

Hazelton, Laura

Subject: FW: 47D Netherhall Gardens / Basement Objection (2019/3948/P)

From: Susanne Lawrence

Sent: 21 January 2021 21:45

To: Hazelton, Laura <Laura.Hazelton@camden.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: 47D Netherhall Gardens / Basement Objection (2019/3948/P)

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Beware – This email originated outside Camden Council and may be malicious Please take extra care with any links, attachments, requests to take action or for you to verify your password etc. Please note there have been reports of emails purporting to be about Covid 19 being used as cover for scams so extra vigilance is required.

**Waltham Lodge
47b Netherhall Gardens
London NW3 5RJ**

21st January 2021

Laura Hazelton
Planning Officer
Camden Council

Also FAO Campbell Reith Consulting Engineers

Dear Laura

**Re Planning application 2019/3948 for 47d Netherhall Gardens
and subsequent BIA report**

As agreed, I am writing further to the objections I submitted to the original application in October 2019, to those raised in my email to you of 23rd December 2020 in relation to this latest additional BIA report and, not least, to Rohan Heath's response, which he and I have discussed in detail and which reflects most of my ongoing reservations about the proposed development at 47d.

In particular Rohan points out that part of my house, 47b, is only 3.5m from the proposed development and therefore falls well within the 'zone of influence' that should have been taken into account in both BIA reports. In the event no consideration whatever seems to have been given to the potential impact of building a basement at 47d on the structural integrity of my house and front garden, let alone the forecourt at no 47, despite the fact that the underlying groundwater conditions referred to in both the original application report and this subsequent BIA are just one of several issues highlighted as potential causes for serious concern.

You will be aware that most of the exploratory work in this regard was carried out in the spring and summer when water levels would have been at their lowest. There is also the warning that "a longer-term groundwater monitoring regime may be required as part of any planning condition and certainly prior to construction."

The other worries which the later BIA raises and does nothing to diminish include the shallow foundations, the negative consequences of removing trees, the effect of basement heave on the Network Rail tunnel below us (I too hear the trains rumbling underneath my house), the inevitable high vibrations from driving down and above all the likely risk of lateral movement resulting in damage to adjacent properties.

Even if these risks were able to be largely avoided or even mitigated by means of the most experienced professionals in the field, one would still worry about such a development being attempted on such shaky ground. However, there is no way the two clearly inadequate BIA reports submitted by the owner of 47d give any confidence, let alone evidence, that the necessary expertise or care will be brought to bear or that the list of foundation and other recommendations would be complied with. On the contrary, the assessments are negligent in not taking account of 47b, the forecourt at 47 and the basement at no 49, and in many respects erroneous (both Rohan and I have previously pointed out a number of errors, which indicate a worrying lack of care and precision).

Clearly you are much more familiar than I am with the most common objections to basement developments (let alone basements proposed for such unsuitable terrain as we have in this area) and also the irrevocable damage done to neighbouring properties where permission has been given (or not but the work has gone ahead anyway!). But, if you had any doubts, I sincerely hope the Eldred Geotechnics report which Rohan submitted as part of his original objections back in 2019 will be enough to convince you that this proposed development is neither a safe nor a desirable proposition, talking as it does about the excessive magnitude of risk of immediate and ongoing damage.

That apart, however, in the Netherhall Neighbourhood Association comments also submitted at the time Stephen Williams drew attention to the inadequate light source allowed for in the proposed basement; I gather that this will now have to be even more reduced as the freeholder of the forecourt has indicated the lightwell would need to be even shallower than planned as the legal boundary of 47d does not come out as far as implied by the applicant.

Finally, even if the following are not regarded as ‘valid’ grounds for objection in terms of Camden’s criteria (if they’re not, they should be!), I must reiterate the concerns raised in my earlier objections about the aesthetic impact of this proposal: 47d is half of one of the prettiest buildings in the area – a lovely arts and crafts-style cottage with traditional Crittal windows and a charming wooden front door and front garden. This needs to be retained as is, matching 47c, and not replaced with inappropriate double glazing, a glass front door and canopy, and the (potentially damaging to water levels and ground stability) destruction of important (and I thought protected) trees and half the garden. Moreover, my own landing window, also one of the best architectural features in this road (much like that of the Freud house in Maresfield Gardens) would be at serious risk of damage if this development was to go ahead.

Your note to Rohan and me of Christmas Eve states that you only approve basement development applications when a final audit report confirms the applicant’s BIA is acceptable and (that the development) will not harm the built and natural environment or local amenity. I presume Campbell Reith will have seen all the objections (the original ones and the response to the supplementary BIA) and trust they will agree that both BIAs fail to address all the risks of building a basement on this site and that you will be inclined to refuse the application on these as well as the various other grounds raised.

Many thanks for allowing us time to make these additional comments.

Yours sincerely
Susanne Lawrence