

FLASK WALK NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION NW3
**(representing the interests of residents of Back Lane, Boades Mews, Flask Walk,
Gardnor Road, Lakis Close, Lutton Terrace, Mansfield Place, Murray Terrace,
New Court and Streatley Place)**

Attn Patrick Marfleet
Regeneration & Planning
London Borough of Camden
23/02/2016

Dear Mr Marfleet

APPLICATION REFERENCE: 2015/3753/P
ADDRESS: 36 Flask Walk, London NW3 1HE
PROPOSAL: Creation of a new basement floor with front lightwell and alterations on rear
grounds floor fenestration

The Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association has recorded its objections to the above application for permission to construct a basement below the existing property in addition to the roof level extension already granted.

Since then the applicant has submitted further documentation amending the proposals and in particular amending the proposed method of construction and consequent implications of the works on the neighbourhood. The Association submits these additional comments in relation to the modifications and revised proposals to be read in conjunction with and in extension of its original objection.

As a result of the criticism of the original proposals by the Association's structural engineer's report, confirmed by the independent engineer's report commissioned by Camden Council, the applicant has modified and revised his design to address several basic design shortcomings. These are to be welcomed, but one crucial check to ensure the stability of the surrounding area, requiring a deep bore to sample the underlying soils and investigate long term slope stability, has not.

The applicant suggests that this investigation be deferred until work commences, a proposal which the Association finds totally unacceptable. The stability of the local area has been shown by several failures over recent years to be at risk from inadequate soil investigation prior to the work. We would instance major problems at 51 Flask Walk, 20 Christchurch Hill and 12 Gayton Crescent, to name but three in the immediate vicinity and on the same side of the hill, to say nothing of the recent discovery of an unforeseen cavity requiring the immediate closure of Flask Walk for several weeks, as being sufficient to require full investigation before any approval is given. The pressure on a contractor to push on with the works while the investigation takes place and argue the case later would make any conditional approval dangerous.

Regarding the revised proposed Construction Management Plan, we welcome the realisation that the previous proposal for large lorries, cranes and concrete delivery vehicles was totally impractical and inappropriate for a narrow street with a 6ft. width limit dictated by actual dimensions of the street. The suggested revised arrangement of restricting delivery and, more importantly, removal of spoil to Ford Transit sized vans and for the spoil to be dug by small hand operated tools and machinery and bagged to taken to the vans is all to be welcomed. On a more positive note, it is suggested that the proposal would be more efficient if the vans were facing downhill to be loaded and exiting the way they had come rather than continuing uphill past the narrowest part of the Walk and round a difficult corner into Back lane.

We must, however, question the figures for van journeys put forward in support of the proposal. The bagging of the spoil will increase the effective bulking factor from around 30% applicable to loaded lorries to an effective factor of at least 50% where the bags are packed together into vans. The suggestion that vehicles delivering clean new materials can be used to remove muck is clearly impractical, quite apart from the fact that these new materials will only be brought in once the excavation is complete. Not only this, but there appears to be no provision for the vehicle movements associated with the approved extension on the roof. Even assuming that all vans to or from the site travel fully loaded the number of vehicle movements and the timescale must be over twice the figures quoted. It is because we have experienced the discrepancies between proposals and experience regarding 51, Flask Walk and for the restoration and upgrading of New Court, accessed via Flask Walk, that we speak with authority on such schedules.

We also note that the proposal is to permit working outside the normal limits of 8a.m. to 5p.m. subject to noise levels being kept below 55dbA. This is unacceptable, even if the contractor could conform, which is unlikely. We must remind the Council of the close packed nature of the street where any noise is transmitted by reflection off the walls, the so called canyon effect.

In summary, whilst the amended traffic management and construction proposals are a substantial improvement, the basic points of our original objection remain. The proposal to defer complete site investigation until approval, however provision and to allow working outside the normally permitted hours of 8a.m.to 6p.m. weekdays, are both totally unacceptable.

Mark R. Nevard.

Mark Nevard, committee member Flask Walk Neighbourhood Association
71 Flask Walk NW3 1ET
mark@nevard.net