



The Heath & Hampstead Society

P.O. BOX 38214 LONDON NW3 1XD

The Society examines all Planning Applications relating to Hampstead, and assesses them for their impact on conservation and on the local environment.

To London Borough of Camden, Development Control Team

Planning Ref: 2013/7182/P

Address: 15 Wedderburn Road NW3

Description: Double basement and other alterations.

Case Officer: Fergus Freeney

Date 20 January 2014

We object most strongly to this proposal to excavate a double basement under this Locally Listed building, divided into flats, for these reasons:

1. Overdevelopment.

A development that proposes to fill an entire residential site, over 2 levels underground, and 3 above can only be described as gross overdevelopment. This is not a site in a fully urbanised part of the Borough, but one described in your Conservation Area Statement for the Fitzjohns/Netherhall CA as one "with substantial scaled properties and generous grounds..." Not an inner-city area, but a leafy suburb. This proposal would intensify development so as to change the whole character of this area, on the corner of two of the leafiest roads in Hampstead. This is totally unacceptable.

2. Basements

The provisions of LDF policies DP23 and 27 are disregarded in almost every aspect of these policies, in the size and scale of basement enlargement, effect on neighbours, damage to the appearance and character of the Conservation Area, adjoining and supporting structures put at risk, subsoil water courses put at risk, and loss of important trees. DP27 a), b), c), d), e), g), i), j), and k) would all be contravened. The BIA is particularly lacking in assessments of likely damage to adjoining and adjacent buildings and structures; this is especially damaging here, in that the excavation work would be carried out under adjoining flats, which would plainly be at risk (without gaining any benefit from the development). The scale of basement excavations, to a depth of 8.5 metres, on a small site such as this, is unacceptable.

3. Effect on Neighbours.

The provisions of LDF DP26 are also completely disregarded. The nuisance and disruption which would be caused by the construction work would be massive, and it is apparent from the documentation that the interests of neighbours, especially those in the flats above, have been neglected. The Construction Management Plan hardly mentions them, and they seem to have been regarded with little short of contempt. This is not acceptable.

4. Effect on Conservation Area.

The site stands at the junction of two important streets, and is extremely conspicuous. The house is Locally Listed (i.e. is referred to in the CA Statement as contributing to the character of the CA); its architecture is consistent with that of many neighbouring houses, some of which are Statutorily listed. The insertion right on this corner of an ugly and intrusive carparking ramp would destroy whatever townscape contribution the house makes, and transform it into a local eyesore.

This is unacceptable

5. Trees

The felling of several trees along the Akenside Road frontage to facilitate the basement excavations would be particularly destructive of street character.

Replanting, as proposed, would only become effective after 10-20 years. The Conservation Area needs these trees, and they must not be lost.

6. Walls and gates

The proposals to erect high boundary walls and gates, to enclose the site, fortress-like, is quite contrary to the character of this part of the CA, and must be resisted. We do not want this area to become a "gated community", turning its back on the rest of us.

This is not Johannesburg.

For this accumulation of reasons, we ask you to refuse this damaging application.

From 26a Wedderburn Road, London NW3 5QG

19 January 2014

Development Control
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
London WC1H 9NJ

Flat 1, 15 Wedderburn Road London NW3 5QS 2013/7182/P

Dear Sirs

We have been residents of Wedderburn Road for over 40 years, and now write in connection to the works at No. 15, the subject of the current application.

Having examined the drawings we are disconcerted to find that the very bulky and onerous works proposed are only to be undertaken to provide some underground parking, an enlarged swimming pool, an entertainment room and some storage space, the sort of accommodation whose provision is not encouraged by Camden Development Policy.

While two additional bedrooms are mentioned in the application, they do not appear on the accompanying plans. This is only one of the many inconsistencies between the planning application and the accompanying drawings.

The most puzzling of these is the lack of any consideration of the engineering problems which the proposed development will involve. The level of the underlying water table and the nature of the soil will require both extensive excavations and the construction of a secant pile wall. Little detail is provided in the report on how this is to be achieved. Underpinning is clearly not possible and no explanation is given as to how piling equipment can be introduced in a low and narrow space, and there is only limited information on how the temporary propping of the building is to be carried out during this operation. The access requirements for Flats 2 and 3 seem to have been entirely disregarded despite the fact that both these flats would be occupied for the full duration of the works.

Wedderburn Road is classified as a 'heavily parked road' by Camden, and this was one of the reasons why no traffic calming measures were introduced. For most of the day, it remains a single track road and cars wait patiently at either end to gain access. Camden's very mistaken approval of the insertion of remote-controlled gates at no. 5 will only exacerbate the situation, and we would ask that they avoid further deterioration of passage along the road by allowing (as seems implied) similar gates for no. 15.

Mr Macfarlane's report discusses in detail the impact of the heavy construction traffic which will arise from the works - 3-4 skip removals and 3-4 concrete truck deliveries each day for at least 8 weeks, and this apart from the 1000 cubic metres of soil which will require over 125 skips to remove. This can only be achieved by eliminating all forms of parking for approximately half the street for the duration of the works.

There is no merit in this proposal, and we would urge you to reject it without delay. The impact on the other residents and on the adjoining schools is beyond what the Council should allow.

Sincerely
Joseph Rykwert
Professor of Architecture
Anne Rykwert