

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee 26/7/2024

Highgate CAAC objection to [HGY/2024/0989](#) Channing School, Highgate Hill, London, N6 5HF

Erection of a basement and ground rear extension. Reconfiguration of floorplates, including the installation of a lift to all levels, and heritage restoration works within the main school. Erection of a single storey rear dormer to Channing House. Landscaping alterations to the front and rear of the main school.

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee has a number of concerns about the current version of this application.

1. On 31st May 2024 we commented on planning application [HGY/2024/0989](#) as follows:

“Highgate CAAC supports the scheme to restore the original room layout and reveal historic details and appreciates the need for disabled access. We welcome the fact that this application involves minimal further loss of outside space and biodiversity.”

Nonetheless, we support concerns raised by Louise Lewis about archaeological investigations which may not have been followed up, and about the layout proposed at the front of the building. The space available seems too small for a formal garden and seating area. The cherry tree should be retained. Planting more greenery of greater ecological value to birds, insects etc would be welcome.

2. We also note that Haringey’s Conservation Officer Elisabetta Tonazzi made comments on planning application [HGY/2024/0989](#) on 12th July. We support her concerns about the proposed changes to the front of the building, the need for careful oversight of details and materials, and so-on.

3. Further new documents were posted for this application on 22nd July 2024, after the objections from Louise Lewis and from Haringey’s Conservation Officer. The revised DAS for [HGY/2024/0989](#) is described as “July 2024 Document Issue Rev

P03 - Updated Planning Issue” but the changes are not described. The “new” drawings are still described as “P01 Planning Issue” and “Date 27/02/2024”.

The difference might be that existing railings at the front entrance are being retained, the existing gate is being removed and stored, and the seating area behind the small bed of “heritage planting” has been removed. We are not sure if there are other changes as well.

However, the documents for related LBC application, [HGY/2024/1904](#), have not been updated. The DAS for that application is still “March 2024 Document Issue Rev P02 - Planning Issue”, and the drawings still show the benches proposed beside the front entrance, “proposed removal or alteration of metal gate to suit”, and there is no mention of the railings being retained.

Applications [HGY/2024/0989](#) and [HGY/2024/1904](#) should both be based on the same set of drawings. This needs to be clarified.

4. As noted above, we think the tiny areas of highly formal topiary risk looking very odd and we would rather see more natural planting, in keeping with the leafy character of Highgate Conservation Area, and with broader sustainability objectives.

At both front and back there is still too much reliance on concrete and paving. Greater thought should be given to carbon emissions, climate change, ecology etc.

We hope the green surfaces shown in the artist’s impressions on p 18 & 19 of DAS Rev 3 are grass or other plants rather than artificial grass or another hard surface.

5. The setting to be considered should include listed buildings and areas in Camden and Islington as well as Haringey. For instance, across the road, Waterlow Park and a number of structures within it are listed at Grade 2 or 2*, but this is not acknowledged in the DAS (e.g. Figure 2 on page 5).

Similarly, archaeological finds in Camden (particularly Hampstead Heath) and Islington should have been considered in the desk study, as well as Highgate and Queen's Wood, alongside earlier finds on the Channing site itself.

6. Our main other concern about [HGY/2024/0989](#) is that the lift block on Channing House will be visible from Highgate Hill, and may damage the Highgate Conservation Area if the design and scale of the intervention is overly obtrusive. (See DAS page 15 "Key Views", for instance.) This aspect of the proposals should be carefully monitored, with the design details, materials etc covered by condition.