

1. Introduction

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee objects to HGY/2023/0317:

"Refurbishment and extension of existing Science Block, to include: 1) Four storey plus basement extension to east wing to provide new entrance and improved circulation, lift and ancillary accommodation; 2) Three storey extension including ground level colonnade to central building; 3) Creation of additional plant space at roof level of the Link Block, with extension of dormer and installation of louvres; 4) Complete replacement of building systems/plant; 5) Rooftop observatory extension; 6) Replacement windows and restoration of existing facades; and 7) Associated landscaping."

2. Background and policies (applicable to each of Highgate School's applications)

This is one of the series of planning applications for major building works by Highgate School. These are set out in the Highgate School SPD agreed between Haringey Council, the school and the local community. The application numbers are:

HGY/2023/0313:	Junior Field
HGY/2023/0315:	Richards Centre
HGY/2023/0316:	Far Field
HGY/2023/0317:	Science Block
HGY/2023/0328:	Dyne House
HGY/2023/0331:	Formal Screening Opinion re. EIA
HGY/2023/0338:	Mallinson Sports Centre
HGY/2023/0390:	Science Block listed building application
HGY/2023/0697:	Dyne House listed building application

3. HCAAC's generic overarching objections to each of applications

These are Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee generic overarching objections to each of the applicant's applications listed in the background and policies section above. Each of those applications should be refused for the reasons set out in this section alone.

All applications in this series are expected to follow the planning principles and guidance in the Highgate School SPD. One of the most important of these is that each application must be considered not only on its own merits, but in relation to its effect on the Conservation Area as a whole.

The Highgate Conservation Area is unusual in that it covers more or less the whole of Highgate not just one particular area. It also extends into Camden and developments in the Haringey "section" impact directly on the Camden "section" of the Conservation Area.

Part of the Conservation Area's importance derives from this fact as it allows the development of Highgate, from a late medieval hilltop village to a modern semi-rural enclave within a major conurbation, to be clearly seen and understood by today's residents

and visitors. One factor in this unique survival is the delicate balance between Highgate Village and the school. If the school buildings become too dominant and threaten the frequently lauded leafy semi-rural character of the village this will be destroyed and the Conservation Area will suffer great damage.

It is also the case that when development has taken place in Highgate it has frequently been of notable architectural excellence, another factor in the importance of the Conservation Area. There are not many Conservation Areas which can boast of including work of architects of the standing of both Robert Adam and Lubetkin along with work by Walter Segal and that of the Hornsey Borough Engineer on the notable Gaskell Estate of 1913.

Equally, given the wide extent of all the works proposed it is essential that particular care is taken over tree work and other landscape features. What may be acceptable in a small one-off application can have disastrous consequences for the atmosphere, bio-diversity and ecological status of a wider area.

Other planning documents whose guidance must be followed contain similar policies with the same aim and are as follows:

- NPPF paragraph 95
- Haringey site allocation SA 41; note also *“the school facilities can be enhanced BUT only when simultaneously benefiting the local communities.”*
- Haringey Local Plan
- Highgate Neighbourhood plan policy DH2
- The London Plan (2021)

All these policy documents emphasise that ONLY development proposals which preserve or enhance the character of appearance of Highgate’s Conservation Area, and respect the settings of listed buildings, other heritage assets and Metropolitan Land should be permitted.

HCAAC believes that that proposals for the Science Block are NOT in accordance with these policies and must, therefore must be refused.

4. 'Need' for accommodation not provided

Sub-section 1 of Section B of Policy S3 (Education and childcare facilities) in the London Plan (2021) states that: *“Development proposals for education and childcare facilities should: 1) locate facilities in areas of identified need”*.

Changes in Gross External and Internal Areas of Buildings

Name of Site	Site Area (sqm)	Existing Total Gross External Area (sqm)	Proposed Total Gross External Area (sqm)	Existing Total Gross Internal Area (sqm)	Proposed Total Gross Internal Area (sqm)	Increase in Total Gross External Area (%)	Increase in Total Gross Internal Area (%)
Dyne House & Island	5,035	3,422	7,390	3,019	6,216	116	103
Science	1,500	2,995	3,424	2,728	3,124	14	15
Richards Music Centre	2,011	700	2,025	624	1,704	109	100
Mallinson Sports Centre	13,745	3,353	6,495	3,014	5,873	94	95
The Decant	4,140	0	2,473	0	2,460	-	-
Total areas and changes as percent	27,231	10,471	21,907	9,365	19,457	108	107

Sources of figures

Area measurements: Applicant's table in HGY/2023/0328, file: 01/2/2023 230124 Site Wide Area Schedule

Totals and % increases: Calculated by HCAAC

As can be seen from this table the increase in the gross area (GEA) amounts is:

$(22,807\text{sqm} - 10,471\text{sqm}) = 11,366\text{sqm}$, an increase overall of 108%, that is more than double the areas of Highgate School's existing building included in all these applications. The increase for the Science Block application is 14%.

The Highgate School SPD stated the school's intention to provide two new classrooms within the pre-preparatory school of the same size as the existing classroom (39sqm). Having said that, in its pre-preparatory school application (HGY/2020/2980), the applicant changed its intent to three classrooms of a larger size (46sqm).

The Case Officer for HGY/2020/2980 noted, correctly, that this increased size far exceeded the DfE (Department for Education) minimum requirements for these type of classrooms.

Despite recognising the over-provision, he then went on to rely upon the London Plan (2016) Policy 3.18 (Education Facilities) which stated that "Development proposals which enhance education and skills provision will be supported, including new builds, expansion of existing or change of use to educational purposes."

The Case Officer should never have invoked that policy as it was not designed to permit three proposed classrooms (providing each pupil with 6.9sqm) when the DfE standard for this age group is a minimum of 2sqm per child.

Importantly, that policy has been discarded in the London Plan (2021). So, there can be no basis whatsoever in trying to invoke it in justification for the increased provision proposed in these latest applications.

The Council needs to assess each of the applicant's applications against Policy S3 (Education and childcare facilities) in the London Plan (2021). In doing so, the Council will be bound to conclude that the applicant's proposals are not in furtherance of Policy S3.

Also, sub-section 1 of Section B of Policy S3 (Education and childcare facilities) in the London Plan (2021) states that: "*Development proposals for education and childcare facilities should: 1) locate facilities in areas of identified need*". The applicant has simply failed to identify that the proposed Mallinson Sports Centre is in an area of need.

In addition, the Council is bound to refuse the applications on the basis that the proposed enhancement of space standards and ancillary provision would have a significant adverse impact on heritage assets, that is, listed buildings and the Highgate Conservation Area.

Highgate School needs to aim higher in reducing carbon emissions not just in the areas covered by the current applications, but across its whole estate. Fabric improvements will be required within the next 10 years. We suggest that serious consideration should be given now to forward-planning which could include a district heating system to serve the Dyne House, Island, Bishopswood Road and St. Michael's Primary School sites.

The amount of biodiversity found estate-wide is very disappointing. We would expect from such a low base that a significant and meaningful increase could and should be achieved. The various applications propose wide use of 'green roofs' which Highgate School admits are difficult to maintain and which are, presumably, extremely labour-intensive compared with maintaining grass and other planting including trees at ground level.

Each of the applications, should be refused for the reasons set out in this section 1 alone. Site-specific objections, which also require refusal by the Council, have been submitted in respect of each application and should be read in conjunction with the objections in this section. The site-specific objections to this application are set out in the sections below.

5. Summary of comments

5.1 Impact of Highgate Conservation Area (Camden and Haringey)

1. The end wall of the proposed stair enclosure would not be subservient to the imposing end façade as seen from the south
2. The plant on the roof and the Observatory would be clearly visible from Southwood Lane both the south and the north
3. New elevation to Science Quad is superficial in design terms.
The revised elevations to the Science Quad and south elevation have not been reviewed by the Quality Review Panel.
4. Design elements, elevations and entrances are unresolved
5. The relationship between the existing recessed entrance and staircase block and the adjacent facades would be irretrievably altered
6. Unspecified alterations to the windows are planned. Details of the work to existing windows/new windows at 1:5 or larger are required.



Science block from south



Science block from north



Highgate School Science block from Highgate High Street

5.2 Impact on listed buildings, their setting and significance

1. The setting of the Science Block is quite extraordinary and exceptional being set in the midst of what is the longest group of listed buildings in Highgate.
2. The significance of the buildings, all Grade II listed, is in no doubt.
3. The proposed extension and new elements at roof level would cause harm to the significance and setting of the listed buildings surrounding the application site.

5.2 Impact on neighbours: Almshouses and other residents

1. We are shocked that Highgate School could consider this proposal would be neighbourly to the residents of the Almshouses. On this ground alone, this application must be refused.
2. We deal with the impact on Southwood Lane residents under other applications.

Detailed comments

6. Impact of Highgate Conservation Area (Camden and Haringey)

6.1 The end wall of the proposed stair enclosure would not be subservient to the imposing end façade as seen from the south.

We agree with the QRP's comment that the relationship between any new extension (whether in the Science Quad or at roof level) must be assessed in relation to views from Southwood Lane. We consider that the existing proposals would cause unacceptable harm to Highgate Conservation Area. Not only does the end wall to the proposed extension unbalance the formal symmetry of the Neo-Baroque south façade, the design treatment on elevation and on plan fails to achieve a subservience to that façade. It also blocks views into the Science Quad as the QRP observed. An understanding of the spatial relationships should be maintained. To be clear however we consider neither option as drawn would be acceptable.

It is therefore necessary for a very careful assessment of the impact on the Conservation Area to be made. The neo-Baroque façade is very prominent in views from both the south and the north and we assess that the proposals would cause harm to the Conservation Area as set out below. We note the Applicant has not provided drawings showing as existing and proposed elevations from Southwood Lane. These are necessary in relation to several of the points listed below.

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee regrets that it considers the proposed extension would destroy the integrity of the original design and that reconsideration of circulation within the Science Block could achieve a significant improvement and a more sympathetic design. The end wall of the proposed stair enclosure would not be subservient to the imposing end façade as seen from the south.

We consider that any design needs unreservedly to respect the set piece of the existing three facades together with the expressed function of the existing recessed entrance and staircase block of the early 20th century neo Baroque Science Block. A 'fake' elevation to the Science Quad with its end elevation in yet a different idiom is a poor solution given the significance of the listed buildings surrounding it and therefore the setting of those buildings would be compromised.

We note that the reason for this extension being extended to the southern corner of the existing building is only because of the need for a refuge from the mezzanine floor in the Staff Common Room. No floor plan of the mezzanine level has been provided and we have asked that this should be submitted. Further, if that is the only reason for the extension then the Mezzanine should be removed rather than cause harm to the significance and setting of

the multitude of Listed Buildings surrounding this site. We presume there is no alternative means of escape from the mezzanine in the Staff Common Room at the moment and therefore it cannot be used in any case.

We strongly suggest that the new staircase/lift enclosure should be removed from the proposals entirely and a more sympathetic design should be developed which fully respects the strong architectural attributes of the existing building.

We consider these parameters should apply:

- a) The formal elevations of the existing buildings should be maintained
- b) a clear expression of the existing recessed entrance and staircase block as a separate entity in the existing and proposed composition of elements must be maintained.
- c) designs should ensure a subsidiary relationship between any new extension and the prominent neo-Baroque south elevation end wall which makes such a marked positive intervention in Southwood Lane.
- d) no extension should extend southwards such that it would be visible in views from the Camden side of Highgate High Street, also part of Highgate Conservation Area.

We note that the alignment of the south elevation to the proposed extension is not shown consistently across the submitted drawings. On some drawings that end wall is shown on the same alignment of the neo-Baroque façade and on others at right angles to the proposed new elevation to the Science Quad. The proposed relationship is a crucial aspect of the design. Clarity on what is proposed is required.

6.2 The plant on the roof and the Observatory would be clearly visible from Southwood Lane both from the south and the north

The plant on the roof, the lift lobby and lift shaft and the Observatory would be clearly visible from Southwood Lane both from the south and the north. The existing roof level extensions are regrettable especially those on the Southwood Lane block which have the appearance of Nissen huts. What is proposed is an inchoate jumble of forms which would cause harm to the Conservation Area. Plant at roof level requires railings which are not shown. The Observatory would be clearly visible from the north; and the Mezzanine (top floor) lift lobby and the plant would be seen from the south. The lift lobby and possibly the Observatory would involve artificial lighting at night causing unacceptable light pollution. CGIs would help the Planning Sub Committee appreciate the impact of the plant and observatory in terms of bulk and height on the views we provide above. Drawings showing as existing and proposed elevations from Southwood Lane are required.

6.3 New elevation to Science Quad is superficial in design terms.

We note that the revised elevations to the Science Quad and south elevation have not been reviewed by the Quality Review Panel.

We consider the proposed new elevation to the Science Quad is superficial in design terms. The proposed new elevation to Science Quad is somewhat bizarre. It may look sensible on a drawing to replicate the arrangement of windows on the existing elevation when compared superficially with the 'as existing' elevation. However this is no more than a device to reproduce the existing façade to the Quad but is meaningless in terms of the function of the extension which encloses only a staircase with little of the area at existing floor levels. There are possibly drawbacks in any case with regard to functionality:

- the 'windows' would probably result in sunlight falling on solid areas of the existing west façade thus unacceptably reducing the light levels in the existing rooms
- People on those rooms may have unacceptable views of people on the staircases
- Scaffolding would be required to clean the windows internally

6.4 Design elements, elevations and entrances are unresolved

The relationship between the quite different proposed treatments of the main new façade and the return at the south end appears to us to be an awkward and unresolved relationship internally and externally.

There is visual architectural confusion and potentially actual confusion about the entrance to the Science block, again a point noted by the QRP but not addressed by the architect

6.5 The existing relationship between the existing recessed entrance and staircase block and adjacent facades would be irretrievably altered

We note that the plant and observatory are placed on the roof at the junction of the two wings of the existing Science building which is recessed at 'front' and 'rear' on plan and has a lower roof, expressing its location as the connecting existing recessed entrance and staircase block between the main facades of the two primary facades on either side. Each façade is symmetrically arranged in strong neo-Baroque elevations independent of each other, separated by the existing recessed entrance and staircase block. The proposed plant and observatory, contrary to the carefully articulated existing design, would increase the height of what is currently a subsidiary existing recessed entrance and staircase block making it higher than the two main elements of the building. The proposal therefore destroys the integrity of the existing building. As a result the proposals cause harm to the heritage asset, namely, the Highgate Conservation Area.

6.6 Unspecified alterations to the windows are planned. Details of the work to existing windows/new windows at 1:5 or larger are required.

Unspecified alterations to the windows are planned. Details of the work to existing windows/new windows at 1:5 or larger must be provided to ensure no visual change to the windows on any elevation would be made. The elevations as seen from Southwood Lane, as existing and proposed, are required.

We therefore disagree strongly with the conclusion in Para 8.10 of the Heritage Statement that the proposal would be 'a minor alteration', and that the impact upon the Conservation Area would be 'neutral'.

In summary, taking all the above points into account HCAAC considers these proposals would cause harm to a heritage asset, namely the Highgate Conservation Area.

7. Impact on listed buildings, their setting and significance

7.1 The setting of the Science Block is quite extraordinary and exceptional being set in the midst of what is the longest group of listed buildings in Highgate.

The context of the site as a curtilage building to Highgate School Chapel and Highgate School Old School is arguably only part of setting and curtilage to be considered. Sir John Woolaston's Almshouses are the earliest buildings in Southwood Lane and immediately adjacent to and contiguous with the Science Block. HCAAC considers that the setting is of recognised high visual value within the historic core of Highgate Village and that the proposal would undoubtedly have a detrimental effect on those views.

7.2 The significance of the buildings, all Grade II listed, is in no doubt. These are the listed buildings in the immediate locality:

Boundary Wall to Graveyard of Former Highgate Chapel	Grade II
Highgate School Chapel	Grade II
Highgate School, Old School Building	Grade II
6 Southwood Lane	Grade II
8 Southwood Lane	Grade II
Sir John Woolaston's Almshouses	Grade II
Highgate Tabernacle	Grade II
10 Southwood Lane	Grade II
12 Southwood Lane	Grade II

16 Southwood Lane
18 Southwood Lane
20 Southwood Lane
20A Southwood Lane
22 Southwood Lane
24 - 48 Southwood Lane
Southwood Lodge

Grade II
Grade II
Grade II
Grade II
Grade II
Grade II
Grade II

7.3 The proposed extension and new elements at roof level would cause harm to the significance and setting of the listed buildings surrounding the application site.

The setting of the Science Block is quite extraordinary and exceptional being set in the midst of what is the most extensive group of listed buildings on the Haringey side of Highgate Village.

The view from the north of the Almshouses against which the Science Block was built was always an awkward one, exacerbated by the much more recent roof extensions. This application if built would exaggerate the imbalance of scale and form to the detriment of the setting of the Almshouses.

Any alteration to the Science Block must also be seen in relation to the twenty four listed buildings on the other side of Southwood Lane which are, relative to the Science Block, of a smaller scale. We have mentioned above the lower level of the existing roof to the existing recessed entrance and staircase block where the visual intrusions would be higher even than the adjoining classroom extensions. The proposed new roofscape would exaggerate or heighten the large difference in scale. Key to this evaluation are the views from Highgate High Street and from the north along Southwood Lane. CGIs are needed for Planning Sub Committee members to appreciate the potential harm.

The extension behind the Almshouses into the Garner Quad would have an adverse impact on the setting and amenity of the Grade II listed almshouses.

8. Impact on neighbours: Almshouses and other residents

- 8.1** We are shocked that Highgate School could consider this proposal would be neighbourly to the residents of the Almshouses. The extension into the Garner Quad of the Central Hall with its fixed fins at right angles to the façade to prevent overlooking into the rooms of the Sir John Woolaston Almshouses would adversely impact the amenities set out in DM1 to a quite unacceptable degree. On this ground alone, this application must be refused.
- 8.2** We deal with the impact on Southwood Lane residents under other applications. Daylight measurements in the accommodation facing Southwood Lane is required.

9. Conclusion

HCAAC considers the harm to the heritage assets, that is the Highgate Conservation Area and harm to the setting and significance of all the listed buildings in the immediate vicinity would considerably outweigh any public benefits, if indeed there are any.

We therefore disagree strongly with the conclusion in Para 8.10 of the Heritage Statement that the proposal would be 'a minor alteration', and that the impact upon the Conservation Area would be 'neutral'.

For all the above reasons this application must be refused.

APPENDIX A:

HGY/2023/ 0317: HIGHGATE SCHOOL SCIENCE BLOCK LISTED BUILDINGS RELATING TO CONTEXT, SIGNIFICANCE AND SETTING

BOUNDARY WALL TO GRAVEYARD

- List Entry Number: 1346211
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II

Location: BOUNDARY WALL TO GRAVEYARD OF FORMER HIGHGATE CHAPEL, HIGHGATE HIGH STREET, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

HIGHGATE SCHOOL CHAPEL

- List Entry Number: 1084325
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: HIGHGATE SCHOOL CHAPEL, NORTH ROAD N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

HIGHGATE SCHOOL, OLD SCHOOL BUILDING

- List Entry Number: 1263619
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: HIGHGATE SCHOOL, OLD SCHOOL BUILDING, NORTH ROAD N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

6, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1189354
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 6, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

8, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1079159
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 8, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

SIR JOHN WOOLASTON'S ALMSHOUSES

- List Entry Number: 1189375
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: SIR JOHN WOOLASTON'S ALMSHOUSES, 13-37, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

THE HIGHGATE TABERNACLE

- List Entry Number: 1358876
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: THE HIGHGATE TABERNACLE, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

10, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1079160
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 10, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

12, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1358874
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 12, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

16, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1079161
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 16, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

18, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1358875
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 18, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

20, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1079162
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 20, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

20A, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1079163
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 20A, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

22, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1079164
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 22, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

SOUTHWOOD LODGE

- List Entry Number: 1189059
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: SOUTHWOOD LODGE, 52, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

24-48, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6

- List Entry Number: 1079165
- Heritage Category: Listing
- Grade: II
- Location: 24-48, SOUTHWOOD LANE N6, Non Civil Parish, HIGHGATE, HORNSEY, Haringey, Greater London Authority

The setting of the Science Block is therefore quite extraordinary and exceptional and is set in the midst of what is the longest group of listed buildings in Highgate.