

HGY/2023/0338: Mallinson Centre: objection re. Ecology and biodiversity

This objection should be read in conjunction with other HCAAC objections sent in February 2026 along with our earlier comments and objections to this application. An annex of photos from a recent visit to the Mallinson is attached to this objection.

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee strongly objects to this application. The plans for the Mallinson site pose serious threats to biodiversity and ecosystems both on site and in the neighbourhood.

1. HCAAC considers approval of HGY/2023/0331 for the EIA on 29 April 2024 should not have been granted. Two reports containing expert detailed analyses were submitted in relation to the Mallinson proposals which were extremely pertinent to that decision but were ignored, namely:

- The objection to HGY/2023/0338 from The Ecology Co-Op, dated 4 July 2023 (loaded 12 July 2023), was available for almost a year before Haringey made its decision on HGY/2023/0331.
- The objection from Nick Haycock dated 15 June 2023 (loaded 19 June 2023) was also available for almost a year before Haringey made its decision on HGY/2023/0331.

In the light of these reports not having been considered in relation to the EIA application, Haringey must now review these two documents and our objection regarding risk to life together with this objection and the recent further comments from Nick Haycock, to provide a proper evaluation against EIA requirements.

The detailed analysis submitted by The Ecology Co-Op, dated 4 July 2023, has now been posted on Haringey's webpage for HGY/2023/0338, dated 05/2/2026, titled "Objection from The Ecology Co-Op". It identified a range of issues and deficiencies in the proposals. Every point in it remains valid and needs to be addressed in full and independently checked.

2. The Mallinson Site cannot be taken in isolation. It is part of important green corridors from Hampstead Heath through Highgate to Highgate and Queen's Wood, Waterlow Park and so-on (see Highgate Neighbourhood Plan and more recent work on Ecological Corridors by the HNF, for instance). It is also an integral part of the hydrology of the surrounding area. The interconnections between trees, various habitats, the hydrology, neighbouring gardens and the Heath should be taken far more seriously than in this planning application.

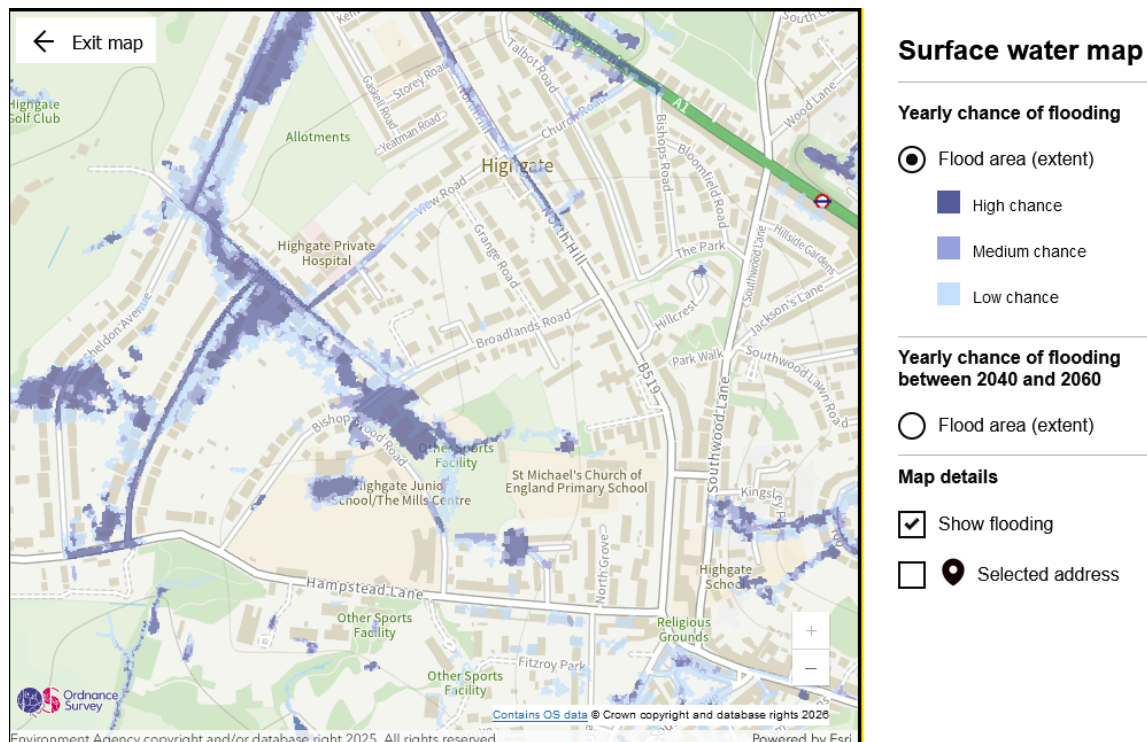
Damage or loss to integral parts of such ecological corridors cannot be made up for by developers providing cash for more greenery somewhere else in the borough. Damage to or destruction of one part of an ecological corridor damages the whole.

3. The Mallinson site contains important Metropolitan Open Land with long established biodiversity including numerous significant mature trees. These include two veteran oaks and a magnificent sycamore, two rows of mature limes, and a "hedge" comprised of a variety of mature trees (see attached photos).

As MOL this site is part of a community asset and heritage, not just private land to be exploited. There are no biodiversity benefits to speak of for the wider community in these plans, only losses of long established biodiversity which cannot just be substituted for by new planting. This is particularly the case where the value of the current flora and fauna is in part due to it being part of Highgate's ecological corridors, as noted above.

(A separate HCAAC objection considers MOL in more detail.)

4. It is clear from the Environment Agency website that the area around the Mallinson is extremely prone to flooding now, and will be more at risk in future given the probably effects of climate change (as is the area descending eastwards behind Dyne House, shown on the RHS of the map below):



The impact of the proposed development on trees, other greenery and wildlife as a result of altered surface water distribution should take the possible effects of climate change fully into account, for instance in line with Haringey Council's emerging policy. The new Local Plan includes Policy CR4: Managing and reducing flood risk:

21.61 UK Climate Change Allowances are Guidelines produced by the Environment Agency.

21.62: Proposals should always apply the upper end of climate change scenarios.

21.63:Proposals must be designed to be safe for a 1% exceedance probability (AEP) including an upper end climate change allowance...no net loss of flood storage. Proposals should set out a full list of vulnerability classifications.

21.70: Proposals should refer to the Haringey SFRA.

In the Edenvale Young report ("*MSC - Edenvale Young - Flood Risk Assessment (Mar 2025)*", dated 09/1/2026 on Haringey's website), Fig 5.16 on page 47 shows *Pre-development and Post-development scenario maximum depth difference maps for 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change design event.*

This shows that much of the area around the proposed attenuation basin would be drier by between 10mm and 250mm. This not surprising due to the combined effect of the basin and diversion of some water into the existing ditch running behind the Junior Field.

However, several areas become wetter: on the boundary with the rear gardens of houses in Broadlands Road; to the west extending into the row of trees behind the Mallinson, and to the east extending into the copse; and a very sizable area to the south of the basin extending into another area of trees to the west of the Junior Field.

It is therefore evident that some areas of the Orchard down to the line of the ancient hedge and oak trees would be drier with the result that those trees and the hedge would be deprived of water and biodiversity would also be adversely impacted, while other areas would become wetter, and thus would also be adversely impacted.

Fig 5.16 shows the change +/- in flood levels in the event of a 100 year flood +40% climate change event as a result of the proposals. Anything coloured pink to brown is worse and anything in green is better. The colours within those bands are not the outcomes but the amount by which the flooding would be worse or better. Some of these areas are already waterlogged through some/all of the year and even greater waterlogging would threaten existing flora and fauna.

Both the construction and the proposed attenuation tank would threaten major tree roots either from flooding, loss of rainwater or compaction during building work in this area. It would appear that the drainage and hydrology have not been taken into account in any reliable way.

(See also the new Haycock Environmental Consultants' *"Review of BIA, FRA, SUDs and implications of the proposed development for the adjoining owners in Broadlands Road"*, listed on Haringey's website as "MSC-Highgate_School_Hydrology_Review-HEC18022026 v3", dated 23/2/2026, for further comments on the hydrological implications of the proposals.)

5. There are at least two active springs which contribute to the special ecosystems and a small stream on site. The effects of interfering with these have not been taken into account.
6. The existing fake turf area immediately to the east already reduces biodiversity on site.
7. The site has already lost a number of key trees, including from the row of limes on Bishopswood Rd - which are also a significant amenity and part of local natural heritage and appearance of the CA. Further attrition of these limes in the plans would exacerbate biodiversity and amenity loss to the CA.
8. The proposals contradict and clash with the school's stated environmental, biodiversity and eco friendly objectives, its teaching curriculum and setting an example for young people.

Conclusion

Given the enormous threats of climate change and loss of biodiversity now and to future generations these plans completely fail to give them the utmost priority they deserve.

We believe there is ample evidence to suggest these proposals should be refused.

Annex - Photos taken on joint visit by HCAAC, Highgate Society and Haringey Tree Officer to Mallinson area - 3rd Feb 2026

The area behind the Mallinson building features some very significant large trees including two veteran oaks and a fine veteran sycamore:



Behind the Mallinson Building - The Proposed Attenuation Basin

The area proposed for a large below ground level attenuation basin is surrounded by rows of large trees, hedges and a dense copse. It is waterlogged, apparently even in summer, so much so that the children are apparently not allowed to use this area. Large earth works and tree/shrub removal in this area is likely to damage remaining trees and displace the wildlife which currently lives here. Note the compacted soil around many of the significant trees. Major building works will not improve this.





Compacted soil around tree roots



Waterlogged ground.



The copse - springs

Between the waterlogged area earmarked for a large below ground level amphitheatre and the playing field bordering Grade 1 listed Modernist Highpoint 1 & 2 there is a dense copse which features numerous springs. This area also houses Highgate School's "Forest School", disused sports equipment and other detritus.





Springs

In one corner of the copse below the springline there is a small stand of willow trees. Haringey's Tree Officer observed that the waterlogged area would be improved by planting more willow trees.



Evidence of poorly maintained drainage?



Larger versions of these photos can be found at
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/200394536@N04/albums/72177720331825372/>

Key points

- the plans interfere with the hydrology so as to threaten the roots of many important trees with either flooding or lack of (rain) water.
- root protection areas are not clearly identified in relation to the construction
- removal of trees and construction destroys or disrupts the connections of old ecosystems and biodiversity which cannot be replaced. This includes green corridors for wildlife and flora, and water systems involving neighbouring gardens and the Heath.
- the wet ground is what the plans are supposed to fix. BUT serious human safety issues and threat to many significant trees are unaddressed consequences of ill thought out proposals.
- two rows of limes at road boundaries of the site are also very important but not in the photos. Some are under threat of removal.