

Objections to Planning Application Ref. No. 2017/4327/P

Jim and Roma Patel have applied for planning permission to build a single story basement at their home No.4 Vane Close NW3 5UN.

They want to have more living space for them and their young son and daughter, although they live in a four bedroom house and they say they do not intend to have any more children.

They have informed Nicole Robinson at No.3 & Danielle Ellison at No.5 of everything they intend to do and they have said they would take steps to minimise any disruption.

Jim being in the business as a property developer we are sure he went through all the points thoroughly when preparing the application.

However we have many concerns. They are as follows:

Vane Close is a small estate of 20 private townhouses around a communal lawn and is built in a very enclosed space.

We are first and foremost concerned by the frailty of the houses, which were built in the 70's quickly and cheaply with poor quality materials. They are not like the large Victorian houses on Haverstock Hill, which were given permission.

1. STRUCTURAL ISSUES

a. The foundation

The houses do not have individual foundations but a common one for all the houses in the same row (10 houses). A new basement could damage not only No.3 and No.5 but the entire row of properties.

b. The terraced houses

They are interconnected. The internal spiral staircases are intertwined in each other's houses. This architectural device saves space but weakens the whole structure.

c. Soil and water

It is well known that Hampstead has complex water movement underground and it erodes the soil.

d. Underground garages

The basement will be very close to the underground garages leaving not much space between the two and reducing the bearing capacity of the soil, which could lead to a risk of flooding.

e. Accessibility of the private roads

There is a cul de sac leading to North Bridge School, which causes a lot of traffic jam twice a day when the children are dropped off and collected.

We also have a number of elderly residents including a wheelchair user.

2. LIGHT AND SOUND POLLUTION

Apart from the important structural issues we have two main worries.

- a. For No.3 the lights will be reflected into the living room,

which has a large window and ruin the enjoyment of being there. If there was screening by trees this would block the view of the lawn and make the whole place darker. Please see notes on garden level *

If planning permission is granted we request for an opaque glass to be used and that Camden set a condition that the space should not be used as a habitable room.

- b. No. 3 had former experience when her hearing was impaired by construction work. She taught at The City Of London School For Girls when the Barbican Centre was under construction. She intends to have her hearing tested before and after if the planning permission is granted.

With No. 5 the impact of this construction will be severe as the resident there is at the later stage of Dementia and is now blind. The Lady will not understand what all the commotion is about in front of her bedroom and this will result in her being fearful and highly agitated. This will make it much more difficult to care for her. It will not be possible to move her into another room or to relocate her somewhere else.

The plan for the basement extending from the edge of the communal path at the front to the edge of the private side road at the back looks like an incredible overdevelopment for such a narrow town house.

We do hope you respect the wishes of Vane Close residents and not grant planning permission.

IMPORTANT POINTS

1. The underground garages are not included on the basement impact assessment. We are concerned as there are only 3 metres from the beginning of the basement plan.
2. They are planning to raise the garden level* at the front by 40cms and at the back by 30cms. The proposed height of the garden is not acceptable as the level will be almost in line with the dividing wall, which would greatly compromise our privacy. As garden No. 3 is already on a lower level it will make it even more sunken and make us feel closed in. The raising of the garden level will visually not be in keeping with the other houses spoiling the aesthetic of the place. This we stress contravenes the terms of the lease. If planning permission is granted the aesthetic of the place should be respected.
3. Any construction changes are contrary to the rules of the lease and this applies to all buildings in the Close. Therefore, they should have been submitted to the head lessor Mr. Brian Kernahan at 4 England's Lane, London NW3 4TG.
4. This is a private estate on a private road, which is not the responsibility of the Council. It is imperative that the head lessor be consulted.