

Josh Lawlor
London Borough of Camden
5 Pancras Square
London

17th December 2020

Dear Josh

**Planning and Listed Building Consent Applications 2020/3067/P and 2020/3397//L
45 Highgate West Hill, Highgate, N6 6DB**

We write further to our correspondence relating to the applications for planning permission and listed building consent for the erection of a single storey shingle clad garage at 45 Highgate West Hill (ref: 2020/3067/P and 2020/3397/L). This letter seeks to address the responses and queries received relating to the potential impact of the proposals on heritage, car parking and trees. We have addressed each of these matters in turn below:

Heritage

We understand that the Council has concerns about the impact upon the setting of the nearby listed buildings and the character and setting of Highgate Village. Your recent correspondence states the following:

“It is clear from the historical maps submitted that the triangle of land has been a wooded Spinney continuously from 1862. The OS Maps of 1869, 1894 & 1913 also show it wooded. There will have been self-seeding and tending of the woodland over a period of at least 160 years if not longer, in other words, considerable continuity as a landscape feature in the centre of the village of Highgate.

Our research has revealed that this Spinney is a remaining part of Highgate Common or Green, like the surviving piece opposite 1-6 The Grove and the triangle of land in front of the Flask, which dates back to the Middle Ages (see Peter Barber's article in the 2018 issue of Hornsey Historical Bulletin).

It must therefore be as unthinkable on heritage grounds to build within this Spinney as to build on the other two remaining relics of Highgate Common. Each contributes significantly to the unique character and setting of Highgate Village.

We also consider that the woodland to such an extent screens the 18th century buildings behind it that it is part of their setting also. We suggest that para 3.14 of the Heritage statement which suggests this group of buildings are within a setting of openness is misguided. The setting is rather one of secrecy and discovery with few people other than owners and their guests even entering it. To alter this delicate relationship would cause harm to the setting of the Listed Buildings.

This woodland Spinney is as important a feature for the setting of Highgate Village as it is for the group of 18th century houses. The Heritage Statement notes views from various locations in the Village which are important. These and other views must not be put in jeopardy by any form of building.”

We note that this response very closely replicates the public consultation response submitted by the Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee on 25th August. In order to respond to these comments, we enclose with

this submission a Heritage Appraisal Addendum prepared by The Heritage Practice, which addresses the points raised by both HCAAC and LB Camden.

The Heritage Appraisal Addendum notes that the site is not identified within the Highgate Conservation Area Appraisal as being a feature of landscape interest. While it is acknowledged that the site can be said to be a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA), the significance of this asset is primarily associated with its aesthetic value. While the past land use of the site has some historic interest, associations of the site as part of the former common are less tangible than the site's current physical character and appearance, as the site has been in private ownership for a substantial period of time.

The assertion that the site comprises 'common land' has been demonstrated to be incorrect in our previous submission from Keystone Law (dated 9th September 2020) which provided evidence from the 'Survey of London: Volume 17, the Parish of St Pancras Part 1: the Village of Highgate' (published in 1936) which stated that the 'right of way from South Grove to Hampstead Lane (*note this was the previous address of the site*) was closed in 1919 at which time the land in front was also enclosed'. It is therefore clear that the site has been in private ownership for over a century.

The Heritage Appraisal Addendum notes that the historic, documented associations of the site (i.e. its use as part of the former common) would remain in the record and the proposal would not cause harm to this, however, it must be acknowledged that the status of the site has evolved over the 20th and 21st centuries.

In addition to addressing the historic interest of the site, the Heritage Appraisal Addendum also considers the effects of the proposal on non-designated and designated heritage assets. The Addendum demonstrates that the proposal would cause no harm to the aesthetic value of the site as the garage would not be seen from the public realm and the townscape value and visual interest of the site would be preserved. The proposal would also not cause harm to the setting (and therefore significance) of the nearby listed buildings or to the character and appearance to the Highgate Conservation Area. We therefore consider that the proposal complies with the Policy D2 of the Local Plan and the NPPF and there are no heritage grounds for refusal.

Car Parking

The comments from LB Camden Highways Officer states that creating additional on-site parking would be contrary to Policy T2 and would therefore not be supported. We do not agree with this statement for the following reasons:

The purpose of Policy T2 is to limit car parking and thus car ownership in the borough. As noted in our letter of 1st July, a substantial quantum of parking exists on site at present. This includes the area proposed for the garage, and as such the construction of the garage will not result in additional on-site parking over and above the quantum which already exists.

The enclosed letter from SK Transport Planning Ltd confirms that the garage will have no effect on the availability of parking at the property, but notwithstanding this has considered whether the proposal would encourage additional car ownership or use, in order to address the rationale behind Policy T2 (that limiting parking within the borough can reduce car ownership and use). The letter demonstrates that parking provision in excess of 1 space per residential unit has been found to make only a very minor difference in the resulting level of car ownership (as reported by TfL in their report 'Residential Parking Provision in New Developments'). The proposal would therefore not be expected to give rise to any practical difference in car ownership or use due to the existing level of car parking already available on the site. The letter concludes that in light of the above the proposal will not result in a negative impact from a highway perspective.

We therefore consider that the proposal does not breach Policy T2(d), as it will not result in additional car parking spaces, car ownership or use and the letter from SK Transport Planning, sets out compelling reasons as to why the proposal accords with the intent of Policy T2 and will not result in a material increase in parking, car ownership or use. Furthermore, there would be no loss to any environmental features on site as has been confirmed by the Council's Tree Officer.

Trees

LB Camden Tree Officer has not raised any objections to the proposal but has suggested several conditions to ensure the protection of the retained trees during construction works and to secure full details of hard and soft landscaping.

With regard to protecting the retained trees on site, we are happy for full details to be secured by condition. For your information, our intention is to plant a maximum of 10 litre plants with spacings of a minimum of 600mm to avoid root disturbance.

With regard to the proposed soft landscaping on site, we note that you suggest there are several species which may not be appropriate within this location (for example, laurel). We confirm that at this stage our indicative soft landscaping proposals for the site comprise the planting of an evergreen hedge surrounding the proposed garage (which will provide enhanced screening). We suggest that holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) would be the most appropriate species as it is a native species with good biodiversity attributes.

We would be happy to discuss this in more detail with LB Camden Tree Officer if this would be helpful.

In summary, we consider that this letter and enclosed Heritage Appraisal Addendum and letter from SK Transport Planning has comprehensively addressed the matters raised by LB Camden with regards to heritage, car parking and trees. We would be happy to meet with Officers to discuss any part of this submission. If you would like to meet or require further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Ballantyne-Way
Director

Enc. Heritage Appraisal Addendum prepared by The Heritage Practice
Letter prepared by SK Transport Planning Ltd