



To: Daniel Boama,
Haringey Planning Services By email.

Date: 19/05/2026

Dear Daniel,

Re: HGY/2026/1047

Ground Floor Flat A, 32 Southwood Avenue, Hornsey, London, N6 5RZ

Proposal: Erection of a garden room outbuilding to rear garden to replace existing shed.

The Planning Committee of the Highgate Society wishes to raise strong objections to the proposal for a detached garden room at 32A Southwood Avenue (HGY/2026/1047). The submitted Design and Access / Heritage Statement seeks to present the development as a modest, incidental garden structure replacing an existing shed; however, this characterisation is not considered accurate in planning terms when assessed against its scale, functional intensity, and impact on rear garden character.

Whilst the proposal is described as “incidental to residential use”, the internal arrangement demonstrates a materially more intensive form of occupation than a simple garden store. It results in a building that is functionally comparable to a habitable extension within the rear garden. This represents a qualitative intensification of residential use rather than a like-for-like replacement of a dilapidated shed.

The existing shed is a small, low-impact structure of limited footprint and minimal functional use. In contrast, the proposed building introduces a significantly larger and permanent form of development, resulting in a measurable reduction in soft landscaping and a substantial increase in built form within the rear garden.

The proposal must also be considered in the context of recent and relevant decision-making within Highgate, in particular the refusal of HGY/2025/3538 at 64 Sheldon Avenue. In that case, planning permission was refused on the grounds of overdevelopment, loss of soft landscaping, and harm to the character of the Highgate Conservation Area. The Council placed significant weight on the erosion of verdant garden character and the imbalance between built form and landscaped space.

The Design and Access Statement's reliance on the presence of other outbuildings in the locality is not, in itself, sufficient justification. Such references do not demonstrate functional or spatial equivalence, nor do they address the cumulative impact of continued incremental development within rear gardens. The presence of isolated precedents does not override the need to assess each proposal against the wider pattern of change and its effect on Conservation Area character.

For these reasons, and in the interest of consistency in decision-making, the Planning Committee considers that the same planning principles applied in the refusal of HGY/2025/3538 are directly relevant to the current proposal. The development is therefore considered to result in unacceptable overdevelopment of the site and harm to the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area, contrary to Policies DM1, DM9, DM12 and London Plan Policy G7 and HC1.

From the Heritage point of view, The Design and Access/ Heritage Statement places significant reliance on the removal of an existing timber shed on the basis that it is "no longer weather tight" and therefore requires replacement. However, this reasoning is not, in itself, sufficient justification for redevelopment in planning or heritage terms.

Advice Notes and Guidance from Historic England and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) principles and approach consistently emphasises **repair and maintenance over replacement**, particularly where structures can be retained, repaired, or refurbished rather than removed and replaced with larger or more intensive development. The Conservation approach is to extend the life of existing fabric where feasible, rather than use deterioration as a justification for intensification of built form.

In this context, the assertion that the existing 3.9 sqm shed is "no longer weather tight" does not automatically justify the introduction of a substantially larger and materially more permanent structure. No evidence has been provided to demonstrate that repair options have been fully explored.

Furthermore, the scale comparison between the existing structure (3.9 sqm footprint, 1.9 m height) and the proposed replacement (approximately 40.8 sqm footprint, ridge height 4.05m) demonstrates that this is not a replacement but a significant intensification of development within the rear garden.

We also trust that immediate neighbours whose amenities may be affected will be appropriately consulted as part of the application process.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Yours sincerely,

Marta Sanchez,

On behalf of
The Highgate Society Planning Committee

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