

Application Number:	HGY/2024/0776
Application Type:	Householder planning permission
Address:	26E North Hill, Hornsey, London, N6 4QA
Proposal:	Installation of No.19 solar panels across rooftop, side and rear roofslopes
Case Officer:	Oskar Gregersen
Valid Date:	20/03/2024
Applicant:	4 Mr ANDRE GIBBS
Agent:	Mr Michael Kapelski

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

1. Site Description

The application site relates to a 3-storey purpose-built semi-detached dwellinghouse, built in the early 2000's on a backland site set within the Highgate Conservation Area. The surrounding area is comprised of another terrace of higher architectural quality, and a variety of older Victorian homes on North Hill.

2. Details of Proposal

This is an application for the installation of 19 solar panels across side and rear rooftops.

3. Relevant Planning and Enforcement history

The most recent applications for this site are summarised as follows:

- HGY/2000/0701 | Land At, 26 and 59, North Hill | Demolition of all buildings on both sites and erection of 12 x 2 bed self-contained flats (4 & 3 storeys) with associated car parking and landscaping at 26 North Hill site. Erection of 2 x 3 bed 3 storey semi-detached houses with rooms in roofspace and associated car parking at no. 59.

Refuse

- HGY/2001/0852 | 26, North Hill, London, N6 4QA, London | Conservation Area Consent for the demolition of all existing buildings on site and the erection of 5 x 3 bedroom houses.

Approve w/ Conditions

- HGY/2023/0285 | Land At, 26, North Hill, N6 | Erection of 2 X two & half storey semi-detached houses with basement accommodation. (Amended scheme to planning application reference HGY/2001/0852).

Approve w/ Conditions

4. Internal & Statutory Consultation

The following were consulted regarding the application:

LBH Conservation: Overall the proposed solar panels would be acceptable as the building is not of any architectural merit, however it would be preferable that the panels proposed on the flat roof element were removed to avoid precedent of panels visible on the front elevation in a conservation area.

5. Local Representations

No responses

6. Analysis/Assessment of the Application

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

1. Energy Efficiency and the benefits of installation of solar panels;
2. Design, visual amenity and impact on the character and appearance of the area [CA]

Energy Efficiency and the benefits of the solar panels

Policy DM21 of the Development Management, Development Plan Document 2017 supports appropriate measures to sustainably retrofit existing homes, recognising the opportunity to improve the environmental performance of existing buildings.

This policy sees to encourage proposals for minor and householder development to incorporate energy efficient measures, including installation of solar panels, providing any such treatment is sympathetic to the character and historic significance of the existing building and surrounding area and, where having regard to other Local Plan policies (DM1 Delivering High Quality Design and DM9 Management of the Historic Environment).

The proposal seeks to install No.19 solar panels, alongside associated equipment which will improve the quality of the building, reduce bills costs, and help residents use greener energy. The works will also reduce health inequality and health outcomes for residents as a result of the improved internal environment and resultant reductions in fuel consumption and fuel bills, and reduced CO2 emissions, delivering wider environmental benefits.

Documents were submitted showing projected usage/generation in MWh of the site using data over 12 months. The site currently consumes 3.28MWh a year, with the panels producing 5.67MWh over the year. Naturally this will be increased in summer time, with the application site projected to import 1.72MWh of energy per year (predominantly in the winter months) and able to export 2.39MWh to the grid (in the summer months when there is most sun).

Design, visual amenity and impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area

This application proposes the installation of No.19 solar panels across the side and rear elevations of a large semi-detached house built in the early 2000's. These panels would be situated such that they would be partially visible from the front elevation, and specifications detail that the panels would not protrude more than 150mm above the slope of the roof.

The overall appearance of the houses would therefore remain very similar to the existing appearance, yet with panels located on side and rear elevations, with a number placed on a flat element of roof that would leave panels visible from the front elevation.

Officers consider that while the proposal does present some harm, given its location within a conservation area, the significance of the application site and surrounding buildings is lesser than that of the conservation area as a whole. However, notwithstanding this architectural insignificance, it is important to assess the potential impact of placement of solar panels visible from the front elevation as precedent within a conservation area.

Conservation officer comments submitted with this proposal stated that it would be preferable to remove the panels from the flat roof element (visible from the front elevation) to mitigate any potential harm to the character of the conservation area. Amendments were requested in an effort to mitigate this potential harm to the conservation area, however this was rejected as it was stated the applicants need the full 19 panels in order to be viable.

On balance, Officers consider that, while the proposal does represent some harm given its location within a conservation area, the significance of the application site and immediate surrounding buildings and vantage points is lesser than that of the conservation area as a whole, and as such the harm is outweighed by the positive benefits of the scheme in terms of improving the energy efficiency of the dwelling and the living conditions of occupants. Officers do not consider the development would result in any significant material change to the character of the area.

Therefore, the proposal would comply with Policy DM9 of the Development Management, Development Plan 2017 and will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

6. CIL Applicable

N/A

7. Summary and Conclusion

The proposed works comply with Development Management Policies DM1, DM9, DM21, as well as Strategic Policies SP11 and SP12, and London Plan Policy D6 alongside all relevant policies of the NPPF and should be approved.

The proposed works would significantly enhance the sustainability and energy efficiency of these houses. This is strongly welcomed and will help to address climate change. The changes to the appearance of the houses, subject to control over materials, are very limited.

8. RECOMMENDATION

The application is recommended for approval subject to the following conditions.

Conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun no later than three years from the date of this decision notice, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and drawings listed in this decision notice, other than where those details are altered pursuant to the conditions of this planning permission.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Informatives:

INFORMATIVE: Hours of Construction Work

The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-

8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday

8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday

and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

INFORMATIVE: Land Ownership

The applicant is advised that this planning permission does not convey the right to enter onto or build on land not within his ownership.