

HGY/2024/0073: 27 Aylmer Road

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee objects to this application on the following grounds:

- the proposal would not make a positive contribution to Highgate Conservation Area
- the proposal does not meet policy requirements
- headrooms shown on drawing no. A/PL17 : third floor plan are not correct
- daylight/sunlight studies for bedroom in basement required
- air quality study in utility room required
- Haringey needs to be satisfied regarding ground water and flooding

1. The proposal would not make a positive contribution to Highgate Conservation Area

Reference to the Design Statement, page P03 shows the very attractive house which the applicant wishes to demolish. Page 10 shows the consented front elevation and the front elevation which is now proposed. The consented scheme had a projecting gable where the car lift is now to be located. The composition was asymmetrical. The windows and tile-hung dormers and the long clay-tiled porch also referenced the Arts & Crafts character of the existing house and of the Bishops area of the Highgate Conservation Area more generally. The comparison on page 11 shows the dormers would be lost, replaced with a row of rooflights however these are shown much smaller than on the application drawing of the front elevation.

The new proposal, in dropping any Arts & Crafts' references, needs to be assessed in terms of its merit as a modern design and in terms of policy requirements. The stated approach now is to achieve symmetry.

We note that sprockets have been retained in the new design. The rooflights are too long and sit uncomfortably high in the roof. The windows on the front elevation are now each one pane of tall and narrow glass, openable below the 1100mm requirement from the internal floor levels as can be seen on the sections. The windows must be shown such that they would achieve compliance.

2. The proposal does not meet planning policy requirements

Highgate Neighbourhood Plan rightly sets a high bar where the applicant wishes to demolish an existing house:

Policy DH1: Demolition in Highgate's Conservation Areas

*Proposals to demolish buildings and structures that are non-designated heritage assets will be subject to a balance judgement with regard to the scale of the loss and the significance of the asset. Any proposed replacement should make a **positive contribution** to the conservation area.*

Supporting text:

*The Plan seeks to preserve and enhance the conservation areas. While all proposals to demolish will be considered against tests in higher level policies, **where demolition is permitted then development must positively contribute to the conservation area in which it sits.** New development should not make less of*

a contribution to the conservation area than that which it replaces. Non-designated heritage assets are listed in Appendices 4 and 5 on the website.

The two penultimate paragraphs in the Applicant's Conservation Area Statement state:

58. The character of Sheldon Avenue is generally more in keeping with the original Arts and Craft vernacular of the area despite the widespread demolition and new build development that has taken place on this street, although the Council has considered the depth and scale of a number of replacement buildings to be uncharacteristic of the historic pattern of development in the area. However, this assessment has shown that the increased bulk of these houses do not evidently appear to detract from the character of the street. Furthermore, some of the replacement buildings on Sheldon Avenue reflect more contemporary interpretations of Arts and Crafts features and have also successfully incorporated features such as basements, car lifts and light wells into their design and layout without any causing any heritage harm. Whilst the Council does not consider these features to be in keeping with the traditional character of the street, they do not detract from the special interest of the street as a whole and the photos taken in this assessment are evidence of this.

59. It is considered, as a result of this Conservation Area Statement, that the Aylmer Road section of the Bishops sub-area, given its peripheral location within the Highgate Conservation Area and the diverse architectural styles and themes present, clearly makes a less significant contribution to the overall character and appearance of the conservation area than Sheldon Avenue does and so is less sensitive to change in this regard.

Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2013) states:

"Aylmer Road (South side)

10.4.63: The consistent size, scale and style of the detached houses along the road, most of which have carriage driveways and which look onto Highgate Golf Club to the rear, are a positive feature..."

HCAAC is firmly of the view that the revised design of the front elevation would not make a positive contribution to Highgate Conservation Area whereas the existing house does. This application therefore does not satisfy the requirement of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan policies set out above.

3. Headrooms shown on drawing no. A/PL17 : second floor plan are not correct

The Case Officer will note the dotted blue line on the third floor plan A/PL17. This dotted blue line is annotated as follows in Bedroom 4, against the flank wall:

"height clearance at 1.8m". Reference to the section A3 on drawing no. A/PL25 shows the height at that point as being substantially less thus affecting the usable areas of all the rooms on the second floor. Section A/PL24 through Bedroom 5 shows a maximum ceiling height of only 2m. Bedroom 5 is unlikely to be a habitable room under any circumstances.

Only once the true line of the 1.8m headroom is shown on the second floor plan will it be known how many bedrooms this application provides. That number may not compare well with the provision in the existing house.

4. Daylight/sunlight studies for bedroom in basement required

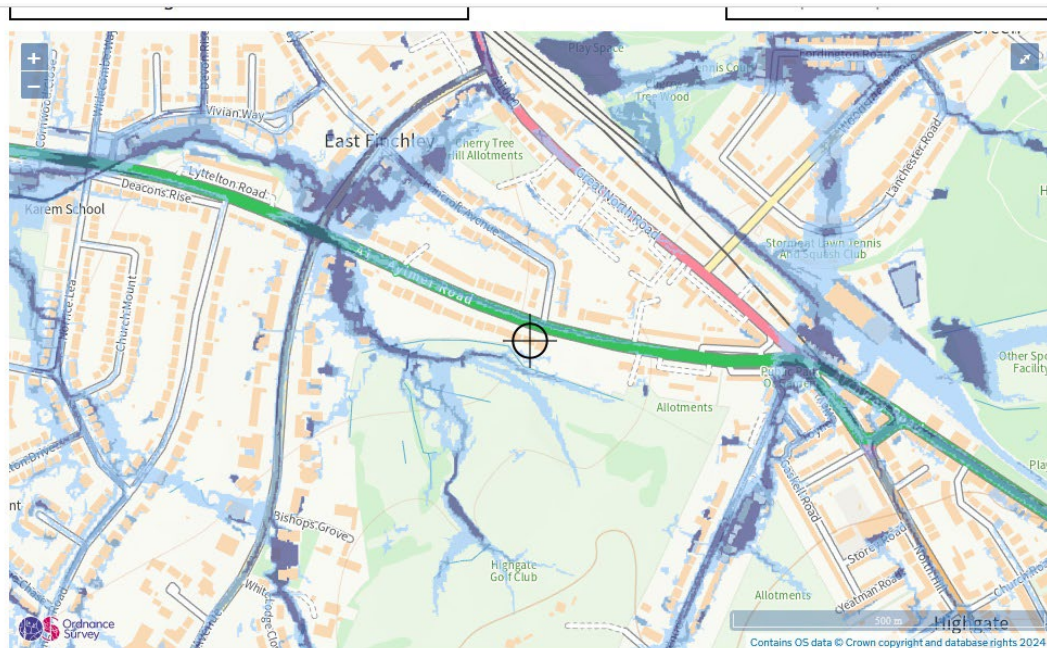
This bedroom may be used by staff who would require appropriate levels of daylight and sunlight as it would probably be a bed-sitting room. The outlook would in any case be poor. (see also Ground water and flooding below)

5. Air quality study in utility room required

The utility room is in effect a passageway from the basement garage to the basement inner hall. There may be fire risk issues as well as air quality issues.

6. Ground water and flooding

We understand that the large open area between Aylmer Road and Highgate Golf Course belongs to Thames Water and is retained as an attenuation area in the event of flooding. Haringey needs to be satisfied regarding ground water and flooding especially with a bedroom in the basement. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment requires an alarm in a bedroom in areas at risk of flooding.



Extent of flooding from surface water

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee considers this application provides no public benefits to balance the harm to the Highgate Conservation Area and therefore must be refused.