

Highgate CAAC objection to [2025/0229/P](#) Waterlow Park Highgate Hill N6 5HG

Provision of step-free access to Highgate High Street entrance to Waterlow Park, including alterations to gate supports.

Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee objects very strongly indeed to this application and believes the application should be refused in its current form.

As Gail Waldman, Chair of Highgate CAAC mentioned in her email to Project Manager Jon Badger of 04/02/2025 (see Annex 1):

- We appreciate all the work and explanations provided. However we remain concerned about the proposals.
- We would not want any existing part of either gate altered, that is by extending the vertical bars.
- The horizontal bars should remain level across the two gates.
- If an extra rail at the bottom were required to meet safety criteria, then it should be added as an extra 'skirt', but only if required.
- This approach would hopefully reduce the cost.

Detail

We would like the York Stone Threshold to be reused but at a lower level.

The asphalt on the Park Side, the York Stone Threshold and the pavement must all be at the same level to facilitate wheelchair access.

The gap between the lowered York Stone Threshold should, at the centre, be the difference in height vertically at each side divided by 2.

If the gates need to be lengthened they must be lengthened equally so the horizontal lines remain aligned.

The gates should be lengthened by attaching a “skirt” to the bottom of the existing gates, not by rebuilding them with new elements.

Photographs

As the following photos illustrate, these gates open inwards, away from the pavement, across a broadly horizontal York Stone Threshold. The bottom of both gates are parallel to the York Stone Threshold, and in line with each other.

The proposal explained to us onsite was for the York Stone Threshold to be reused at a slightly lowered level, more in line with the pavement of Highgate High Street, while the Asphalt path inside the Park would be lowered to the same height as the York Stone Threshold.

There is potentially a trip hazard on the right and left if the existing York Stone Threshold were laid truly horizontal but it seems there would be a trip hazard somewhere unless the York Stone Threshold and asphalt on the Park side were laid to the same fall as the pavement outside.

The application proposes adding different amounts to the bottom of each gate. This asymmetry will look exceedingly odd.





The stone pavers which make up the York Stone Threshold are laid in an “L” shape. The vertical gate supports are not part of the York Stone Threshold. The existing gate housings could continue to be used or, if judged structurally unsound, could be replaced in the same position as they are now while still allowing the York Stone Threshold to be lowered:



Damage to heritage assets

Waterlow Park is a Grade II* registered park, English Heritage listing 1000849: [WATERLOW PARK, Non Civil Parish - 1000849 | Historic England](#).

While these gates are not separately listed themselves, unlike the gates of Lauderdale House just to the south ([ENTRANCE GATES AND WALLS TO LAUDERDALE HOUSE ADJOINING HIGHGATE HILL, Non Civil Parish - 1379129 | Historic England](#)) and the gates at the south-western corner of Waterlow Park ([LODGE AT SWAINS LANE ENTRANCE AND ATTACHED RAILINGS, PIERS AND GATES](#)), we believe they form an integral part of Waterlow Park.

Waterlow Park also forms a substantial part of “*Sub area 3: Waterlow Park and cemeteries*” of Camden’s Highgate Conservation Area, as explained in the [Highgate Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy - Camden Council](#).

The gates also border both *Sub area 1: Highgate Village*, in Camden’s CAAMS and *Subarea 1 (Village Core)* of Haringey’s Highgate Conservation Area (see https://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/highgate_appraisal_web_part_1_chapters_1-6.pdf).

The buildings opposite the gates in Haringey’s Highgate Conservation Area include Grade I listed [Cromwell House](#) and grade II* listed [106, 106A and 108 Highgate Hill](#) along with several grade II listed walls and structures¹.

These gates form an integral part of the most historic part of both the Camden and Haringey sides of Highgate Conservation Area, and form part of the setting of numerous listed buildings and structures. We believe that replacing part of the existing gates with new, unnecessary elements will damage both sides of the Highgate Conservation Area and the setting of numerous important heritage assets.



¹ [FORECOURT WALLS TO 110, HIGHGATE HILL](#)
[FORECOURT WALLS AND GATES TO 106 AND 108 HIGHGATE HILL](#)
[RETAINING WALL ALONG HIGHGATE HILL BETWEEN STREET PAVEMENT AND HIGHER PAVED WALK LEADING TO NUMBERS 104 TO 110 \(EVEN\) AND THE COTTAGE, AND HOUSES FARTHER WEST](#)



Consultation exercise

HCAAC members met twice onsite with the project officer. We believe we were clear that we thought the existing gates should not be altered as they were an integral part of a listed park and in a conservation area, but that lowering the York Stone Threshold and attaching a small fringe to the bottom of the unaltered gate to fill the gap, if need be, might be acceptable.

Expense

We object to the cost of this project to Camden Council Tax payers. We believe these proposals will cost far more than merely lowering the York Stone Threshold and attaching a small additional element to the unaltered gates to fill the resulting gap, if this is judged necessary.

Other concerns

We are also concerned about whether it will be possible to remove the concrete from around the curved elements next to the gate without damaging them.



We also question whether the very large central York Stone paver can be lifted in one piece and stored nearby during the works without damage. Many of the attached photos show how the two narrower “L” shaped York Stone pavers to the side have already cracked.

The existing metal hole in the central York stone slab, intended for fastening the gates, will look odd if the York Stone paver is moved so it is not longer in line with the gates.



Conclusion

We believe very strongly indeed that this application should be refused.

Annex 1 Email from Gail Waldman, Chair of Highgate CAAC, to Camden Project Manager Jon Badger, of 04/02/2025.

"Dear Jon,

I have been busy with other matters and am just catching up with emails. Can I say firstly that we appreciate all the work and explanations you have provided. However we remain concerned about the proposals as I have been from the beginning.

Could I set out our position and ask some questions:

- 1. We would not want any existing part of the left hand gate, as seen from Highgate Hill altered, that is by extending the vertical bars. The horizontal bars should remain level across the two gates.*
- 2. What is an acceptable gap below the existing bottom rail? Part K does not appear to apply although the space between elements in para 139 could be a guide. It requires a maximum of 100mm. gap*
- 3. The extension to the vertical bars brings the bottom of the gate much closer to the ground than the existing gate which will not be touched. It would be very helpful if the existing and proposed gaps were dimensioned at each end of each gate.*
- 4. It is not as though the proposed bottom rail lines through with the existing rail. If an extra rail at the bottom were required to meet safety criteria, then it should be added as an extra 'skirt' but only if required.*

I think this approach would hopefully reduce the cost.

Kind regards,

Gail Waldman

Chair, Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee"