



HERITAGE STATEMENT

19 Bishops Road, Highgate, London, N6 4HP

Proposed development: Erection of a rear roof dormer extension, installation of three conservation-style rooflights to the front roof slope, erection of a lower-ground-floor rear infill extension, and associated external repair works

Local planning authority: London Borough of Haringey

Application type: Householder planning application

Heritage asset: Highgate Conservation Area

Prepared by: Brass Architecture



1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Brass Architecture in support of a householder planning application at 19 Bishops Road, Highgate, London, N6 4HP.

The proposed development comprises:

- the replacement and enlargement of the existing rear roof dormer;
- the installation of three conservation-style rooflights within the front roof slope;
- the removal of the existing rear glazed sunroom and its replacement with a lower-ground-floor rear infill extension;
- the installation of new glazed doors to the rear elevation;
- associated repairs and making good to brickwork and external finishes; and
- repair and redecoration of the existing front garden boundary wall.

This statement should be read alongside the submitted Design and Access Statement, existing and proposed drawings, site photographs, a contextual review of comparable roof and rear alterations in the surrounding streets, and visualisations of the development.

The assessment is proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed householder works. It considers the significance of the Highgate Conservation Area, the contribution made by the application property, and the effect of the proposals upon that significance.



2. Site and Surroundings

The application site is situated on the western side of Bishops Road, close to Archway Road and Highgate Village. Bishops Road is predominantly residential and contains a mixture of detached and semi-detached houses of varying architectural styles.

The application property forms one half of a pair of substantial houses and is arranged over lower-ground, ground, first and second-floor levels. It has a small front garden and boundary wall, side access and a substantial rear garden.

The principal elevation is constructed in yellow stock brick with contrasting red-brick bands and decorative detailing. Other characteristic elements include:

- painted stucco window and entrance surrounds;
- a raised entrance approached by external steps;
- a canted front bay window;
- vertically proportioned sash windows;
- decorative brickwork and moulded details;
- a pitched tiled roof; and
- a prominent traditional chimney stack.

These elements give the property a recognisable late Victorian or Edwardian domestic character and allow it to contribute positively to the architectural variety and established rhythm of Bishops Road.

The rear elevation is less formal than the principal elevation and has been altered over time. It currently includes a lightweight glazed structure at lower-ground-floor level and a small dormer within the rear roof slope.



3. Heritage Designations

The application site lies within the designated Highgate Conservation Area. The building is therefore experienced as part of a designated heritage asset.

The property is treated for the purposes of this assessment as an unlisted building. Its principal heritage significance derives from:

- its architectural character and retained external detailing;
- its relationship with the adjoining property and wider group of houses;
- its contribution to the established Bishops Road streetscape; and
- its position within the Highgate Conservation Area.

No works to a statutorily listed building form part of the application.



4. Planning Policy Context

4.1 National policy

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) sets out the Government's approach to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 207 requires local planning authorities to ask applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting; the level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and sufficient to understand the effect of the proposal on that significance.

When considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 212 requires that great weight be given to its conservation, irrespective of whether any identified harm would amount to substantial harm or less than substantial harm. Paragraph 213 requires clear and convincing justification for any harm to, or loss of, significance. Where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm, paragraph 215 requires that harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (see Section 8.6 below). Paragraph 219 encourages development within conservation areas that preserves the elements making a positive contribution to their significance, or that better reveals that significance.

4.2 London policy

Policy HC1 of the London Plan requires development affecting heritage assets to conserve their significance and to be sympathetic to their architectural and historic interest. Heritage considerations should be incorporated from the beginning of the design process, with proposals responding appropriately to scale, materials, form and local character.

4.3 Haringey policy

Haringey Local Plan Policy SP12 and Development Management Policy DM9 seek to conserve the historic significance of the borough's heritage assets, their settings and the wider historic environment. Policy DM9 requires development to be assessed against the significance of the affected asset and the effect of the proposal upon that significance, having regard to relevant conservation area appraisals and management guidance.

4.4 Highgate Neighbourhood Plan

The following policies are particularly relevant:

- Policy DH2: alterations and extensions should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Highgate's conservation areas.
- Policy DH3: rear extensions should be subordinate, complement the host building and retain an appropriate area of garden.
- Policy DH5: roof extensions, dormers and rooflights should respect the existing roof form in their design, scale, materials and detailing, and are expected to be restricted to the rear of the property except where they reflect the established local character of the immediate context.
- Policy DH6: original front boundary walls should be retained and repaired where possible.



The Plan also recognises the importance of roofscape, original materials, rear gardens and gaps between buildings to Highgate's character.



5. Significance of the Highgate Conservation Area

Highgate Conservation Area derives its significance from the combination of its historic development, varied high-quality architecture, elevated topography, mature landscape and established street pattern.

Its architectural character is not uniform. It includes Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian, Arts and Crafts and later buildings, united by their domestic scale, quality of materials, traditional proportions and landscape setting. Original windows, doors, roof forms, chimneys, boundary treatments, brickwork and decorative details are important components of this character.

The Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal describes Bishops Road as a long residential street containing mostly three-storey detached and semi-detached houses in a variety of styles and in both red and yellow brick. It identifies the preservation of original features as important to maintaining the quality and distinctive character of the conservation area.

The appraisal also notes that inappropriate painting or cladding of masonry, the loss of original detailing and prominent alterations to front roof slopes can erode the integrity and visual cohesion of historic frontages.



6. Contribution of the Application Property

The principal significance of 19 Bishops Road lies in its front elevation and its contribution to the wider street.

The following elements make a positive contribution:

- the original scale and proportions of the house;
- its relationship with the adjoining property;
- the yellow stock-brick frontage;
- contrasting red-brick banding and decorative panels;
- painted stucco surrounds;
- the projecting bay window;
- the entrance porch and external steps;
- the vertically proportioned sash-window openings;
- the pitched roof and chimney stack;
- the modest planted front garden; and
- the low front boundary wall.

Together, these features contribute to the varied but coherent architectural character identified by the Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

The rear elevation has a more limited contribution to the public appreciation of the conservation area because it is substantially screened from Bishops Road. Nevertheless, its overall hierarchy, traditional masonry construction, roof form and relationship with the rear garden remain relevant to the significance of the host building.

The front roof slope is more sensitive because it is visible from Bishops Road and contributes to the continuity of the local roofscape.



7. Description of the Proposed Development

7.1 Lower-ground-floor rear infill extension

The existing lightweight glazed sunroom would be removed and replaced with a permanent single-storey infill extension at lower-ground-floor level.

The extension would:

- remain subordinate to the main house;
- align with the established rear building line;
- occupy an already developed part of the rear of the property;
- retain the substantial majority of the existing garden;
- use facing brickwork compatible with the host building; and
- contain slim-profile, dark-framed glazed doors facing the garden.

A solid structural pier or column is proposed between the new glazed-door openings. This provides an efficient structural solution while dividing the glazing into appropriately proportioned bays and maintaining a suitable balance between solid masonry and openings.

7.2 Rear dormer

The small existing rear dormer would be replaced with an enlarged dormer contained within the rear roof slope.

The dormer would be:

- positioned below the principal ridge;
- set in from the sides and lower edge of the roof;
- subordinate to the overall roof;
- finished in a dark, visually recessive material; and
- provided with a simply detailed, dark-framed window.

The existing chimney stack and principal front roof form would be retained.

7.3 Front rooflights

Three conservation-style rooflights would be inserted into the front roof slope.

The rooflights would be:

- modest in individual size;
- evenly spaced;
- aligned with the composition of the elevation below;
- installed as close as technically possible to the plane of the existing roof;
- fitted with dark, non-reflective frames; and



- surrounded by roofing material carefully made good to match the existing.

No front dormer, increase in ridge height or alteration to the chimney is proposed.

7.4 Repairs and external finishes

All brickwork, roof coverings and adjoining finishes disturbed by the works would be carefully repaired and made good.

Replacement bricks would match the existing in size, colour, texture and bond. Mortar and pointing would be selected to be visually and technically compatible with the existing masonry.

The existing front boundary wall would be retained, locally repaired and redecorated to match its established colour and finish. No increase in its height and no new visually intrusive gates are proposed.



8. Assessment of Heritage Impact

8.1 Lower-ground-floor rear extension

The proposed lower-ground-floor extension would be located at the rear of the house, where it would not materially affect the principal Bishops Road elevation or the building's contribution to the public streetscape.

It replaces a lightweight glazed structure with a more coherent and permanent addition. Its single-storey scale, position beneath the upper floors and relationship with the existing rear building line ensure that it remains subordinate to the host building.

The use of facing brickwork provides continuity with the masonry character of the house. The dark-framed glazing gives the extension a clearly contemporary but visually recessive character, avoiding an inaccurate imitation of the original building.

The structural pier between the glazed doors reduces the apparent breadth of the glazing and introduces a vertical rhythm compatible with the proportions of the existing rear elevation.

The extension occupies only the area immediately adjoining the house and retains the substantial depth and landscaped character of the rear garden, consistent with Policy DH3's expectation that an appropriate area of garden be retained. It would therefore preserve the contribution made by rear gardens to the wider conservation area.

The effect of this element upon the significance of the Highgate Conservation Area would be neutral to minor beneficial.

8.2 Rear dormer

The rear dormer would introduce additional built form into the rear roof slope. However, this part of the roof has already been altered by an existing dormer, and the principle of a rear roof projection is therefore established on the building.

The replacement dormer is designed as a visually recessive addition. It is contained within the roof, positioned below the ridge and does not wrap around the side or front roof slopes. Its dark external finish allows it to relate to the surrounding roof covering and reduces its prominence when seen from the rear.

The dormer would not alter the principal elevation, roof ridge or chimney stack. It would have limited visibility from the public realm and would principally be experienced from private rear gardens.

Subject to the use of high-quality, non-reflective materials and careful detailing at the roof junctions, the dormer would preserve the overall hierarchy and legibility of the original house.

The effect of this element upon the significance of the conservation area would be neutral, with no identified heritage harm.



8.3 Front rooflights

The front roof slope is the most sensitive part of the proposal because it is visible from Bishops Road. Policy DH5 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan establishes a general expectation that roof extensions, dormers and rooflights are restricted to rear roof slopes, save where they reflect the established local character of the immediate context; the justification for the front rooflights therefore turns on that exception.

The rooflights have been designed as three small, evenly spaced conservation-style units rather than a dormer or other projecting roof extension. The proposed rooflights at 19 Bishops Road are to be a low-profile installation, dark frames and regular arrangement would allow the underlying pitched roof form to remain clearly legible.

The rooflights would not interrupt the ridge, eaves or chimney, and the roof would continue to be read as a single, simple pitched plane. The use of individual units limits the amount of glazing and avoids the appearance of one large opening.

The contextual review referred to in Section 1 identifies other properties along Bishops Road Nos. 31, 29, 27, 25, 23, 15, 13, 11, and 7 Bishops Road and within the wider Highgate area where rooflights and rear dormer alterations have been introduced, establishing that such alterations are not wholly uncharacteristic of the local context.

Relevant planning history within Bishops Road demonstrates that roof alterations form part of the established evolution of the street. At No. 13 Bishops Road, planning permission HGY/2024/2673 approved a rear dormer extension. At No. 10 Bishops Road, permission HGY/2010/0845 approved four rooflights within the front roof slope. Nos. 27, 25, 23 and 7 Bishops Road also display roof alterations within the wider streetscape; however, no corresponding planning references have been identified, and these are therefore cited only as existing contextual examples rather than confirmed planning precedents.

Each proposal nonetheless falls to be considered on its individual merits, and the case for the present proposal rests on the specific factors set out above rather than on precedent alone.

The proposed development at No. 19 responds to the context through a subordinate rear dormer and three modest, regularly arranged conservation-style rooflights, while retaining the principal roof form, ridge and chimney stack.

The rooflights would create a small degree of visible change. Nevertheless, their modest dimensions, conservation detailing and ordered composition would avoid visual dominance and retain the roof as the principal element.

The rooflight proposal would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and would not cause harm to its significance.



8.4 Front boundary wall

Retention and repair of the existing front boundary wall is a positive conservation measure.

The works would preserve an established element of the property's frontage, avoid unnecessary replacement and improve the condition and appearance of the public-facing boundary. This accords with Policy DH6 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks the retention of original boundary treatments.

8.5 Cumulative effect

The development has been designed to concentrate the greatest physical changes at the rear of the property.

The proposal retains:

- the principal front elevation;
- the front bay, entrance and decorative details;
- the established window openings;
- the building's overall scale and proportions;
- the pitched front roof form;
- the ridge and chimney;
- the front garden; and
- the existing boundary wall.

The combination of the rear extension, rear dormer and rooflights would not result in the loss of the architectural features that make the property a positive component of Bishops Road.

The development would remain legible as a series of subordinate contemporary interventions to an established historic house, rather than as an alteration that competes with or overwhelms the original building.

8.6 Position in the event any degree of harm is identified

The assessment above concludes that the proposals would preserve the significance of the Highgate Conservation Area and would not result in harm to this designated heritage asset. That conclusion reflects the modest scale of the works, their concentration to the rear of the property, and the sensitive detailing proposed to the front rooflights.

In the event that the decision-maker nonetheless identifies a degree of less than substantial harm in respect of any individual element of the proposal, paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In that scenario, the following public benefits would be relevant:



- the repair and reinstatement of traditional brickwork, pointing and boundary treatment, leaving the heritage asset in a better state of repair than at present;
- the removal of an existing lightweight, poor-quality glazed structure at the rear and its replacement with a more permanent, appropriately detailed addition;
- the retention of the property in active, viable residential use, avoiding pressure for more extensive redevelopment; and
- the wider social and economic benefits associated with improving and modernising an existing home, consistent with paragraph 203(e) of the Framework.

These benefits would, in the applicant's view, clearly and convincingly outweigh any low level of less than substantial harm, such that the balance under paragraph 215 would continue to favour the grant of planning permission.



9. Mitigation and Detailed Design Measures

The following measures should be incorporated into the works:

- The front rooflights should be genuine conservation-style units with dark, non-reflective frames and low-profile or flush installation.
- Existing roof coverings should be retained wherever practicable. Areas disturbed around the rooflights and dormer should be made good with materials matching the existing in type, colour, dimensions and weathering.
- The existing chimney stack should be retained and protected throughout the works.
- New facing brickwork should match the relevant existing rear masonry in colour, size, texture and bond.
- New mortar should be compatible with the existing brickwork and should not be harder than the surrounding masonry.
- Existing decorative brickwork, stucco, window surrounds and other architectural details should be protected and retained.
- The rear dormer should be finished in a dark, recessive material with minimal visible flashings and neatly detailed junctions.
- Glazed doors should have slim, dark-coloured frames and simple detailing.
- The front boundary wall should be repaired rather than replaced, with localised defects made good before redecoration.
- External pipework, vents, outlets and rainwater goods should be positioned discreetly and colour-matched to the adjoining surface.

These measures can be secured through the submitted drawings and, where necessary, appropriately worded planning conditions.



10. Conclusion

19 Bishops Road is an attractive unlisted house that contributes positively to the varied architectural character of Bishops Road and the Highgate Conservation Area, principally through its yellow stock-brick frontage, decorative brick and stucco detailing, traditional proportions, bay window, raised entrance, pitched roof, chimney, front garden and boundary wall. All of these features would be retained unaltered by the proposals.

The lower-ground-floor extension is subordinate, confined to the rear, and replaces an existing lightweight glazed structure with a better-proportioned and more durable addition. The rear dormer is contained within an already-altered roof slope and would have limited visibility from the public realm. The three front rooflights introduce a modest degree of change to the most sensitive part of the roof, but have been designed as small, ordered, low-profile conservation units that preserve the legibility of the pitched roof form and do not affect the ridge, eaves or chimney. The repair and redecoration of the front boundary wall would enhance the appearance and condition of the property's frontage.

Taken as a whole, the proposals retain the elements that make the host property significant, preserve the established character of Bishops Road, and maintain the hierarchy and legibility of the original building. For the reasons set out in Section 8, the proposals would preserve the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area and would cause no harm to the significance of this designated heritage asset; in the event any lesser degree of harm were identified, Section 8.6 sets out why this would in any event be clearly outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

The development therefore accords with the heritage objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular paragraphs 207, 212, 213 and 215), London Plan Policy HC1, Haringey Policies SP12 and DM9, and Policies DH2, DH3, DH5 and DH6 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan.



Relevant and Referenced Approvals:

10 Bishops Road – HGY/2010/0845

