



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2026/0923
Application Type:	Householder planning permission
Address:	5 Firs Avenue, Hornsey, London, N10 3LY
Proposal:	Erection of lower ground floor single storey rear extension; basement extension; rear dormer extension; associated internal and external changes.
Case Officer:	Nathan Keyte
Valid Date:	30/03/2026
Applicant:	Ms Amy La
Agent:	Ms Elli Farrant

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

1. SITE AND SURROUNDING

The application site is a two-storey mid-terrace dwellinghouse with single-storey rear projections and an existing lower-ground floor area. The site is located within the Muswell Hill Conservation Area and is identified as a positive contributor.

Firs Avenue itself has a strong and coherent architectural character, defined by a consistent Arts and Crafts influence. The street is characterised by uniform two-storey terraces with pitched roofs, upstand party walls, traditional fenestration patterns and a rhythm of two-storey rear projections. This consistency is recognised in the adopted Conservation Area Character Appraisal, and the street makes a positive contribution to the wider conservation area.

2. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This is an application for a proposed lower ground floor single storey rear extension; basement extension; rear dormer extension; associated internal and external changes.

The proposal will extend the lower ground floor area, excavating a basement under the southern area of footprint of the host building. The proposal has been amended since lodgement to remove proposed lower ground front windows.

The single storey rear extension will have a floor level that is approximately level with the rear garden, where there is currently four step difference (approximately 1.2m). The height of the extension will be 3.3m from the existing lower ground level, and 2.7m from the new floor level. The extension is reduced in height nearer to the principal rear façade to approximately 2.7m from existing lower ground level – as indicated on proposed Section DD – where it adjoins the rooflights of no. 3 Firs Avenue.

The rear extension will extend to be in line with that of the rear extension at no.3 Firs Avenue, being a depth of 3.5m from the existing rear elevation/ outrigger, with a width of approximately 5.0m.

The rear dormer extension will have a width of 5.2m and a height of 2.2m.

3. SITE HISTORY

HGY/2016/0523,

Address: 5, Firs Avenue, London, N10 3LY

Proposal: Erection of single storey rear extension with partial glazing to pitched roof.,

Decision Date: 14 April 2016

Decision: Approve with Conditions

HGY/2019/1796,

Address: 5, Firs Avenue, London, N10 3LY

Proposal: Demolition of and erection of replacement 2-storey part lower ground and ground floor rear extension, erection of rear dormer, replacement timber windows to front elevation, insertion of 2 front rooflights.,

Decision Date: 20 August 2019

Decision: Approve with Conditions

HGY/2022/1415,

Address: 5, Firs Avenue, London, N10 3LY

Proposal: Demolition of existing lower/upper ground floor rear projections; erection of two storey rear extension at lower/upper ground floor levels; installation of rear dormer, insertion of two front rooflights and replacement of existing windows with new double glazed timber windows.,

Decision Date: 12 July 2022

Decision: Approve with Conditions

4. CONSULTATION

Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association: No comment received.

LBH Conservation Officer: Acceptable, following amendments received.

5. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by the way of letters and public notices. One objection was received, which contains the following objections material to planning:

- Rear extension will result in loss of light to neighbouring property skylights, which serves a kitchen, and therefore impact on amenity. [Officer comment: additional elevations have been shown to further demonstrate the proposed reduction in height of the extension in the vicinity of the existing neighbouring skylights].

6. MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

1. Design and heritage
2. Impact on neighbouring amenity
3. Basement development

Design & heritage

London Plan Policy HC1 seeks to ensure that development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings, should conserve their significance. This policy applies to designated and non-designated heritage assets. Local Plan Policy SP12 and DPD Policy DM9 set out the Council's approach to the management, conservation and enhancement of the Borough's historic environment.

DPD Policy DM9 states that proposals affecting a designated or non-designated heritage asset will be assessed against the significance of the asset and its setting, and the impact of the proposals on that significance; setting out a range of issues which will be taken into account. In relation to extensions or alterations to residential buildings, including roof extensions, Policy DM9 requires proposals to be of a high, site specific, and sensitive design quality, which respect and/ or complement the form, setting, period, architectural characteristics, detailing of the original buildings, including external features such as chimneys, and porches. The policy also requires the use of high-quality matching or complementary materials, in order to be sensitive to context.

High quality matching or complementary materials should be used appropriately and sensitively in relation to the context. DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' requires development proposals to relate positively to their locality, while Local Plan (2017) Policy SP11 requires the highest standard of design that respects local context and character and historic significance, which is equally supported by London Plan (2021) Policy D6. DPD Policy D9 requires development to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Borough's conservation areas.

The site lies within the Muswell Hill Conservation Area, and Firs Avenue is noted in the adopted Character Appraisal for its strong and coherent Arts and Crafts character, defined by consistent roof forms, fenestration patterns and a regular rhythm of rear projections. This architectural consistency contributes positively to the wider conservation area.

The proposal has been amended since submission, including the removal of the front basement windows and the use of brick for the rear extension (replacing timber), with the dormer now proposed in grey zinc cladding. These changes improve the integration of the additions with the host property.

The proposed dormer is similar in scale and siting to the previously approved scheme (HGY/2022/1415). The use of zinc cladding will ensure the dormer reads as a recessive, well-integrated addition. The rear extension is of an acceptable scale and design, is not a dominant addition, and is smaller than that previously approved. The resulting changes to rear fenestration and the single front rooflight are also acceptable.

Taking into account the amendments, the established character of Firs Avenue and the wider conservation area, will not be harm and as such left preserved.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

London Plan Policy D6 outlines that design must not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding housing, in specific stating that proposals should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, while also minimising overshadowing. London Plan Policy D14 requires development proposals to reduce, manage and mitigate noise impacts.

DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' states that development proposals must ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for a development's users and neighbours. Specifically, proposals are required to provide appropriate sunlight, daylight and aspects to adjacent buildings and land, and to provide an appropriate amount of privacy to neighbouring properties to avoid overlooking and loss of privacy and detriment to amenity of neighbouring resident.

With regard to No. 3 Firs Avenue, the proposed rear extension will not project beyond the neighbouring extension. While concerns regarding the impact on existing rooflights are noted, the proposed extension steps down in height adjacent to the boundary, being approximately 500mm lower where it adjoins the neighbour's rooflights and sitting only 400mm above the existing gutter line. Given this reduction, the presence of the existing two-storey outrigger at the application site, and the fact that the rooflights serve a kitchen, the impact on daylight and outlook will not be significant or sufficient to justify refusal.

The extension is set off the boundary with No. 7 Firs Avenue and will not materially affect their amenity. The proposed dormer sits within the existing roof profile and will not result in overlooking or loss of privacy.

Amenity impacts arising from basement construction will be temporary and are controlled by separate legislation, including the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The scale of works does not warrant additional construction-related submissions through planning.

Basement Development

DPD policy DM18 ('Residential Basement Development and Light Wells') requires householder extensions for basement development to demonstrate that a proposal will not adversely affect the structural stability of the application building and neighbouring buildings; does not increase flood risk to the property and nearby properties; avoids harm to the established character of the surrounding area and not to adversely impact the amenity of adjoining properties or the local natural and historic environment. Policy DM24 outlines the requirement of new development to manage and reduce surface water runoff.

The proposed works are to excavate and create a basement within the footprint of the existing property adjacent to the existing lower ground floor level. The basement slab will be approximately 2.7m below current ground floor level. Existing masonry walls above ground level will be underpinned to the proposed basement foundation level and supported on mass concrete footings. The property shares party walls with No.s 3 and 7 Firs Avenue.

A Basement Impact Assessment (BIA) prepared by Site Analytical Services Ltd has been submitted with this application which includes site investigations. The BIA is informed by site investigations and borehole tests undertaken for the purposes of the BIA etc.

Flood risk

The BIA concludes that the proposed development will not increase flood risk at the site or the surrounding area. The site is not within a flood zone and at very low risk of surface water flooding. The amount of hardstand in relation to the basement construction is not expected to change, and where the site is located outside of a Critical Drainage Area.

Impact on groundwater conditions

Groundwater was encountered at respective depths of 3.08m and 2.25m below ground level in boreholes 1 and 2 during the return monitoring visit.

The site is noted to be above an aquifer, and the BIA outlines that excavating below the water level in this area may result in construction difficulties. The BIA recommends that trial excavations to the proposed basement depth be carried out to confirm the stability of the soil and to further investigate the presence of groundwater inflows. Care will be required to ensure that any dewatering is monitored and does not allow settlement of neighbouring structures. Provided this occurs, and

groundwater management is employed, the proposed basement construction is unlikely to cause significant damage to surrounding structures.

Noting the above, a condition requiring the basement works to be overseen by a suitably qualified chartered engineer is recommended, to ensure the works do not result in significant damage to neighbouring buildings.

Ground movement/ structural stability

The Basement Impact Assessment includes a ground-movement assessment undertaken by Curtins (Report Ref: 088490-CUR-XX-XX-T-GE-00001), provided as Appendix B. The assessment confirms that, with appropriate detailed design, staged excavation, underpinning, temporary works and groundwater management, the proposed basement construction is unlikely to cause significant damage to surrounding structures. Predicted movements fall within CIRIA C760 Damage Category 0 (negligible), an industry-standard benchmark indicating that no meaningful structural impact is expected.

These findings can be carried through into the Party Wall agreements, where pre-condition surveys, movement monitoring and other safeguards can be secured to protect adjoining properties during excavation.

Matters relating to structural stability, underpinning design, temporary works and excavation sequencing will also be examined in detail at the Building Control stage, which ensures that engineering design and construction methodology are competent and safely implemented.

To ensure these measures are followed, the basement works will be required to be overseen by a suitably qualified chartered structural engineer, secured by condition.

Taken together, the BIA findings, the CIRIA C760 assessment, Building Control oversight, Party Wall procedures and structural-engineer supervision provide a robust framework to ensure that ground-movement and structural-stability risks are properly managed.

Conclusion

Overall, the works will not adversely affect the structural stability of the application building or neighbouring buildings; will not increase flood risk to nearby properties; and will avoid harm to the established character of the area and neighbouring amenity, consistent with Policies DM18 and DM24. Subject to the recommended condition requiring the basement works to be overseen by a chartered structural engineer, the proposal is considered acceptable.

In addition to the planning safeguards, the works, as referenced above, will also be subject to Building Control approval, which will review the detailed engineering design, temporary works, excavation sequencing and structural safety. A Party Wall Agreement with adjoining owners will also be required under the Party Wall etc. Act 1996, ensuring that neighbouring properties are surveyed and monitored before and during excavation. These parallel regulatory processes provide further protection and control over the construction phase.

Conclusion

The proposal is acceptable in design and heritage terms and will not result in material harm to neighbouring amenity. The basement works are supported by a submitted Basement Impact Assessment, and, together with the recommended condition requiring oversight by a chartered structural engineer, is considered acceptable in terms of structural stability and flood risk matters.

All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been considered. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION.

7. CIL APPLICABLE

Development proposed does not exceed 100 sq.m, 90.6 sqm, and therefore the proposal is not liable for the Mayoral or Haringey's CIL charge.

8. RECOMMENDATION

The application is recommended for approval subject to the following conditions.

Conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun no later than three years from the date of this decision notice, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and drawings as listed below except where conditions attached to this planning permission indicate otherwise or where alternative details have been subsequently approved following an application for a non-material amendment.

Approved plans list:

Location Plan; ELL-080-A-06-001; ELL-080-A-06-100 Rev A; ELL-080-A-06-101 Rev A; ELL-080-A-06-102; ELL-080-A-06-103; ELL-080-A-06-104; ELL-080-A-06-020; ELL-080-A-06-201 Rev A; ELL-080-A-06-202; ELL-080-A-06-203; ELL-080-A-06-301 Rev B; ELL-080-A-06-303 Rev A; ELL-080-A-06-302 Rev A.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 The external materials to be used in the development shall accord with those specified on the approved plans and in the submitted Design & Access Statement, and shall match the colour, size, shape and texture of the existing building where applicable, so as to respect the character and appearance of the Muswell Hill Conservation Area.

Reason: To ensure a high-quality appearance and to safeguard the character of the Muswell Hill Conservation Area, consistent with Policies D3 of the London Plan 2021, SP11 and SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan 2017, and Policies DM1 and DM9 of the Development Management DPD 2017.

- 4 The development for basement works hereby approved shall not commence until such time as a suitably qualified chartered engineer with membership of the appropriate professional body has been appointed to inspect, approve and monitor the critical elements of both permanent and temporary basement construction works throughout their duration to ensure compliance with the design which has been checked and approved by a building control body. Details of the appointment and the appointee's

responsibilities shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. Any subsequent change or reappointment shall be confirmed forthwith and retained for the duration of the construction works.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance and structural stability of neighbouring buildings and the character of the immediate area.

Informatives:

INFORMATIVE: Party Wall Act

The applicant's attention is drawn to the Party Wall Act 1996 which sets out requirements for notice to be given to relevant adjoining owners of intended works on a shared wall, on a boundary or if excavations are to be carried out near a neighbouring building.

INFORMATIVE: Hours of Construction Work

The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-

8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday

8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday

and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

INFORMATIVE: Land Ownership

The applicant is advised that this planning permission does not convey the right to enter onto or build on land not within his ownership.