



The Heath & Hampstead Society

The Society examines all Planning Applications relating to Hampstead, and assesses them for their impact on conservation and on the local environment.

To London Borough of Camden, Development Control Team

Planning Ref: 2019/1515/P

Address: 26 Netherhall Gardens

Case Officer: David Peres da Costa

Date: 18th January 2021

FORMAL TECHNICAL OBJECTION

The neighbours have now obtained an expert opinion from a geo-technical and structural engineer about the risk to neighbouring properties which has been passed onto Camden: the Review of application 2019/1515/P by Michael Eldred of Eldred Geotechnics Ltd.

As suspected, this confirms the inadequate assessment of damage potential and insufficient evidence that 24A Netherhall Gardens (NG) will not be significantly damaged by the building of a basement beneath the new side extension to 26 NG.

He states

- There is good reason to suppose that the foundations beneath most of the flank boundary wall of 24A NG are not as deep as the applicant is assuming
- Several assumptions have been made in the ground movement assessment

Considering

- almost nothing is known about the extent of groundwater flow and the behaviour during and following storms of the groundwater passing between 24 and 26 NG
- the site is on a slope I have now calculated to be 8.28 degrees or 14.5% when taken between the contour lines immediately above and below the site.
- this site is right on the area deemed by the British Geological Survey as being at high and very high potential of landslide
- there is already a considerable incidence of subsidence in Netherhall Gardens, and cracking can be observed in much of the interior of 24A NG, including a significantly long, wide and stepped crack in the tiled floor of the front room, presumably immediately above the concrete slab here, that the applicant will have seen photographed in my first objection of 20th July 2020.

I think it is clear that there is sufficient evidence that there is the potential for more severe damage than the applicant is aware of.

In addition Eldred also states that the construction sequence lacks credibility.

As he states, 1990 was the last of several years of severe drought and the time of much subsidence and underpinning. Indeed, building control applications for Netherhall Gardens only go back to February 1992 and so have missed all the underpinning that would have required Building Control consent at this time, including any undertaken at 24A NG.

He notes that it is probable that the side access excavation would expose ground below this flank wall foundation, that the ground below has been shown to include much brick rubble which would deflect trench sheeting inserted to provide temporary support, but that struts that would be required to support any temporary support would probably preclude efficient construction of any form of piled wall.

He believes it is essential for further investigations of the depth of the flank wall footings to be undertaken and, if necessary, for the engineering design to be reviewed.

I therefore request that Camden consider the gap in technical information required to build this project safely without significant damage to both 24a and 24NG, and that the applicant be required to provide satisfactory evidence for a means to build it safely that is achievable in a Basement Construction Plan.

This is echoed in Eldred's report:

The construction method statement in the BIA report requires substantial revision to describe a sequence that is practicable, relates to information provided by other documents, and demonstrates that potential risk to neighbouring property has been recognised and addressed.

Dr Vicki Harding, Society Tree Officer Heath & Hampstead Society, and Planning Sub-Committee member.