

Date of meeting: 08/07/2022

Thank you for attending the recent pre-application planning advice meeting with Haringey Council to discuss your proposal. We hope you found the meeting useful. The points discussed at the meeting are outlined below, along with feedback from the Planning Service about aspects that were good, could be improved, or are unlikely to obtain planning permission as currently proposed. We hope this summary will provide you with useful guidance about the steps you will need to take before submitting an application for planning permission.

If you have any questions about the feedback we have provided, please contact the named officer who will be able to clarify the advice. If you require further advice, our website can provide you with some information about the things we take into consideration when determining a planning application, or you can book a second pre-application advice meeting.

Site Address: 63 Sheldon Avenue, N6 4NH

Proposal: Demolition of existing house and erection of a new dwelling with a basement.

Attendees:

- Nigel Young – StudioY2
- Hamid Ipakchi – Applicant
- Matthew Gunning – Team Leader
- James Mead – Senior Planning Officer
- Elisabetta Tonazzi – Principal Conservation Officer

1. SITE DESCRIPTION & PROPOSAL

- 1.1. The site, subject of this pre-application enquiry, is occupied by a two storey, detached dwellinghouse, together with a swimming pool and garden space to the rear. This property sits on the western side of Sheldon Avenue in a line of detached houses along this route. The setting of the site is generally residential in character, with large detached properties evident to the south. To the north are two further detached residential properties, however beyond these are blocks of flats. There is also a block of flats present directly opposite the site. Green space associated with Highgate Golf Club is situated to the rear of the plot.

- 1.2. The property is located to the western side of the Highgate Conservation Area (CA) and within the boundary of this heritage asset. The northern section of Sheldon Avenue was not developed until the 1950s, and therefore it is evident that the buildings in this area are generally not of heritage interest. The subject property reflects this and is considered to be a building that makes a neutral contribution to the character of the CA. The Highgate CA Character Appraisal (2013) provides commentary on this part of Sheldon Avenue and explains that this area has been subject to the demolition and then the rebuilding of significantly sized replacement dwellings. In addition, there has been an increase in the creation of large basements. The CA Appraisal concludes that overall these works have detracted from the open character of the streetscape in Sheldon Avenue.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- OLD/1961/0900: Plunge pool at the rear. Granted.
- OLD/1960/0867, OLD/1957/0579, OLD/1957/0578 and OLD/1957/0577: Detached house integral garage. Granted.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- National Planning Policy Framework (2021);
- London Plan (2021);
- Haringey's Local Plan Strategic Policies (2017);
- Development Management DPD (2017); and
- Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017).

4. COMMENTS ON PRE-APPLICATION SCHEME

- 4.1. In response to the plans/information submitted and having regard to the discussions at the pre-application meeting, the following advice and assessment is provided by officers.
- 4.2. The main planning considerations for such a proposal would be:
- Design, Appearance & Heritage;
 - Basement Development;
 - Standard of Accommodation;
 - Neighbour Amenity;
 - Energy & Climate Change;
 - Transport; and
 - Other Considerations.

Design, Appearance & Heritage

Demolition of Existing Building

- 4.3. The existing building appears to have been constructed in the late 1950s and is not considered to be of any notable historic or heritage interest. The property has a crown roof form, with one flat roof dormer present on both the southern side and rear roof slopes. There is a two storey forward projecting gable-end present on the front elevation, whereas to the rear is a flat roof single storey element. The main building is of red brick construction and the roof is primarily covered in tiling. A building of this design and appearance is not considered to be of significant architectural merit. In addition, there is a pool outbuilding to the rear, which is again clearly of no historic or architectural value. Given the lack of any heritage or architectural interest, it is considered that the existing property does not make a substantial positive contribution to the character or historic significance of the CA.
- 4.4. The lack of any heritage or architectural interest associated with the existing buildings means that the demolition and re-build could be acceptable. However, the replacement dwelling must be sensitively designed, so to ensure that the character and historic significance of the CA is preserved or enhanced, in line with London Plan Policy HC1, Local Plan Policy SP12 and DPD Policy DM9. Furthermore, Highgate Neighbourhood Plan Policy DH1 outlines that any proposed replacement, following demolition, should make a positive contribution to the CA. The supporting text to this policy also explains that new development should not make less of a contribution to the CA than that which it replaces. Therefore, clearly the acceptability of the intended demolition is reliant on the design quality of the proposed replacement dwelling.

Replacement Dwelling

- 4.5. The proposed replacement dwelling would have a similar width across the front, when compared with the existing property. However, the height of the new dwelling would be increased with a large crown roof added above two storey flat roof built form. This crown roof would incorporate front and rear dormers, providing additional floor space in the roof and creating three levels of accommodation. The crown roof would be of notable depth extending a significant distance towards the rear, as evident on the side elevation drawing. Further to the rear both single and two storey flat roof projections would be constructed.

- 4.6. It appears that the proposed increased height of the replacement dwelling would result in the ridgeline of the new building extending slightly above that of the two neighbours. This visual relationship is considered unsatisfactory, as the scale of the replacement dwelling would fail to respect its immediate setting. The large crown roof would be located towards the front of the replacement dwelling meaning that the height increase would be clearly evident when viewing the site from the street. Due to this increased bulk and scale, it is considered that the replacement dwelling would appear dominant and unduly large in the street scene. The significant depth of the proposed crown roof would also be visible when viewing the side elevations of the replacement dwelling from Sheldon Avenue. In such views, the crown roof would appear as a bulky and excessively scaled feature, again increasing the dominance of the proposed building in the street scene.
- 4.7. The proposed design of the replacement dwelling has clearly sought to replicate elements of the houses present to the south on Sheldon Avenue, as several of these properties are of bulky nature, incorporating crown roofs. It is officer's general view that the excessive scale and modernistic design approach of these houses to the south has detracted from the open character of the area, as noted in the CA Appraisal. Noting this, it is not considered that the proportions or design of these properties to the south should be reproduced in the future. Consequently, this attempt to imitate the appearance of the houses to the south would not be supported, as it would continue the gradual erosion of the appearance of this part of the CA.
- 4.8. It is also worth highlighting that generally speaking the larger houses to the south are sited in reasonably wide sites, whereas the subject property sits in a narrower plot. The houses to the northern end of this line of properties already appear slightly cramped in the street scene, with minimal separation distance present between flank walls. It is considered that the increased scale of the proposed dwelling would further exacerbate the cramped nature of this part of Sheldon Avenue, with even less visual spacing present between neighbouring dwellings. This outcome further emphasises officer's view that the proposed replacement building is of excessive size for this site.
- 4.9. In terms of the specific design and form of the replacement dwelling, the large crown roof, is considered to be a modernistic design solution, which would not be sensitive to this CA location. This roof would appear bulky, unduly prominent and conspicuous in the street scene. The examples of properties with large crown roofs to the south are acknowledged. However, this design should not be replicated, as it has already been noted that these houses make a negative visual contribution to the character of the CA.

Landscaping

- 4.10. Currently the front of the site incorporates notable soft landscaping, vegetation and small trees. These landscape features contribute to the overall green character of Sheldon Avenue. This pre-application submission has not outlined any landscaping proposals for the front of the site. Officers would wish to see at least the equivalent soft landscaping retained or provided in any future development. This should be clearly demonstrated on plans supplied as part of any future planning application.

Design Conclusion

- 4.11. Overall, the proposed replacement dwelling would be of excessive scale and proportions. Therefore, the new building would appear as a bulky and dominant addition to the street scene and the wider CA. The large crown roof is not considered to be an appropriately traditional design solution, and consequently would not be suitable in this CA location. There would be an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the site and the street scene. The proposed replacement dwelling would not make a positive contribution to the CA. Instead, the new building, when compared with the existing property, would detract from the character and appearance of the CA. Therefore, the proposed demolition is not justified. The historic significance and special interest of the CA would not be preserved. Therefore, the proposed scheme would be contrary to London Plan Policies D3, D6 and HC1, Local Plan Policies SP11 and SP12, DPD Policies DM1 and DM9 and Highgate Neighbourhood Plan Policies DH1 and DH2.
- 4.12. The applicant is advised to re-consider the design of the proposed scheme. A more simple, subtle and traditionally designed replacement dwelling could be acceptable in this location. The scale of any proposed replacement dwelling should also be reduced, so that the new building does not appear unduly dominant in this street scene.

Basement Development

- 4.13. As part of the proposed replacement dwelling, it is proposed to construct a large basement. This would extend from the front of the new building, past the rear building line of the replacement dwelling and into the rear garden. The existing swimming pool would be replaced to allow construction of the basement.
- 4.14. The Council has a specific policy on Basement Development, DPD policy DM18, which requires proposals to demonstrate that they will not adversely affect the structural stability of neighbouring buildings; do not increase flood risk to nearby properties; avoids harm to the established character of the surrounding area and to not adversely impact the amenity of adjoining properties or the local natural and historic environment. Policy DM24 ('Managing and reducing flood risk') also outlines the requirement of new development to manage and reduce surface water runoff.

- 4.15. Policy DH7 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017) is equally relevant and requires impact assessments to be submitted with basement development where there is evidence that there may be problems with drainage or flooding and to show there are no adverse effect from such development on the structural stability of adjacent properties or associated potential damage. It specifically talks about there being no possibility of irreparable damage to the local water regime both in terms of ground water diversion and surface water flooding and that construction should not be allowed where there is evidence that damage to neighbouring properties would exceed Burland Scale 1.
- 4.16. While noting the application site has a current pool and there is basement development in the immediate area, it is also pointed out that Highgate has complex hydrogeological conditions. The site here is understood to lie within the surface water catchments of an unnamed tributary of the Dollis Brook, a tributary of the River Brent, part of which is visible within the adjoining Highgate Golf Course. It is equally noted that historical maps for the area show an unnamed stream following what is Sheldon Avenue.
- 4.17. As such within an area where streams are known to have once flowed, it is outlined that basement development may have the potential to divert and displace groundwater, meaning a need for early and careful consideration and mitigation of such impacts. As such in the case here a detailed Basement Impact Assessment (BIA) should be prepared in support of such an application, prepared in line with Camden's guidance noted in CPG4 introduced in early 2011 (Camden geological, hydrogeological and hydrological study).

Standard of Accommodation

- 4.18. The proposed scheme would clearly meet the space standards and private outdoor space requirements of London Plan Policy D6. Furthermore, all the habitable rooms within the replacement dwelling would be served by at least one window or opening. This would ensure that good levels of light would reach these spaces and acceptable outlook would be achieved for future occupiers. Any future proposal should again accord with the requirements of London Plan Policy D6, so to provide satisfactory living conditions. In addition, a future scheme should demonstrate that the proposed replacement dwelling would comply with Building Regulation requirement M4(2) 'accessible and adaptable dwellings', in line with London Plan Policy D7.

Neighbour Amenity

- 4.19. To the north of the site is 65 Sheldon Avenue. This neighbouring property does not appear to have any southern flank elevation windows and the proposed dwelling would not sit notably forward of the front building line of No.65. Therefore, loss of light, overshadowing or harm to outlook impacting the front or side of No.65 is not a significant concern. The proposed replacement dwelling would project beyond the rear building line of No.65, however the first floor of the new building would be set-in from the boundary. The setting in of the first floor from the boundary would ensure that undue loss of light or a material restriction of outlook would not impact No.65. Any future scheme should demonstrate that the first floor of a replacement dwelling would not breach the 45 degree line taken from the nearest first floor windows of No.65. This would ensure the amount of light reaching this neighbouring property is protected. Increased overlooking of No.65 does not appear to be a significant issue raised by the proposal.
- 4.20. 61 Sheldon Avenue is located to the south of the site. This property does have several flank elevation windows on the northern side. It appears that these openings receive limited light and they also already have restricted outlook. It is considered unlikely that there would be material harm to the light reaching these openings or the outlook from these windows. However, it would be useful for officers to understand which rooms are served by these openings. The impact on these flank windows would be re-assessed at application stage. The new dwelling would not sit notably forward of the front wall of No.61 and would only project minimally beyond the rear building line of this neighbouring property. Having regard to these observations, it is considered unlikely that: undue loss of light, excessive overshadowing or a material restriction of outlook would impact the front or rear of No.61. In terms of privacy, it is likely that any southern flank elevation windows at upper floor levels would be required to be fitted with obscured glazing to limit overlooking. Subject to this, it is not considered that there would be an unacceptable invasion of privacy affecting No.61.

Energy & Climate Change

- 4.21. The London Plan contains detailed policies relating to energy efficiency, renewable energy, climate change and water resources. Local Plan Policy SP4 requires all new developments to take measures to reduce energy use and carbon emissions during design, construction and occupation. Similarly, DPD Policy DM21 requires proposals to implement sustainable design, layout and construction techniques. In order to meet these requirements, an Energy/Sustainability Statement should be provided with any future planning application.

Transport

- 4.22. The construction of a replacement dwelling would not be a development of such scale that it would be likely to generate a significant increase in the number of vehicular movements. As such, it is not considered likely that there would be material harm to the capacity of the highway network.
- 4.23. This pre-application submission has not outlined the intended parking arrangements to serve the proposed dwelling. The site has a PTAL rating of 0 indicating very poor access to public transport. In such areas, it is expected that the applicant would seek to deliver off-street parking. The proposed parking provision should be clearly set out in any future planning application. The Council would support the provision of electric charging for new off-street parking spaces. In regard to cycling, London Plan Policy T5 requires 2 cycle parking spaces to be provided for this size of dwelling. Any future application should demonstrate that this level of cycle parking would be supplied within the site. The cycle parking should be fit for purpose, secure and well-located, in accordance with the London Cycling Design Standards (2014).

Other Considerations

- 4.24. This response has noted that the proposal would adversely impact the character, appearance and historic significance of the CA. However, the impacts would be localised, and as such the harm would be 'less than substantial'. In these circumstances, paragraph 202 of the NPPF outlines that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. No significant public benefits would arise from this proposed scheme. Therefore, the less than substantial harm to this designated heritage asset would not be outweighed.

Conclusion

- 4.25. In summary, the proposed replacement dwelling would be of excessive size and scale. The design of the proposed building would not be sympathetic to the CA location. There would be an adverse impact upon the character and appearance of the site, the surrounding street scene and the Highgate CA. The historic significance and special interest of the CA would not be preserved. Therefore, officers would not support the proposed scheme in its current form.

5. INFORMATION TO ACCOMPANY AN APPLICATION

Should you wish to submit an application following this advice, the easiest way to apply is electronically by registering on the Planning Portal at:

<https://www.planningportal.co.uk/applications>

Any application will need to be accompanied by the following information before it will be registered and considered. If you submit your application on paper rather than electronically we will need two sets of all information.

The following information will be required for registration of the planning application in respect of this site:

1. A standard full application form – all sections must be completed signed and dated.
2. Planning application fee - £462.
3. Location Plan – Must be based on an up-to-date map, and should be at a scale of 1:1250. The site boundary should be identified in red, with a blue line drawn around any adjacent land owned by the applicant.
4. Existing Block Plan – Should show footprints of all existing buildings on site and should be at a scale of either 1:200 or 1:500.
5. Proposed Block Plan – Should show the footprint of the buildings as proposed and should be at a scale of either 1:200 or 1:500.
6. Existing Floor Plans & Elevations – Full floor plans and elevations of existing buildings at a scale of either 1:50 or 1:100. Street scene elevations should be provided showing the relationship with neighbouring buildings.
7. Proposed Floor Plans & Elevations – Full floor plans and elevations of proposed buildings at a scale of either 1:50 or 1:100. Street scene elevations should be provided showing the relationship with neighbouring buildings. Site sections should also be supplied.
8. Design & Access Statement (D&A)
9. Heritage Statement (can be included in D&A)
10. Landscaping Plan
11. Energy & Sustainability Statement
12. Basement Impact Assessment

If any of these requirements are missing, we cannot consider your application until it is provided. If you are in any doubt, please take time to view the requirements at our website at:

<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-applications/pre-application-guidance/do-i-need-planning-permission/planning-application-requirements>

6. PLANNING APPLICATION PROCESS

Once you have submitted your planning application, it goes through several steps:

1. Validation/Checking
Applications are checked to make sure all required documents and fees are there and checked for any potential issues which need addressing to ensure compliance with policy. If considered 'valid' and likely to be acceptable they are registered. Applications are only checked when an officer is available so there can be several weeks before an application is validated and checked.
2. Registration
The application is entered into the register of applications and customers are informed formally that their application is registered, their application reference number, their case officer and the deadline they can expect to hear back by.

3. Consultation (a minimum of 24 days following registration)
Details of the application will be provided to neighbours in line with our consultation policy and they will have the opportunity to comment on the proposed development. Consultees are given a minimum of 24 days to comment on an application.
4. Decision
The planning service can deal with smaller applications under delegated powers (within 8 weeks) and will issue a decision notice stating whether the application has been approved or refused, and if there are any conditions that must be met.

7. CARRYING OUT BUILDING WORKS

Once you have planning permission, it is recommended that you obtain technical advice regarding building control matters. Building Control services ensure that the works carried out by your appointed builders are done safely. Building Control services can be found through your local council or an approved inspector service.

Haringey Building Control has extensive experience in working with clients on a wide range of projects. Should you wish to discuss your project and how Haringey Building Control may best advise you regarding compliance with relevant building control regulations, please contact Building Control on 020 8489 5504 or by email on building.control@haringey.gov.uk

PLEASE NOTE

Please be advised that this response is given at officer level and does not form a formal response or decision of the council with regard to future planning application(s) or other formal approaches. The views expressed above are given in good faith, to the best of ability, and without prejudice to the formal consideration of any future planning application, which will be subject to formal consultation and ultimately decided on by the council.

CONTACTS

If you have any queries regarding the content of this pre-application advice note please contact the following officer.

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