

Michael English
FLAT C
42 FALKLAND ROAD
NW5 2PX

2013/5766/P

Building application reference 2013/5766/P

We wish to oppose a planning application for building work on land adjoining 42 Falkland Road, Kentish Town, NW5, which proposes the building of two basements and several light wells.

The core of the objection is that the development completely ignores previous undertakings to maintain the appearance of a totally original terrace - a terrace that does NOT have underground flats and ugly deep light wells with intrusive iron railings.

A planning reminder : Camden policy PP24 paragraph 24.12 states "that where townscape is particularly uniform attention should be paid to responding closely to the prevailing scale form and proportion of materials". And from Camden Council's planning statement of 5 January 2012: "Any such building will have to be carefully designed to appear as an extension to an established terrace within an conservation area and the acceptability of any scheme is likely to rest on the quality of such design." Permission was granted with this proviso.

Other practical objections:

1. The digging of foundations for the three-storey house could cause problems with land movement particularly adjacent to 42 Falkland Road, the end of terrace house owned by the council which has an exposed flank wall that could be damaged.
2. The proposed development requires the removal of thousands of square feet soil and rock over an area of about 9400 ft2. Multiply this by the proposed depth and the total volume is formidable. It will require many lorries to remove it on a quiet residential street. An excavation of at least 11 foot depth is proposed. The excavation would cause excessive noise, traffic disruption, street soiling and a threat to the safety of the children who live in the street.

Background: Permission was granted for a three-storey terrace extension of 42 Falkland Road and a smaller two-storey one. Several attempts to add to them with incongruous details like extra windows or mansard roofs were quite rightly rejected as being out of character with the terrace.

The present permission for two houses should be maintained and not modified

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Subject: Planning application 2013/5766/P

Date: 4 February 2014 13:52:01 GMT

To: planning@camden.gov.uk

I am one of the tenants of No 42

(I am the owner and occupant of No 40 Falkland Road NW5 2PX) I should like to object to the addition of basement and lightwells to the proposed new houses adjacent to no 42 Falkland Road, the subject of planning application 2013/5766/P.

i have four main objections:-

1. The overall plans would seem to be a gross overdevelopment of the site, leaving almost no garden and, even that small area having a basement beneath it, severely restricting the use/planting of the garden.
2. The houses to be built are in a conservation area and yet they do not conform to the pattern/style of the Victorian terrace to which it is proposed to attach them. I am confident that were any of the other houses in that terrace to apply for permission to excavate a basement, they would be refused. I see absolutely no grounds for making an exception in this case. Basements to these houses would damage the appearance of the terrace as a whole.
3. In the initial planning application for these houses it was stated that the second, single storey house was to be for disabled/elderly occupants. Belief in the validity of this assertion was stretched somewhat by the addition of another floor; it is entirely demolished by the application for the addition of a huge basement, accessed by a narrow, dark and winding staircase. This is certainly not a house designed to serve the elderly or disabled. The design - bigger at each application - is clearly primarily designed to maximise the eventual selling price which should not be the influential factor in deciding whether or not the plans are acceptable.
4. My principle objection- which is not to minimise those already mentioned - is that the proposed excavation of basements will almost certainly lead to issues of heave/subsidence in the adjacent houses. Although this will be legally covered by Party Wall Agreements, they will not cover the severe disruption to the living arrangements of the occupants of no. 42 Falkland Road in particular, and it is quite likely that the tenants there would need to be evacuated entirely pending structural repairs. This was certainly the case in similar approved applications in the area of Hampstead Heath. Mention is made in one of the specialist reports relating to this application of the relevance of the existing foundations of no 42 Falkland Road. At No.40 this was investigated in 1985 - it was not a difficult thing to do. The foundations were found to be of stepped brick with a maximum depth of 0.5 metres. The bricks used are not engineering bricks and have no mortar between them. There would seem to be no doubt that this issue is seriously problematic in respect of the continued stability of the existing terrace and of no 42 in particular. Moreover from the experience of building a rear extension at no 40 in 2000, as a result of subsidence, I can let you know that the piles required for a sound structure had to be driven more than 50 feet into the ground. This is clearly not the slight matter that the applicants would have everyone believe.

it is for these reasons that I am hoping that common sense will prevail and this application will be refused. Please let me know the outcome.