

Heritage Statement

Site: The Water House, Millfield Lane, London N6 6HQ

Proposal: Rear access staircase and small platform extension with bin and cycle storage (replacement of former lift)

Date: 31 October 2025

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany a householder planning application and assesses the proposal in the context of the Highgate Conservation Area, having regard to Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF, the Camden Local Plan, and the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan.

1. Heritage Designations

- The site is located within the **Highgate Conservation Area**.
- The building is **not listed** and is **not identified as a positive contributor** within the Conservation Area appraisal.
- The wider area is characterised by its **landscape setting, low-density residential pattern, and strong relationship to Hampstead Heath**.

This statement is submitted in accordance with Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF, the Camden Local Plan and the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Heritage Significance

The significance of the Highgate Conservation Area derives from:

- Mature landscaped setting and green infrastructure
- Intimate pedestrian routes and discreet architectural forms
- Eclectic residential architecture integrated into a wooded hillside
- Quiet, private character adjacent to Hampstead Heath's ecological and historic landscape

The application site positively contributes to this significance through its **landscaped setting, subdued architectural presence, soft boundary treatments, and secluded pedestrian approach** from Millfield Lane.

3. Existing Site Contribution

The site's contribution to the heritage significance of the Conservation Area includes:

- Soft landscaping and tree cover
- Secluded private access character
- Lack of visual prominence to public views
- Harmonious relationship with topography and the wooded setting

The existing lift structure was **non-operational** and had limited architectural value. Its removal provides an opportunity for a sensitive and improved access arrangement.

4. Description of Proposals

The proposal includes:

- Replacement of the obsolete lift with a **lightweight stair structure**
- A modest platform extension at upper level
- **Low-level timber bin/cycle storage** and screening
- A small increase to **boundary fence height** in specific sections for privacy and security

Materials are **natural and recessive** (timber and metal) and will weather sympathetically within the landscape.

5. Heritage Impact Assessment

In accordance with Paragraphs 199-202 of the NPPF and Camden Local Plan Policy D2, the proposals have been assessed for potential impact on:

- **Significance**
- **Setting**
- **Character and appearance**
- **Public realm and visual amenity**

Assessment

Heritage Consideration	Assessment
Visibility in public views	No change — structure screened from public realm

Heritage Consideration	Assessment
Impact on character and appearance	Neutral — context-appropriate, recessive, lightweight design
Impact on significance	No harm — proposal is ancillary and functional
Preserve & enhance duty	Preserves Conservation Area character
Landscape integrity	Maintained — minimal footprint, timber, planting retained
Neighbourhood Plan compliance	Supports accessible, well-designed homes (Highgate NP DH2, DH9)

The proposal does **not** introduce bulk, massing, or materiality that would compete with the natural or architectural character of the area.

The intervention is **modest, discreet, and functional**, providing safe access in a manner sympathetic to the site's topography and landscape setting.

6. Conclusion

The proposal is very modest in scale and sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Highgate Conservation Area.

It replaces an outdated and visually neutral structure with a discreet, high-quality intervention that improves access, enhances site functionality, and maintains the verdant, secluded character of this part of Fitzroy Park.

The development preserves the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area and therefore accords with Section 72 of the Act, the NPPF, the Camden Local Plan and the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan.