

FAO: Nathan Keyte  
Planning Services,  
Haringey Council,  
River Park House,  
225 High Road,  
London  
N22 8HQ

19/08/2024

Dear Sir,

**RE:** HGY/2024/1953

**FOR:** Erection of a detached part single, part two storey, three-bedroom family home

**AT:** 28 Shepherds Close, London N6 5AG (site adjacent to 27 Shepherds Close)

As a resident of the Close, I am writing to object to the proposed development at Shepherds Close formally. My concerns are based on the design's incompatibility with the area, the historical context of planning refusals, and the inadequate visualisations provided in the application.

Shepherds Close has a long history of planning refusals dating back to 1979 (OLD/1979/1258) – and not as applicant claims to 1990s (see point 4.1 in Planning Statement), with the most recent rejection in 2024 (HGY/2023/3217). These consistent refusals have cited concerns about overdevelopment, loss of green space, and negative impacts on the Highgate Conservation Area. The current proposal fails to address these longstanding issues, merely repackaging previously rejected designs with minor alterations.

The proposed detached, part-single, part-two-story 3-bedroom home is fundamentally at odds with Shepherds Close's architectural character. Our street is defined by uniform terraced houses that create a cohesive streetscape. Introducing a modern, detached structure disrupts this visual continuity and detracts from the historical aesthetic that defines our Conservation Area.

The proposed development would severely and detrimentally impact residents who currently enjoy views of the green space.

The existing layout of Shepherds Close is a well-balanced and harmonious residential environment that should be preserved. The current arrangement of uniform terraced houses creates a cohesive streetscape that enhances the area's aesthetic appeal and historical character. This architectural consistency is vital in maintaining the integrity of the Highgate Conservation Area.

Adding a new three-bedroom house would disrupt this delicate balance, introducing a structure that is out of character with the existing homes. The proposed building's design and scale do not align with the established architectural style of Shepherds Close, which is characterised by its uniformity and historical significance. This inconsistency would detract from the overall visual harmony and could compromise the area's cultural heritage. Besides, the existing green space is a vital buffer against urban

encroachment, providing residents with a sense of openness and connection to nature. It is a cherished amenity that contributes to the quality of life for those living in the Close. Introducing a new dwelling would reduce this valuable green space and diminish the tranquil atmosphere that residents currently enjoy.

The current layout supports a strong sense of community, with shared access to green areas for recreation and social interaction. The loss of this communal space would negatively impact the established community dynamics, reducing opportunities for residents to gather and enjoy their surroundings.

Residents whose properties directly face or overlook the green space will lose their natural, open vista. This green outlook is a significant amenity that contributes to their quality of life and well-being. The proposed building would replace this calming, natural view with a man-made structure, fundamentally altering the character of the outlook these residents have long enjoyed.

The loss of green space views has negative psychological effects on residents. Studies have shown that views of nature contribute to stress reduction, improved mood, and overall mental well-being. Replacing this green outlook with a building could lead to increased stress and decreased well-being for affected residents.

Properties that currently benefit from views of green space often command higher values due to this desirable feature. The loss of these views could potentially decrease the property values of the affected homes, causing financial harm to residents.

The green space currently provides a natural, soft light reflection that benefits surrounding properties. Introducing a building with hard surfaces could alter the quality of light entering these homes, potentially creating glare or reducing the amount of natural light they receive.

Residents enjoying observing local wildlife in the green space will lose this valuable connection with nature. The green area likely serves as a habitat for various bird species and small animals, providing residents with opportunities for nature watching from their homes.

The open green area creates a sense of spaciousness and breathing room within the urban setting. Its loss would lead to a more enclosed, built-up feeling, fundamentally changing the spatial experience for residents who currently benefit from this open aspect.

For residents whose main living areas face the green space, the change would significantly affect their daily lives. Activities such as enjoying meals, relaxing, or working from home would now be conducted with a view of a building instead of greenery, potentially impacting their enjoyment of their homes.

The green space offers varying views throughout the seasons, from spring blossoms to autumn colours. Losing this seasonal variation would deprive residents of the visual pleasure and connection to nature's cycles that the current outlook provides.

The loss of this green view extends beyond mere aesthetics, affecting the residents' quality of life, well-being, and potential financial interests. This impact should be given serious consideration in the planning decision process.

Section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that anyone intending to carry out works to trees in a conservation area must give the local planning authority six weeks' notice before any work begins. This notice is essential as it allows the authority to consider the contribution the trees make to the area's character and decide whether to make them subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

The applicant's failure to submit this notice has effectively concealed their intentions to clear the site of vegetation, including potentially significant trees that contribute to the character of the Highgate Conservation Area. This lack of transparency has prevented both the local authority and residents from assessing the full impact of the proposed development on the area's green infrastructure and overall character.

Furthermore, this omission raises serious questions about the applicant's commitment to following proper planning procedures and their respect for the conservation area's protected status. It suggests a concerning disregard for the area's environmental and historical significance.

Had a Section 211 notice been properly filed, it would have alerted the community to the applicant's plans to clear the site, allowing for timely objections and potentially preserving valuable trees and vegetation. The absence of this notice has unfairly disadvantaged the community and undermined the planning process's integrity.

This failure to comply with basic conservation area requirements should be viewed as a significant strike against the application. It demonstrates a lack of due diligence and respect for both the planning process and the local environment, further supporting the case for rejecting this inappropriate development proposal.

Despite claims of size reduction, the proposed building still seems too large for the plot. Its footprint and height (different height measurements are mentioned in documents – 5.6m, and 5.7m) make it look cramped and overshadow the important green space that has historically provided an open buffer within the Close. The setback diagrams show that the proposed building does not maintain enough distance from the street compared to neighbouring properties, further emphasising its mismatch with the existing streetscape.

The design features large windows and elevated positions, significantly overlooking neighbouring properties. This invasion of private spaces is a significant concern for residents and detracts from the quality of life within the Close.

All houses in the Close are positioned in a way so that no windows of any house face another. This new building would change that principle. This plot has been designed to be a garden land, not a plot for another house. Historically, for over 50 years this land has always been used as a garden, and a recreational area for the Close residents. This proposal represents a deliberate degradation of valuable green space within our community. It disregards the site's history, the Conservation Area's character, and Shepherds Close's environmental integrity. Approving this application would not only reward destructive actions but also set a dangerous precedent for future developments.

The visualisations provided in the application are fundamentally flawed and potentially misleading.

1. The streetscape view (145b\_09) and setback comparison (145b\_18) appear to understate the proposed development's true scale and visual impact.
2. Outlook visualisations for properties 6-27 (145b\_14, 145b\_15, 145b\_16) reveal substantial overlooking issues, indicating a significant loss of privacy for neighbouring properties.
3. Visualisations lack critical details such as accurate representations of existing tree cover, site topography, and the full extent of neighbouring properties.
4. The application lacks detailed shadow analyses and accurate representations of how the proposed building will impact light levels for surrounding properties.

The proposal lacks adequate shadow studies to assess how the new structure will affect daylight access for neighbouring properties. The visualisations do not accurately represent the scale and impact of the proposed development, leading to a misunderstanding of its effects on residential amenities and the local environment. Additionally, there is insufficient analysis of how the removal of trees and vegetation will impact local wildlife and biodiversity.

The development contradicts Highgate Conservation Area guidelines by introducing a structure that is inconsistent with the established architectural style of Shepherds Close. It undermines Haringey's Urban Forest Strategy, which aims to increase the borough's green canopy by 10% by 2026, as removing mature trees for this development directly contradicts this goal. Furthermore, the proposal conflicts with the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan, emphasising protecting open space and heritage conservation.

The application misleadingly asserts that "the Met Police note the high level of crime in Shepherds Close," which is untrue. Actual crime statistics reveal that crime rates in Shepherds Close are comparable to or lower than those in similar nearby areas. For example, in 2023, there were only 11 reported crimes in Shepherds Close, and no crimes have been reported in 2024.

Pressure on Utilities and Services

The addition of a new dwelling could further strain already stretched local services, including water supply, sewage, electricity, and gas. The area has a history of infrastructure issues, and this development could exacerbate these problems.

#### **Traffic and Parking Concerns**

The development could lead to increased traffic and parking congestion in an already crowded cul-de-sac. This raises safety concerns, particularly for children and elderly residents.

#### **Dangerous Precedent for Future Developments**

Approving this development could set a precedent for future infill developments in Shepherds Close and similar areas. This would make it more difficult to protect other green spaces from being developed and could lead to further erosion of the conservation area's character.

In light of these significant concerns regarding design, historical context, environmental impact, community well-being, and the misleading nature of the application materials, I urge the planning committee to reject this proposal. The development fails to address the reasons for previous refusals, contradicts local conservation and environmental policies, and would irreparably harm the character and community of Shepherds Close.

Yours faithfully,  
Kasia Marzec

### **Appendix: Relevant Planning Policies and Legal Precedents**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

##### **1. Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places**

Paragraph 127 Developments should be visually attractive, with good architecture, layout, and landscaping.

Paragraph 130 Permission should be refused for poor designs that fail to improve area character and quality.

##### **2. Section 15 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment**

Paragraph 170 Planning decisions should enhance the natural environment, protect valued landscapes, and minimise biodiversity impacts.

##### **3. Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment**

- Paragraph 193 Emphasizes preserving the significance of heritage assets in planning decisions.

#### **London Plan (2021)**

##### **1. Policy D3 - Optimising Site Capacity Through Design-Led Approach**

- Developments should enhance local context through layout, orientation, scale, appearance, and shape.

2. Policy G6 - Biodiversity and Access to Nature
  - Developments should secure net biodiversity gain.
3. Policy HC1 - Heritage Conservation and Growth
  - Developments affecting heritage assets should conserve their significance.
4. Policy G7 - Trees and Woodlands
  - Protects existing trees and requires high-quality green infrastructure in new developments.

### **Haringey Local Plan (2017)**

1. Policy SP11 - Design
  - New developments must be high quality and respect local context and character.
2. Policy SP12 - Conservation
  - Protects and enhances heritage assets, ensuring new developments respect these areas.
3. Policy DM1 - Delivering High Quality Design
  - Ensures developments complement the existing built environment.
4. Policy DM7 - Protecting Green Infrastructure
  - Resists loss of garden land or green spaces.
5. Policy DM9 - Management of the Historic Environment
  - Proposals must preserve and enhance conservation areas' character.
6. Policy DM19 - Nature Conservation
  - Ensures developments don't negatively impact biodiversity and ecological networks.
7. Haringey's Urban Forest Strategy
  - Aim to increase the borough's green canopy by 10% by 2026.

### **Highgate Neighbourhood Plan (2017)**

1. Policy SC1 - High Quality Design
  - Developments must respect and contribute to local character.
2. Policy OS1 - Protecting Open Space
  - Protects and enhances local green spaces.
3. Policy TR2 - Reducing the Impact of Traffic
  - Seeks to minimise traffic impact in residential areas.
4. Policy DH2 - Conservation and Heritage

- Ensures new developments respect Highgate's historic environment.

### **Legal Precedent**

-Barnwell Manor Wind Farm Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire District Council (2014)\*\*: Established that considerable weight should be given to preserving heritage assets in planning decisions.

### **Additional Considerations**

1. Urban Characterisation Study (2015): This study emphasises maintaining residential area character, particularly regarding garden land loss.
2. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA): Haringey may consider conducting an EIA to assess the proposed development's ecological and environmental consequences