

Dike, Darlene

From: Rob Hagemans [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 April 2015 14:07
To: Planning
Subject: Objection to application 2014/7752/P at 38 Frogmal Lane

Dear Mr. Peres Da Costa,

Application 2014/7752/P for a basement excavation at 2014/7752/P has just been brought to my attention. I object to this application on the following grounds:

- * This is perhaps the sloppiest Basement Impact Assessment I have seen so far in Hampstead. Applicant name-checks some of the requirements of a BIA, but does not provide anything more than anecdotal evidence for his case.
- * No survey of the underground (boreholes) appears to have been carried out; evidence is based on a "walkover" and "peering over the fence". Applicant's advisers, in other words, have no idea how the subsoil is laid out.
- * There is no survey or evidence of the effect on underground water flows, even though it is acknowledged that this "might be a problem in the winter months".
- * There appears to be no assessment of damage to *neighbouring properties* on the Burland scale, as required by BIA guidance. The assessment of current cracking of the house on the Burland scale that is given is not relevant in this context and appears designed to throw the planning officer off guard.
- * Applicant's advisers appear not to understand the meaning of "cumulative impact". The cumulative impact of basement developments is the impact of several neighbouring excavations seen together, which can be considerably worse than that of a basement by itself alone, in particular as water flows are redirected around several properties rather than just one. Even if a basement's impact by itself is negligible (and applicant provides little evidence to show this is so), its cumulative impact may be large. This site in particular has two neighbouring basement developments, one in construction at 42 Frogmal Lane and one in planning at 40 Frogmal Lane. Applicant's (unsupported) claim that the "environmental impacts of the scheme are minimal" and "as such there is no cumulative impact" is dangerously misleading.
- * Applicant claims that "there is nothing in this BIA to suggest that the construction of the proposed basement ... will have a detrimental impact". The absence of evidence is not evidence of absence: the purpose of a BIA is to provide sufficient evidence to convince the Council that the development will *not* have a detrimental impact. There is nothing in this BIA to suggest the development will not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring sites' stability or hydrogeology.

This is a sensitive site, on top of a hill towering over a large number of downstream properties; a hill, moreover that has seen numerous basements being dug out over the past few years, whose cumulative impacts are expected to show over the coming years. A BIA of such low quality as provided by the applicant would be insufficient for consideration on any Camden site; it is entirely inappropriate here.

Please refuse.

Kind regards,
Dr Robert Hagemans
254a Finchely Road, NW3 7AA