

Barnett, Jessica: PC-Plan

From: Margaret Exley
Sent: 26 March 2014 20:30
To: Planning Policy
Cc: Bach, Michael;
Subject: URGENT: Council's Proposed Policy to Control Basement Developments

Dear Sir,

PARTIAL REVIEW OF THE CORE STRATEGY: BASEMENTS

I am extremely concerned by the rapidly increasing number of basement developments and the inadequacy of the Council's current planning policies to deal with the pressure to excavate basements. Recent experience in this neighbourhood has been very disruptive for a considerable length of time and to such an extent that it is affecting the quality of life of residents and the elderly neighbour of the most recent development in this road, which has been going on for years has been so tormented by it that we hardly ever see him anymore. These developments due to their scale, duration and impact on our neighbourhood during construction and the cumulative effect of successive schemes have severely affected our quality of life through both noise, vibration and dust and through the impact of construction traffic and long-term parking suspensions. They are also completely against the spirit of if not the legal rules associated with listed buildings which were originally built to create a community for families. These extensive basements completely alter the character of the houses and are potentially very damaging to houses that have basements that were built in 1840. It is of the utmost importance that listed buildings of all buildings in the Borough in particular are protected from this menacing new development. The streets in the Victoria road Residents Association area are much admired and enjoyed. Please don't allow that to be eroded by allowing these massive developments.

I strongly support the Council's proposals to change their policy toward basements in order to:

- to reduce the scale of basements by limiting them to one storey and no more than 50% of the garden, except for listed buildings where there is already a restriction about building under them;

- to be more explicit about the need to:
 - ensure proper drainage through soakaways,
 - retain trees,
 - ensure that buildings are adapted to a higher level of performance in respect to energy, waste and water consumption,
 - ensure better control of the traffic and parking problems due to the demolition, excavation and construction process
 - ensure better control over noise, vibration and dust

It is vital because of the impact on our quality of life that is caused by the scale and number of basement construction projects and the resulting inconvenience caused by traffic and construction activity and the prolonged extension of parking, which simply cannot be compensated.

I would like to have my support recorded in favour of the proposed changes.

Please note also my strong objection to allowing basements to be built under the gardens of listed buildings such as those in Canning Place/Victoria Grove/Launceston Place and, therefore, to exempt from the proposal that basements may cover up to 50% of the garden. This is a preposterous concession and completely unacceptable to me and to other residents here.

Margaret Exley

