



## HIGHGATE SOCIETY

10A South Grove, Highgate London N6 6BS

8th October 2023

Kate Henry  
Planning Department, London Borough of Camden  
5 Pancras Road  
LONDON, N1C 4AG

### **By e-mail**

Dear Ms. Henry

**Re: Application No: 2023/3475/P – Extensions and replacement of garage doors  
at 93 Swain's Lane, London N6**

I am writing on behalf of the Highgate Society to object to the above application.

1. The terrace of houses extending from 91-103 Swain's Lane built in the 1970's is an important example of modern architecture in Highgate. The buildings, designed by Haworth and Kasabov, featured in the Highgate Society's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition, Highgate's Modern Homes. Unfortunately, the importance of the terrace is not reflected in the Conservation Appraisal which could have provided some protection from piecemeal alterations which will potentially cause harm to this Heritage Asset. However, an Article 4 Direction does afford some form of protection from PD rights.
2. It should also be noted that the site is in a Archaeological Priority Area. There appears no mention of measures to address this within the submission
3. Potential harm to the integrity of the elevation has already been caused by the unimplemented planning approval 2021/4768/P for the conversion of the garage into a ground floor room.
4. In this, the current application duplicates the previous application. However, the society feels it is worth readdressing this for the following reasons. This application is for the creation of a ground floor room, variously described as a bedroom, home office or playroom. This is an entirely unsuitable location for any form of habitable room in that it opens directly onto the public domain without any defensible space, thus putting the occupants at risk. Although not such an issue with a home office, there is no legislation that will prevent its use as a playroom or bedroom. Within the application there are no details as to how this room will be ventilated as no opening windows are shown (and if so, these will present a security risk) and the only other option is unsustainable artificial ventilation which will require ducted air and extensive plant, which is not shown. Therefore, the Society believes this element of the application is not suitable for use as a habitable room.

5. The proposal also looks at effectively forming a new the basement to the rear by extending the access level to the rear. There are a couple of issues with this. The first is that by doing so, the basement wall will extend beyond those of the adjoining properties and, as such, result in ground water being diverted to the neighbouring properties where they will remain potentially constrained. This is a steep hillside leading down to the historic Highgate Cemetery. Highgate is notorious for hydrology problems and the investigations to date do seem to have only been carried out in a period of extended dry weather. Secondly, the extended access level will form a full basement to the rear without access to light or air and will require ventilating and thus plant, as mentioned in no 3 above.
6. The new ground floor extension extends beyond the two adjoining approved extensions. Any proposals should be examined in conjunction with adjoining properties to ensure the protection of the architectural integrity of the block . Any new rear extension should respect the emerging building line and should not extend beyond this either in depth or height
7. Finally, it has been mentioned that this expansion is to meet the needs of the current owners. This proposal will result in, what was designed as a relatively modest 4 bedroom house, turning into what will become a much larger 6 bedroom house. Highgate has a considerable number of large houses but few smaller one which meet the needs of downsizers and smaller families. This does therefore beg the question as to why the owners do look to a larger home more suited to their needs rather than expanding this house beyond its original design intention.

On the basis of the above, the Society confirms its objections and trust that Camden will reject this application.

Yours sincerely,

Elspeth Clements

Highgate Society Planning Committee