

HGY/2022/4099: 63 SHELDON AVENUE, BISHOP'S AREA, HIGHGATE:

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee objects to this application.

Firstly, around 95% of the houses in Sheldon Avenue are Queen Anne style with double hung sliding sash windows and are not Arts & Crafts. This is indicated by the several examples of other houses in Sheldon Avenue in the Design & Heritage Statement.

It states the architects have used these buildings as sources for their design:

- Little Thakeham by Sir Edwin Lutyens 1903 Grade 1
- Deanery Gardens, Sonning by Sir Edwin Lutyens 1901 Grade 1
- Woolverstone House, Suffolk by Sir Edwin Lutyens 1901 Grade 1
- The Red House, Bexley by Philip Webb for William Morris 1859 Grade 1

These buildings are not only recognised nationally but internationally for their exceptional design.

15 View Road, Highgate (very close to the site) was designed by George Sherrin FRIBA in 1905 so similar in date to the Lutyens' examples. It is listed Grade II (list entry 1109950).



The Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan states that Sheldon Avenue was developed in the 1920s by the Quennell brothers. The examples of buildings in Sheldon Avenue in that document make it plain that the character of those buildings (also included in the DAS & Heritage Statement) is a tendency to symmetrical elevations and a far cry from the Arts & Crafts Movement. The roof pitches are also significantly shallower than the great examples of Arts & Crafts houses from which the architects have mistakenly taken their inspiration. There are a few earlier houses in the Arts & Crafts' idiom but they are, as we have said, definitely the exception in Sheldon Avenue.

ARTS & CRAFTS HOUSES IN SHELDON AVENUE



The Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan makes it clear that the northernmost section of Sheldon Avenue is of a quite different character, to an extent illustrated in the DAS & Heritage Statement. From the crossroads going north from Denewood Road all the houses are symmetrical which are broadly replicas of similar houses in the southern part of Sheldon Avenue but on a smaller scale. Immediately round the site there is a real mixture of a mixture of a tall block of flats, a low-rise horizontal block of flats, a fairly modern house and 63 & 65 both of which were granted planning permission in the late 1950's. No. 63 is a good house of its period and in scale with its neighbours. There is a move against demolition to reduce embodied carbon.

Our opinion is that the proposed design fails to reflect any genuine Arts & Crafts character. It adopts very steeply pitched roofs, not because they have a local precedent, which does not in any case exist, but in order to achieve more accommodation at the third floor level, hence the examples of crown roofs set out in the DAS & Heritage Statement. In this case the steeper roof pitches result in a much larger building quite out of scale with the location.

The design significantly fails to provide any of the real character and juxtapositions of different forms found in the Arts & Crafts' Movement and appears to be led only by a desire to maximise the amount of accommodation and built form on the restricted site.

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee considers this application would cause harm to the Highgate Conservation Area. The bulk and poor design together with the poor evaluation of the existing house and errors in the DAS & Heritage Statement set out in Appendix 1 in our view mean this highly inappropriate application must be refused.