Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee 6 November 2026

HGY/2026/2614: 24 Southwood Lawn Road

Demolition of existing garage and erection of outbuilding garden studio with a home gym, bicycle storage, shower, sauna, and garden shed in the rear garden.

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee (HCAAC) objects to this Application for the reasons set out below.

Off street parking

Interestingly, a few years ago on the Camden side of Highgate Conservation Area, we objected to planning applications and appeals, both lost by the applicants. One was for a garage and the other for a sauna/gym etc. We are reminded of these cases because the heritage consultants' approaches were similar in one respect: words describing key elements of the proposals changed through the course of the documents. In the case of this application, it is the use of the land between the pavement and the doors to the existing garage for which different words are used to describe it. This may seem a small point but in planning terms it is important. Ultimately, this is an application for off-street parking, a precedent which HCAAC considers would harm Highgate Conservation Area and so must be refused.

The Applicant's DAS states:

"*Existing Site Constraints and Opportunities*

• *The existing* ***driveway*** *provides* ***off-street parking***.

• *The amenity and privacy of neighbouring properties should be protected*.

2.3 ***Driveway*** *and landscape Vehicular Access Gate: The proposal includes the replacement of the existing vehicular access gates with a new timber gliding gate. The new gate has been designed to match the height of the existing gate and will be finished in timber to complement the material palette proposed for the garden building. The replacement gate is not considered to have any adverse impact on the character or appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area or on the amenity of neighbouring properties*."

"*3.0 Access Proposals/ Solutions Vehicular Access The existing vehicular access to the property will be retained. The proposal does not require the creation of a new access onto Southwood Lawn Road. The existing driveway will be widened to provide improved functionality and a more practical parking arrangement****. An off-street parking space will continue to be provided within the site***.

"*The associated driveway and garden step works improve the functionality and accessibility of the site while* ***retaining off-street parking*** *and providing dedicated cycle storage*." *Pedestrian Access The existing pedestrian relationship between the house,* ***drivewa****y and garden will be maintained*.

HCAAC wishes to point out that the so-called 'off-street parking' does not have that status and to grant that change of use would adversely impact the character of Highgate Conservation Area which would, in setting a precedent, be unacceptable.

Sliding gate

The drawing on page 11 shows what appears to be a sliding gate on the curtilage with the street. What is the height of the proposed sliding fence?

For example, the drawing shows the sliding gate as having the appearance of the existing fence. The illustration of the proposed gate indicates it would have the appearance of two gates with elaborate curved designs which would be inappropriate for this setting especially with the recently carefully restored clinker wall to no 26 next door. The DAS states: "*As part of these works, the existing vehicular access gates will be replaced with a new timber gliding gate* of matching height*, maintaining the established point of access from Southwood Lawn Road*." A decorative gate with multiple curved tops cannot be described as being '*of matching height'*. How high are those proposed gates at their highest

Height and form of boundary between 24 & 26 is unclear

What is the height of the existing fence or wall between the application site and the front garden of no. 26? That is variously shown as having a horizontal as well as it being with a sloping top.

The south elevation on page 12 appears to show a high wall beyond the car. Is that correct and how high is that wall?

Use of Gym etc.

Access to the Garden Building The garden building will be accessed from the garden/driveway area. The arrangement provides convenient access to the proposed gym, sauna and storage areas without requiring a change to the established principal access to the dwelling."

The proposed Garden Building should not be used commercially. Ventilation or a/c, etc. or use of the building should not affect neighbours at no. 26 especially given they have windows in the flank wall immediately above the proposed Garden Building.

It should be noted that No. 26 makes a significant contribution the Highgate Conservation Area. We note its new clinker wall carefully retains the character of the area.

26 Southwood Lawn Road

It is relevant to this application that 26 Southwood Lawn Road makes a significant contribution to the character of Southwood Lawn Road and Highgate Conservation Area.

Summary

More clarity on this Application is required as set out above. Only with that information could evaluation of any harm to Highgate Conservation Area be assessed. There are no Public Benefits from the proposed application to offset the harm. Thus, this application must be refused unless or until full information is provided and off street parking must be refused.