



I am a frequent user of Hampstead Heath and Ladies Pond. I swim in Ladies pond regularly for over 5 years, also in winter season, therefore have a good idea of the nature of the use of this part of Millfield lane by vehicles, pedestrian, bicycles, children and dogs.

The concern Nr. 1 below refers to this planning application and gate design. Points 2 and 3 refer to the safety concerns as a consequence of increased traffic to the gate and through the gate. The copy of this letter is therefore also sent to the City of London Corporation.

#### **1. Historic vs. new Millfield lane gate design.**

There were several planning applications related to the Water House over last few years, with no indication of changes to vehicular access gate. It should be expected that any alterations carried out to the property could and should have been made behind the existing gate position. The case has not been made for the work proposed

to the gate itself.

It is clear that the highways officer had concerns previously (application 2019/2584/P). The traffic engineer's diagrams presuppose perfect driving but this is already a turning with limited sight-lines onto a predominantly pedestrian lane which are made more limited by bringing the gates forward, meaning that a vehicle exiting the property will have to move farther onto the lane before full visibility is obtained. Vehicles entering would be no longer be able to drive off the lane and up to the gates and would be forced to wait in the lane itself while the gates are opened – a further risk to pedestrians and a potential blockage to other vehicles. At present, the set-back of the gates provides a valuable 'breathing space' in the lane: a spatial and visual pause that is valuable in its own right, regardless of the technical aspects of vehicle movement.

In case of a delivery vehicle unable to make a U-turn at the Water House gate, it will be **forced to reverse to Merton Lane junction**, endangering pedestrians. Some vehicles are not expected to enter the property's driveway for the U-turn, e.g. Amazon dropping off a book through the mailbox on the gate, or failed deliveries, when the residents are not in.

## 2. Increased traffic

I have concerns on how increased traffic to Water House will impact safety of the users of the Millfield Lane. Judging from the extensive amenities of Water House, it is suitable as a family home for an **above average UK household** (4 bedrooms). In addition to residents and their guests accessing the property, the traffic from the following vendors may be expected: taxis, grocery deliveries, Amazon and other online shopping deliveries, utility and maintenance companies, indoor pool maintenance, security, gardening, removals and furniture deliveries etc. While some of these household activities may not be relevant for the current owner, they are not ruled out for subsequent Water House owners.

The property description (<https://www.onthemarket.com/details/3305234/>) specified "vehicular gate opposite the entrance to the Ladies Bathing Pond" and "ample secure parking", highlighting the potential for increased traffic to the property. Furthermore, Google maps and Waze navigate the drivers to Water House via Millfield lane. The current amount of traffic, apart from recent construction activities of Water House (well managed by banksmen), is negligible and is mostly related to Hampstead Heath maintenance and Ladies pond facilities maintenance activities by briefed drivers. Among the code of conduct for City of London vehicles are turning hazard lights on when entering the lane. It has to be investigated by the applicant how adequate safety procedures can be achieved for the private traffic.

## 3. Traffic safety and road conditions.

In light of the increased traffic on this part of Millfield Lane, also after dark, **the traffic signs need to be updated**. The current traffic sign ("12mph, give way to pedestrians") is quite outdated. What traffic signs ("access only", speed limit, shared use notices, parking restrictions, width or weight restrictions) are planned for this section? According to the information obtained from LB of Camden Highway team, this part of Millfield Lane is neither private nor public road, and consequently falls into category of **unadopted roads with private owners**, which street works authority either require frontagers to repair/maintain, or street works authority executes repairs/maintenance and recovers the costs. It would be reasonable to clarify the accountabilities of City of London and private owners of Millfield lane houses related to enhancing safety for the shared road users.

Furthermore, in rainy seasons the road surface gets muddy and slippery, which creates additional danger for the pedestrians, navigating around moving vehicles. Based on the rationale for the Hampstead Heath Ponds Project, also supported by LB of Camden (LB of Camden SFRA Strategic Flood Risk Assessment July 2014, p.38), future peak rainfall intensity will gradually increase due to climate change. The increased risk to pedestrians therefore needs to be mitigated by by frontagers by maintaining the surface of Millfield Lane.

To summarise points 2 and 3, this part of Millfield lane is unlit, unmarked, does not have traffic signs, and the uneven slippery surface of the road make it dangerous for shared use and require mitigation. The applicant and City of London would need to discuss how to address it, how to enforce these measures and agree on the process of dealing with incidents on this road.

Thank you for considering these concerns.

Kind regards,

