

OBJECTION:

PLANNING APPLICATION 2020/4667/P – 38 Frognal Lane, Hampstead.

DEMOLITION: This application to build a monster structure is based on the destruction of a much-loved landmark house of charming aspect and scale in keeping with its conservation-area location, with historic connections, recorded in the “Victoria County History” as being built in 1898-9 by Edward Michael and possibly redesigned by world-famous architect Basil Champneys who built (1881), and lived in, two doors away, Manor Farm, 42 Frognal Lane, until his death in 1935.

DEMOLITION PERMISSION BASED ON MISINFORMATION: PLANNERS REPORT to Application 2019/4220/P, dated 15/08/2019 states: “The building was originally built as the stable block to 12 Langland Gardens and has been in residential use since the late 1930’s.” However, as above, the evidence of the “Victoria County History” puts the date as 1898-9. Was this misinformation supplied by the developers?

THE PLANNERS’ REPORT to Application 2019/4220/P, dated 15/08/2019 also states:

“1.2. The property is not listed but is noted as a positive contributor in the Redington Frognal Conservation Area.”

ARCHITECTURAL VALUE OF EXISTING: The great attraction of the existing house of 38 Frognal Lane is its scale, in that it was clearly built to be lived in, not built to maximise profit, nor to display wealth, as were some of the larger, surrounding listed-buildings (40, 42, 44, 19, 21, 23 Frognal Lane) which are all set in large gardens appropriate the the size of the houses. It is rare to find a “detached” house of this size and provenance in Hampstead.

The historic value of the existing little house, most unusually standing independently, in its own little garden is that it should be preserved to show future generations the contrasting scale of living in Hampstead.

Although a serious oversight that it is not listed, as are so many of its immediate neighbours, the little house of 38 Frognal Lane has always been an integral part and asset to the important cluster of Georgian and Victorian listed buildings on this original site of the hamlet of Hampstead established, and farmed, a thousand years ago by the monks of Westminster Abbey, which is still visible in the distance.

DEMOLITION would result in loss of amenity for all neighbours and Hampstead as a whole.

PROPOSED: The proposed would be a massive structure, too big for the little garden, and the result would be an out-of-scale building that would overpower the garden and the street scene.

To create such a massive structure the proposed would result in the front appearing to be dropped into a parking ditch, which to the north and to the east would be a retaining wall of about six-feet in height, to the south the height of the building, and of a width so narrow as to make it almost impossible for cars to enter and park in what would feel like, to residents of such a house, a car-filled trench in front of the house, accessed only after

contorted manoeuvring of reversing and exiting by jockeying cars in and out of a little niche set aside for car manoeuvring.

Would anyone want to invite visitors to negotiate such a bizarre and unwelcoming approach? Having to wade through cars to get to a front door is no more than a house in a car park.

THE DEVELOPER'S aerial photographs demonstrate how generous the EXISTING area for cars is, plus a garage. The developer's AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS numbers 5 and 6, show that the existing access drive is of a realistic width, is more than the width of two cars parked side-by-side with easy space around them, enough to open the car doors, enter the garage or turn around.

The Developer's LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN P03 shows that the width of the access would be reduced to the width of one car and a bicycle. As a demonstration, in real terms, two cars attempting to be side-by-side would be locked together by their wing mirrors, i.e. if touching wing-mirror-to-wing-mirror, their outside wing mirrors would be scraping the front door on one side and the retaining wall on the other — not workable.

EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS: Would emergency vehicles be able to negotiate such an impractically narrow approach?

LIVING in such a house would have very unpleasant features: a resident, to greet visitors, opening the FRONT DOOR — of which the architects have made much of the proposed “centring” of it on the facade — opening the front door to find oneself in a ditch, the proposed building's wall on one side and a retaining wall of more than six feet in height at its tallest point on the other side, DRAWING P03, a ditch that is, at its deepest, about six feet below road level, a narrow ditch that has filled with the traffic fumes rolling down from the busy road above, captured by a canyon created by the proposed building's high wall on one side, a retaining wall on the other, surmounted by a street wall/fence, and a continuation of the wall of six feet in height to the east, and the residents' cars jammed into the ditch in front of the house so that if there were any architectural merit it would be lost.

APPLICATION FORM: No 5 asks “Has the work or change of use already started?” However it appears from recent activity witnessed by neighbours that the length and width of the basement area has been enlarged, if so was there planning permission for this?

APPLICATION FORM: No. 12 asks about FLOOD RISK, “if there is a watercourse within 20 meters and, could the work cause flooding elsewhere?” The applicant has ticked “No” in both cases, however, it is a danger due to the watercourses and a spring under Frognaal a few meters further up hill, which appear on the Arup Map of Underground Rivers for Redington Frognaal. Therefore 38 Frognaal Lane is in the watershed of those water sources.

FOOT PRINT: DRAWING 012 BASEMENT IMPACT. The proposed is too massive for the little garden and the proposed would take up / displace about two-thirds of the garden.

BASEMENT: The proposed excavation to add a subterranean living, activities and swimming pool level is completely at variance with the Redington Frognaal Neighbourhood Plan 2020 that is against basement developments because of possible detrimental effects

on the water-table and all properties in the watershed below and flanking such a proposed structure.

TREES: The application is unclear if the proposed is to move the existing retaining wall nearer the street to the north, thereby removing an existing mature tree (missing from the LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN and DRAWING 012, but that is recorded in Google Street View July 2019). The tree in question is within the boundary of 38 Frognal Lane. Has there been a tree application for the removal of the tree in question, within the boundary of 38 Frognal Lane? Moving the retaining wall nearer the street would endanger the nearby mature street trees.

VEHICLE ACCESS AND PARKING: Although the HEADS of TERMS says future residents of 38 Frognal Lane would not be permitted street parking permits, it is unlikely that this condition would be adhered to. Would that restriction include visiting maintenance vans, and larger vehicles?

VEHICLE ACCESS AND PARKING: APPLICATION FORM: No.10 declares four existing parking spaces will be reduced to three spaces, increasing demand for street parking but, in fact, parking would be reduced by half, see below.

VEHICLE ACCESS AND PARKING: LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN: DRAWING P03 shows that due to the ground-level roof light for the proposed basement swimming pool, the parking is actually reduced to two cars if the little turning area is left empty for that purpose. And because the length and width of the planned parking would be so reduced, it would mean cars, jockeying in and out to allow blocked-in vehicles to exit, would be either dangerously backing in or out of the fast-moving traffic speeding down the slope of Frognal Lane.

CLIENT WAITING? The developers claim to have a client waiting for this proposed development, however, no one — not even a member of the developer's family — would want the approach to their house to be through a car park, and if someone were foolish enough to buy it, it would result in years of construction and reconstruction as the hapless owners tried to resolve this profoundly flawed and destructive plan.

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