

Highgate School: all applications:
HGY/2023/0313: Junior Field Decant
HGY/2023/0315: Richards
HGY/2023/0317: Science Building
HGY/2023/0328: Dyne House
HGY/2023/0338: Mallinson Sports Centre
HGY/2023/0390: Science Building, Listed building application
HGY/2023/0679: Dyne House, Listed Building application

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee (HCAAC) objects to all the planning and listed building applications listed above. We have submitted to Haringey a number of objections since March 2023 and all remain relevant. In this Objection HCAAC addresses the question of Need.

The Highgate School SPD March 2021 Page 45 states:

“4.68 Notwithstanding that this SPD has been developed taking into account supporting documents provided by the school, including an Education Needs and Accommodation Needs assessment, it is considered that the need for the specific facilities proposed is an important consideration in the planning balance. Therefore when strategic proposals in the SPD come forward the development quanta proposed should be justified within planning applications to help in weighing up the planning balance against potential impacts on designations and amenity affecting each site.”

The ‘designations’ are:

- Listed buildings
- Highgate Conservation Area

In this document we set out the various factors which must be taken into account when assessing Highgate School’s ‘Need’ for its proposals in these planning applications. HCAAC sets out below what we believe should be considered and sets out our conclusions.

1 Background: Changes over time

Several changes have occurred over time which have affected the School’s Need and also its ongoing impact on Highgate generally.

- The last boarders left in 1997. When it was a boarding school the number of parents dropping off and collecting their children was fewer.

- Highgate School became co-ed in 2004.
- The Headmaster's Statement notes that the school population has doubled in the last twenty years, that is, roughly, up to when the current planning applications were submitted. Staff numbers would have increased as well.
- Apparently, the school population varies from year to year to a degree.
- The number of pupils approved by the Dept of Education is 1,970 and the SPD dated March 2021 states:

"2.6 The strategic proposals in the SPD are to accommodate existing pupil numbers which will remain within the School's currently licenced capacity of 1,970. The school's estate management programme is not one of growth."

HCAAC suggests that Haringey should, if minded to grant consent for any or all of the planning applications, limit the School's student body across the pre-School, Junior School, Senior School and Sixth Forms to the current licenced capacity of 1,970.

The changes over time have resulted in daily chaos in Highgate with disruption to buses, traffic and huge inconvenience to local people, especially given the 214 bus is regularly terminated at the bottom of the hill directly as a result of Highgate School's lack of a Travel Plan that actually works and which meets various Haringey policies.

We set out the planning policies on which we rely at the end of this document. HCAAC considers that unless Highgate School is able to show CO2 emissions including travel to and from the School are reduced to meet Haringey's Strategic targets, this application must be refused.

2 VAT and falling rolls

These applications come at a time when VAT is now applied to school fees and when rolls are falling in London across both the public and private sectors but potentially applying pressure on the local state schools.

There is therefore considerable uncertainty that the NEED set out in the Highgate School SPD remains relevant. We suggest Haringey must consider enrolment at Highgate School across all the age groups in this School Year as part of the assessment of NEED.

Without the sound and up-to-date data required, Highgate School has not proved the NEED for the considerable additional provision sought.

Schools in London are accommodating to falling rolls and private schools are also finding parents are worried about the higher cost of fees with VAT being added. Highgate School's fees have been increased by the amount of the VAT. The inevitable consequence for Highgate School is that it will look to an even wider 'catchment area'

which would inevitably result in more car journeys morning and afternoon and even more chaos and pollution for Highgate residents.

Respondents to a poll by The Times are reporting falling numbers, with one school accusing the government of ‘vandalism’ in its approach to education and most private schools report cutting staff.

The level of ‘NEED’ in space terms cannot be justified at this time and would actually be less.

3 Curriculum

Even with the doubling of pupil numbers in the last 20 years to 1,970, the Department for Education has allowed that increase in pupil numbers based on the ability of Highgate School to deliver the required curriculum.

The average increase in area across all Highgate School’s applications is over 100% with Richards close to 200%. It appears these increases do not relate to NEED but only from Highgate School’s business case to seek to enhance the School’s ‘offer’, for example:

- The Mallinson application states it supports the 2012 Olympic Legacy. (HGY/2023/0338)
- An International standard badminton court is proposed. (HGY/2023/0338)
- The justification for the café at the Mallinson Centre is: “*given the extended sporting day (pre- and post-school indoor training sessions to support fitness and skills development), Parents will benefit from a warm and welcoming venue to await their children and reduce the tendency to sit in cars ‘with the engine running’.* We ask Haringey to note that these sessions appear to fall under the non-curricular category. (HGY/2023/0338)
- At one of the King’s Foundation workshops we were told by Highgate School that there is a demand for individual private tuition in music. These private students leave their class on a curriculum subject to attend private music lessons. That accommodation on the Dyne House site should definitely not be counted as fulfilling Highgate School’s NEED. From Highgate School’s website:
 - INDIVIDUAL MUSIC LESSONS
 - 35 minutes: £43.56 (including VAT)
 - 50 minutes: £62.28 (including VAT)
 - Pre-Prep 30 minutes: £37.32 (including VAT)
 - Instrument hire: Hire of school instruments is competitively priced according to instrument (enquire about availability and costs if required.)
 - *Lessons are billed pro rata in arrears. Half a term’s notice (five academic weeks) is required to cancel lessons. 48 hours notice is required to reschedule a specific lesson.*

These are without doubt private lessons. (HGY/2023/0328 and HGY/2023/0679)

- We were also told at a workshop that Highgate School would find teachers for sixth form pupils to provide individual tuition for any language and which would be taught on a one-to-one basis. The Collegiate-sized spaces for 12 or so students, again in Dyne House, would not be efficiently used (HGY/2023/0328 and HGY/2023/0679)
- The Richards Centre provides accommodation which is aspirational rather than fulfilling a Curriculum Need (HGY/2023/0315)

That leaves the Science block which continues to give us grave concern. It is not only a curtilage building to a listed building, it is in the heart of Highgate Village and surrounded by many listed buildings, several of which belong to Highgate School. The proposed atrium adversely impacts the significance and setting of the Science block itself but also all those listed buildings as well as the Highgate Conservation Area. The extension of the laboratories and the proposed observatory have an adverse impact on the many heritage assets but also on neighbours including the Almshouses. HCAAC objects to these applications in the strongest terms. Public benefits to offset these harms do not apply. (HGY/2023/0317 and HGY/2023/0390).

HCAAC considers a great deal of the proposed additional space sought by Highgate School falls outside the definition of NEED set out in the Highgate School SPD; and that the level of harm to heritage assets cannot be justified

4 Planning context

Haringey's Strategic planning policies:

2013 – 2026 (formerly the Core Strategy) March 2013 Consolidated with alterations since 2017:

4.1.11 In October 2009 Haringey Council adopted an aspirational target to reduce borough wide CO2 emissions by 40% by 2020 on a 2005 baseline and committed to developing an action plan to meet this target. This fulfills a commitment to establish a long term CO2 reduction target, which was made in the Greenest Borough Strategy.

HCAAC suggests Highgate School's proposals fail to address this policy target.

Highgate School SPD:

4.49 As the School has grown, so too has the number of cars dropping pupils off, particularly on the Bishopswood Road campus where the Pre-Preparatory School and Junior School are situated.

The Highgate Community is all too aware of the increase in the number of pupils and the daily traffic chaos. The obvious result of construction traffic is also a major concern. At the public meeting in the summer of 2023, most of the many aggrieved comments were about the drop-off and collection of pupils clogging up Highgate and

the impact of pollution and on disruption to local buses. When entry exams are taking place, the situation is even worse. Highgate School has simply failed to improve the behaviour of parents who double- and sometimes triple-park on the North Road carriageway every school day and to persuade them to reduce car usage with a widening catchment area. The justification for the café at the Mallinson Centre is: *“given the extended sporting day (pre- and post-school indoor training sessions to support fitness and skills development), parents will benefit from a warm and welcoming venue to await their children and reduce the tendency to sit in cars ‘with the engine running’”*. (We ask Haringey to note that these sessions appear to fall under the non-curricular category.)

HCAAC considers none of Highgate School’s planning applications would or even seek to achieve any reduction in CO2 emissions as required under Core Strategy 4.1.1.

Policy DM1: Delivering High Quality Design Haringey Development Charter

- A All new development and changes of use must achieve a high standard of design and contribute to the distinctive character and amenity of the local area. The Council will support design-led development proposals which meet the following criteria:
- D Development proposals must ensure a high standard of **privacy and amenity** for the development’s users and neighbours. The Council will support proposals that:
- c Address issues of vibration, noise, **fumes**, odour, light pollution and microclimatic conditions likely to arise from the use and activities of the development. HCAAC asks Haringey Development Management DPD whether fumes from idling cars would come under this policy.

Highgate Neighbourhood Plan

3.3.1 Aspirations Highgate owes its existence to traffic – it was a hub and a staging post over the centuries – yet the many competing demands today currently create tension, making travel and transport the issue that concerns residents most.

3.3.2 Challenges The key issues for Highgate identified during the course of consultation and evidence gathering included the following:

- I. A desire to encourage more people to adopt sustainable modes of transport and make the most of the opportunities to walk, cycle or use public transport;
- II. The importance of improving highway safety for all types of road user;
- III. The reduction of congestion and traffic flows to deliver – among other improvements – reductions in air and noise pollution;

Policy TR2: Movement of Heavy Goods Vehicles: Where planning permission has been granted, development that would generate significant movement of goods or materials by road, both during construction and in operation, must:

I. Have a construction management plan (CMP) and – where appropriate because they are likely to generate delivery vehicles and/or refuse trucks – servicing management plan (SMP) showing the proposed logistics of heavy goods vehicle movements – this will be required for any major development. For smaller developments, the Councils will consider the requirement for a CMP or SMP, having regard to access issues and the potential impact on the local road network, and impact on properties in the vicinity of the development site. It will be designed to keep disruption to a minimum. These CMPs and SMPs will be secured through a condition attached to the permission or through a section 106 planning obligation, and must be agreed with the council prior to the commencement of works;

- I. Wherever possible, avoid the need for additional movement of vehicles over 7.5 tonnes in predominantly residential areas;
- II. Must make every effort to accommodate goods and service vehicles on site, during and after construction; and
- III. Seek opportunities to minimise disruption for the local community through effective management, including through the optimisation of collection and delivery timings, cleaning roads of building-related waste and the use of low emission

HCAAC considers Highgate School's applications do not meet our Highgate Neighbourhood Plan policies.

5 Summary

The SPD is clear that Highgate School's 'NEED' must be balanced against the level of harm to local amenity and harm to heritage assets. This level of 'offer' at the expense of harm to our listed buildings and the Highgate Conservation Area far exceeds any definition of 'NEED'.

HCAAC considers the traffic chaos we have described and shown in photographs in our other objections fails to meet the requirement of the above policy in DM1 D/D 'c'. Please also see our objection to the poor results in Highgate School's Annual Transport surveys.

HCAAC considers Highgate School's neighbours generally and in particular the Almshouses would suffer an unacceptable impact on their amenity.

Our Conservation Area, amenity, trees and biodiversity must not be harmed because Highgate School seeks to enhance its offer to keep up or even get ahead of its competitors. HCAAC will be disappointed if Haringey approves these applications with such a long-lasting impact on our many heritage assets including the Highgate Conservation Area, an asset of considerable significance to the London Borough of Haringey.