

COMMENT ON PLANNING APPLICATION 2016/2600/P – THE GARDEN HOUSE

THE Vale of Health Society wish to object to the above application.

We note that the architects' statement refers to the planning approval received via appeal on 30.10.13 and states that the works proposed within the current application do not vary from the previously approved works, The VOHS objected to the previous application as did the Heath and Hampstead and a number of individual residents and we consider those objections still have considerable force.

There are 2 further matters to which we wish to draw attention. The first relates to the addendum report of Richard Jackson Ltd dated June 2012 which is enclosed with the present application. The report deals with subterranean groundwater flow. There has been a recent development which we believe suggests that the problem of subterranean groundwater flow has been underestimated. We understand that proposed works to the foundations of Hillview, which is built on a site within a few metres of The Garden House, revealed a substantial flow of subterranean water approximately 1 metre below the property extending to a depth of some 8 metres. The impact of the water is currently being examined. We believe that there should be a further addendum report in the light of this discovery. We also understand that the lower floor of Beechey Cottage requires permanent pumps to deal with underground water.

If, as we suspect, the impact of subterranean water in relation to The Garden House has been underestimated, so has the degree of piling which will be required if the basement extension proceeds. We refer to the Draft construction management plan submitted with the current application which sets out in detail the massive problems and disruption which will be caused in carrying out the works, particularly in the light of the very limited access to and location of the site. The problems and disruption will inevitably be compounded if the piling works required are far more extensive than envisaged in the addendum report.

The other matter which we consider is of considerable importance relates to the timing of the current application which is required because the previous permission will shortly expire. The basement extension is now covered by permitted development rules. We refer to Camden's Article 4 directive which will come into force on 1.6.17. It seems to us this particular basement excavation is just the sort of excavation which should require full planning permission so that the impact thereof can be properly assessed. It seems to us wrong in principle that the application should be considered now rather than after the directive has come into force.