

Planning Application 2014/0342/P

Planning Officer : Seonaid Carr

Date: February 27th, 2014

I wish to **comment on and object to** the Planning Application 2014/0342/P for Roof Extensions to provide 8x2 bedroom flats over 14 - 45 Froggnal Court, Finchley Road, London NW3 5HG.

I am Dr Michael Anson of 36, Froggnal Court, Finchley Road, London NW3 5HG - telephone 020 7435 9513

My Comments follow below:

I am the Long-leaseholder of Flat 36 Froggnal Court (top floor) in Block 'B', where I have lived continuously for 26 years and would therefore be directly underneath the proposed mansard roof extensions: **I object most strongly** to these and urge Camden LB Planning Committee to **refuse** proposal **2014/0342/P** Planning Permission.

My major grounds for objection are:

The quiet enjoyment of my flat would be disturbed by the noise, occupants, visitors and bustle coming from the extensions as a major factor in the original purchase of my flat was that it is on the top floor i.e. it is currently a penthouse flat.

Just beneath the buildings run two major **Network Rail mainline railway tunnels, the Belsize Tunnel and the Belsize New Tunnel**. Their presence clearly raises major structural and stability problems. There is considerable shaking, vibration and noise from the rail traffic in the tunnels that can be felt in the flat.

There have been at least two instances in the past 25 years of **major subsidence** affecting the stability of Block 'B' 30 - 45 Froggnal Court. This required evacuation, major engineering works and underpinning followed by reconstruction of the northern part of the block. Clearly any additional weight added by the roof extensions will endanger the stability particularly in the light of the heavy vibration that the block is subjected to from the rail traffic underneath.

No provision is made in the plans for the existing water storage tanks supplying the 32 flats beneath the proposed extensions. These need to be retained as they are part of the demise of the existing flats. We must not be deprived of our indirect water supply which is used for hot water, WC flushing etc.

These extensions will prevent the roof area, about 750m², being used for the benefit of the existing 32 flats, through solar water heating and photovoltaic electrical generation. We are already investigating these and other Green Roof modifications which would do much more to reduce the carbon footprint of Camden flats than building a few luxury flats on top.

Previously planning consent was sought for a similar scheme of mansard roof extensions to the front blocks also; this was withdrawn together with the earlier rear block application (2011/3735/P) partly on realization that these would trigger a mandatory Social Housing provision. Planning consent was sought for a very similar scheme in 2012 (2012/0793/P) but was eventually listed as 'withdrawn'.

No study has been made of the impact on the adjoining eastern area, Frogmal Court Wood an SNCI designated by London Borough of Camden as a Grade II conservation area, which is an integral part of the Frogmal Court Estate.

The quiet enjoyment of my flat will be greatly disturbed during any construction work and access through the common stairwells disrupted.

It is unlikely, given current prices on this Estate, that 2 bedroom flats will sell for less than £500,000 and rent for less than £2,500 per month. This is not Affordable Housing and as such should not be encouraged.

Before any permission can be entertained full structural, hydrological and structural reports must be made with the full knowledge and cooperation of Network Rail, the Freeholders and disclosed to all interested parties including all the Lessees of Frogmal Court, Midland Court and Warwick House.

The Developer and other proposers of this must be compelled to have sufficient insurance in place to be able to indemnify Flat owners, Network Rail and other parties for structural damage and/ or collapse of existing structures and for compensation for loss of amenity, noise, disturbance, disruption and deprivation of quiet living during and after construction and into the future as our Leases run until 2179 or later.

I wish to be informed of the dates of the relevant Development Control, Environmental, Buildings, Planning &c. Committee Meetings at which this proposal will be considered: I will want to make a deputation(s).

Signed, Dr Michael Anson

36, Frogmal Court,
Finchley Road,
Hampstead
London NW3 5HG

26 February, 2014

For the attention of Seonaid Carr

The Director,
Environment Department Development Control Team,
London Borough of Camden,
Camden Town Hall, Argyle Street,
London WC1H 8ND.

Dear Sirs,

Application No. 2014/0342/P
Flats 14-45 (Blocks A&B), Froggnal Court, Finchley Road, London NW3 5HG

I am writing both on behalf of the Netherhall Neighbourhood Association and of the occupants of properties on the west side of the lower end of Netherhall Gardens – and therefore with their gardens facing the proposed addition of eight flats within a 6th floor mansard roof extension on Blocks A&B of Froggnal Court, Finchley Road, NW3.

Having examined on-line the documents and drawings accompanying the application, we wish to express the following concerns. If you examine your files, you will find the comments to be similar to those we expressed at the time of the 2012 application for these properties.

1. On the submitted drawings, no sections are provided. These would show the location and height of the parapet walls and the extent to which the mansard roofs are set behind these walls. We find it suspicious that, in their set of drawings, the architects have not included these.
2. The application refers to a 4-storey building whereas the existing building is 5 storeys (4 storeys of flats built over 1-storey of garages). That would result in a 6 storey building!
3. The extra floor would not only add a further 9 feet in height enabling overlooking of the rear gardens and rear bedrooms of the properties along the lower end of the west side of Netherhall Gardens for half of the year when the trees are not in leaf, but would also result in further overshadowing of its gardens in the evenings when the sun sets behind the blocks of flats. The additional mansard roof would extend that shadow considerably.
4. The chimney stacks, water tank housings and lift shafts on the roof of the existing building are not shown adequately on the submitted drawings. From the higher ground in the Netherhall Gardens properties, they are

unsightly. Raising them would certainly be even more unsightly as well as adding to the overshadowing referred to in item 3.

5 When the Coach House at 7a Netherhall Gardens was re-built and, later, adjacent land from British Rail was purchased, it was stipulated that, under no circumstances could any additional structure be built on the land behind it as the track bed of the railway line from St. Pancras to Sheffield does not run sufficiently low below it. We were told that the structural integrity of the rail tunnel would be threatened by any further weight being added. It would be very surprising if Network Rail, the freeholder of Froggnal Court - British Rail's successor - did not object to an additional storey for the same reason. We assume that the new building over the tunnel below 11 Netherhall Gardens was only approved as it was constructed on a concrete raft – *a solution that would entail demolition of both of the blocks of Froggnal Court for which planning permission is now sought!*

Incidentally, we have just seen that the of the nine new flats in the recently constructed 11 Netherhall Gardens are not included in your list of consultees. Unless we hear from you to the contrary, we will assume that this oversight has been rectified so that their owners can, if they so wish, let you have their comments.

6. In our submission to you in 2012, we drew the Council's attention to further grounds for concern on this issue, namely the related one of subsidence in the area. A retaining wall in the garden of 7a Netherhall Gardens collapsed two years ago and had to be re-built.

5. Finally, we would draw your attention, as we assume the existing occupiers of flats in Blocks A&B will do, to the exceedingly likely noisy building work that they would have to endure for about a year – with presumably no compensation for this appreciable lowering of the quality of their lives during this period.

In the circumstances, we object to the proposals on the grounds set out above and hope that these will be seen to be of sufficient substance for Camden to refuse planning permission for this development.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Mayer Hillman
Netherhall Neighbourhood Association

PS This email is also being sent to you by post.

(A copy of this email is also being sent to Camden Council by post)