

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee

HGY/2024/0806 41 Sheldon Avenue, N6 4JP

Revised 27 April 2024

Demolition and erection of replacement larger dwelling with basement, swimming pool and associated plant equipment to rear garden, and all ancillary works including landscaping, boundary treatments and access

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

1. Re-modelling rather than demolition would be preferable in terms of sustainability and appearance.
2. The proposed extension at the rear, given the change in levels, would have an unacceptable impact on neighbours and so would not meet the amenity requirements in policy DM1.
3. Independent audit of BIA would be prudent.
4. Where native trees are to be removed, mature native replacements should be required. Larger tree at front required to replace T 14. Tree Report: encroachment on RPAs unacceptable.

Taking each objection in turn we expand on our reasons for our objections listed above:

1. Re-modelling rather than demolition would be preferable in terms of sustainability and appearance:
Heritage Statement 2.5: "The house has a symmetrical front façade, with a centrally placed main entrance"



Note horizontal format of the windows, casement windows, low roof to the porch and mature trees in the front garden.

The Statement quotes the Character Appraisal on the Bishops' area of Highgate Conservation Area:
"2.8 Paragraph 10.8.1 of the Appraisal notes with regard to positive contributors within Sub area 7 that
"Most of the existing buildings contribute to the homogenous character of the sub-area."

Para 5.1 states: "Overall, the front elevation has a pleasing sense of scale and proportion, and a solid neo-Georgian character, but lacks any innovative or unusual features to its composition or styling which would elevate its architectural interest or value" and "with little embellishment or ornamentation". HCAAC considers this description understates the more Arts & Crafts elements, particularly the windows, being horizontal in

form and with casements and toplights. This is one of the original houses which led to the area being included in the Conservation Area.

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Under the heading 'Evidential value' the author states: *"The building dates from the 1928 and what evidential evidence it provides largely relates to its minor role in the suburban development of the area from the 1914 onwards."*

HCAAC considers that this distinctive part of the Highgate Conservation Area was added specifically because of the design merit of the houses in this area. It also represents a period which is otherwise not significantly represented in Highgate.

The Heritage Statement asks *"Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands? Response: All buildings by their very existence form part of, and illustrate, the development of the settlement. Given the number houses along Sheldon Avenue which are of a similar age and character, the existing building contributes to the group character of the road and the wider Bishop's estate."*

HCAAC considers that No. 41 is one such example which contributes to the homogeneity referred to in the Character Appraisal of the Bishop's area which states:

"10.8 Positive Contributors

10.8.1 Most of the existing buildings contribute to the homogenous character of the sub-area."

We have also read the comments from the immediate neighbour at 43 Sheldon Avenue who correctly observes how the design and scale of the house will impact on an important element which Policy DH2 of 'Highgate Neighbourhood Plan' dealt with, namely that development proposals should preserve and enhance the character or appearance of Highgate's Conservation Areas.

If one looks at the current site with its wide views into the garden and golf course it certainly adds to the openness and character of the area. Allowing any development which, as the neighbour notes, eliminates the existing gaps between the properties by building extremely close to the site's boundaries, must result in a significant impact on the special character of the Conservation Area.

2. The proposed extension at the rear, given the change in levels, would have an unacceptable impact on neighbours and so would not meet the amenity requirements in policy DM1.
3. Independent audit of BIA would be prudent as there are aspects of the submitted BIA which may give rise to concern:
 - 4.5.1 notes that there is a second aquifer
 - 4.5.4 notes the rear garden appears to be in an area at a low to medium risk of flooding from surface water
 - 4.5.3 notes there would be a slight increase of the hard surface area due to the enlargement of the building footprint and the proposed pool
 - 5.1.1: 1b notes ground water was encountered at a depth of between 0.34m and 1.07m below ground floor level (?) of the rear garden. Which applies?
 - Q10: Excavation will be undertaken within the Claygate member which is a Secondary Aquifer A.In response to the standard questionnaire:
Q4 and Q5: based on the surface water modelling on the gov.uk website, the surface water flood risk is mainly at the rear of the property.
Q6: Is the site in an area identified to have surface water flood risk – Yes. Refer to Flood Risk Assessment for further details

5.4: cumulative development: is response reasonable?

9.2 states the basement construction will only partially act as a barrier to ground water flow.

9.3: Construction below the groundwater level could theoretically deviate the ground water flows. However, the arrangement of the buildings is as such that no significant influence on the local hydrogeology is expected.

4. Where native trees are to be removed, mature native replacements should be required. Larger tree at front required to replace T 14.

Encroachment on RPAs unacceptable:

ASHP pit and swimming pool severely encroach on the RPA of the neighbour's fine tree; football and small seating areas could be managed to restrict root damage. The rear terrace also encroaches on an RPA. Loss of additional trees due to these encroachments would be unacceptable.

There appear to be only three single stem trees to replace the loss of 5 mature trees. New trees should be native species.

HCAAC does not consider a sound case for demolishing this house if the period has been made. We note that the applicant is willing to pay £6,840 carbon off-setting charge in lieu of achieving the required targets. We would wish to see an assessment by Haringey's Sustainability Officer.