

HCAAC objection to [HGY/2023/0930](#) - 17 Shepherds Close, London N6 5AG

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee would like to object to this application for the same reasons that we objected to the highly similar application [HGY/2022/2219](#).

1. Modest, small scale 1950s, 60 and 70s developments such as Shepherds Close are an architecturally significant feature of Highgate Conservation Area. They are not sufficiently well protected from harmful changes, to the detriment of the character of Highgate CA. An Article 4 directive might be one way to achieve this.
2. The lack of protection for developments of this sort has resulted in haphazard and sometimes major alterations to such developments over the last few years. This section of Shepherds Close was very little altered from its original form as recently as July 2019.

The most recent image from Google Streetview:



3. The planning inspector's report for case [APP/Y5420/D/23/3314877](#), issued only a few days ago on 10th May 2023, overturned the refusal of [HGY/2022/2219](#),

ignoring the architectural significance of Shepherds Close and focusing instead on numerous alterations to front facades. Most of these must be very recent, again pointing to the urgent need for such 50s, 60s and 70s estates to be better protected in Haringey.

4. The planning inspector's report for case [APP/Y5420/D/23/3314877](#) stated that it was retrospective in that the changes proposed in application [HGY/2022/2219](#) had apparently already been made without planning permission. Was any enforcement action taken in respect of this breach?

5. We regret the planning inspector's decision to overturn the refusal of [HGY/2022/2219](#), allowing the cohesive character of Shepherds Close to be further degraded.

6. The only difference between the current application [HGY/2023/0930](#) and the refused application [HGY/2022/2219](#) appears to be to cover the bare brickwork on the front extension with vertical cladding. This is not an unwelcome alteration but does not reduce the harm to the HCA very much.

7. As we stated in our objection to HGY/2022/2219:

*"Shepherds Close was designed by Andrews, Emerson, Sherlock & Keable, as was the Southwood House Estate (1 - 25 Hillside Gardens, 44 - 60 Jacksons Lane and 86 - 112 Southwood Lane) which is on the Local List. Harley Sherlock also designed much admired social housing in Islington. We consider Shepherds Close is an important part of his work and that it is imperative it retains design coherence. If each house were allowed to apply new, different, inconsistent appendages to the straightforward form of these houses, all architectural design merit of Shepherds Close would be lost.*

*It is unacceptable to use changes in building regulations to argue for greater damage to the coherence of these houses.*

*The proposal is not for 'a porch' but for an uncharacteristic extension across*

*the entire front of the house. We remain opposed to this change and do not agree with it being made higher, and in particular with it being higher than the neighbouring lobby. This would look very odd indeed, working against the decreasing levels of frontages as the houses descend the hillside.*

*The applicant may not have considered thinner insulation options because of the greater cost compared with the more standard products. The roofs should not be higher than their uphill neighbours. If a solution cannot be found the application must be refused.”*

8. We agree with the conservation comments about HGY/2022/2219 made by Essex County Council’s Place Services:

*“The proposals would result in the loss of symmetry which it shares with No. 16 Shepherd’s Close; this would have a detrimental visual impact on the cohesive character of Shepherd’s Close. As such it considered that the proposals would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area, contrary to Paragraph 206 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)”*

and with the reasons for refusal given by case officer Mercy Oruwari:

““Reasons for Refusal:

1) The proposed development by reason of the loss of symmetry with No 16 and the resulting imbalance of the terrace as a whole, but especially with No 12, would be detrimental to the character and appearance of this site and on this part of the Highgate Conservation Area. The level of harm would not be outweighed by any public benefit, and the proposal is therefore contrary to the aims of the NPPF 2019, Policies D6 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021), Policies SP11 and SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan (2017), Policies DM1, DM9 and DM12 of the Haringey Development Management DPD (2017) and policy DH2 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017).”

9. In our view the current application is not a minor material amendment to HGY/2021/0830 and so using Section 73 is inappropriate.

10. Highgate CAAC also objected to HGY/2021/0830, on which this application is based, for similar reasons. In our view the then case officer should never have permitted that application. As we said in that objection:

*"We would wish to see 20th century buildings in Haringey respected and appreciated. Hornsey Board and the London Borough of Haringey were responsible for many well designed developments and the legacy in Highgate Conservation Area is significant. Shepherds Close is one such, as recognised in the recent planning appeal Decision for a proposal to build a new house on land at 27 Shepherds Close.*

*The Planning Inspector stated:*

*" Character and appearance*

*4. Shepherds Close (the Close) sits on a south facing slope accessed from Shepherds Hill, close to Highgate station. It is a small 1960's estate with a distinctive and repeated typology of staggered pairs of modest town houses arranged in terraces around three sides of the L-shaped access road. It forms a discrete cluster within the grander development pattern of 19th and early 20th villas and flatted developments on large plots, that largely characterise Shepherd's Hill.*

*6. The HCA Character Appraisal (HCACA) highlights the area's cohesive character. Although 6 - 27 Shepherds Close and the garages are noted in the HCACA as negative contributors, the Close is not particularly visible from Shepherd's Hill. Moreover, there is a high degree of architectural consistency within the Close and a strong and appropriate relationship with the underlying topography.*

*7. An earlier appeal decision noted that the Close contributed to the diverse quality of the HCA. On balance I conclude that the Close has design merits, which, whilst of no heritage value per se, contribute positively to the underlying urban form for the reasons set out above."*

*The Character Appraisal is about to be redrafted and we intend to nominate numerous 1950s and 60s developments of this sort for greater recognition, and certainly we hope that the Close will receive a greater accolade than the Inspector gave it in 7. above.*

*We consider this small estate currently makes a positive contribution to the Highgate Conservation Area but this would only be maintained if there remains 'a high degree of architectural consistency'."*

11. We note that all the applications for successive extensions and alterations to this property: [HGY/2015/0552](#), [HGY/2021/0830](#), [HGY/2022/2219](#) and [HGY/2023/0930](#) were made by the same applicant. The last three in particular have damaged the conservation area and set an unfortunate precedent for neighbours to do likewise. If Haringey, notwithstanding our comments above, were minded to grant planning permission, we would like to see a condition set that no further alterations to this property will be permitted.

For all of the above reasons we object to this application.