

My name is Didier Ryan, the architect. I have read all the submitted comments and wanted to thank those that participated with their various views - in support and objection.

There are passionate comments on both sides. I will focus on addressing the objections, which broadly fall into 2 categories i) the proposed house is incongruous with the neighbourhood, and ii) the land is part of the surrounding greenspace.

I will refrain from addressing personal or professional conduct comments. I conduct myself fairly, openly and to a professional standard.

Part of surrounding Greenspace:

The site is closely connected to the surrounding greenspace, sharing one 1 of its 4 boundaries with Parkland Walk. The site is not - and never has been – within, nor part of, Parkland Walk.

No. 28 Shepherds Close shares the same relationship with Parkland Walk as No.s 18 - 27 Shepherds Close. These 10 houses have 1 of their boundaries that connect with Parkland Walk, and in some cases, private access gates (blue arrows below indicate boundaries adjacent to Parkland Walk). The relationship is highly compatible: some residents of No.s 18 - 27 Shepherds Close volunteer to tend the Parkland Walk Wildlife Trail, while others walk their dogs early morning and late evenings, helping to improve safety and casual surveillance. There is no reason why the proposed house could not be equally compatible - especially in light of the proposed measures aimed at enhancing this interface, such as mature, native trees; biodiverse roofs; ecological habitats; and an owner-occupied garden.

The land is physically contained by 3 other boundaries, within the curtilage of the Shepherds Close development. (also evidenced in the objector's photo taken from the window of No. 9)



The northern boundary is defined by a block of brick garages. (This sets the 2 storey height limit for the northern part of house). Opposite and to the south, is one of the neighbouring pair of houses, separated by a garden and entrance courtyard. (pink outline) The proposal

site is located in-between these dwellings and garage block. It is an infill plot, currently vacant and derelict.

It is not - nor ever was - part of the surrounding greenspace. There are no rights of access over the land, nor ever have been. This is despite efforts by the neighbour at No. 27, to plant a non-native hedge on No. 28 (as noted in her objection) in order to amalgamate the property with her own.

The site has been boarded up for a number of years, so I am curious how another objector states they are *“somebody who frequents this much-needed green space with my children and it would be a travesty to see it destroyed for commercial gain”*.

Development on this site would not infringe upon the neighbouring Parkland Walk.

It would not compromise the surrounding green or open space.

The woodland background will be retained.

Foreground planting will reinforce the existing background greenery.

And mature, native trees and landscaping across the site will enhance the streetscape and Parkland Walk.

The HCAAC questions the statement that this is brownfield land. It quotes the first half of the NPPF definition for Previous Developed Land as “land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure”. The Committee omits the 2nd half of the sentence which concludes: ***“including the curtilage of the developed land”***.

The site is within the curtilage of the Shepherds Close development. It is an infill between existing houses and garages. It is underutilised, boarded up and within the full definition classed as ‘brownfield’.

The proposed house is incongruous with the neighbourhood

This has been addressed at length within the submission and the proposed design.

Based on neighbour’s feedback, the proposal commits to a home that matches the height, style, materials and appearance as their own homes, so in design terms this argument is misplaced.

There are some objectors that make the case that proposal is incongruous with Harley Sherlock’s design intentions.

I do not personally know Sherlock, although I have read much of his writing, including ‘Cities are good for us’ and ‘An architect in Islington’. I also studied at the Architectural Association, where Sherlock and the other Kemlock/Andrews, Emerson, Sherlock & Keable Architects were studying when they received their initial commission.

Sherlock was committed to buildings that met the needs of the time. He was philosophically aligned with buildings that were flexible - that could, and would, change over their lifetimes, and with buildings that would remain modern – in style – and in practice. One of the many attractive qualities of his designs is the ability to accommodate changes – houses that

allowed for changes in family unit, changes in personal circumstances, and changes in society at large. A simple example of this is the original garages which were underneath No.s 1 - 5 Shepherds Close. These were too narrow for modern cars and were subsequently converted and integrated into the interior space of each house.

Sherlock was a devout modernist. He believed that communities and occupants change, and that their building should change with them.

Objectors who argue that Shepherds Close should remain fixed in time are making a personal case. If they are interested to learn more about the Architect's intentions, then either of the above books provide an excellent insight.

Based on consistency to his own philosophy, it is probable that Sherlock would agree that Shepherds Close can, and should change. He might also agree that a modest building, with a low impact, could readily be integrated within his overall vision, and help to contribute to its ongoing sustainability and evolution.

This is a sensitive design on the right site and it will make a positive addition to Shepherds Close and to the architecture of Highgate.

Thank you for the wide interest and passion during this consultation.

Didier Ryan