

HCAAC objection to application [HGY/2023/1327](#) for 17 Denewood Road, N6 4AQ

Highgate CAAC agrees with the comments made by Arlene Polonsky for the Highgate Society in her letter of objection to this application.

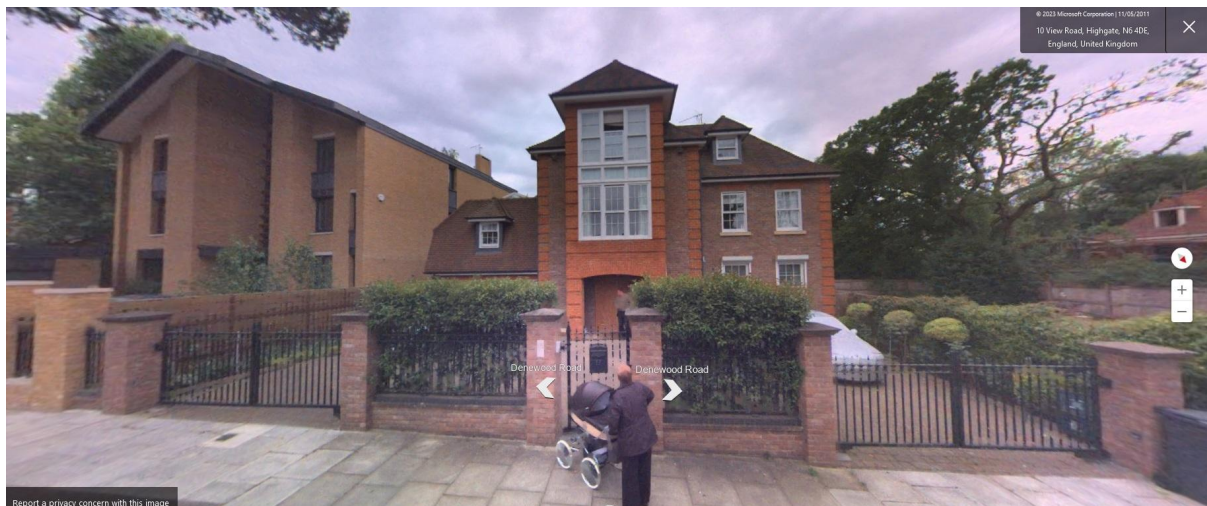
It is not possible to get a clear view of the house currently due to the hoardings around the property, and the house has been blanked out in every Google Streetview image available online. However, it is clear that “IMAGE 2: PHOTO OF FRONT” in the D&A for this application is not consistent with the appearance of the house taken from Bing maps “Streetside”:

2.0 - THE EXISTING



IMAGE 2: PHOTO OF FRONT

Image from Bing Streetside (2011?)



The image above from the D&A is also not consistent with application drawing “BDH222(PL)024.1_01-Existing Street Elevation.pdf”.

The frontage of 17 Denewood Road has obviously been altered since the Bing “Streetside” image was recorded. Two double gates and a pedestrian gate and all the greenery that was previously to the front and sides have been removed. The paving may also be different.

As Arlene Polonsky says in her letter, it is not clear that planning permission was sought or given for these changes.

The D&A image above also shows a house to the right of No 17 which does not exist in reality. The most recent planning permissions for No 19 date from 2006/7. Planning permissions [HGY/2007/0607](#) and [HGY/2007/0608](#) concerned building a block of flats but the building in the above image appears to be a house. Does the image from the D&A show a house which was demolished years ago? Are those permissions still valid? Three objections to tree application [CON/2020/0235](#) and the report from Haringey’s own tree officer asked about the status of No 19 as “a development site”, but no answer was forthcoming. No 15 also looks different.

Also, is the boundary between Nos 17 and 19 as shown by the fence on the right in the D&A image closer to the flank wall/corner of No 17 than in the Bing image?

The application documents are, at best, confusing and inconsistent and need to be clarified.

Photos of No 17 taken on 13th July 2023 show the top of the pier caps protruding through the hoarding. They may be consistent with the photo from Bing Streetside, above.







The application suggests raising the height of these piers and filling in most of the gaps with two sets of solid, horizontally banded, 4 panel, black bifold gates.

The piers are already very high and raising them and filling most of the frontage with solid gates will be out of keeping with the character of the street and this part of the Highgate Conservation Area, as described, for instance in the HCA Character Appraisal:

Denewood Road

10.4.28 Denewood Road runs between Broadlands Road and Sheldon Avenue. Part of the road forms a through route from Crouch End to Hampstead via View Road and Stormont Road. The road contains two sections each with a distinct character, a busier southern section between the junctions with Broadlands Road and Stormont Road and a quieter northern section, which is a private road, between the junctions with Stormont Road and Sheldon Avenue, leading towards the Golf course. The southern section of the road dates from the 1890s.



Goldsmiths Cottage, Denewood Road

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Southern section (between the junctions with Broadlands Road and Stormont Road)

10.4.29 There is a view towards open land at the northern end of the road, where it leads to Highgate Golf Club. There is also a large number and variety of mature trees, many dating from the time when the road was originally laid out, both in the public and the private realm. The range of different architectural styles reflecting the period when houses along the street were built is notable, in particular nos. 2 and 2a, the flat roofed nos. 12 - 14 and no. 23. There are spacious gaps between many of the houses which provide glimpses of trees behind. Deep front gardens provide off street parking resulting in a streetscape not overly dominated by parked cars. Goldsmith's Cottage, which is locally listed, has recently been subject to unsympathetic alterations which have been to the detriment of the character of the road.



25 Denewood Road



A Denewood Road

The proposals are also very clearly against policy DH6 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan:

Policy DH6: Front Boundaries

Original boundary walls, gate piers or railings should be retained unless their removal is necessary due to the condition of a structure, or replacement provision is proposed which would enhance the character of the area. In areas where matching and similar boundary walls form a recognizable part of the streetscape, for example clinker walls in Cromwell Avenue, replacements should be reinstated to match the originals.

New boundary walls requiring planning permission, and gated developments will not be permitted if they:

- I. Have a detrimental impact on the open character of the street-scene; or*
- II. Result in the unnecessary removal of mature hedges or natural features which have a positive impact on the character of the local area;*
- III. Would result in a loss of visual permeability or public accessibility where this contributes to local character.*

Further, placing artificial shrubs behind those small gaps which remain is completely unacceptable and out of keeping with the “green and leafy” character of HCA. This element of the plans must be refused.

The proposed “planting” beds shown in “BDH222(PL)040_03-Existing and Proposed Front Garden Plans.pdf” are far smaller than those previously existing. The greenery evident in the earlier Bing image should be reinstated or added to.

Highgate CAAC greatly regrets the fashion for more and higher solid walls and gates and the loss of greenery and the traditionally open aspect of these streets with views beyond, and believes these proposals will further harm the conservation area.

The argument that the piers need to be higher to increase conformity with no 15 is clearly specious. No 15 is completely different in design and the road slopes downwards towards No 17. There is no reason why the two boundaries should look the same, and the fences, gates and piers in front of No 17 should reflect the slope of the street down from No 15.

Neither does No 15 have two solid bifolding vehicle entrances. The new gates will look nothing like No 15 and, particularly when being opened or closed, will look very jarring set in front of an Arts and Crafts style house.

Raising the height of already high piers will not “create an improved streetscape view”, as claimed in the application. The piers are already above head height and should not be made higher.



Also, more information is needed about the “new pier caps” mentioned on the drawings. Which existing pier caps will be replaced?

Security

Another reason cited for raising the height of the piers and introducing solid gates is security. This is not persuasive. The police advise that the most effective boundary treatment to deter criminals is less stable fencing or trellis and/or spikey plants: roses, berberis etc. Criminals find it much harder to scale such obstructions.

In addition, solid barriers allow criminals to lie in wait unseen, and reduce passive surveillance from the street and neighbouring properties, allowing criminals to go about their business undetected. The applicant might be far more secure if they retained the permeable fencing and planted roses or similarly spiny plants behind.

Also, solid high walls at the pavement edge make the road far less welcoming for pedestrians, increasing fear of crime, and crime itself in the surrounding area if roads become less well used as a result.

New doors and windows, more railings

We also think the addition of further black railings around the light well already given permission, a new black garage door and new front door are regrettable.

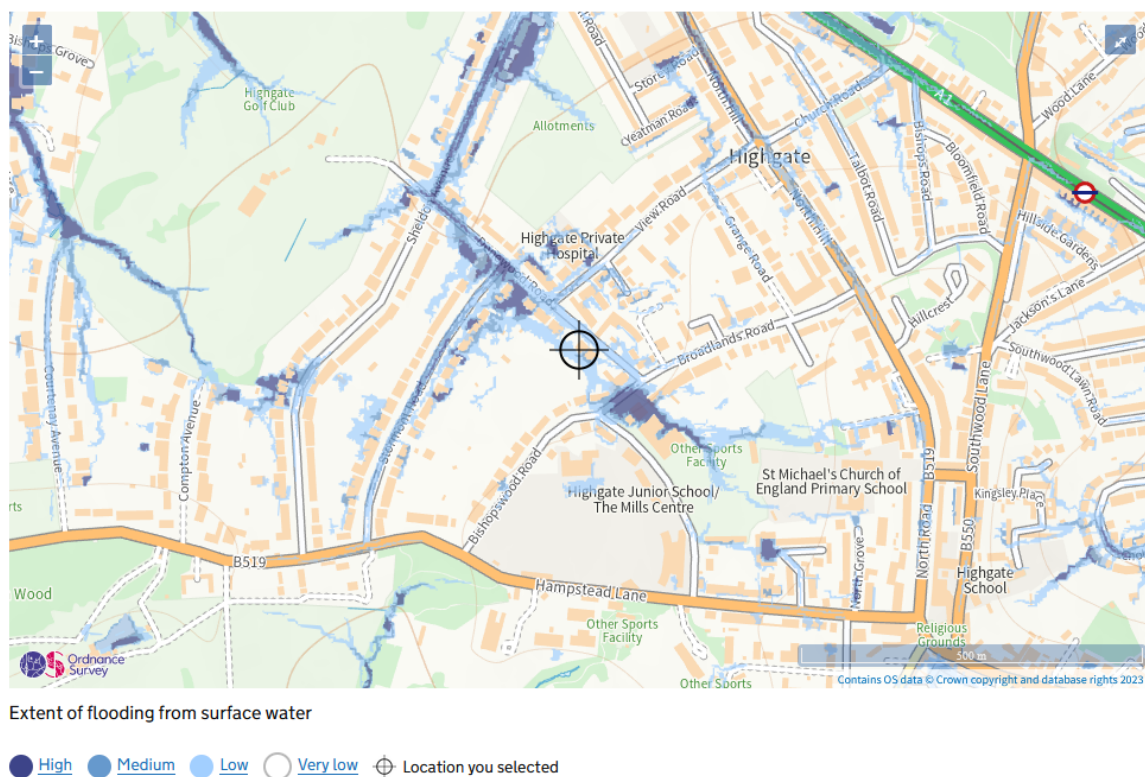
Replacement windows should be exactly like for like, including in terms of materials and the way they open, not merely in the “same style” as the originals.

Detailed drawings of the replacement windows and doors should be provided.

Sustainability

The large area of paving should be SUDs, and ideally reduced, with the former degree of planting reinstated or increased to improve sustainability performance.

While No 17 is only at medium risk of surface water flooding, areas closeby in both directions are at high risk. Making surfaces more permeable should be a priority.



Clearly replacing real plants with artificial ones is also not in keeping with Haringey’s policy vis-a-vis climate change, biodiversity etc.

We also object to the proposal for a downlighter on the streetside of each pier. This will waste energy at a time of concern about climate change, cause light pollution for neighbours, birds, bats etc and be out of keeping with the traditionally rural feel of this part of the HCA.

Summary

Overall we believe the proposal for far higher, solid black bifolding barriers, a few small sections of railings with artificial plants behind and increased light pollution is dismal, out of keeping with the character of the Highgate Conservation Area, bad for nature and sustainability and for the security of both this property and the wider area.

The application also lacks detail. Some documents are inconsistent with each other and with the current layout of Nos 17 and 19 in reality.

We very strongly believe these proposals should be refused.

Addendum

One oak tree visible from the road appears to be in a very poor state. Is this the tree covered by TPO/2014/1858 and by 5 day notice CON/2021/0644? Perhaps tree officers and/or enforcement should check that it is being properly protected from building works and other damage.

