

Officer's Report

Application Number	HGY/2023/0861
Type	Householder planning permission
Location	8 Southwood Lawn Road, Hornsey, London, N6 5SF
Proposal	Conversion of loft comprising a rear dormer extension and the insertion of four front rooflights, the erection of ground floor and upper floor extensions and the installation of a new window under the gable of the two storey front bay.
Case Officer	Mercy Oruwari
Valid Date	28/03/2023
Applicant	Mr and Mrs Christian J. Mehl and Lin Qi
Agent	Mr George Omalianakis

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

1. REPRESENTATIONS

A total of 15 representations were received in response to notification and publicity of the application. The following issues were raised by neighbours, local groups:

- Rear extension out of character for this road;
- Rear extensions on the road are not usually full width and usually retain the patio area;
- The rear extension will create a precedent on the road resulting in overdevelopment in the neighbourhood;
- The combination of the extensions would be out of proportion with the size of the plot;
- Road is on a slope therefore the height could exacerbate and negatively impact neighbours on a lower ground level as with No 6;
- Rear extension too bulky and excessive;
- Overshadowing for No 6;
- Light spillage from roof lights;
- Replacement of garden fence with high brick wall will impact the daylight/natural light for No 6;
- Soil pipe would be required for the front bathrooms. This would contravene conservation area and Haringey planning guidance; (Comment: The placing of an external soil pipe on the side of the property would not be significant, with this widely prevalent in respect of neighbouring properties. Such works would not justify withholding consent).
- Loss of biodiversity both from the works and replacement of vegetation with the extension;
- No arboriculture report submitted (Officer comment: Tree application submitted)
- Disturbance during construction;
- Disturbance from works should be minimised;
- If approved height should be reduced on boundary of No 6, roof should slope towards boundary of No 6, brickwork of new wall should match that of the existing building of No 6, party wall issues should be considered.

2. REASONS FOR GRANTING PERMISSION

Southwood Lawn Road runs from the southern end of Highgate Avenue west before turning northeast to join Jackson's Lane just before the junction with Southwood Lane. The subject site is located close to the corner just off Highgate Avenue. This stretch of houses are characterised by mainly two-storey semi-detached properties that are semi-linked. The properties are linked by flat roofed three-storey rear extensions that sit behind joint double storey pitched roofed outriggers which also sit behind joint single storey lean-to projections.

These properties are of the early late Edwardian era with an Arts and Crafts style influence, displaying a variety of details and decorative features. No 8 is part of a pair of houses with prominent front gables, squared ground floor bays and a cantilevered oriel bay at first-floor level. The lower floors are faced soft red brick, terminating with a string course and rendered upper floors. Another feature of these properties is the porches which have attractive timber turned columns supporting the leaded roof. The site is located within Highgate conservation area.

The planning history of the site has been taken into account when coming to this decision:

- HGY/2023/1297 – Application for tree works - No objection.
- 1. Damaged Lilac tree: - Remove the main stem as it is infected with fungus and a danger to everybody close to it as it may fall any time. The 10 year old seedling (young tree) will remain and just pruned so it does not interfere with the neighbours property.
- 2. Magnolia tree - The main tree itself is pruned very well, however, the seedlings and offshoots of the main tree (around 1.5 meters in height) interfere with the public footpath. The seedling is planned to be removed.
- 3. T1 Ilex spp. (Holly) - We apply for this tree to be removed as it is in the way of a planned extension and it takes all light away from the little light we have (north facing garden).
- 4. T2 Malus spp. (crab apple)(tree) and T3 Cotoneaster spp. (Cotoneaster) (shrub) - We apply for these trees/shrubs to be removed as it takes all light away from the little light we have (north facing garden).
- 5. In exchange for the removal of T1-T3 we plan to place a Japanese cherry blossom tree to the left of T9 and in the front garden.
- 6. Pruning T4-T9 by a tree surgeon by 1 - 1.5 meters.

Design & Heritage

The main issue in considering this application is the design of the proposed extensions/ alterations and whether such works would preserve or enhance the character or appearance to this part of Highgate Conservation Area.

Infill ground floor rear extension and ground floor outrigger extension

Policy DH3 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017) requires rear extensions to be subordinate to and complement the original dwelling. The Highgate Conservation Area Management Plan and Design guide (2013) (HCADG) also advises that a rear extension should have a width between half and two thirds of the original width of the house.

The infill ground floor rear extension would be approximately half the width of the original dwelling, adjoining an outrigger. As such this would satisfy advice of Policy DH3 and the HCADG of being subordinate to the original dwelling.

This infill ground floor rear extension on the boundary with No 6 would specifically project out 3.4m and has been amended so as to pitch down to a height of 2.5m on the boundary. The depth of such an extension is not considered to be excessive relative to the size of this plot and would only project 0.4m further than an extension which can be built under 'permitted development'.

It's acknowledged that although there are no other infill extensions on this side of the road, there is a presence of a variety of other ground floor rear extensions and alterations to the backs of the properties, with the ground floors to these properties not openly visible given the presence of intervening fences and vegetation etc.

In relation to the outrigger extension this is for a very modest single-storey rear projection, no deeper than the neighbouring extension built at the rear of No 10. Given this extension is set at a different plane to the infill extension, which is to adjoin an outrigger, these two extensions in terms of resultant scale and how they would be appreciated/ viewed, are considered to be subordinate features.

First-floor outrigger extension

A first-floor outrigger extension with an extended pitched roof and new rear facing window would be constructed. Such an extension would be similar to an extension on the upper level of the outrigger to No 6, approved in 2008. This addition would be faced in materials to match the existing and equally would have fenestration to match, as such therefore being subordinate in scale and serving to assimilate into surrounding context.

Rear dormer

Policy DH5 of the HNP indicates that dormers should respect the existing roof form in terms of design, scale, materials and detail and be restricted to the rear.

The loft space would be converted, which would include the creation of a new rear dormer, 4 front roof-lights and a new window installed within the front gable. The materials for the dormer would be in keeping with the main house and the surrounding area. In regards, to the rear dormer, this type of development is prevalent on this part of Southwood Lawn Road and as such would not be out of place on the host property.

Alteration to the front gable & rooflight

Front gables are characteristic on this street, with these represented in a variety of styles, including some with glazing within the apex of the gable as an original feature and some as later alterations. Given this varied context as well as the fall-back of being able to install a window under Class A of 'permitted development', an intervention of adding an opening to the gable for the purposes of providing light to the loft space is considered acceptable here. As per the amended plans the shape and size of such an opening has changed and is less imposing to that original proposed, allowing the gable to still appear as an in part solid feature, as common to other gables where glazing is present.

The inclusion of rooflights on the front roof slope is a common feature to this road, with the installation of rooflights possible under Class C of 'permitted development'. While a smaller number of rooflights would be preferable, it is noted the rooflights are small in size, with their

siting also in part obscured from vision given the presence of the gable feature to the front roof slope. A condition is being imposed requiring such rooflights to be 'conservation style'.

Impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area

In relation to the extensions and alterations, as discussed above the individual parts are considered acceptable and compatible in relation to the character and appearance of this property and surrounding context.

In the case here, the significance of the conservation area as a heritage asset lies more in the consistency and uniformity of the different groups of terraced houses and the overall appearance of the street-scene. As such the fronts to these properties contribute more to the significance of the conservation area as a heritage asset, while the rears have a more neutral effect. The works to the rear, while introducing new elements, are acceptable in design terms and are subordinate features, having minimal impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, as such leaving it preserved.

Impact on neighbouring amenity

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.

DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' states that development proposals must ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for a development's users and neighbours. Specifically, proposals are required to provide appropriate sunlight, daylight and aspects to adjacent buildings and land, and to provide an appropriate amount of privacy to neighbouring properties to avoid overlooking and loss of privacy and detriment to amenity of neighbouring resident.

The Highgate Neighbourhood Plan Policy DH3 of the HNP also states that proposals should not harm the amenity of adjacent properties.

Impact on No 6

It is noted that the occupiers of No 6 raise specific concerns about the rear extension in terms of impact on their amenity. In respect of the application site and No 6, Officers acknowledge that there is a difference in levels between these properties in question, with the application property sitting higher than No 6.

As per photos provided, it is noted that there is a window on the rear elevation of No 6 closest to the rear boundary, with large patio doors beyond, serving this same room.

At immediate right angle to these patio doors and window is vegetation of the same height as these openings, behind which is a fence. The presence of such screening currently restricts outlook and conditions of light, but also understandably serves to provide privacy to the occupiers of the properties in question.

The height of the proposed extension as revised will pitch down to a height of 2.5m on the boundary with No 6. Such an extension would have a lower height on the shared boundary with No 6, compared to a typical 3m deep extension which can be built under 'permitted development' (namely which could be built from the ground level of the application property).

When measured from the ground level of No 6, as per the amended plans, the side wall of the extension would be approximately 3.1m, pitching up to a height of 3.6m further into the side, almost 1m in from the shared boundary.

In relation to conditions of outlook and light, such an extension as modified will not have an adverse impact. The increase in height over and above the current vegetation/ fence is not significant. The proposed extension would not obstruct a 45 degree angle drawn from the top of the extension on the boundary.

In terms of understanding light, it is also important to bear in mind that daylight is dependent on how much clear sky is visible from a particular window/ specific reference. The visible surface of the extension will not lead to any significant amount of visible sky lost as seen from the neighbouring patio doors, with this space/ room in question receiving light from multiple windows.

The proposed extension would not breach the tests set out in BRE "Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight – A Guide to Good Practice" (2nd Edition, Littlefair, 2011), known as "The BRE Guide".

The overall height and depth of the extension would also not be visually overbearing, nor would it lead to an unacceptable tunnelling/ overshadowing effect given the factors discussed above and also given the reasonable width of the lightwell space to the rear of No 6.

Overall, despite the factors of differences in levels between the properties in question, and being mindful of the measures taken to reduce the height of the extension on the boundary, the living conditions of the adjacent neighbouring occupiers in terms of outlook and light will not be adversely affected.

Impact on No 10

In relation to No 10 the extension would sit comfortably in relation to the current extension to the rear of this property, overall meaning that there would be no harm to the amenity of the occupiers of this property.

Other concerns

In respect of the concerns about disturbance during the construction period this would be temporary in nature and cannot constitute a reason to refuse or withhold consent, with such concerns mitigated and controlled by other areas of legislation, i.e. the Control of Pollution Act governing issues such as working hours and noise levels.

In relation to the concerns regarding the potential impact of the extensions on biodiversity and on trees, it is pointed out that a separate application for works to trees has been assessed by a Council Arboricultural Officer, as set out in the planning history above. As

also explained above an acceptable area of the garden is retained with this property, ensuring space for soft landscaping etc.

In terms of the concerns about light pollution, it is accepted that there are two rooflights proposed on the side roof slope facing No 6. Light spillage from such glazing would not be significant in planning terms, bearing in mind this dwelling already exists as opposed to being new, with this suburban environment also not being intrinsically dark. The arrangement and orientation of such glazing would not materially alter light levels by comparison to the existing situation or the fall-back position of a 3m extension which could be built under 'permitted development rights'.

In relation to the concerns about overdevelopment, an acceptable garden space would be retained and the extensions are not viewed to be cramped or dominant in relation to such a plot.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of design, heritage and neighbouring amenity and complies with relevant planning policies.

Specifically, the proposal is in general accordance with Policies DM1, DM9, and DM12 of the Development Management, Development Plan Document 2017, and policies SP11 and SP12 of Haringey's Local Plan Strategic Policies 2017. The proposed development also accords with the relevant policies of the London Plan 2021 and the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan.

All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out above.

GRANT PERMISSION subject to conditions

Conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun no later than three years from the date of this decision notice, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and drawings listed in this decision notice, other than where those details are altered pursuant to the conditions of this planning permission.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 The external materials to be used for the proposed development shall match in colour, size, shape and texture those of the existing building unless otherwise stated within the approved plans.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance for the proposed development, to safeguard the visual amenity of neighbouring properties and the appearance of the locality consistent with Policy D3 of the London Plan 2021, Policy SP11 of the Haringey Local Plan 2017 and Policy DM1 of The Development Management DPD 2017.

4. Notwithstanding the detail referred to within the application the front rooflight proposed shall be a conservation type rooflight and sit flush with the roof line and shall be retained in perpetuity unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the integrity of the building and the visual amenities of the conservation area consistent with Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021, Policy SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan 2017 and Policy DM9 of The Development Management DPD 2017.

Informatives:

- **INFORMATIVE: Hours of Construction Work**
The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-
8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday
8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday
and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- **INFORMATIVE: Party Wall Act**
The applicant's attention is drawn to the Party Wall Act 1996 which sets out requirements for notice to be given to relevant adjoining owners of intended works on a shared wall, on a boundary or if excavations are to be carried out near a neighbouring building.
- **INFORMATIVE: Land Ownership**

The applicant is advised that this planning permission does not convey the right to enter onto or build on land not within his ownership.