

Comments Form

Name Michele Bryan
Address Flat 2, 9 Templewood Avenue, NW3 7UY
Email address [REDACTED]
Telephone Number [REDACTED]
Planning Application Number 2014/6143/P
Planning Application Address 36 Redington Road NW3 6RT

I object to the application for the reasons below;

Design and Aesthetics of External Appearance

The site is within a conservation area. Notwithstanding that the inappropriate over development of the adjacent property was given planning approval, it now can be seen how ill- advised such approval was. This and similar developments in the area are altering the character of the neighbourhood and setting dangerous precedents. To preserve the sylvan nature of the area, any future development of this site should not exceed the footprint of the present house and not extend to basements.

The present house is out of character with the neighbourhood and its replacement should provide an opportunity to design a house in keeping with the neighbourhood. Other houses in the road are higher than the present house but they are graduated in the upper floors so do not dominate in the way that number 38 does.

A flat roof is inappropriate for the British climate.

Overlarge windows reduce privacy and are out of keeping with the neighbourhood

Basements necessitate lightwells which reduce garden size and they increase flood risk.

Flood Risk to neighbouring properties

The planning application erroneously states that the site is not near a water course. There is an underground stream below Redington Gardens. It can be heard clearly at the top of Redington Gardens and its course is downhill close to the site. The development of a double basement must increase the risk of flooding to neighbouring properties.

I have not seen an independent hydrological survey of the area but this is essential.

Damage to trees and loss of habitat for wild life/ birds

The area around Templewood Road, Templewood gardens and Redington Road has suffered an excessive loss of trees in the last few years and this has largely been at the behest of developers to provide access for large excavating equipment. Trees are vital to the air quality of cities. There are several mature trees on the boundary between this site and 7 Redington Gardens. The root system of these trees would certainly be damaged by deep excavation. It is very likely the trees will be killed.

In the 28 years that I have lived in the area I have seen a drastic reduction in the bird population. There are far fewer places for them to nest. This is unacceptable. Numbers of hedgehogs have also reduced.

Recent building developments in Hampstead have resulted in the reduction of garden size and a proliferation of "hard landscaping". This should be resisted.

Proximity to contaminated land

At the end of Redington Gardens and just a few hundred feet from the site there is an area infested with Japanese knotweed. Camden Council are aware of this and have treated it once. It is re-growing and is known to be very invasive and harmful to property. I understand from the Council's Staff that it can only be treated when the plant is in leaf and that treatment will continue over a number of years. A full survey of the entire area should take place in the growing season to check the spread of the weed before any soil is removed from the site.

Noise nuisance

Here I can speak from personal experience. Five properties in our immediate neighbourhood have been re-developed in quick succession; each development taking up to 2 or 3 years. The noise and dirt are excessive and the noise and dirt from these developments carry for many hundreds of metres. For many months, during the hours of 8am and 6pm I measured the noise level at 80 decibels inside our flat. This is a volume at which it is impossible to hold a conversation with someone three feet away. Camden Council would not allow its staff to work in these conditions.

Access problems and consequent road obstruction by construction vehicles

The Planning Application suggests that there is sufficient access on site for construction vehicles. This is obviously false. Although the development at number 38 did have additional space, there were regularly vehicles blocking the road and continuing to run engines while many tons of concrete and other materials were delivered. The driveway to 36 is only wide enough to accommodate a domestic car. If the site were to be excavated it could not be used for construction vehicles.

The site is close to a busy four way road junction and any large vehicles in the road will obscure the view for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians and inevitably lead to accidents and injuries.

Health and Safety issues for residents within a radius of a minimum of 100 metres of the site

I have written above about the noise and dirt from the many local developments and while I believe that the bronchial problems and stress they cause to neighbours is unacceptable, these health problems may be difficult to quantify. However it is possible to test air quality and vehicle pollution wherever there is demolition and construction work. The Council should make regular and frequent random checks of the air quality in the neighbourhood throughout any redevelopment work.

I did not see in the plans any survey relating to asbestos which was sometimes used about the time that the present house was built.

Conflict with The London Plan and Camden's own policies

I have looked at the Development Plan Policies, The London Plan and Camden's response to these. It seems to me that this planning application fails to match some of the criteria for good planning.

I suggest that "Optimising Housing Potential" and "Making full use of Camden's capacity for housing" mean increasing the **supply** of housing and **not** increasing the space occupied by a single family, as is the case here.

Little attention has been paid to "The quality and design of Housing", "Local Character" or "Conserving Heritage".

General comments on the planning process

I understand some of the requirements and constraints of the planning process but if the affected neighbours are to have equal rights as the planning applicants the Council could be more even handed.

The earliest documents relating to this planning application are dated 4 July 2014. Following pre-application advice, the revised scheme was submitted in September 2014. In the months that followed, the planning applicants have had time and professional expertise to produce;

- Existing and proposed plans, sections and elevations
- A lengthy Planning Statement (although largely cut and paste)

- Design Statement
- GI and basement Impact assessment
- Sustainability report
- Tree report
- Photographical survey
- Etc

Only months later, at the end of November, did the nearest neighbours see the plans –if they had computer access) and at this point they were given only three weeks to produce their comments. This is three weeks before a major seasonal holiday when it is almost impossible to appoint professional advisers. This disadvantages neighbours and may well be the reason that so many inappropriate developments are approved.

My second point is that, currently, only immediate neighbours are notified of a planning application. If you happen to walk the same route regularly you might see the “Does this affect you?” notice. But they do not always appear on the date that is written on them.

In developments of the scale we have recently seen in Hampstead, any resident who lives near enough to be affected by:

noise, dirt, poor air quality. Road obstructions, broken pavements, resident parking changes, building mud and detritus on pavements

should be canvassed because they are all affected by these works and many deplore the effect on the character of Hampstead.

I urge you to refuse the application

Michele Bryan

19 December 2014