

[REDACTED]

From: Marie Helene English - [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 August 2014 15:48
To: Planning
Subject: Planning Application 2014/4332/P

Dear Sir,
Dear Madam,

I am writing to object to the Planning Application above(construction of dams on Hampstead Heath). Please find below my reasons to object:

- The proposals would result in a considerable loss of visual amenity for numerous residents and visitors of Hampstead Heath (who will probably agree with me as I understand the "anti-dams petition"has already reached over 10.000 signatures).
- Indeed the visual impact would be unacceptable due to the overbearing size of the constructions proposed.
- Also the changes are completely out of balance and style : this will have an adverse effect on the character of the existing surroundings as we know and love them.
- In my view all the facts above will create permanently a very unfortunate and undesirable disfigurement of a very beautiful and unique place: the unnatural huge earth works and excavations (Model Boating Pond)as well as the concrete walls(Men's Bathing Pond and Highgate n.1 Pond) would be some relevant examples of the disfigurement in question.
- The loss of existing views from neighbouring properties is in my opinion not acceptable either.
- We would lose 160 trees, another considerable disfigurement and loss of amenity.

WHY DISFIGURE HAMPSTEAD HEATH WHILST:

- The proposals would be clearly very detrimental to the natural beauty of the Heath which the City of London is required to preserve under the Hamsptead Heath Society of 1871.
- Furthermore the work is not a requirement of the 1975 Reservoir Act.
- The new dams would not stop future floodings (as it seems the City admits).
- The computer modelling for these proposals is based on an extreme 1/400.000 years worst case scenario, which shows that the proposals are not based on a reasonable assessment of the risk.
- There has been no collapse of any of the dams , no escape of water and no deaths in any storms of the Ponds' 300 years history.
- Civil contingencies (warning systems of evacuation etc...) have not been considered as part of the risk assessment.

- Other solutions(like a greater use of the Heath's capacity to absorb floods that would require much less works than the proposed dams) have not been considered either.

I urge the Camden Council Planning Department to make the only reasonable decision ie not support this project which is clearly in contradiction with all the Planning rules and guidance of the Council.

Many thanks for your attention.

Regards.

Marie-Helene English
3 Hillway
London N66QB

[REDACTED]

From: Sandra Wolton <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 05 August 2014 16:11
To: Planning
Subject: application 2014/4332/P

As a regular user of the ponds I wish to object to proposed planning on the following grounds.

Catchpit Valley above the mixed pond will be obliterated by the proposed dam (5.6 m high, 40 m wide and 100 m long).

More than 160 trees will be cut down which will devastate the environment.

[REDACTED]

From: Nathaniel Lane <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 05 August 2014 17:03
To: Planning
Subject: Objection to damm construction at Hampstead heath

To Whom it may concern.

I am objecting to this scheme, because the dam would ruin hampstead heath and money would be better spent on the flood defences at the thames barrier.

Comments made by Nathaniel Lane of 38A Lawford Road, Kentish Town, London, NW5 2LN, EX19 8NP
Phone 07756960358
EMail wayofwords@hotmail.com
Preferred Method of Contact is Email

Comment Type is Objection

[REDACTED]

From: Cathleen G. Mains [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 August 2014 18:08
To: Planning
Subject: (Planning Reference 2014/4332/P

Dear Mr Markwell

Please note that in this email I've (hopefully) corrected some typos I spotted in the earlier one:

Mr Jonathan Markwell
Development Control Team
L.B. Camden

Dear Mr Markwell

re: Planning Application No. 2014/4332/P

I have been lucky enough to live in Constantine Road, NW3 2LP, immediately south of Hampstead Heath, since January 1971 and have known and loved the Heath since I moved to London as a student in 1968.

I am writing to oppose the City of London's application to carry out massive, and I believe unnecessary, works around and to the north of the Hampstead chain of ponds and the Highgate chain of ponds. These will substantially alter the topography, geology and ecology of the Heath to its detriment.

My grounds for opposing include the following:

1. Every one of us has a duty under the Hampstead Heath Act of 1875 to ensure that the Heath is conserved as far as possible to the state it was in then for the benefit of this and future generations.

These proposals breach this duty.

2. Regular inspections, including the most recent, have established that the existing dams are in a safe condition.

3. In their more than 300 year existence, the ponds have never caused flooding nor have the dams ever been breached.

Occasional flooding within living memory in South End Green and Oak Village, Gospel Oak were nothing to do with the ponds and were entirely owing to the then inadequacy of the Thames Water Sewers, which backed up (as they have also done in West Hampstead and Kentish Town from time to time) during downpours. The problems with the sewers were corrected by Thames Water, under pressure from Camden Council, and there has been no recurrence of the flooding. Nonetheless, the City of London has repeatedly tried to call those historic floods in aid to panic local residents into supporting their proposals regarding the Heath dams.

4. Even in the exceptionally wet 2013-14 winter, when little streams were springing up all over the Heath because it was saturated, the pond dams did not overtop, nor did they breach.

5. The City's proposals are based on a hypothesis that the dams might breach in the event of a torrential

downpour so exceptional that the chance of its occurring is only once in 400,000 years,

To re-engineer the Heath to obviate such a risk is patently absurd and disproportionate. Civilisation has only existed for just over 5,000 years. Human beings have only been around for about 50,000 years.

It is also utterly unscientific. Following severe rainfall over London and the Thames Valley far less exceptional than 1 in 400,000 years, the whole of the London basin would already have flooded at least up to the bottom of the north and south escarpments, i.e. in this area, up to the north of Camden Town and Kentish Town. We know this risk from the historical and archaeological record over 10,000s years. We also know that the Thames Barrier is at far greater risk of being inadequate.

With the whole of London under floodwater, why on earth would anyone then be worrying whether the weather might get even worse to the extent that the dams on Hampstead Heath might give way?

Yet this is the scenario this Planning Application asks us to believe. Indeed, the City says that in this circumstance they might be sued for the dams giving way! With London's population already drowned out of their homes by floodwaters from the Thames and ingress from the sea, such a suggestion is ludicrous!

6. The City assumes that there would be absolutely no flood warning before the Heath Dams burst and that we'd all be soundly asleep in our beds or going about our business in basements.

The City thus entirely ignores all the Civil Defence and Flood Warning Systems already in place at the Meteorological Office, Central Government and Local Government, Camden included.

It also assumes that ordinary people are exceptionally stupid. Especially in the light of Para.5, we'd be more than well aware of the risk of a flood!

7. The City alleges that the Reservoirs Act 1975 requires them to carry out the massive works they propose.

This is simply untrue.

8. The City's proposals will massively disfigure Hampstead Heath.

They propose almost completely filling in a valley north of the Hampstead Ponds to provide a very much larger "underground" catchment. This is vandalism on a huge scale. It also rides a coach and horses through the 1875 Act which is intended to protect the Heath.

They propose totally altering the shape of the Model Boating Pond.

By raising and extending the dams they will effectively alter the topography and views on and across the Heath.

9. The City's proposals in effect abuse the Heath to give priority to turning it into a massive reservoir complex.

The City's strategy is to force the Heath to retain far more rainwater than it currently does and also far more than it's natural geology can do.

This abuse includes, and is evidenced by, the many thousands cubic metres of existing soil etc. which the City intends to remove entirely from the Heath over a period of several years.

It is also evidenced by the massive quantities of concrete which are to be introduced onto the Heath in these plans, both above and below ground. This is a very real alteration to and abuse of the natural geology of the

Heath.

10. All this will greatly damage both the amenity and the ecology of the Heath.

Mature trees are to be uprooted. Natural habitats, with their homes for insects and birds, are to be destroyed.

For several years, large areas of the Heath will be a building-site eyesore. They will also be out of bounds to walkers and to everyone who seeks peace, quiet, and physical and psychological health and renewal on the Heath.

11. The City makes much in their plans that they will be doing some ecological planting. After vandalism the vandalism they intend, cosmetic, man-made ecological works merely add insult to injury.

12. I think that Camden Council should be made aware that the Planning Application lodged with Camden entails far more extensive and disruptive work than was provided in the information placed before the public by the City in the so-called "Public Consultation Exercise" earlier this year.

That said, the public response to those more modest plans was nonetheless overwhelmingly negative.

Yours sincerely

Cathleen G. Mains
99 Constantine Road, London NW3 2LP

[REDACTED]

From: sonu shamdasani <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 05 August 2014 21:52
To: Planning
Subject: Hampstead Heath Dams and Ponds Project Ref 2014/4332/P (with spelling corrections)

To whom it may concern,

I am opposed to the proposed Hampstead Heath Damns Project for the following reasons:


1. I believe the justification for the works rests on a false interpretation and application of the 1975 reservoirs act.
2. I believe it is mistaken to claim that the ponds fall under the rubric of the act, simply because they were once reservoirs. The fact that they originated as reservoirs, once upon a time, in the 17th century, does not mean that their identity and purpose has been fixed for all eternity: it is clear to all that they long ceased being used as reservoirs and function and are used as natural ponds. Due to this resignification, they do not fall under the ambit of the 1975 act.
3. Even if, for the sake of argument, one chooses to regard them as reservoirs I believe, on reading through the submission on the Camden Council website, that the justification is based on a false reading of the 1975 act. The act states that "measures should be taken in the interests of safety": this sentence does not state "are legally required." The 'should' is a much weaker statement, and takes no account of the binding legal status of the Hampstead Heath act of 1871, which gives no basis for the exceptional treatment of the ponds 'as if they were still reservoirs.'
4. The assessment that measures need to be taken have been drawn up by the company hoping to carry out the work, which is a clear conflict of interests, as they stand to benefit commercially from their own recommendations. At the very least, it would be necessary to separate a safety assessment from a properly conducted tendering process by which different firms were allowed to compete with proposals.
5. The scale of the proposed works is excessive, as they have been falsely calculated as if the ponds were still dams, and hence contravene the provisions of the 1871 Hampstead Heath Act. I believe that the proposed works will irreparably damage and spoil a site of natural beauty, to the detriment of local residents and thousands who flock to the Heath throughout the year, as well as causing lasting environmental and ecological damage.

Yours sincerely,

Sonu Shamdasani

50 South Hill Park
London NW3 2SJ

Professor Sonu Shamdasani
School of European Languages, Culture and Society (German)
University College London
Gower Street
London WC1E 6BT



[REDACTED]

From: Jenny Cox [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 August 2014 22:22
To: Planning
Subject: Application No 2014/4332/P

Hampstead Heath Ponds and Dams

To say I would be appalled if this senseless and unnecessary proposal was passed by Camden would be an understatement. So much money already spent, and a minimum of 15 million more, were the plans to go ahead, on something no one needs, and that would cause so much destruction to life in terms of nature, of beauty in terms of the environment and of enjoyment and tranquility in terms of those of us who use the Heath. I speak as a Ladies pond swimmer of 55 years, a Heath walker and a qualified landscape architect. These proposals fly in the face of most of the things the Corporation of London is duty bound to conserve on Hampstead Heath. I hope you will have the courage and common sense to oppose it.

Jenny Cox

[REDACTED]

From: Maggie Baron - [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 August 2014 22:51
To: Planning
Subject: OBJECTION TO PLANNING PROJECT REFERENCE 2014/4332/P - logged se 14.08

To whom it may concern,
Hampstead Heath Dams and Ponds Project Ref 2014/4332/P

I wish to register my objection to the plans to make changes to the dams and ponds on Hampstead Heath. As a resident for the past twenty eight years overlooking Pond number One, I am able to say that in all these years I have never seen the water rise in that pond to any level that could indicate a threat to its surroundings.

I have however witnessed the wild fowl which enjoy the environment and particularly the swans which have produced numerous cygnets in this location. Having looked at the plans for this pond in particular I do not understand the necessity to carry out the proposed reconstruction.

With regard to all other ponds on the Heath it seems that even greater disruptions are to result with regrettably unfavourable results. i.e. the spoiling of familiar vistas and disruption to Heath life for an inordinate amount of time.

The amount of upheaval the potential heavy machinery would cause not only to our peace and quiet but to all the life which the Heath supports seems to be an unwarranted excess which is not in proportion to what might best serve to protect the environment.

On behalf of the frogs which are at last beginning to flourish at the ponds edge this year, on behalf of the lonely the elderly, the families, the dogs and the visitors, could you please leave well alone and not give this planning permission to the proposed engineers who have shown that they have not grasped the special uniqueness of the Heath and its three hundred year old ponds.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Baron

[REDACTED]

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Yours sincerely
Margaret Baron

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 August 2014 07:00
To: Planning
Cc: Markwell, Jonathan
Subject: Planning application 2014/4332/P

I write to object to the proposals in the planning application from the City of London concerning the proposed measures to guard against possible collapse of the dams at the Hampstead and Highgate ponds. The basis of the computer modelling leading to the conclusion that drastic work is required appears to be based on questionable assumptions concerning the amount of rainfall and its effects that can reasonably be expected, and to lead to conclusions that pay insufficient attention to the effects upon the Heath. I hope the Council will make its own thorough examination of the data used in the modelling and of the calculations used in the modelling, and will also take account of the legal challenge being brought by the Heath and Hampstead Society.

Risk assessment must essentially be a matter of judgement. The City's judgement in this case appears to have been affected by excessive caution. I am reminded of the occasion some years ago when the City, on legal advice, opposed a proposal to allow swimming in the Mixed Pond during winter months without the presence of lifeguards. It lost the case. The present application from the City appears to demonstrate yet again, on a far more serious matter, the City's inclination to over-caution, and its dependence on questionable professional advice.

Kenneth Blyth

27 Laurier Road NW5 1SH

[REDACTED]

From: Jane Whitlock Blundell <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 06 August 2014 09:08
To: Planning
Subject: Heath Dams

Dear Planning department

As a regular Ladies' Pond swimmer I am writing to add my voice to the very many objecting to the proposals to build substantial dams round parts of the ponds on Hampstead Heath. I have been persuaded by the arguments that they are unnecessary, and they would radically alter and damage the natural look of this part of the Heath, disturb its wildlife habitats and destroy the historic views of this important and valued part of London's green spaces. Not to speak of removing many trees, and causing building havoc for an extensive period.

No Heath user I know wants this.

Octavia Hill would be out there at the head of the petition. Please do not trash her legacy.

Regards
Jane Blundell

Jane Blundell
37 Dartmouth Park Avenue
London NW5 1JL

[REDACTED]