



10A South Grove, Highgate, London N6 6BS

Planning Department
London Borough of Haringey
River Park House
225 High Road,
London, N22 8HQ.

By email

HGY/2026/1790: Installation of ground floor shopfront signage, comprising a new fascia sign and a new projecting sign.

Dear Ben

The Highgate Society objects to the above application for a replacement shopfront and associated signage as it fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area.

Harm to the Highgate Conservation Area

The application site occupies a prominent gateway position at the southern entrance to Highgate High Street. The character of this High Street is derived from its cohesive historic townscape and the quality of its traditional buildings and shopfronts, many of which are Grade II listed. As one of the first commercial frontages encountered when entering Highgate from Archway, the building makes an important contribution to the appearance of the Conservation Area. Although it is not itself listed, alterations to its frontage should preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the wider historic streetscape.

The submitted drawings demonstrate that the proposal is not simply for a replacement fascia sign. Instead, it introduces an extensive corporate branding treatment across almost the entire shopfront. The fascia, entrance surround, timber shopfront and railings are all proposed to be painted in the applicant's bright corporate yellow. The drawings also indicate that the brickwork above the fascia may be painted in the same colour.

The proposal also includes three projecting canopies, each finished in the applicant's corporate yellow. These extend the branding beyond the plane of the shopfront into the public realm, increasing its prominence within the street scene. Rather than functioning as discreet architectural features, the canopies become highly visible branded elements that add to the visual dominance of the proposal.

It is the cumulative impact of these elements that causes harm. Individually, a new fascia, a canopy or a change in colour might not be objectionable. Taken together, however, the extensive application of the applicant's corporate branding across almost every visible element of the frontage results in the architecture of the building becoming subordinate to the branding itself.

Conflict with Adopted Planning Policy

The proposal conflicts with the adopted Haringey Development Management DPD.

Policy **DM8: Shopfronts, Signs and On-Street Dining** states that:

"The Council will require shopfronts... to be designed to a high standard and contribute to a safe and attractive environment" and seeks "the retention of traditional shopfronts of distinctive character contributing to the visual, architectural or historic quality of the local townscape."

The supporting text to Policy DM8 explains that:

"New shopfronts should contribute positively towards a cohesive streetscape and attractiveness of the shopping parade. Materials, detailing, craftsmanship and finishes are equally important in achieving high quality shop front design."

The proposal also conflicts with Strategic Policy **SP12 – Conservation**, which seeks to conserve Haringey's heritage assets and ensure development preserves or enhances the borough's Conservation Areas, together with Policy **SP11** and Policy **DM1**, which require high-quality design that responds positively to local character and context.

The Highgate Neighbourhood Plan similarly requires new development to respect the distinctive character of Highgate and preserve the significance of the Conservation Area. In the Society's view, this proposal fails to do so.

Emerging Local Plan

The Council's emerging Draft Local Plan has now completed Regulation 18 consultation and, whilst not yet adopted, is capable of attracting weight as an emerging policy document.

Draft Policy **D5 – Active Street Frontages and Shopfronts** requires that shopfronts:

"preserve and enhance the character of Conservation Areas."

The supporting text is equally relevant.

Paragraph 18.89 states that shopfronts should:

"contribute positively towards a cohesive streetscape and should be of a high-quality design which refers to the architecture of the host building, neighbouring units and general scale and rhythm of the shopfront widths in the area."

Paragraph 18.93 continues:

"Generally, shop fronts should be of a traditional design..."

A More Appropriate Approach

The Highgate Society has consistently supported high-quality shopfront design and your Conservation Officers have also always supported our aspirations to achieve good shopfront design in Highgate High Street, two recent example being the Shelter premises at 52 Highgate High Street and the Urban Café at 66 Highgate High Street. Both applicants subsequently revised their plans, and a more sympathetic solution was achieved using traditional materials that better reflected the character of the High Street.

The Society considers that the applicant could establish a clear commercial identity through a well-designed fascia and restrained colour palette without extending its branding across the entire elevation.

Highway and Parking Concerns

In addition to its concerns regarding the proposed shopfront, the Highgate Society shares local residents' concerns about the operation of a veterinary practice at this location. Unlike many retail uses, a significant proportion of clients are likely to arrive by car, often transporting sick, elderly, injured or distressed animals that cannot easily be brought to the premises on foot or by public transport.

The premises provide no dedicated customer parking, and there is very limited short-stay parking on Highgate High Street. The nearest available parking on Highgate Hill and Cholmeley Park requires customers to walk up a steep hill to reach the premises, which is unlikely to be practical for many veterinary patients.

The site is also located immediately adjacent to a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing that provides an important route to schools on both sides of Highgate High Street. The crossing is heavily used by pupils, parents and carers, particularly at the beginning and end of the school day.

The Society is concerned that the absence of convenient parking immediately outside the premises may encourage some customers to stop or park on the school keep-clear markings, adjacent zig-zag lines or other restricted sections of highway in order to drop off or collect animals. Such behaviour would create an unacceptable risk to pedestrian and highway safety by reducing visibility and obstructing a crossing that is heavily used by children and families.

The Highgate Society therefore considers that the Council should carefully assess the operational implications of the proposed use at this particularly sensitive location and be satisfied that the development would not give rise to unacceptable highway safety impacts or compromise the safe operation of the adjacent pedestrian crossing.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out above, the Highgate Society considers that the proposed shopfront fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area. We therefore respectfully request that planning permission be refused.

Yours sincerely,

Liz Morris

For and behalf of Highgate Society Planning Group

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