

HGY/2023/2886 Flat A, 30 Shepherds Hill, N6 5AH

Demolition of existing garage, and construction of new 3 storey self-contained 4 bed house with basement and rear living terrace, with associated vegetation removal and ancillary works.

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee objects in the strongest terms to this application:

Policy DH4 of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan states *“the gaps between buildings, often providing views of mature rear gardens, are an important feature of many residential streets of Highgate and contribute positively to the conservation area.”*

The majority of large late-Victorian detached villas (and 20th-century flats) in Shepherd’s Hill retain these gaps. The group of which No. 30 forms part have particularly wide gaps affording views of greenery beyond. Where side extensions/garages have been added (as in this instance) they are usually single storey. This proposal, if approved, would set an unfortunate precedent with a potentially disastrous impact on the streetscape and the character of Shepherd's Hill and on the character and appearance of both the Highgate and Crouch End Conservation Areas.

The side elevation of No. 30 is highly visible with attractive detailing, which would be largely obscured by the extension.

No CGIs have been provided to show the impact of the proposed extension from street views. However it is very clear that the proposal would be much larger than more recent infill houses, being almost as tall as the “host building”.

The application does not meet the requirements of the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan or para 135 of NPPF. This application must be refused.

Further detail for the grounds of our objection are as follows:

- The design appears to be an attempt, whatever the massing or appearance, to maximise (as opposed to optimise) what can be crammed onto the site with no regard to the setting or significance of the Conservation Area. The result is unfortunately large and simply creates an inchoate series of forms of different sizes, lengths and widths, piled one above the other resulting in an incongruous whole. The application does not meet the requirements of para 135 of NPPF
- The site in this instance is not the whole of the house and land of no. 30 as seems to be suggested on page 4 of the Design and Access Statement but only that part of the land indicated on the Location Plan. The proposed building covers more or less the whole area of the plot; and the lightwell at the front encroaches on what may be parking space for the other flats
- Highgate Conservation Area Character Appraisal recognises this property and its neighbours as positive contributors to this part of the Conservation Area (nos. 18, 20 and 26 - 34 are mentioned in the CAA and are cited as making a positive contribution.)
- The principle of keeping views of the flank walls with their decorative details has been established.



This application would unacceptably obscure that view:

- The need to retain open views between properties has also been established.



- The gardens at the rear of these properties are large, open and well stocked with trees. There is no tree report. Please note there is apparently a tree with a TPO on this property
- The applicant's suggestion that the height of the building should be dictated by the cill line of the adjacent dormer window has no basis. The proposal does not follow the established principles set out above.
- Any extension should be set back from the main façade
- At the rear, the proposed building extends into the existing garden in a form which is not typical of development at the rear of these properties
- Overlooking from the rear terrace into neighbours' gardens should be assessed
- The proposed plans would provide a dwelling with poor levels of amenity and outlook
- The "internal" courtyard towards the back of the proposed house at basement level provides extremely restricted amenity and scant daylight or sunlight especially for anyone largely or actually confined to the basement. It seems likely that a sense of seeing sky or sunlight would be limited or non-existent
- The size and quality of the outside space for a family house is extremely poor. The proportion of garden space to the built area is 0%. The area of the amenity space to built area is also extremely poor
- Flat rooflights within that terrace provide some daylight to the basement floor (accommodation for a disabled person). Is the glass opaque or transparent? Either way, there would be an actual or perceived lack of privacy in the basement below these rooflights
- Daylight and sunlight information should be provided. The front lightwell is extremely small, would need guarding and would have a car parked in front of it
- The open staircase internally suggests sprinklers would be necessary and safety for a disabled person could be questionable
- Although there is no stream here as Shepherds Hill runs along a ridge between Priory Brook and Upper Cholmeley Brook, however the fact that number 30 is at 88 metres, and the new house, 1 Pound Lane and the houses in Stanhope Gardens are at 81 metres, could be significant. An independent assessment of the BIA could be appropriate

Fundamentally the developer is seeking too much accommodation at the expense of good architecture and decent living standards. The result would cause harm to the Highgate Conservation Area and so must be refused.
