
From: Luigi Montefusco [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 October 2023 10:18
To: Kate Henry
Subject: 2023/3475/P - Comments

Dear Kate

Please find below my comments on the objections received:

Mrs Gabriel Ryder: 05/10/2023

Hydrology: refer to our BIA report for details about investigations

The use of Basement Extension: The New extended room will be used as a **storage**, to be able to remove the garden shed from the garden and create more green area, and a **bathroom**. Both rooms will have a mechanical ventilation system, according to building regulations.

Planning permission has already been granted for the conversion of the garage into a home office at 93 Swains Lane, as well as for 101, 97 Swains Lane. This initiative was undertaken with careful consideration for the potential scenarios where not all houses would convert their garages. The fundamental aim of this proposal was to create a versatile design that would seamlessly accommodate both scenarios. We are pleased to share that this approach was warmly received by the Highgate Society and all residents involved. This collective approval underscores the positive impact this project will have on the community. The houses in question were originally designed in 1970 with a modernist and rationalist approach to the theme of single-family terraced dwellings. This design philosophy emphasized versatility and adaptability to future changes. Over the past few decades, the garages have fallen out of use for their intended purpose due to their small size, which is not in line with the dimensions required for more modern cars. Moreover, the development was conceived with a front pathway where all residents park their vehicles. Given the current societal landscape where property costs have escalated beyond the means of many, it seems only fair and pragmatic to repurpose an underutilized space into a more convenient area that would seamlessly integrate into the daily life of a family. We firmly believe that this conversion aligns with the original design ethos and is in the best interest of the community as a whole. It not only revitalizes a dormant space but also contributes positively to the overall functionality and aesthetics of the neighborhood.

References of planning approved for garages conversions:

93 Swains Lane: 2021/4768/P
97 Swains Lane: 2021/4766/P
101 Swains Lane: 2021/4560/P

Sustainable urban drainage system and the ground floor extension:
refer to our BIA report for details

The ground floor extension:

The initial layout of the house envisioned a living space on the first floor, featuring the master bedroom and a small office, while the ground floor accommodated the kitchen and two bedrooms. Over time, most of owners opted to convert the first-floor living room into an additional bedroom, and reconfigure the ground floor accordingly. This resulted in an arrangement featuring two double bedrooms, a small office, and one bathroom on the first floor, along with an expansive living and kitchen space on the ground level. While spacious, this layout proved inefficient for a family with more than 1 child, creating a disproportionate living space.

The proposed rear extension, which is limited to 3.85 meters in depth, in line with the current garden walls of 2.3 meters in height, seeks to rectify this inefficiency. By amalgamating the kitchen and living room into a single open space, the rest of the house will remain faithful to its original design, adding an extra bedroom room at the first-floor level. This will yield two generously sized bedrooms on the ground level and two double bedrooms on the first floor, representing a rational and efficient use of space for a dwelling of this scale and for a family with more than 2 children.

Furthermore, the extension has been carefully designed to maintain an uninterrupted flow of daylight, with the proposed roof structure slightly stepped in from the party wall to accommodate a minor 150mm differential in gutter height with the neighbor extensions, to accommodate current level of insulation and energy efficiency standards.

We firmly believe that this extension sets a precedent for similar improvements in the future, offering residents an opportunity to optimize their layouts while maintaining a uniform approach in line with the Highgate Society's vision, much like the garage conversions.

In accordance with the **rationalist principle** of efficiency, both in terms of energy and space utilization, we firmly assert that our proposed extensions represent a discreet yet invaluable transformation for the existing houses. This update is aimed at modernizing them to better suit the needs of a typical local family in Highgate, ensuring they remain relevant for future generations.

Our intention is to set a high standard in both design and construction, one that will serve as a blueprint for all houses in the terrace going forward. This commitment to quality will not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of the homes but also contribute to a more sustainable and functional living environment.

We believe that this forward-thinking approach is in alignment with the broader vision of the community and will ultimately enhance the character and desirability of the entire neighborhood.

Personal Statement From Gabriel Ryder:

We would like to shed light on the decision to extend the basement, a choice made following a comprehensive examination of historical architectural drawings. These records indicated that the current party walls between the houses were constructed at a lower ground floor level. To corroborate this information, we conducted ground investigations, which revealed that the party walls extend to a depth of four meters below the concrete slab of the kitchen.

This crucial finding implies that the two side walls of the new basement (lower ground floor) are already in place and will not necessitate any underpinning. Furthermore, we confirmed that the kitchen slab is suspended and will not require any breaking or demolition. This translates to a minimal amount of excavation work, which will be executed from the existing garage, thereby reducing the extent of disruption.

In the interest of minimizing any potential impact, we intend to employ diamond drilling techniques for the opening from the garage wall into the new space beneath the kitchen. This method eliminates vibration, ensuring the process is as unintrusive as possible.

It's worth noting that Swains Lane N91 already features a room beneath the kitchen. This feature was incorporated during the initial construction phase, as the party walls were designed to accommodate such spaces. While this option was not pursued universally at the time, it provides a historical precedent for the proposed extension.

In summary, the decision to limit the lower ground extension to the current kitchen area is rooted in a desire to avoid any form of underpinning or extensive construction work, thereby ensuring the preservation of the existing structure and minimizing any potential disruption to the surrounding environment.

Louise Lewis : 06/10/2023

Planning permission has already been granted for the conversion of the garage into a home office at 93 Swains Lane, as well as for 101, 97 Swains Lane. This initiative was undertaken with careful consideration for the potential scenarios where not all houses would convert their garages. The fundamental aim of this proposal was to create a versatile design that would seamlessly accommodate both scenarios. We are pleased to share that this approach was warmly received by the Highgate Society and all residents involved. This collective approval underscores the positive impact this project will have on the community.

The houses in question were originally designed in 1970 with a modernist and rationalist approach to the theme of single-family terraced dwellings. This design philosophy emphasized versatility and adaptability to future changes. Over the past few decades, the garages have fallen out of use for their intended purpose due to their small size, which is not in line with the dimensions required for more modern cars. Moreover, the development was conceived with a front pathway where all residents park their vehicles. Given the current societal landscape where property costs have escalated beyond the means of many, it seems only fair and pragmatic to repurpose an underutilized space into a more convenient area that would seamlessly integrate into the daily life of a family. We firmly believe that this conversion aligns with the original design ethos and is in the best interest of the community as a whole. It not only revitalizes a dormant space but also contributes positively to the overall functionality and aesthetics of the neighborhood.

References of planning approved for garages conversions:

93 Swains Lane: 2021/4768/P

97 Swains Lane: 2021/4766/P

101 Swains Lane: 2021/4560/P

We submitted a BIA with the application that takes in consideration the hydrology of the area.

I would like to provide further information regarding the proposed lower ground extension. Our plan involves removing a garden shed to create a new storage area within the extension, thereby optimizing the available space for both functional and green areas.

It's important to note that the surface area designated for the extension is currently entirely paved. As such, the implementation of the extension will not result in any loss of green area. In fact, it is a strategic move aimed at maximizing the use of the available space for the benefit of the property and the surrounding environment.

Highgate Society, 08/10/2023:

1. Planning permission has already been granted for the conversion of the garage into a home office at 93 Swains Lane, as well as for 101, 97 Swains Lane. This initiative was undertaken with careful consideration for the potential scenarios where not all houses would convert their garages. The fundamental aim of this proposal was to create a versatile design that would seamlessly accommodate both scenarios. We are pleased to share that this approach was warmly received by the Highgate Society and all residents involved. This collective approval underscores the positive impact this project will have on the community.

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ethos and is in the best interest of the community as a whole. It not only revitalizes a dormant space but also contributes positively to the overall functionality and aesthetics of the neighborhood.

2. The proposed excavation is under the existign kitchen area that acoring to soil investigations in the BIA is all made ground. The proosed space was originally part of the proposed design .

3.References of planning approved for garages conversions:

93 Swains Lane: 2021/4768/P

97 Swains Lane: 2021/4766/P

101 Swains Lane: 2021/4560/P

4. I would like to emphasize the significance of preserving the architectural integrity of these houses. It is imperative to incorporate any previously approved planning applications as part of the comprehensive scheme. This holistic approach provides a complete vision for the overall development.

This is precisely why we included the approved planning for the garage conversion. We view this as a demonstration of our commitment to clarity, respect for the architectural heritage, and a meticulous attention to design detail.

By integrating these prior approvals, we aim to ensure that the proposed changes seamlessly complement the existing structures and contribute to the overall enhancement of the neighborhood.

I would like to bring to your attention an important consideration regarding the Highgate Society's role in the approval process. It seems counterproductive for the Society to initially endorse a design proposal, based on the approved planning, only to later reverse their position. This inconsistency creates confusion and hinders the ability of local architects and designers to work with confidence.

A cohesive and unified approval process within the Highgate Society is essential to maintain the quality of design and architecture in the Highgate area. This consistency provides a clear framework for professionals in the field, ensuring that the proposed changes adhere to established standards.

We believe that a streamlined and consistent approach will ultimately lead to a more harmonious and visually appealing architectural landscape in Highgate.

5. The proposed lower ground extension does not extend the existing party walls.

We would like to shed light on the decision to **extend the basement (Lower ground floor)** , a choice made following a comprehensive examination of historical architectural drawings. These records indicated that the current party walls between the houses were constructed at a lower ground floor level. To corroborate this information, we conducted ground investigations, which revealed that the party walls extend to a depth of four meters below the concrete slab of the kitchen.

This crucial finding implies that the two side walls of the new lower ground extension are already in place and will not necessitate any underpinning. Furthermore, we confirmed that the kitchen

slab is suspended and will not require any breaking or demolition. This translates to a minimal amount of excavation work, which will be executed from the existing garage, thereby reducing the extent of disruption.

In the interest of minimizing any potential impact, we intend to employ diamond drilling techniques for the opening from the garage wall into the new space beneath the kitchen. This method eliminates vibration, ensuring the process is as unintrusive as possible.

It's worth noting that Swains Lane N91 already features a room beneath the kitchen. This feature was incorporated during the initial construction phase, as the party walls were designed to accommodate such spaces. While this option was not pursued universally at the time, it provides a historical precedent for the proposed extension.

In summary, the decision to limit the lower ground extension to the current kitchen area is rooted in a desire to avoid any form of underpinning or extensive construction work, thereby ensuring the preservation of the existing structure and minimizing any potential disruption to the surrounding environment.

Please refer to the BIA about the concern of water.

A mechanical ventilation will be provided to the storage and bathroom proposed into the lower ground level.

6.

The initial layout of the house envisioned a living space on the first floor, featuring the master bedroom and a small office, while the ground floor accommodated the kitchen and two bedrooms. Over time, many owners opted to convert the first-floor living room into an additional bedroom, and reconfigure the ground floor accordingly. This resulted in an arrangement featuring two double bedrooms, a small office, and one bathroom on the first floor, along with an expansive living and kitchen space on the ground level. While spacious, this layout proved inefficient for a family with more than 1 child, creating a disproportionate living space.

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Furthermore, the extension has been carefully designed to maintain an uninterrupted flow of daylight, with the proposed roof structure slightly stepped in from the party wall to accommodate a minor 150mm differential in gutter height with the neighbor extensions, to accommodate current level of insulation and energy efficiency standards.

We firmly believe that this extension sets a precedent for similar improvements in the future, offering residents an opportunity to optimize their layouts while maintaining a uniform approach in line with the Highgate Society's vision, much like the garage conversions.

In accordance with the **rationalist principle** of efficiency, both in terms of energy and space utilization, we firmly assert that our proposed extensions represent a discreet yet invaluable transformation for the existing houses. This update is aimed at modernizing them to better suit the needs of a typical local family in Highgate, ensuring they remain relevant for future generations.

Our intention is to set a high standard in both design and construction, one that will serve as a blueprint for all houses in the terrace going forward. This commitment to quality will not only enhance the aesthetic appeal of the homes but also contribute to a more sustainable and functional living environment.

We believe that this forward-thinking approach is in alignment with the broader vision of the community and will ultimately enhance the character and desirability of the entire neighborhood.

7. I would like to underscore that the decisions to extend these houses are firmly rooted in the objective of optimizing them for modern living standards and ensuring their adaptability for the future. With careful consideration of unused spaces and minor extensions, these homes can be thoughtfully reconfigured to better suit the needs of families.

The underlying goal of our proposal is to secure a promising future for this development and the entire terrace, while upholding a high standard in design and construction. The Highgate Society, as a steward of architectural excellence, should celebrate architects and designers who exhibit a keen interest in elegant and innovative solutions. This celebration serves as a catalyst for promoting exceptional design and discouraging mediocrity and speculative ventures.

We believe that by recognizing and supporting visionary designers and architects, we can collectively elevate the standard of living and enrich the architectural landscape of the community.

Best Regards

Luigi Montefusco

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