement house makes optimum use of the site in an appropriate use for the area. The proposal is of high-quality design and responds positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area as a whole. The internal layout has been designed carefully to meet the applicant’s living requirements and the external appearance of the house has been sensitively designed to reflect the key features of the conservation area. The proposed replacement house will constitute an improvement to the existing property in architectural terms and so will make a positive contribution to the conservation area overall.
4. The proposed development will be wholly in accordance with the development plan and national planning policy, and there are no material planning considerations that would indicate that planning permission should not be granted

B. THE SITE AND PROPOSAL

The site

Site description

5. The site comprises an existing two-storey detached property at 27 Aylmer Road, Haringey, London N2 0BS.
6. The site backs on to Highgate Golf Course to the rear which is designated Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and is a site of ecological importance (Grade II).
7. The site is approximately a 10-minute walk from East Finchley town centre which offers a range of local amenities, including local shops, cafes and restaurants.

Planning designations

8. The site is located within the Highgate Conservation Area, close to its northern boundary. It lies within the Bishops sub-area.
9. The site is also within the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan Area.
10. The site is located within Flood Risk Zone 1 which means it has less than a 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding, the lowest possible risk.

Planning history

11. The relevant planning history for the site is set out below:
 - HGY/2021/2700 - Demolish existing detached property and erect new detached home comprising basement with lightwells, ground and first floor plus roof space with front and rear dormers. Refused 26 October 2021.
 - HGY/2009/1002 - Partial demolition of existing property (no.27) and erection of new two storey detached house with accommodation within the roofspace along with a garage building to the front and a new separate vehicular crossover onto Aylmer Road. Granted 5 August 2009.
 - HGY/2004/1931 - Demolition of existing garage and erection of a two-storey side extension. Granted 26 October 2004.

2021 application

12. The applicant previously submitted an application at the site for the demolition of the existing house and the erection of a new detached house comprising a basement with light wells, ground and first floor plus roof space with front and rear dormers (LPA ref. HGY/2021/2700). This was refused on 26 October 2021. The Council's reason for refusal was:

The proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of Highgate Conservation Area and its significance, due to the loss of an original historic house and

because the replacement house, by virtue of its scale bulk and appearance, would fail to respect the character and appearance of the conservation area, contrary to policies D3 and HCI of the London Plan (2021), Policies SP11 and SP12 of the Haringey local Plan Strategic Policies (2017), policies DM1 and DM9 of the Haringey Development Management DPD (2017) and policies DH1 and DH2 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017).

The proposal

13. The proposed development, as part of this application, seeks to demolish the existing house on site and erect a new detached house, comprising a basement with a perimeter light well, ground and first floor plus roof space with front roof lights, rear dormers, and a car lift.
14. The proposal also includes the replacement of the existing rendered boundary wall with a new brick boundary wall with bricks to match the elevation of the existing house; with two new sliding entrance gates to replace the existing entrance gates. Details of the proposal are described under the following headings; height, scale & footprint, external appearance and basement.

Height

15. The proposed house will be two and half storeys in height, matching the existing height of the building and in keeping with the height of surrounding properties. The eaves height will be consistent with the neighbouring properties and the ridge height will remain the same.

Scale & footprint

16. The proposed house retains a similar scale and massing to the existing house but benefits from additional internal floorspace to meet the applicant's needs. The overall footprint of the proposed house will be marginally larger than existing, with the depth of the main part of the house aligning with that of no. 27a. However, the house will occupy a smaller silhouette than the existing house with wider spaces proposed between its neighbours. The proposed house is set back further from the street than the existing house, aligning its frontage with the neighbouring property to the east.

External appearance

17. The proposed house adopts a classical composition with a broad visual symmetry. A traditional pitched roof is proposed with roof lights on the front elevation. Roof lights were chosen in place of dormer windows to maintain the simplicity of the roof form on the street façade. The roof will also contain overhanging eaves to reflect the Arts and Crafts character of the area.
18. In terms of materials, the proposed house will be constructed using brown and red brick and the roof will use clay roof tiles. The fenestration on the front elevation will comprise of aluminium-framed windows with stone sills. A columned porch is also proposed at the entrance to the house and reflects other similar porch designs along the street.

Basement

19. The basement occupies the footprint of the house above, with a light well along both side elevations and the rear corners to allow some natural light to reach all rooms. The basement will contain a study, games room and a generous home gym with a changing room. The study at the basement level is naturally lit over a garden sloping up from basement to natural ground level. The gym can be accessed via a stairway leading down to the light well from the outdoor terrace and also via the stairway inside the house.
20. Overall, the proposal will be different to the refused scheme in the following ways:

	Existing	Refused scheme	Proposed scheme
Footprint	241.8 sqm	243 sqm (ground floor only) 392.0 sqm (including basement)	254.7 sqm (ground floor only) 310.5 sqm (including basement)
Floorspace	385.6 sqm	802.1 sqm	723.9 sqm
Build-to-plot ratio	21.22%	21.32% (ground floor only) 34.4% (including basement)	22.35% (ground floor only) 27.21% (including basement)
Height to ridge of the roof (measured from ground level at front porch)	9.4m	9.1m	9.3m
Maximum depth from front to rear at ground floor level	16.2m	16.2m	16.3m
Maximum depth from front to rear at first floor level	9.4m	11.6m	12m

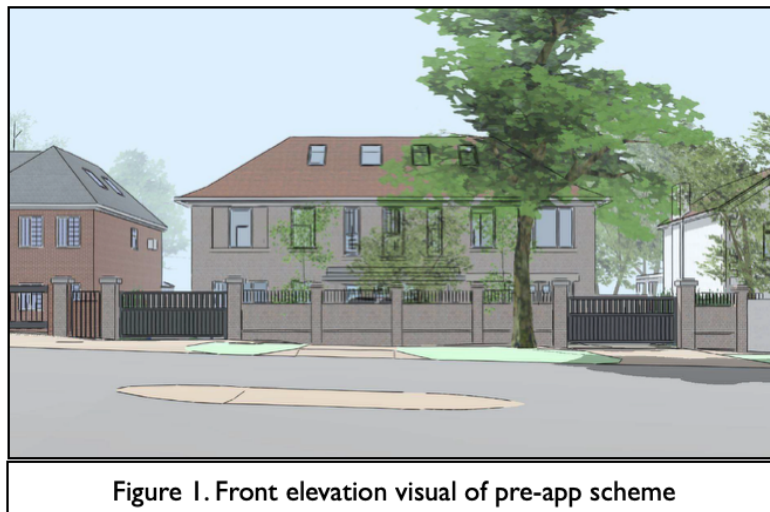
C. PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

Pre-app scheme

21. As is best practice, the applicant prepared a draft scheme and submitted this to the Council for their views and comments as part of a formal pre-application enquiry. The pre-application enquiry (ref. PRE1003064) was submitted to the Council on 13 July 2022, and a meeting was held on Wednesday 3 August 2022. This confirmed the following:
- the principle of development was considered acceptable and in accordance with Policy H8 of the London Plan (2021);
 - no transport or highway-related concerns were raised;
 - no concerns around the level of residential amenity for future residents were raised;
 - concerns were raised around the design of the new house and its impact on the character of the conservation area; and
 - minor concerns were raised around the potential for overlooking from the proposed terrace.

Design and heritage considerations

22. The Council did raise a number of concerns with respect to the design of the scheme and its impact on the character of the conservation area. The scale, bulk and roof form of the proposed replacement house was considered to appear incongruous with the street scene and the proposed basement was also considered to be an uncharacteristic feature in the area and had the potential to erode the amenity and habitat value of the garden.
23. With respect to the appearance of the replacement house, the Council's Conservation Officer felt that the design itself did not reflect specific Arts and Crafts features that, in her view, define the character of the conservation area. Instead, it was suggested that an Arts and Crafts asymmetry was introduced, particularly with respect to the roof form.



The applicant's response

24. In response to these comments, the material choice was refined to harmonise with and reinforce the positive characteristics of the conservation area. A combination of brown brick work with red brick dressing around the window has been proposed to allow the house to sit at ease in its neighbourhood.
25. However, the suggestion to introduce an asymmetrical roof form was not followed as this was not felt to respond to the local context of the street, particularly as the neighbouring properties at no.27a and no. 23 both have a symmetrical composition. In addition to this, the applicant maintains its view that there is no uniform character or architectural style along this section of Aylmer Road and so the scheme has sought to respond to this diversity rather than adhere to a distinct Arts and Crafts design.
26. The design approach and rationale for the scheme has also been informed by a detailed contextual analysis of the conservation area. This is set out in the supporting Conservation Area Statement which the applicant also submitted with the pre-application. The purpose of this assessment was to reflect on the key elements and features which contribute to the area's character today and effectively challenge the Council's assessment of Aylmer Road as documented in the Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (HCAAM) (2013).
27. It is the applicant's view that the Council's assessment of the character and appearance of Aylmer Road in both this document and its written pre-application advice does not provide an accurate portrayal of its current state. For example, the Council's written response identifies the neighbouring houses as 'positive contributors' by virtue of their surviving arts and crafts form and design, but the applicant contends that there is little visual evidence to suggest that these features still exist, and a number of these properties have undergone various alterations which have gradually diminished their Arts and Crafts character over time. More notably, when asked by the applicant during the pre-application meeting, the Council's Conservation Officer was unable to provide any concrete examples of Arts and Crafts style houses on Aylmer Road. Instead, she predominantly focused on selective features which either do not exist or exist in isolation among some of the more modern properties on Aylmer Road. Further analysis of the character of Aylmer Road can be found in the Conservation Area Statement, which has also been submitted with this application.
28. The applicant also disagrees with the Council's comments regarding the basement, noting that its footprint has undergone a significant reduction from the previous scheme (application ref. HGY/2021/2700) where the basement projected much more extensively into the rear garden. The proposed basement now sits wholly underneath the footprint of the replacement house and so is not considered to affect the amenity value of the garden in any way.
29. Therefore, it is the applicant's position that the refined scheme does not result in any heritage harm, nor does it fail to respect its local context. Rather, this scheme is considered to make a positive contribution to the diversity of architectural styles found along this street and the proposed house is considered to be a distinct improvement to the existing building in architectural terms. The design of the replacement house, in particular, has taken visual cues from Sheldon Avenue where

the houses are considered to possess a higher architectural quality than those along Aylmer Road.

30. It is for these reasons that the applicant has decided not to refine the design of the scheme in an Arts and Crafts manner, by incorporating an asymmetrical roof form. However, it is the applicant's view that the refined scheme does respond to the material palette of other houses along the street so that it sits harmoniously within the streetscape. Further justification of the design approach is set out within the supporting Design and Access Statement and Section E of this statement.
31. Overall, it is the applicant's position that the proposed house significantly enhances the building's presence within the streetscape and has been designed to respond positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

D. HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Policy background

32. Paragraph 195 of the Framework sets out that “*local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting)*”. In determining applications, local planning authorities should give weight to proposals that preserve the elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance).
33. Part C of Policy HCl of the London Plan states that “*development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings, should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the asset’s significance and appreciation within their surroundings*”. Therefore, any development proposal must set out how it has identified, valued, conserved, restored, re-used and incorporated heritage assets, where appropriate, and that development affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials, and architectural detail.
34. At the local level, Local Plan Policy SPI2 and DPD Policy DM9 set out the Council’s approach to the management, conservation and enhancement of the Borough’s historic environment. Policy DM9 sets out that development that conserves and enhances the significance of a heritage asset and its setting will be supported.
35. When considering the impact of proposals on the historic environment, the Council will have regard to:
 - a) *the priority given to sustaining and enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and its setting;*
 - b) *character appraisals and management plans or other guidance, where they are available;*
 - c) *the preservation or reinstatement of original or historic form, fabric, function or character of the asset and its setting;*
 - d) *the relationship with adjoining and neighbouring uses, particularly where these are heritage assets of significance in their own right;*
 - e) *the desirability of securing a viable use for a heritage asset consistent with its conservation;*
 - f) *an understanding of and respect for significance of heritage assets as parts of measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change; and*
 - g) *the contribution that the sensitive utilisation of heritage assets can make to sustainable regeneration.*
36. Policy DM9 also sets out that the Council will give consideration to, and support where appropriate, proposals for the sensitive redevelopment of sites and buildings where these detract from the character and appearance of a Conservation Area and its setting, provided that they are compatible with and/or complement the special characteristics and significance of the area.

Asset(s)

37. The site is located within the Highgate Conservation Area. There are no statutorily or locally listed buildings nearby.

Highgate Conservation Area

38. The Highgate Conservation Area was designated in 1967. The original conservation area boundary included the village core and the Bishopswood area, the Gaskell Estate, together with the area bounded by Southwood Lane, Jacksons Lane, the central part of Archway Road, Muswell Hill Road, and Wood Lane up to Queen's Road.
39. The conservation area is divided between the London Boroughs of Camden and Haringey. The Camden side includes part of Highgate Village, Fitzroy Park, Waterlow Park, Highgate Cemeteries and Whittington Hospital. The conservation area boundary was extended on the eastern side on 27 September 1990, to include the upper and lower parts of the Archway sub-area, together with the Miltons and Shepherd's Hill sub-areas. The final relatively small boundary extension was on the eastern side to include part of Stanhope Road in the Shepherd's Hill sub-area on 29 November 1994.
40. The Council adopted the Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (HCAAM Plan) in 2013. This document provides a description of the significance of the Highgate Conservation Area, in terms of its architectural and historic interest.
41. The character of the Highgate Conservation Area is formed by the relationship of its historic pattern of development, its high percentage of buildings with architectural merit, its topography and its green open spaces and distant views. The open space of Highgate Golf Club provides an attractive landscape setting to the area and street trees also form an important part of the suburban character of the area.

Significance

42. Historic England Advice Note 12 (Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets) sets out guidance for assessing the significance of a heritage asset. The assessment in this document considers the significance and associated impacts of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area.

Contribution of site to character and appearance of conservation area

43. The site itself is not identified in the HCAAM Plan (2013) as a locally listed building or a building that positively contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area. However, the character appraisal does assess the contribution of the street and wider site to the character and appearance of the Bishops sub-area, including the southern side of Aylmer Road which borders the northern boundary of the conservation area.

44. A Conservation Area Statement has been submitted in support of this application. This document assesses the character of Aylmer Road and the surrounding area by reflecting on the key elements and features which contribute to its character today.
45. The historical context of Aylmer Road is set out in paragraph 10.4.60 of the HCAAM Plan (2013):

Aylmer Road forms part of a dual carriageway built around 1925 to relieve congestion on the Great North Road. Only a small section of the south side as far as the junction with Bishop's Road is part of the Highgate Conservation Area. A section of the south side also forms the edge of Highgate Golf Club and also contains a former playing field now used for flood control by Thames Water. The road rises steeply from the junction with North Hill to the entrance to Miriam Court but then drops away towards Hampstead Garden Suburb. The road carries a great deal of heavy traffic as the access route to the A1, A406 and ultimately M1.

46. Paragraph 10.4.63 identifies the 'consistent size, scale and style' of detached houses along the southern side of Aylmer Road as positive features associated with this part of the conservation area. However, the southern side of Aylmer Road is somewhat in contrast to other parts to the Bishops sub-area where the Arts and Craft vernacular is more prominent, including the surrounding streets of Sheldon Avenue and Denewood. The character of the southern side of Aylmer Road is primarily suburban and mainly derives from its landscape setting to the south and its active frontage with the A1 dual carriageway to the north.
47. Along the southern side of Aylmer Road, a more eclectic mix of architectural styles has been established and over time and the character of the street has been influenced by various interventions to the original properties, including proposals for external alterations, side extensions and rear extensions. Figure 2 shows examples of contrasting facade designs on properties along Aylmer Road. As such, whilst the properties along Aylmer Road do share some consistent features which add to the special interest of the street, including a common building line, front boundary walls and portico entrances, it is considered that the description of these properties in the HCAAM Plan (2013) are no longer wholly reflective of the character of the street today. There is no evident 'homogenous' character along Aylmer Road. Further description of the character of Aylmer Road is set out in the supporting Conservation Area Statement.



48. The existing house incorporates a number of arts and crafts elements into its design, including a wide and low facade composition with a prominent gable above the main entrance. However, it has undergone a number of alterations to its layout that have diminished its architectural quality and contribution to the character of the area over time. It is now considered to represent an 'unremarkable' example of the Arts and Crafts style and no longer reflects an example of 'high-quality residential development' in the area as referenced in paragraph 10.10.1 of the HCAAM Plan (2013).



Figure 3.27 Aylmer Road

49. Overall, the site therefore does not detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area but rather makes a neutral contribution to it. This position was also confirmed by the Council's Conservation Officer on the refused application (LPA ref. HGY/2021/2700).

Impact on the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area

Assessment of proposals

50. The site is located within the Highgate Conservation Area and this is the key heritage asset that has the potential to be affected by the proposed development. There are no statutorily or locally listed buildings nearby. The property at the site is not on the Council's local list and is of no special historic or architectural interest sufficient to warrant its retention.
51. As explained in the previous section and in the supporting Conservation Area Statement, the character and appearance of the southern side of Aylmer Road is not wholly consistent with its description in the HCAAM Plan (2013) and a number of properties have been subject to various interventions that have influenced the street's character over time. The established character now comprises a mix of architectural styles and materials which is clearly at odds with the Council's description of the area as having a 'homogenous character'. The proposed development has therefore been

assessed against the characteristics of the street today with reference to positive contributors identified in the HCAAM where relevant and appropriate.

Design and appearance

52. With respect to design and appearance, the proposed development will make a positive contribution to the diversity of architectural styles present within the streetscape and uses building materials present in other properties nearby to ensure that the proposed development is in keeping with the character and appearance of the street.
53. Design inspiration also been taken from certain houses on Sheldon Avenue, which is a short distance away and also within the Bishops sub-area of the Highgate Conservation Area. Many of these houses are well-designed and have an elegant appearance that could be regarded as being of a higher architectural quality than some of the houses on Aylmer Road. Figure 4 shows the facades of properties along Sheldon Avenue.



54. The composition of the proposed front façade follows classical principles of order and proportion and adopts a broad visual symmetry, much like the houses on Sheldon Avenue do. The choice of brown brick is different from its immediate neighbours but is in keeping with other houses along Aylmer Road which have retained more of their original character. This choice is also reflective of the wider established character of the Bishops sub-area. As stated in the previous section, the existing building has a diminished architectural quality as a result of a number of alterations to its original features, including on its side and rear elevation. The proposed replacement house will be architecturally superior to the existing property in terms of its design and

appearance and so would enhance the overall appearance of the conservation area in this respect.

Scale and massing

55. With respect to mass and scale, the depth and footprint of the proposed house will be more in keeping with the historic pattern of development along the street than the refused scheme at the site which was considered to have an adverse impact on the established site layout. The depth and footprint will therefore ensure that the proposed replacement house respects the layout of properties in this part of the conservation area and is more in keeping with the build-to-plot ratios on Aylmer Road. The proposed development will have no adverse impact on the spatial relationship between the properties and will preserve the positive contribution made by the front and rear gardens to the setting of the street.

Gaps between neighbouring properties

56. The HCAAM Plan (2013) identifies the gaps between houses, particularly on their upper storeys as a key feature of properties on Aylmer Road which help contribute to its suburban character. These gaps help to facilitate views of further trees in their side or rear gardens and to the open space of Highgate Gold Club. Figure 5 shows the gap between 27a and 27 Aylmer Road and the rear view into Highgate Golf Course.



Figure 5. Gap between 27a and 27 Aylmer Road

57. The proposed development will increase the width of the gaps between the sides of the house and the neighbouring property compared with the existing and so views of Highgate Golf Course to the rear will be enhanced by the proposals. The proposed development will therefore enhance the suburban character of the conservation area in this respect.

Front carriageway and boundary treatment

58. The large carriage driveways found on properties along Aylmer Road are identified as positive features of the conservation area. Boundary treatment to the front of these properties also forms an attractive part of the street scene and trees within the front gardens help to contribute to the suburban character of the area.
59. The proposed development will retain the existing paved front driveway to preserve the setting of the house. The proposals also include some additional planting along the front of the site which will add to the leafy character of the street and enhance the site's overall contribution to the street scene. The proposed development will therefore preserve the character of the conservation area in this respect.

Basement and car lift

60. The proposed basement will have no adverse impact on the integrity of neighbouring properties and will sit wholly underneath the footprint of the existing building to respect the historic layout of properties in this part of the conservation area. It will extend significantly less into the rear garden in comparison to the previous scheme (LPA ref HGY/2021/2700) which the Council considered to be 'visually intrusive' and 'uncharacteristic' of the host property. The basement will therefore preserve the openness of its garden setting and will have no adverse impact on the site layout.
61. With respect to the car lift, this has been sensitively incorporated into the scheme layout and will not be visible from the street level, as a result of the proposed boundary wall. The car lift will therefore fit in harmoniously with the streetscape and will consequently cause no heritage harm.

Conclusions

62. Overall, the proposed development will preserve the suburban character of the street by retaining key features that are identified as making positive contributions to the conservation area, including the gaps between neighbouring properties, the large front carriageway and front boundary treatment. The mass and scale of the proposed development has been designed to respect the historic layout and footprint of properties in this part of the conservation area and its external appearance seeks to reflect the architectural vernacular of the Bishops sub-area, whilst also having regard for change and diversity.
63. Elsewhere across the Bishops sub-area, other replacement dwelling houses have been granted planning permission on the basis that the character and appearance of their host street has changed as a result of replacements, additions, external alterations, and extensions.
64. At Guildens, Courtenay Avenue, London N6 4LP, a proposal for the "demolition of existing dwelling with retention of front facade and erection of replacement two-storey dwelling and associated extension to lower ground floor and the creation of a basement level" was recently granted at appeal (ref. APP/Y5420/W/19/3243272 dated 21 May 2021). The Planning Inspector notes at paragraph 8:

Its character and appearance has fundamentally changed as a result of these developments and the previous uniform and homogenous character of the road no longer exists. The character and appearance of the road as a whole and its contribution to the overall historic significance of the CA has lessened over time.

65. Whilst the application site is not on Courtenay Avenue, it is within the same sub-area within the conservation area and the principle of its change in character has been accepted. The same can be said for Aylmer Road where a 'homogenous' character can no longer be observed along the street. When considered in the context of the street's existing character, the proposed development will be of a superior architectural design to the existing property and so will enhance its contribution to the conservation area as a whole. Therefore, the proposed development is deemed acceptable in heritage terms.
66. Accordingly, it is clear that the proposed scheme has been designed having regard to the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area. It is the applicant's view that no harm will result from the proposed development with respect to designated heritage asset of the Conservation Area, and accordingly paragraphs 199 to 202 of the Framework are not engaged. Rather, the proposed development will make a positive contribution to the character of the area and so consequently, the relevant development plan policies in relation to design and heritage will be wholly complied with.

E. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICY COMPLIANCE

67. The statutory development plan for the London Borough of Haringey, as it applies to the site, comprises:
- Local Plan: Strategic Policies (2013);
 - Local Plan: Development Management DPD (2017);
 - Local Plan: Site Allocations DPD (2017);
 - The Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017); and
 - The London Plan (2021).
68. Other documents that are material considerations include; National Planning Policy Framework (2021).
69. The main considerations for this proposal include;
- principle of development;
 - basement development;
 - design and impact on character and appearance of Highgate Conservation Area; and
 - residential amenity.

Principle of development

Demolition and replacement of original building

70. Policy H8 of the London Plan (2021) requires that the loss of existing housing should be replaced by new housing at existing or higher densities with at least the equivalent level of overall floorspace. As the proposed development proposes to retain the current residential use of the site and provide additional overall floorspace, the principle of development is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy H8. This position was confirmed by the Council at the pre-application stage. Page 2 of the Council's written response sets this out:

The proposal would retain the current residential use of the site by erecting a new house that would provide additional overall floorspace. As such, the principle of development is in accordance with Policy H8.

71. The supporting text at paragraph 4.8.1 states that the benefits of development proposals that involve the demolition and replacement of existing homes should be balanced against any potential harm.

72. At the local level, Policy DH1 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan states that:

Proposals to demolish buildings and structures that are non-designated heritage assets will be subject to a balance judgement with regard to the scale of the loss and the significance of the asset. Any proposed replacement should make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

73. The Council has approved numerous applications for the demolition and erection of replacement dwelling houses within the Highgate Conservation Area. These include at 27 Sheldon Avenue (LPA ref HGY/2019/0014), 28 Sheldon Avenue (LPA ref HGY/2017/0174) and 55 Sheldon Avenue (LPA ref HGY/2016/080155).
74. Proposals for the replacement of dwelling houses within conservation areas should therefore not be resisted in principle. Where demolition is permitted then development is expected to positively contribute to the conservation area in which it sits. New development should not make less of a contribution to the conservation area than that which it replaces.
75. The site makes a 'neutral' contribution to the conservation area. This position was confirmed by the Council's Conservation Officer on the refused application (LPA ref. HGY/2021/2700):

The existing building has been altered in the past, however, it is still in keeping with the character and appearance of the area, in terms of mass and scale, overall proportions, building line, roof form, site layout and materials. As such, it is considered to make a neutral contribution to the area.

76. Therefore, the demolition of the existing building would be acceptable in principle, subject to an appropriate replacement of a high-quality design and materials that at the very least preserves this contribution or better enhances its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
77. Overall, the proposed development will be of a high-quality design and will make optimum use of the site in an appropriate use for the area. The proposed replacement house will make a positive contribution to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area and so the principle of its demolition is acceptable in accordance with Policy DH1 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan and Policy DM9 of the Haringey Development Management DPD.

Self-build housing

78. Policy H2 of the London Plan sets out that "boroughs should pro-actively support well-designed new homes on small sites (below 0.25 hectares in size) through both planning decisions and plan-making in order to support those wishing to bring forward self-build housing".
79. The National Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: I6a Reference ID: 57-016a-20210208) is also supportive of proposals for self-build housing:

Self-build or custom build helps to diversify the housing market and increase consumer choice. Self-build and custom housebuilders choose the design and layout of their home, and can be innovative in both its design and construction.

80. At the local level, Policy DM14 sets out that planning applications for ‘self or custom build’ housing, built or commissioned by individuals or groups of individuals for their own occupation, will be supported by the Council. In particular, proposals for self-build housing can help to support the local economy by providing work for local builders and tradesmen and maximising the use of local supply chains.
81. The proposed development is for a self-build and the replacement dwelling will be for the applicant’s own occupation. Therefore, the proposal is acceptable in principle in this regard and is in accordance with national planning practice guidance.

Basement development

82. Policy D10 of the London Plan sets out that proposals for basement development should be managed sensitively through the planning application process to ensure that their potential impact on the local environment and residential amenity is acceptable.
83. The supporting text at paragraph 3.10.6 states that:

The Mayor considers that smaller-scale basement excavations, where they are appropriately designed and constructed, can contribute to the efficient use of land, and provide extra living space without the costs of moving house.

84. At the local level, Policy DM18 of the Council’s Local Plan sets out policy guidance in relation to residential basement development and light wells. It states that householder extensions to existing basements, and the construction of new basements, including in existing dwellings will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal does not adversely affect the structural stability of the building, does not increase in flood risk to the host or nearby properties and does not cause harm to the appearance or setting of the property or the established character of the surrounding area.
85. Policy DH7 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan also seeks to ensure that full consideration is given to the potential impacts of basement developments at application stage.
86. With respect to the refused scheme at the site (LPA ref HGY/2021/2700), the scale of the basement was highlighted as a key concern. Paragraph 6.21 of the Officer’s Report stated that:

The proposed basement and associated lightwell areas would be extensive, visually intrusive and uncharacteristic of the host property and the properties along the south side of Aylmer Road.

87. Concerns were also raised at the pre-application stage, with the Council citing on page 4 of its written response:

The proposed basement projecting into the rear garden would be an uncharacteristic feature in the area and raises some concerns as it would erode to some extent the amenity and habitat value of the garden.

88. In response to these comments, the proposed basement as part of this revised scheme has been significantly reduced in size and now sits wholly underneath the proposed footprint of the building, which itself is only marginally larger than the

existing footprint which is 241.8 sqm. The proposed basement therefore does not extend beyond the footprint of the proposed replacement house, and this would minimise any impact on the open and green character of the existing garden space and would also ensure that the basement does not appear visually intrusive in any respect. As such, the proposed basement will be of a more acceptable scale and footprint in comparison to the previous application at the site.

89. An updated Basement Impact Assessment (BIA) has been prepared by JMS Consulting Engineers Ltd in support of this application. This report assesses the impact of excavating the basement and confirms that there will be no adverse effect from subterranean development on the structural stability of adjacent properties and associated potential damage.
90. No concerns were previously raised by the Council's Building Control team in relation to the basement impact assessment submitted as part of the refused application. The updated report confirms that the proposed basement will not have an adverse effect upon local hydrology arising from its construction. Paragraph 8.13 sets out that:

The construction of the proposed development generally, and the subterranean basement in particular, will not affect the integrity of the surrounding building stock or overload the near-surface geology.

91. The proposed basement will also have no impact on the character and biodiversity of the designated open metropolitan land to the south of the site.
92. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with Local Plan Policy DM18 and Policy DH7 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan.

Heritage impacts

93. Paragraph 199 of the Framework requires great weight to be given to the conservation of a heritage asset (with conservation defined in the glossary as “the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance”). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 200 follows this to say that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraphs 201 and 202 then set out the exercises to be carried out in the event that harm is identified to be substantial or less than substantial respectively.
94. Section D of this Planning and Heritage Statement assesses the significance of Highgate Conservation Area, and considers the potential impacts of the proposal against this significance. It concludes that the proposal results in no harm to the significance of the Highgate Conservation Area.
95. Overall, the proposed development will result in no harm with respect to the designated heritage asset of the conservation area, and accordingly paragraphs 199 to 202 of the Framework are not engaged. Therefore, the proposed development is wholly compliant with the relevant policies of the development plan and the Framework in relation to design and heritage.

Design

96. Section 12 of the revised Framework relates to design and states the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment stating that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 134 states that great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs that promote high levels of sustainability, or help to raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of the site's surroundings. Chapter 16 of the Framework sets out the Government's planning policy on designated heritage assets.
97. The London Plan sets out a number of design specific policies. In particular, Policy D3 encourages development proposals to follow a design-led approach to optimise the capacity of sites and states that *"development proposals should enhance local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness through their layout, orientation, scale, appearance and shape, with due regard to existing and emerging street hierarchy, building types, forms and proportions"*. In terms of quality and character, Policy D3 also states that *"new developments should respond to the existing character of a place by identifying the special and valued features and characteristics that are unique to the locality and respect, enhance and utilise the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character."*
98. At the local level, Policy SPI 1 of the Council's Local Plan sets out that development should be of the highest standard of design that respects its local context and character and historic significance, to contribute to the creation and enhancement of Haringey's sense of place and identity.
99. Policy DMI2 also relates to the design and quality of housing and requires that all new housing must be of a high quality, taking account of the privacy and amenity of neighbouring uses and are required to meet or exceed the minimum internal and external space standards of the London Plan and the Mayor's Housing SPG.

Scale, form, and external appearance

100. The design of the replacement house is of high quality and will make a positive contribution to the diversity of architectural styles in this part of the conservation area. It will retain the overall proportions, scale and materials of the original houses along the south side of Aylmer Road. The proposals will therefore be in keeping with the street scene and will preserve the positive features of the streetscape, including the gaps between the houses which provide views into Highgate Golf Course to the rear.
101. The scale of the replacement house will be appropriate to its plot size and will respect the prevailing scale and form of houses along Aylmer Road. The build-to-plot ratio of the proposed replacement house is only marginally greater than the footprint of the existing building but is not substantially different in this respect.
102. In terms of the external appearance, the design approach is sensitive to its context and has taken inspiration from some of the newer, high-quality houses on Sheldon Avenue. The roof will include overhanging eaves which is a common roof feature found on properties along Aylmer Road and the roof will have swept eaves to echo

the character of the roof of the existing house. The design of the porch will be relatively sober in appearance with classical columns on plinths proposed which will reflect other porch designs along Aylmer Road, including 5 Aylmer Road.

103. The proposed basement and associated light well areas will not be visible from the street to ensure that these features do not appear visually intrusive in the context of the host property. The light wells along the side elevations are concealed behind garden walls / garden gates to the side of the property which are proposed to ensure privacy and security of the replacement house.

Internal layout

104. The internal layout of the proposed replacement house has been designed to ensure that living space can be more efficiently used to meet the applicant's current needs. Adequate and easily accessible storage is proposed.
105. The ground floor proposes a spacious, open plan kitchen and living room with a study and learning / therapy room. The basement will contain a home gym and games room, as well as an additional bedroom and study. The first floor accommodates two ensuite bedrooms and generous master bedroom suite, with access to the roof terrace. There is also a gallery looking down onto the ground floor. The second floor accommodates three further bedrooms, providing additional capacity to accommodate guests.

Conclusion

106. Overall, the design of the scheme will be appropriate to its context, is of high-quality and will preserve the character and historic significance of the conservation area in accordance with Policy SP11 and London Plan Policy D3.

Residential amenity

Standard of residential amenity for future occupiers

107. London Plan Policy D6 requires housing developments to be of high-quality design, providing comfortable and functional layouts, benefiting from sufficient daylight and sunlight, maximising the provision of dual aspect units and providing adequate and easily accessible storage space as well as outdoor amenity space.
108. At the local level, Policy DM12 requires that new housing for development meets or exceeds the minimum internal and external space standards set out in the London Plan and the Mayor's Housing SPG. Ground floor family housing should also provide access to private garden / amenity space.
109. Policy DH9 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan also considers the environmental health of existing and future residents and identifies Aylmer Road as a transport corridor where new residential development should offer suitable protection of amenity.
110. The proposed house will be built to a high standard using appropriate materials to insulate the house and provide suitable protection from any adverse noise from

Aylmer Road. The proposed replacement house would also be dual aspect, thus ensuring that sufficient levels of outlook and daylight for the future occupiers are provided. The rear windows are south-facing and therefore would receive sufficient sunlight into the property throughout the year. The light wells and sloping garden will also ensure that the basement receives adequate natural daylight. On the first floor, a terrace is proposed to provide some private outdoor amenity space, and this is accessed via the master bedroom suite. The existing garden space to the rear of the site will be retained.

- 111. All habitable rooms are generously sized and will exceed the minimum internal and external space standards of the London Plan and the Mayor's Housing SPG.
- 112. Overall, the proposed development would provide a high quality, spacious environment for future occupiers and is therefore in accordance with Policy D6 of the London Plan and Local Plan Policy DM12.

Impact on residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers

- 113. London Plan Policy D6 outlines that design must not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding housing, in specific stating that proposals should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, while also minimising overshadowing.
- 114. At the local level, Policies DM1 and DM12 set out that proposals for new housing must take into account the privacy and amenity of neighbouring uses and should ensure that these provide an appropriate amount of privacy to neighbouring properties and do not result in any harmful overlooking or loss of privacy.
- 115. Minor concerns were raised at the pre-application stage regarding the potential for overlooking from the proposed roof terrace at the rear of the first floor into the neighbouring garden at 25 Aylmer Road. The existing house has a roof terrace at first floor level which extends the full width of the rear of the house. By comparison, the proposed roof terrace will be much smaller, extending just over half of the width of the existing roof terrace and so this would not give rise to any additional overlooking. Moreover, planters have also been proposed along the edges of the terrace to deter residents from walking to the edge of the terrace in order to reduce the potential for any overlooking.
- 116. The scale and footprint of the proposed replacement house is acceptable in the context of the neighbouring properties and would not result in any overbearing impact. The retention of planting along the boundaries and translucent glazing to the windows at first floor on the side elevations would further ensure that current levels of privacy are maintained and reduce any potential for overlooking. As with the previous scheme at the site whose footprint projected significantly deeper into the rear garden, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the living conditions and amenities to the occupant of neighbouring properties.
- 117. Overall, the proposed development will therefore have no adverse amenity impact on neighbouring occupiers and is in accordance with London Plan Policy D6 and Local Plan Policies DM1 and DM12.

Arboricultural impacts

- I18. Policy G7 of the London Plan emphasises the role of trees within the urban environment and their role in improving environmental conditions. Development proposals should ensure that, wherever possible, existing trees of value are retained.
- I19. At the local level, Policy DM1 sets out that development proposals should respond to trees on and close to the site and ensure that careful consideration is given to existing trees in the early design process. Policy DM18 also requires that proposals for basement development do not cause the loss, damage, or long-term threat to trees of townscape or amenity value.
- I20. Policy OSI of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan also emphasises the need to retain mature trees within conservation areas which have townscape, ecological or amenity value.
- I21. The proposed development, including the basement construction, will have no adverse impact on any tree either on the site or adjacent to the site.
- I22. Overall, the proposed development will have no adverse arboricultural impacts and will therefore be in accordance with London Plan Policy G7, Local Plan Policies DM1 and DM18 and Policy OSI of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan.

Sustainability

- I23. Policy DM21 requires that all new development will be expected to consider and implement sustainable design, layout and construction techniques.
- I24. The proposed development incorporates a number of sustainability measures, including triple-glazed windows, photovoltaic panels and ground source heat pumps. Overall, the scheme will be of a high-quality and energy-efficient design which will help to minimise carbon emissions on site in accordance with Policies SP4 and Policies DM21 and DM22.
- I25. An Energy Statement has been prepared by GMS Engineering Design Ltd and submitted in support of this application. This report sets out that the development will meet the current Building Regulations for energy efficiency as a baseline and will include the use of low carbon and renewable energy technology to offset the energy demand even further, in accordance with 'Be Lean', 'Be Clean' and 'Be Green' principles.
- I26. Such technologies include photovoltaic panels, which are proposed to be located on the main roof as the configuration and orientation are suitable and allow for the use of a solar PV array to be installed. Rainwater harvesting units are also proposed to be installed to aid the watering of the gardens as required. The air source heat pumps are proposed to be located at ground floor level on the side of the building on its western elevation.
- I27. A detailed design SAP calculation will set the savings that can be achieved from maximising the potential and suitable technologies which shall be completed during the post-planning stage, in preparation for the Building Regulations application.

128. The proposed development is therefore wholly compliant with London Plan Policy SI 1, Policies DM21 and DM22 of the Haringey Development Management DPD and Policy SP4 of Haringey's Strategic Policies.

Highways and parking

129. The Framework recognises that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development and states that development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. Paragraph 111 of the Framework states that developments *should not* be refused on transport grounds unless there would be an *unacceptable impact on highway safety*, or the residual cumulative impact of the development are severe.
130. Paragraph 107 of the Framework states that local planning authorities should take into account a range of factors if they choose to set local parking standards for residential and non-residential development. These factors are the accessibility of the development; the type, mix and use of development; the availability of opportunities for public transport; local car ownership levels; and the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
131. The site is in a sustainable location and lies within a 10-minute walk to East Finchley Underground Station which is served by the Northern Line. The site has a PTAL rating of 3 which indicates a moderate level of public transport accessibility.
132. With respect to the previous application, no issues were raised in terms of on-street parking demand and highway safety. Since the parking demands and traffic movements associated with the proposed development would remain largely the same as no additional dwellings are proposed on site, the existing driveway is proposed to be retained. This was also the Council's position at the pre-application stage. Page 4 of the Council's written response confirms this:
- From the transportation perspective, this is a minor proposal with no transportation impacts of note... the numbers of trips and transport demands would essentially remain as existing or only increase very slightly.*
133. The size of the parking forecourt will be increased slightly to facilitate the proposed development which would provide additional space at the front of the site for vehicle manoeuvres. A car lift leading down to an underground garage is also proposed to provide a more secure parking facility for the applicant. However, this will not create any additional pressures on local traffic conditions.
134. Three cycle parking spaces will be provided on site in accordance with the cycle parking requirements set out in the London Plan (2021). These are proposed to be securely located within the garage.
135. The proposed development will therefore be in accordance with the Framework and the development plan with respect to highways, access and parking matters.

Conclusion

136. The proposed development of a replacement house will be in accordance with the development plan and national planning policy. The proposed development is sensitively designed in terms of scale, mass, and appearance to respect and preserve the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area. There will also be no adverse residential amenity impact in terms of future occupiers of the replacement house and neighbouring occupiers.