

1A OAKHILL AVENUE LONDON NW3 7RD

5 January 2016

Regeneration and Planning Development Management
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judd Street
London WC1H 8ND

For the attention of Tania Skelli-Yaoz

Dear Sirs,

FORMAL OBJECTION

PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE NO: 2015/5056/P
(ASSOCIATED REFERENCES: 2013/6162/P, 2015/5055/P)

RELATING TO 2 OAKHILL AVENUE, LONDON NW3 7RE

I was appalled to note that the council gave permission to the owner of a small end of terrace town house to construct a basement in order that he can change the user from a single residential unit to 2 maisonettes, and even more appalled that, presumably out of sheer greed and in order to maximise profit, the owner is now seeking a variation to include additional extensions and a roof terrace. I would urge the council to **REFUSE** this application to vary.

Presumably you are aware that, following exploratory bore holes in Redington Road, running water was discovered at a depth of only approximately 3.5 metres, apparently striking one of the several tributaries of the Kilburn River which runs through Oakhill Avenue.

It is understood that the proposed development at 2 Oakhill Avenue envisages demolishing the existing house and forming extensive additional accommodation at basement level. It is further understood that the development intends to increase the volume by more than double the size of the existing house. The proposed substantial subterranean work may well affect the direction of the river referred to in the above paragraph, with calamitous and catastrophic consequences for our own property. This will be increased by the variation now proposed.

Under the current legislation/guidelines in respect of basement works, the council must ensure that in cases of one storey basement works,

it can be no larger than the footprint of the existing property and does not damage or cause impact to trees, water, environment or land stability. Where basement works are intended of two or more storeys (as appears to be the case in 2 Oakhill Avenue) in addition to the above constraints, the council must also ensure that the natural environment and local amenity are not damaged.

The pressure caused by the proposed basement works will inevitably be in breach of the current legislation/guidelines and would harm trees and erode foundations of neighbouring properties. The further works proposed will exacerbate this. In addition, the council must take into account the disruption caused to neighbours, the pressure (which is already great) on parking spaces in Oakhill Avenue and the increased noise nuisance which may well follow if the application to vary is granted.

As a lawyer, I have personal knowledge of the litigation which ensues when basement developments cause damage to other properties. Such litigation could well include the local authority as defendant.

I would urge you to **REJECT** this potentially extremely harmful proposal for variation

Yours faithfully

Judith Gould

6th January 2016

Mrs. Helene Hort
2C Oakhill Avenue
London
NW3 7RE

Ms. Tania Skelli-Yaoz
Regeneration and Planning
Development Management
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 8ND

**Ref – 2015\5056\IP
2015\5055\IP**

Dear Ms. Skelli-Yaoz,

I am writing to you today in order to submit my objection to the planning application for the basement excavation and extensions to the rear and side in connection with conversion of existing single family dwelling into 2 x 3 bedroom maisonettes, namely to widen the lower ground rear extension and to create a roof terrace with screens at the rear flat roof area.

My concerns relate to the following:

- Impact on visual amenities and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Harm to residential amenities
- Insufficient off street parking
- The impact of the proposed basement construction

Impact on Visual Amenities and Conservation Area

The excavation at the front of the property, ramping down to the proposed basement will result in a completely out of touch feature in relation to the general area. The additional floor above and the visible basement below will completely unbalance the terrace. Also, the proposed rear elevation is also starkly different to the other two properties in the terrace in terms of position and proportion of fenestration and materials. The proposals completely lose the existing vertical alignment of rear windows and pay absolutely no regard to the host building.

In this respect I would like to point out that whilst the host building itself is of no particular character, a design that is wholly at odds with the host building will tend to draw further attention to it by its bizarrely different nature. Given that this group of three buildings is of no merit in the Conservation Area, such a form of design, drawing significant attention to the terrace, will unfortunately be extremely detrimental to the overall character and appearance of this part of the Conservation area.

The proposals incorporate a rear extension at basement level and at existing ground floor level. The substantial extension and proposed basement, all of which will be visible at the rear due to changing ground levels, will appear over dominant and entirely out of keeping with the terrace. This is exacerbated by the extent of glazing, design and detail including materials.

Harm to Residential Amenities

The large basement extension, all of which will project above garden level of No.2C, will result in the garden of 2C suffering from the loss of sunlight on the ground and an uncomfortable sense of enclosure. The sense of enclosure is compounded by the fact that the rear of the garden to 2C is narrow.

Another impact on my residential amenities is from the proposed roof terrace with screens at the rear flat roof area. The proposed glass balustrading will do nothing to prevent overlooking into my garden and into my property, to which I regard a violation of my privacy. Furthermore, the additional elevation and materials will further decrease the sunlight received within the area of 2C.

Impact and Basement Construction

As well as concerns in respect of the visual appearance of the proposed basement, there are also concerns in respect of the impact of its construction on ground water in the area. It is noted, from the Basement Impact assessment, that ground water has been found only approximately 1m below the level of the proposed basement. The site is above an aquifer and within 100m of a water course. The Basement Impact assessment acknowledges that the construction may affect ground water flow and may cause new springs to form or the reactivation of old springs. It also notes local instability within the site and adjoining sites may occur. In respect of 2C it also acknowledges that the excavation to form the basement may result in structural damage.

I would also like to note that one of the recommendations of the BIA is that ground water monitoring should continued to establish equilibrium levels and to determine the extent of any seasonal fluctuations. Whilst I am not an expert in the field, it does not seem appropriate to grant planning permission for a development where the full impact is unknown.

Car Parking

As regards car parking there are currently two parking spaces on the application site, one in the existing side garage and another in front of the garage and ground floor window. The proposals, however, result in the loss of the garage. Off-street parking is therefore reduces from two to one car spaces. This is considered wholly unacceptable given that the proposals increase the number of dwelling units from one to two and there will be nothing preventing the occupiers seeking residents parking permits and also because of the fact that the road is already very heavily parked on, particularly in the evenings.

If the council is minded to grant planning permission for the proposed development (despite the numerous other concerns that have been raised) then it is believed that it should only be if subject to a "car free" Legal Agreement, removing the rights to all residents to obtain parking permits.

6th January 2016

Conclusions and Additional Points

An additional point I would like to make is that on the second paragraph of page 6 of the Design and Access statement, there appears to be an error in the reference:

"In 1991, no.2C – the house at the other end of the terrace of three – received planning permission for..."

This statement is incorrect as the house at the end of the terrace is No.2B and should therefore be amended.

For the numerous and varied reasons it is therefore hoped that the Local Authority will be refusing planning permission for this wholly unacceptable development. I would be grateful if you could please keep me notified of the progress with the application. If any amended plans or additional supporting documents are submitted could you please ensure that I am advised. Please also notify me if the application is to be reported to Committee and, if so when.

Yours faithfully

Mr

