

*73 Fitzjohn's Avenue
Hampstead Village
London
NW3 6PD*

13th April 2017

Camden Council

Dear Sirs,

BASEMENT EXCAVATION – 76 FITZJOHN'S AVENUE
REGISTRATION NUMBER 2017/1047/P

We understand that a planning application has been made for the excavation of a basement covering the entire floor area of 76 Fitzjohn's Avenue. It is understood that the existing house covers an area of approximately 140m² and that the envisaged works will cover an area of 200m². We are informed that the depth of excavation will be up to 3.5m below ground level which, in itself, will generate approximately 1,000m² of spoil. We should not only like to express our grave concern at this proposal, but also to object most strenuously to it.

The house is situated on a significant slope and with the removal of such a large amount of spoil, it is inconceivable to imagine that the water table will not be affected, particularly as it is situated some 80 metres from a spring line which was the source of the River Tyburn. It is understood that ground water monitoring was done on one day only which would not give reliable or adequate readings and, we believe, is totally contrary to established principles.

We understand that there is a considerable concentration of lead in the soil and disturbing it could be highly detrimental to the environment. Furthermore, the statement of the proposed method of construction does not comply with Camden planning department's current planning policies. We believe that the planned proposals incorporate changing the existing windows of the building and that the design of the new fenestration will not be in-keeping with either the style of the house or of the neighbouring buildings.

The proposals will undoubtedly increase the already very congested traffic flow on Arkwright Road – a road which is already highly dangerous having regard to the proximity of the proposed development to St Antony's School and Devonshire House School. Being situated at the corner of Arkwright Road and Fitzjohn's Avenue and within a matter of a few yards of the traffic lights, it goes without saying that there will be a considerably increased danger to both traffic and pedestrians to say nothing of the added

pollution to the already very toxic air. Since the site is within 5 metres of the public highway, and with a considerable volume of heavy lorries taking away the basement soil, the development will undoubtedly lead to structural damage both to the road and the footpath. We understand, furthermore, that there is a specimen tree within a few yards of the proposed development which will undoubtedly be affected by these proposals.

What concerns us very particularly is the fact that the owners of the proposed development will, in all probability, not live in the premises and we believe that the impact on the neighbours in the immediate vicinity will extend to the developer's ability to sell the property. We understand, furthermore, that the owners/developers will probably not be in the country whilst the proposed construction is being carried out so that they, in themselves, will not be subjected to any nuisance caused by these proposals. It has to be questioned who will be supervising the project and what recourse there will be in the event of having any objections during the course of the building works or, in the event of a worst case scenario, of having to seek an immediate injunction.

The environmental issues such as acoustics/noise, air pollution of both dust and machinery, to say nothing of undoubted serious vibrations during the excavation and the traffic issues including road safety, etc., etc., indicate that not only is this project totally ill-conceived, but it is also absolutely unnecessary and out of keeping with the area. Basement excavations are the current "buzz words" and have already been demonstrated to be seriously detrimental to the environment for many of the above reasons. We believe, furthermore, that the developers are simply seeking to cash in on the current fashion and only in order to make a "fast buck".

We believe that this planning application should be strenuously resisted and vigorously opposed.

Yours faithfully,

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Mr & Mrs Peter S. Hammerson