

Highgate CAAC.

Supplementary objections to the application 2018/3672/P to build 5 houses on the site at 55 Fitzroy Park N6.

Highgate CAAC wishes to submit the following additional objections to this application.

1. The applicant has submitted a heritage statement with regard to this application but it does not fully take into account the significance of the site and its importance for the Conservation Area. It describes the pond as 'a pleasant feature' (p.23 heritage statement) and as 'picturesque' but shows no awareness at all of its historic significance. As is clear from the 1869 Ordnance Survey sheet 111 the pond was already in existence at that date as a farm pond closely associated with Fitzroy Park Farm. The field boundaries shown on this map also correspond closely with the later plot boundaries. In fact the site and the pond link closely with the historic layout of the area. The pond itself is a unique survival and an undesignated heritage asset, the character of which must be protected as set out in local and national policies. The whole site is also a SINC Metro. As virtually undisturbed virgin farmland the ecological value of the garden site with its colonies of vertebrates and invertebrates of all species is hard to overestimate
2. The proposed development proposes very extensive excavation covering the whole site. The depth of the excavation proposed varies from 1.50 m. adjoining Fitzroy Park itself and between 1.4. and 2.50 on the sites proposed for plots 4 and 5. This will destroy the topography of the site and create an artificial environment. It is so extensive that piles 25m. deep are needed to ensure ground stability for the proposed buildings. The pond will be in grave danger of dewatering since the excavation of plot 4 will be only 4.40 m. from its banks and will extend beneath the ground water level. It is hard to understand how changes of this magnitude with potentially disastrous results for a heritage asset can be described as 'high quality site specific' and an enhancement to the significance of the Conservation Area as is claimed by the applicants.
3. The application also does not comply with the draft London plan, 7.1.2 which makes plain that historic landscape features are non-designated assets. The Camden Local plan policy A2 is also relevant. Policies for the protection of open spaces include the requirement to protect the openness of Metropolitan Open Land of which the prime example in Camden is of course Hampstead Heath.; map 2 on p199 of the Camden plan shows the buffer zones needed to protect MOL. The site of 55 FRP is immediately adjacent to the Heath and thus in the zone of the 280m buffer. Paragraph 6.37 of the Camden Local Plan also advocates strongly the protection of undeveloped rear gardens; they will be resisted if they occupy an excessive amount of the garden and contribute to a loss of character in the townscape, as is the case in this instance. Building very close to the boundary with Millfield lane with possible access to this undisturbed and truly rural lane will cause grave detriment to the CA and the adjoining MOL of international significance.

4. Paragraph 6.43 of the local Plan also describes the Heath as the key open space in Camden and includes (for the proper safeguarding of this space) the requirement for 'numerous large private gardens adjacent to the Heath' to be designated and protected as open space.' The application puts forward no convincing argument to override this policy which ensures the maximum of public benefit. The sensitivity of this site immediately adjacent to the Heath and the Ladies Swimming Pond cannot be overstated; its protection is essential.

5. Given the narrowness of Fitzroy Park itself and the lack of any pavements , the difficulties of the turn into Merton lane and the number of pedestrians , many with small children and dogs which use this approach to the Heath , it is hard to see how a development of the scale proposed can be undertaken without grave danger to the public. The number and size of lorries needed is completely unacceptable.

For these reasons and those already submitted Highgate CAAC strongly objects to this application which must be rejected. The amount of damage caused to the Conservation Area cannot be justified by any local or national policy.

 Chair Highgate CAAC.