

James Argles

From: Planning Support
Subject: FW: I object to application HGY/2022/4004

Sent: 26 January 2023 23:23

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To whom this may concern

This is my objection to the application to build a basement/develop no 69 Cromwell Avenue; I attach a photo that I couldn't post to the comment I posted on the website

David Townshend

I live in 67 Cromwell Avenue in the semi detached house with no 69 and am therefore probably the most impacted by this development. I object to application HGY/2022/4004 on the following basis:

1) Basement

a) Burland Scale level 2 damage to our house (no 67)

The BIA report suggests that the degree of damage done to our house will not exceed the Burland Scale level 2 category; I understand this level of damage breaches guidelines. When I spoke to a Party Wall Surveyor he said this was unacceptably high and should be restricted to at worst a level 1 impact. If the submitted plans are anticipating a level of impact on our house that is unacceptably high they should clearly be refused.

b) Complicated local soil, water/aquifer and sinkhole issues; plus underlying slope steeper than it seems. Much of this area is steeply sloping with significant areas of infill land and problems with clay preventing water from seeping to lower ground (witness the many springs in nearby Waterlow Park). There is a large retaining wall at the bottom of our garden with around a 30 foot drop to Hornsey Lane, which is clearly not a natural feature implying our garden is on a large built up section of land and that the underlying landscape is much steeper than it appears to the eye. We are concerned that a large basement will effect water flows around our house and who knows how this will impact this unstable type of land? Also there have been several cases of sink holes along Cromwell Avenue and down Highgate Hill suggesting the land is vulnerable to water erosion. We are not convinced that the research done in the past few months is sufficient to establish there will not be water flow implications for our house and the surrounding area, especially as the weather pattern over the period the work was done was unusually dry. We want all such risks to be properly and thoroughly accounted for - a mistake would potentially be catastrophic for us.

c) Shallow foundations

These semi detached houses were built in 1884 and have shallower foundations than modern day developments. While our house is solid it is clear that there has been movement in the past given the way doors and floors are not all perpendicular, even without any such development. We are therefore very concerned that a basement development of this scale will have serious structural implications.

2) Loss of Privacy

a) Juliette balcony

The proposed 2nd floor Juliette balcony at the rear of the house will overlook our garden resulting in a loss of privacy. (I attach a photo from our rear decking to show that we can see the proposed Juliette balcony and

that it will overlook the majority of our garden.) Further, by converting the existing window at the second floor level into a Juliette balcony we are concerned there will be access to the flat roof of the new extension which would overlook our whole garden.

b) Top floor dormer window

The proposed large dormer window at rear of the house will overlook our rear decking resulting in a loss of privacy. (I attach a photo from our rear decking to show that we can see the proposed dormer which will overlook our rear decking.) Further building a large dormer on top of a dormer at the top of the house looks to be very unsightly.

c) Raised terrace

The proposed garden terrace at the rear of the house is raised resulting in a potential loss of privacy.

Further the plans are a little confusing as to the height of the proposed new extension (replacing the previous extension). In the BIA (which may be out of date) the drawings show the new extension as being higher than the existing extension, whereas drawing 326 of the side elevation show it as being the same height; which is it?

3) Potential harm to the Conservation area

a) Top floor dormer window

The proposed large dormer window at the rear of the house is very visible from Cromwell Place and Hornsey Lane and looks very unsightly and is not in any way consistent with the other houses in the conservation area. It is extremely different from the adjacent house no 67.

b) Lightwells

The light wells and attached wall at the front of the house are not in keeping with Cromwell Avenue and may harm the local conservation area by setting a precedent as no lightwells have been approved under current guidelines.

4) Lack of respect for due process?

Over the past 12 months no 69 has been stripped down to the basics (brick walls, wooden floors and wooden roof structure etc) with all internal features, doors, plaster board and plaster etc removed as part of turning the house into a single residence from the previous 4 flats. This change of use is probably relatively cosmetic structurally (so far). However we have already seen some extensive cracking in our hall which is on/next to the party wall, which makes us worry about what will happen when the real structural work begins. But equally we have not been able to appoint a Party Wall Surveyor to come into our house as no Party Wall Notice has yet been served.

We also find it odd that there is no mention of a mains sewage pipe that runs across the back gardens of 67, 69 and 71 in the application. This pipe runs very close to all 3 houses (perhaps even passing under some of the structures) and yet it is not included in the drawings.

Finally, I fully agree with the points made by the Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee regarding the unsuitability of several proposed external features in this scheme.

