

Despite this impressive application with a huge amount of historical and other detail, much of which is immaterial, there are several important areas of concern with this application which are either glossed over or omitted.

1. FLOODING

The application admits in several places in the BIA and section 3.1.3 and several other places the low risk of flooding from surface water, as well as the existence of perched water within the made ground. For example, in section 7.0 Ground Model, the applications states that

“groundwater was not encountered during the field work but subsequent monitoring measured groundwater at depths of between 1.30 m (6.50 m TBM) and 5.45 m (2.35 m TBM)”

The experience of longstanding neighbours in houses 9 – 17 Belsize Lane to the north west of 40 Ornan Road is of occasional flooding of homes in Ornan Road from the higher elevation of Belsize Lane and its gardens during heavy storms. This is the area precisely as is shown in the “Map Showing Flood Risk from Surface Water” on p5 of the Construction Method Statement for Subterranean Development. Several houses opposite 40 Ornan Rd/17a Belsize Lane and around the junction of Ornan Road and Belsize Lane have been flooded on occasion during heavy rains, as water gushes down this section of Belsize Lane when the drains and sewers cannot cope.

2. TUNNELS

Both the British Rail Air Shaft and the Belsize Tunnel, which run almost parallel at the northwest and southern extremities of 40 Ornan Road, are approximately 20m from the proposed basement. Section 3.1.2 Stability Screening Assessment states

“the area of the proposed development is not understood to be located in an exclusion zone and is unlikely to have any adverse impact on these assets”.

It is my understanding that official permission may be required from British Rail for the excavation of a basement.

3. THE GARDEN STUDIO

If this application had only been to convert the existing garage at the rear of the property into such a large glazed garden studio, with Deep Trench Foundations, with such a large footprint, height, and extensive glazing, the planning department would have required more detail. There is no indication as to whether this garden studio will be electrified, plumbed, or will have toilet facilities, nor what its use might be. In the pre planning advice letter from the Planning Officer Alyce Jeffery, dated 02/02/2019, it states that

“The proposed garden room would be sunken into the ground and sited alongside the boundary shared with 36-38 Ornan Road. Furthermore, the level of glazing should be significantly reduced to ensure the garden room does not produce light pollution which can cause harm to neighbouring amenity and biodiversity.

and

“...Once the above suggested design alterations are made to the garden room, the amenity concerns are likely to be overcome. “

However the amount of glazing on the drawings still appears to be excessive and the height of the garden studio above the wall from Belsize Lane very dominant.

4. CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT PLAN

On p11 of the Construction Management Plan, it states

“Ornan Road is a two-way two lane residential road with parking on both sides and Belsize Lane to the rear of the property is a two-way single lane residential road with parking on one side; both will accommodate construction traffic. The site has limited space for storage. A traffic management plan by the Contractor will therefore be necessary to manage construction traffic and deliveries and storage of construction materials on site”.

This statement totally denies the existence and proximity of a school on Belsize Lane opposite the existing rear gate and garage of 40 Ornan Road where the garden studio is to be situated. There is only limited parking on one side of this road at this point due to a large dedicated school bus parking bay. This road already has insufficient capacity for vehicles at school drop of and fetching times, despite an informal one way system in place for vehicles to travel north up Belsize Lane from Ornan Road. This road has no capacity for skips or construction vehicles, and skips should be sited either in Ornan Road or within the curtilage of the rear garden of 40 Ornan Road for as long as is possible.

There is no space on Belsize Lane pavement which is quite narrow at this point for temporary building cabins or skips, and as it is opposite the school entrance, there is a high volume of pedestrian traffic including young primary school pupils and adults, as well other members of the public.

Furthermore, the statement on pP13 that

“The surrounding roads are wide enough and without tight bends or corners that will hinder or prevent site traffic and will not cause site traffic to hinder or delay local and residential traffic.”

is patently untrue, as the curves at both ends of Belsize Lane at the junctions of Ornan Road to the south and Wedderburn Road to the north, including an additional bend midway in Belsize Lane, frequently make the passing of two ordinary vehicles in opposite directions very difficult.

Yours sincerely

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12 February 2020