

Dear Charles,

I am writing as chair of the Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee to advise you of the serious concerns that the Committee has regarding the CMP for the Water House in Millfield lane.

Firstly I would like to point out that there has been no recent consultation with the CAAC on this topic or any other matters regarding the proposed works at this site. The last contact was some two years ago.

The plan proposed will impact very seriously on the considerable numbers of local residents, walkers, cyclists, users of the Ladies' Pond and those in powered and unpowered wheel chairs, who use the lane to access Kenwood and the Heath and to make their way to Hampstead Lane. It is clear from the plan that no adequate safety measures have been put in place to protect users and that the requirement for a 1.2m pedestrian refuge ALONG THE WHOLE OF THE RELEVANT SECTION OF THE LANE (some 205m not 80m as stated in the CMP) cannot be met. The lane is too narrow to meet this requirement and the idea that HGVs will stop to allow users to pass is ludicrous; how will a powered wheelchair get past in safety if the roadway is less than 3.7m wide?

I would remind you that the Inspector's report rejecting a similar CMP for Fitzroy Farm (APP/X5210/A/08/2080723) concluded that the use of Millfield Lane would cause 'considerable and prolonged risk to safety and disturbance to residents and the many visitors to the locality'. This conclusion is discussed in detail in paras.15, 16, and 21 of the report. Nothing has changed since this report was written; if anything pedestrian use of the lane has increased and an accurate survey has established that the lane is in fact narrower than was assumed previously.

Furthermore no agreement regarding the use of the lane has been reached with the other owners including the City of London. Surely this should be in place BEFORE any CMP is agreed. No explanation is given by the Council for this omission.

There is also an issue concerning the effect on tree roots of the passage of HGVs along this unmade up lane. There are several veteran oaks along the lane and the effect of HGV loading on their RPSs had not been addressed. Only ONE California Bearing Ratio (CPR) has been taken directly outside the Water House, a point where there are no vulnerable veteran trees. It is usual and good practice to require CBR ratings a minimum of every 25m, plus also in the locations where sensitive RPAs might be affected. Given the length of the lane this would imply 8-10 readings are required. This should be taken up by the Council's Tree officer, the City and the applicants.

Finally it is suggested that some alternative walking route may have to be identified 'via Hampstead Heath to direct pedestrian and cyclist movements away from Millfield lane.' The ONLY access for emergency vehicles to the ladies' swimming pond is via the lane. Such a closure would also entail the closure of this much-loved and in fact world-renowned facility. For this to happen to allow the construction of one private dwelling seems bizarre to say the least. It is also the case that neither the Council nor the applicant have the authority to require the owners of adjacent land to provide such an alternative.

The disturbance caused to the adjacent made-up section of Millfield lane and to Merton lane by the weight of construction traffic contemplated is also not adequately addressed. Both are in a controlled parking zone and are narrow with poor sight lines and carry heavy pedestrian traffic.

For all these reasons this CMP must be rejected by the Council.

Yours sincerely Susan Rose , Chair Highgate CAAC