

Ref: 2014/0617/P

## OBJECTIONS

We strenuously object to the application 2014/0617/P for the following reasons.

1. Properties on Constantine Road are built close together on clay strata; the proposed development is incredibly drastic for such a small house in a Conservation area. Such a development near Hampstead Heath means any groundwater below ground level will be diverted around the basement which could lead to both immediate neighbours and other Constantine Road residents being affected. Another house in Constantine Road is said to already have problems with flooding. A local builder familiar with the local terrain and building issues has explained to us that this work will lead to between 18 months and 2 years of significant, sometimes total, disruption in our street. This is not just an issue of large lorries moving excavated soil, but also the noise of the heavy equipment required to do this kind of work and the consequences of this work.
2. There is a history of subsidence at No. 75, which in 1992, resulted in extensive repair work being required to keep the gable end wall, which is above the roofline of No.73, stable. The proposed development would result in the ground below the houses responding to the significant change in water pressure in the clay strata. The response of the ground will continue to occur long after work has been completed. Whilst the response from the ground may be small in absolute terms it will in no way be uniform meaning neighbouring properties can gradually be distorted as the ground nearest the excavation is more likely to move than the rest.  
With a history of subsidence at No. 75 which resulted in extensive repair work being required and the plans for the basement including extensive subterranean structural work including new foundations, the proposed works create an opportunity for this issue to reoccur and be exacerbated by introducing extensive, new construction below the shared party wall leaving No. 75 structurally unstable.  
The structural impact the basement will have will be extensive as No. 75 is not of the same height or design as No.73, with a third floor and loft sitting above the roofline. Furthermore, by underpinning No.73, subsidence is more likely to occur along the entire road following the works and Mr Lees will then have no responsibility to other house owners should their properties be affected by the works. There was serious subsidence and underpinning undertaken in Roderick Road recently – the cause is believed to be basement works.
3. The proposed development could set a precedent meaning other houses can dig out a basement putting even more properties at risk. Also if one house (No.73) is underpinned by concrete, the neighbouring properties have the potential to move away due to ground instability as a result of the water redistribution around the basement.

4. **RISK TO LIFE AND LIMB:** It is believed that this and any similar project in this neighbourhood represents a risk to life and limb. The City of London has a project to raise the dams on Hampstead Heath. This is because their engineering consultants Atkins have indicated that in the case of a torrential and catastrophic downpour, the present dams will burst their banks, flooding all the streets below the Heath, INCLUDING CONSTANTINE ROAD. The engineering project will cost the City an estimated £15,000,000 so the risk must be seen to be very high.  
In addition to this the Fleet River, now a subterranean sewer, splits into two branches just above nearby Mackeson Road. As you may remember, a major flood occurred in the neighbourhood below the Heath in 1975, caused by the sewers overflowing. It is reported one person lost their life and many houses were affected. We question whether these sewers are now secure?
5. **RISK TO PROPERTY OF OTHERS:** I am reliably informed by residents of the top house on the west side of Roderick Road that the cellar, built with the property, floods each year when the Fleet River rises. Not so well known is the fact that some 20 years ago, all the houses on the west side of the street had to make major repairs costing into tens of thousands of pounds (20 years ago!) for a chain of subsidence. Only the top house did not succumb.
6. A year of inaction on this application and the severe prospect of detriment to our property and reduction in its value post-works has been very stressful. Furthermore, any excavation works will create excessive noise which will be transmitted through the party wall. The noise and disruption to residents will be prolonged and horrendous; also the elderly housebound residents of No.75 will suffer the most from the prolonged and excessive noise due to being in such close proximity to the works all day.