

**From:** Annie Hanson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 14 July 2014 21:50  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** Planning Application 2014/4332/P

Dear Sir or Madam

I am deeply concerned about and strongly object to the above plan. The City of London looks after the Heath and has ignored the results of its own limited consultation exercise November 2013-February 2014 where two thirds of respondents were very dissatisfied with all of the dam proposals and were given limited options to comment on in the first place.

No alternatives have been considered such as Stephen Myers' proposals reported in the Camden New Journal 4th July 2014 ...greater use of the Heath's natural capacity to absorb flood water requiring much smaller modifications to the existing dams.

The massive disruption and permanent disfigurement of the Heath, would destroy a large part of this world famous beauty spot freely available to tourists and Londoners alike.

The scale of the project is unnecessarily large costing seventeen million pounds and is not a requirement of the 1975 Reservoirs Act and takes no account of the responsibilities of Camden Council and Thames Water to reduce the impact of flooding.

The ponds are a vital resource for the well being of large number of people. This environment and the habitats of wildlife in the area will be permanently scarred by this ill thought out and illogical development.

Please refuse this plan.

Many thanks

Annie Hanson  
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London W2 3BG

**From:** Alison Assiter <A [REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 15 July 2014 11:11  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** Planning application no. 2014/4332/P

Dear Camden,

I would like to object to the proposal to build dams on the heath on the following grounds: Hampstead Heath is world famous, freely available to all Londoners and visitors and it is used daily by wide variety of people; walkers, runners, swimmers, families with children. There are benefits to physical and mental health and the dams proposal would spoil this facility in the short and in the longer term.

The spillways proposed as a "soft engineering" option will still have significant impact. They are proposing to fell at least 160 mature trees as part of these works, to keep spillways clear This is a significant number and would spoil the character of the heath in itself.

The City has not considered alternatives e.g. Stephen Myers' proposals reported in the Camden New Journal on 4 July 2014 (greater use of the Heath's natural capacity to absorb flood water requiring much smaller modifications to the existing dams). Most significantly of all, the City has based its proposal on a crazy risk model of the 1 in 400,000 year "probable maximum flood" and seek to "virtually eliminate" the risk of dam failure. This is wholly unrealistic.

The approach is basically illogical and the work is not a requirement of the 1975 Reservoirs Act.

Best wishes,

Alison Assiter.

A Michael Weindling  
BSc MA MD FRCP FRCPCH HonFRCA

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*Emeritus Professor of Perinatal Medicine, University of Liverpool  
& Hon Consultant Neonatologist, Liverpool Women's Hospital*

Jonathan Markwell  
Regeneration and Planning Development Management  
London Borough of Camden  
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By email and post

Application Ref: 2014/4332/P  
Associated Ref: 2014/2149/PRE, 2013/7231/P, 2014/0320/P

DM Forum Attendee 05.06.14

15 July 2014

Dear Mr Markwell

PLANNING APPLICATION CONSULTATION: Hampstead and Highgate chains of ponds, Hampstead Heath, London

The Proposed Work:

Proposed engineering works to the Hampstead and Highgate chains of ponds comprising dam raising at Model Boating Pond (2.5m) and Mixed Bathing Pond (1m), new walls along dam crest to increase the height of the dams at Men's Bathing Pond (1m) and Highgate No.1 Pond (1.25m), a 0.19m kerb along part of the crest at Hampstead No.2 Pond, a new flood storage dam (5.6m) in the catchpit area, grass-lined spillways at most ponds, dam crest restoration, pond enlargement at Model Boating Pond, a replacement changing room building at Ladies Bathing Pond and associated landscaping, habitat creation and de-silting.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal. I attended the meeting at Parliament Hill School on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2014 with an open mind to learn more about the proposal. I came away from it not only unconvinced about the risk-benefit arguments relating to the proposed project, but clear in my own mind that this was a waste of money and of serious detriment to the environment. Please record my strongest objection to the proposal.

My objections are as follows.

1. The risk of flooding, described as the principal reason for these proposed works, seems to be extremely low and greatly exaggerated. Although the risk was described as being of high impact, it seems most unlikely that catastrophic flooding would occur without warning. Presumably if Camden Council thought there was a significant risk now, there would be appropriate instructions to the potentially affected householders with signage.

There are none. The arguments relating to risk seem to me to be entirely unconvincing. It appears to me that the probability of flooding because of a hypothetical failure of the Hampstead Heath system is so extremely unlikely (1 in 400,000 years was suggested) that taking no action is justifiable. As a Hampstead resident it is undoubtedly a risk that I would be prepared to take.

2. The effect on the environment would be considerable. In spite of the description of mitigating features, the final proposal would result in the removal of trees and the creation of high walled dams, entirely out of keeping with the general look and feel of Hampstead Heath and Kenwood. I think this is deplorable and unacceptable.
3. The proposed works would also result in the loss of use of the swimming ponds for a significant period, and this too is unacceptable.
4. The cost is considerable. As a rate and tax payer, I find such expenditure to be unwarranted, unjustifiable and unacceptable. It suggests maladministration.
5. The fact that the report was from an engineering firm that specialises in the building of dams suggests that it may not have been entirely objective. In my own profession, medicine, if you ask surgeons for a solution to a problem, they advise surgery. I urge the Corporation of London and Camden Council to seek a separate and objective opinion, or alternatively (and more cheaply) to have the courage to ignore this report and to ditch this proposal.
6. I understand that the proposed work contravenes the 1871 Act that established the Heath as a natural space and that the 1975 Reservoirs Act does not require work on such a large scale.

In summary, I object strongly to this proposal and urge the Corporation and Council not to proceed and to abandon this pointless and damaging scheme.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of A M Weindling.

A M Weindling

63 Whitehall Street  
London  
N17 8BP

Jonathan Markwell  
Regeneration & Planning,  
Development Management,  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Camden Town Hall Extension,  
Argyle Street,  
London  
WC1H 8EQ

17 July 2014

Dear Mr Markwell

### **Consultation Response – Planning Application 2014/4332/P**

I am writing in response to planning application 2014/4332/P (Dams Project – Hampstead Heath). I am a regular user of the Kenwood Ladies' Pond and cycle there daily throughout the year in order to swim. I have taken a keen interest in the proposals to build or enlarge dams on the Heath, since this was first announced about 3 years ago. This planning consultation provides me with an opportunity to urge Camden Council to reject the application by the City of London, for the reasons set out below.

1. **Green Space** - Hampstead Heath provides a natural environment which is accessible to all Londoners (and visitors from further afield) irrespective of their background. It is a truly democratic space and one of London's precious green "lungs". It has been protected by Act of Parliament (Hampstead Heath Act) since 1871, so that it should be preserved in its natural state. The City of London, which has been the custodian of the Heath since 1989 is now trying to flout that legislation and the proposals to build or enlarge dams on the Heath would leave it permanently disfigured. The Heath has experienced human intervention over the centuries, which has been gradual, but these works would be sudden and dramatic.
2. **Environmental damage** - These works would take approximately 2 years, causing significant disruption to Heath users, and those living near the Heath. The wildlife and habitat of the Heath would also be damaged during the works. The City of London's Environment Statement (Volume 3 Appendix 13.3 of the Related Documents to this application) states that the machinery used will regularly include 10 tonne lorries, 13 and 20 tonne excavators and a 9 tonne dumper. There will also be "exceptional" use of a 90 tonne crawler and 26 tonne concrete pump. Such heavy plant is likely to contribute to the soil compaction that the dam works are being partly justified to counteract.
3. **Public Health** - The Heath is used by a wide range of people (dog walkers, swimmers, joggers, families with children etc) and has a beneficial effect in terms of public health. This is surely something which Camden Council should be promoting amongst its citizens? This wonderful open space, only a few miles from central London is beneficial to the physical and mental health of those who use it, which indirectly reduces strain on health and social care budgets.

4. **The scale of the proposed works** is monstrous. The most dramatic changes will be in the Catchpit valley (5.6 m high, 40m deep and 100m long embankment) and at the Model Boating Pond (enlargement of the pond and a 2.5m dam at the southern end). The “lesser” work at other locations (e.g. 1m dams at the Men’s Bathing Pond and Mixed Pond) will also make significant changes to the topography of the Heath. Even the spillways which are presented as “soft engineering” will have dramatic effects, including the loss of 160 trees. The tree loss is referred to by the City of London as “tree protection”!
5. The **£17 million** which these works are expected to cost could be much better used for example to fund social care or the development of new council housing. In terms of mitigating flood risks, the money could be put to better use advising the residents to the south of the Heath of the likely risks, and putting in place the kind of civil contingency arrangements that Camden Council would be obliged to have anyway e.g. early warning systems and evacuation procedures.
6. **The risk model** which these proposed works is based on is illogical and unrealistic. The works are intended to “virtually eliminate” the risk of dam failure in the event of a 1 in 400,000 year event, the “Probable Maximum Flood”. This approach owes more to the legend of King Cnut than sensible risk management, and would be an act of supreme arrogance on the part of the City of London. This fanciful scenario is being used to carry out major developments which are not a requirement of the 1975 Reservoirs Act. The legislation does not prescribe “virtual elimination” of risk.
7. Incidentally one of the 80+ “Related Documents” (Environmental Statement Volume 3 Appendix 7.13, Habitat Statement page 3) states that the works are intended to address a 1 in 10,000 year flood, not 1 in 400,000. The *Ecology Consultancy* which produced this report appears to have been misinformed about the “justification” given for the dam works?
8. The risk model also concludes that dam failure would cause an additional 300 deaths, when the Probable Maximum Flood has already led to the death of approximately 1100 people due to other factors. These other factors would be beyond the control of the City of London or its new dams. Flooding would be caused much earlier by e.g. drain failure. It would be a better use of £17 million if the City of London sought to work with Camden Council and Thames Water to improve drainage in the wider area.
9. The City has managed Hampstead Heath since 1989 but has only recently concluded that the 1975 Reservoirs Act requires the proposed works, on advice of its “panel engineer” Dr Hughes. The City has failed to give due consideration to alternative proposals such as those of Stephen Myers’ as reported in the Camden New Journal on 4 July 2014 (greater use of the Heath’s natural capacity to absorb flood water requiring much smaller modifications to the existing dams). Instead the City of London and its contractor Atkins, are determined to go ahead with this unnecessary expense.

10. In the ponds' 300+ years' existence, the dams have not yet over-topped. We have just experienced the wettest winter on record, with no ill-effects to the dams or ponds of Hampstead Heath.
11. **Consultation** - City of London has ignored the results of its own limited consultation exercise (November 2013 – February 2014) where two thirds of respondents were very dissatisfied with all of the dam proposals. Respondents were given limited options to comment on in the first place but two thirds of them still stated that they were dissatisfied with the whole proposal. In the "Related Document" Environmental Statement Main Report (Volume 2 Part 1) this overwhelming opposition is dismissed and greater emphasis given to the small number of favourable responses received from people who live in areas which might be at risk of flooding. This report gives no figures for responses opposing or supporting the dam proposals, and the city of London is in effect ignoring its own consultation results.
12. This planning consultation has over 80 "Related Documents", many of which were difficult or impossible to open from the Camden website due to file size. This does undermine the validity of a consultation if supporting documentation is difficult to access.
13. **Access to swimming during works** - During earlier stages of consultation swimmers were assured that two ponds would be open at all times during the works, and as far as possible single sex swimming facilities would be maintained. It was also stated that work would take place at the Ladies' Pond from October 2015 to March 2016. It is clear from a number of the "Related Documents" that these undertakings may now be broken (see below) and this must be challenged. For a number of groups of swimmers e.g. Orthodox Jewish, access to single sex swimming facilities is essential and not just a preference.
  - a. Environmental Statement Volume 1 Non-Technical Summary, which states on page 14 that there may be a simultaneous closure of swimming ponds for at least 2 months.
  - b. Appendix 3.1 Construction Programme, which indicates that the Ladies Pond will be closed from October 2015 to May 2016, taking into account an extended closure period for the construction of the new changing rooms.
  - c. Appendix 10.1 Full Amenity Assessment which states for the Ladies Pond that "Construction works at the pond will require complete closure to all users for approximately 7 and a half months. This largely coincides with the least busy period in terms of visitor numbers, October to March, although April and May are noted to be when the pond usage increases for the summer. The mixed bathing pond will be closed during the same period, so the only alternative bathing pond will be the Men's bathing pond which will not offer any facilities for women wishing to swim during January–March"
14. At the Development Management Forum on 5 June 2014, the contractors BAM Nuttall indicated that swimming might be possible during some of the works (October 2105- March 2016) due to the use of an "aqua-dam" but there is no mention of this possibility in the planning application that I can find. Clarification is needed.

15. The **proposed new buildings at the Ladies Pond** present some problems too. The proposed single narrow entrance to the deck area and changing rooms would be much more congested than the current layout. This presents a potential risk in an emergency situation, if lifeguards need to move quickly against the flow of people entering the area. Also the single point of exit from the proposed lifeguard facilities makes no provision for alternative emergency exit from the back of a long/narrow building. There is a "blind spot" from the back of their office area too, with no view of the south meadow. An emergency exit door here facing the south meadow, with suitable glazed panel, would resolve both issues (instead of the proposed window at the side of the office looking at the entrance gate).
16. **Aerators** - The document "Proposed Drawing B Ladies Bathing Pond" indicates that a new aerator will be installed in the middle of the pond with a power supply from half way along the western bank of the pond. This appears intrusive as the aerators currently used are near to the southern end of the pond, behind limit lines so that swimmers cannot get too close to them. They do not intrude on the main body of the pond and serve an additional purpose of keeping an area close to the deck "swimmable" if there is ice in winter.

As I have stated at the beginning of this letter, I am urging Camden Council to reject this planning application. This is in the interests of preserving Hampstead Heath for future generations. The works proposed by the City would be an act of environmental and cultural vandalism.

Yours sincerely



Mary Powell



Dear Letters,

**Private Gain at Public Expense - The Proposed Development of Ponds on Hampstead Heath .**

Please allow me to voice my opinion on the above. I am a resident of 40 years in Millfield Lane which is adjacent to the Heath. Concern has been heard about potential flooding in Gospel Oak etc as happened in 1975 due to overflow of the sewers, but I would like to mention that properties in Millfield Lane, which is at the top of the hill were also affected .

In Winter 2013 where excessive rainfall flooded large parts of the UK, there was not a teaspoon of water overflowing from the ponds !

I see this project by the City of London Corporation, Atkins, BAM Nuttall and their shareholders as a means of making private money by misleading, intimidating ( "*We are the landowners !*" .... "*You will die...!*" ) as they revealed at the recent public forum ,and basically conning the public into what would be an immensely lucrative scheme for themselves .Their investment figure quoted of £15 million will be recouped in a short time .

This scheme is not about a potential 1 in 400,000 chance of flooding, but an opportunity to make **12 deep water reservoirs** out of ponds which are presently about 2 metres deep and have adequately handled the water run off for centuries.

In the process this means an absolute desecration of Hampstead Heath, the destruction and removal of hundreds of established trees ,raising the earth banks and a complete remodelling of a truly individual landscape.

They will in fact, be creating a future potential problem as more water will be stored on the Heath and these reservoirs will have to be maintained to ensure their integrity and safety.

Of course,its instigators would have made their money and be long gone .

The benefit to those pushing for this project will be to sell this harnessed water ,onto to say, Thames Water, who in turn will then sell it back to us -the public who have no choice,so **WE** -the public - will pay for this outrage in the end !

For this construction ,millions of tons of Earth moving equipment,Materials – Aggregate,Steel, Concrete,Timber,and Debris will have to moved in and out of the sites, and of course Millfield Lane will become an obvious thoroughfare for this .

So, this proposed intrusion has now gone to Planning stage and I would like to urge all citizens of London and further afield who would like to protect ,conserve and save a beautiful place and space to stand up for your rights and strongly object to Camden Council on these plans.The Heath has been under attack for centuries by Developers and the Self Indulgent, but thankfully others before us have fought to keep it as it is ,so now it's for us as protectors to defend and ensure its future.

**Hampstead Heath is public land and we enjoy it now, but we need to look after it ... if only for them that's coming after us!**

**Re -[www.camden.gov.uk/planning](http://www.camden.gov.uk/planning) .Planning applications 2014/4332/P, 2014/2149/PRE ,2014/7231/P , 2014/0320/P**

Yours Faithfully,  
Keith King  
Millfield Lane N6

Jonathan Markwell  
Regeneration & Planning, Development Management  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Camden Town Hall Extension  
Argyle Street  
London WC1H 8EQ

20<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Dear Mr Markwell,

I strongly oppose the proposed works to Hampstead Heath on the following grounds:-

- The City of London is required under the Hampstead Heath Act of 1871 to preserve it in its “natural state and aspect”.
- Hampstead Heath is world famous, freely available to all Londoners and visitors.
- Used daily by wide variety of people; walkers, runners, swimmers, families with children.
- Benefits to physical and mental health, in turn a wider economic benefit.
- Works would take at least 2 years, massive disruption to the Heath.
- Permanent disfigurement. Large areas inaccessible during works.
- Wildlife will be disrupted, sensitive environment damaged by traffic and heavy machinery.
- The Heath is a natural space, subject to gradual human intervention over hundreds of years. Proposed works would be sudden and dramatic.
- Spillways proposed as a “soft engineering” option will still have significant impact.
- Proposing to fell at least 160 mature trees as part of these works, to keep spillways clear.
- Model Boating Pond to be enlarged, island created and 2.5m dam to south.
- Men’s Bathing Pond 1m dam
- Highgate No1 Pond 1.25m dam and wall
- Catchpit Valley earth embankment, 5.6m high, up to 40m deep at base and 100m long
- Mixed Bathing Pond 1m dam
- Works over 2 year period, requiring use of heavy plant on the Heath. Likely to worsen the soil compaction and increase flood risks.
- Works would cost £17million, which is money which could be better spent elsewhere.
- Failing to consider alternatives e.g. Stephen Myers’ proposals reported in the Camden New Journal on 4 July 2014 (greater use of the Heath’s natural capacity to absorb flood water requiring much smaller modifications to the existing dams).
- Based proposal on risk model of the 1 in 400,000 year “probable maximum flood” and seek to “virtually eliminate” the risk of dam failure. Unrealistic.
- Illogical approach and this work is not a requirement of the 1975 Reservoirs Act.
- Based this flood model on the number of additional people (300) who might be killed by the Probable Maximum Flood if the dams fail.
- Takes no account of the responsibilities of other bodies like Camden Council and Thames Water to reduce the impact of flooding.

- No consideration of civil contingencies measures e.g. early warning systems or evacuation procedures that Camden Council is required to have in place.
- Does not allow for other infrastructure which would fail earlier than the proposed dams, and still lead to flooding and deaths e.g. drains and sewers south of the Heath.
- Assumes the 300 additional people who might die in floods due to dam failure remain in their homes and take no action to leave.
- **In over 300 years' existence the ponds on Heath have not collapsed or caused any major flooding. Have just had wettest winter on record with no ill-effects to the ponds.**
- City of London has ignored the results of its own limited consultation exercise (November 2013 – February 2014) where two thirds of respondents were very dissatisfied with all of the dam proposals. Given limited options to comment on in first place.

#### **Proposed works at Ladies' Pond**

- Full Amenity Assessment (Appendix 10.1) states Ladies' Pond will be closed for 7.5 months and there will be no alternative swimming facility for most of this period (October 2015-March 2016) as the Mixed Pond is closed for most of this time too. Needs to be clarified as assurances previously given about access to female only swimming facilities throughout the works i.e. access to the Mixed Pond as a substitute.
- Furthermore, the builders (BAM Nuttall) indicated at Development Management Forum on 5 June 2014 that swimming would be restricted for a much shorter period, due to the use of an "aqua-dam" during work on Ladies' Pond. Indicated they would only need to restrict swimming during de-silting works and when changing rooms being rebuilt.
- Proposed single narrow entrance to deck area and changing rooms will be much more congested than at present. Potential risk in emergency situation.
- Single point of exit from proposed lifeguard facilities makes no provision for alternative emergency exit from long/narrow building. Also a "blind spot" from the back of the office area, no view of the south meadow. An emergency exit door here facing south meadow, with suitable glazed panel, would resolve both issues (instead of proposed window to side/gate).

Yours faithfully,

Claudia McLoughlin  
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