

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB TRUST

Supplementary Basement Guidance

The Trust's existing basement guidance, as set out in the Hampstead Garden Suburb Conservation Area Design Guidance, remains unchanged but is augmented by this further guidance. Its purpose is to help clarify where the construction of a basement may be acceptable and offer advice on appropriate basement design.

The Guidance

In determining applications for basements the Trust will take into account –

1. The realistic prospect of physical damage to the application property and neighbouring properties.
2. Damage to the original design, character, amenity and historic interest of a close, group or street.
3. Setting a precedent that could lead to a reduction in the range of dwelling sizes and types within the Suburb.
4. Disruption to the original homogeneity of a close, group or street of properties, including the size of the accommodation contained within the houses.
5. The possible increase in household size leading to the potential for increased number or size of vehicles, occupants, and/or visitors associated with the property and consequent detriment to the amenity of neighbouring properties, and the access and services associated to them.
6. Disruption to neighbouring properties due to the nature and/or timing of the application work and other construction works in the vicinity.
7. The size of dwelling resulting from the proposed development (and previous developments, such as extensions) compared with its original size and the size of properties to which it is related in terms of setting or type.
8. Potential damage to trees, hedging and mature garden planting or impact on the ability to establish a garden over a basement which extends beyond the footprint of the house (in those situations in which a basement outside the footprint of the house might otherwise be acceptable).

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In general, where a basement is acceptable in principle, the development should:

- Respect the character or appearance of the building, garden or wider area and the amenity of neighbours with external elements such as light wells, roof lights, mechanical plant, extracts and means of escape being carefully designed and discreetly sited;
- Not comprise more than one storey (approximately three metres in depth). Exceptions may be made on large sites where evidence is provided that the development does not harm the built and natural environment or local amenity including the mix of housing in the suburb;
- Not normally add further basement floors where there is an extant or implemented Trust consent for a basement;
- Not normally extend beyond the original footprint of the house;
- Ensure that there is no loss, damage or long term threat to trees of townscape or amenity value or to boundary hedges or to the garden setting of the house;
- Not introduce light wells, pavement lights, grilles or railings to the front or visible side of the property;
- Ensure that traffic and construction activity does not harm pedestrian, cycle, vehicular and road safety, affect other transport operations, significantly increase traffic congestion, nor place unreasonable inconvenience on the day to day life of those living, working and visiting nearby;
- Ensure that construction impacts such as noise, vibration and dust are kept to acceptable levels for the duration of the works;
- Be designed to safeguard the structural stability of the application building, nearby buildings and other infrastructure;
- Ensure that the development does not displace ground water or surface water flow so it causes flooding and does include a sustainable urban drainage scheme (SUDs);

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- Include a minimum of one metre of permeable soil above any part of a basement which, in exceptional cases, may be approved beneath part of a garden;
- Should have adequate headroom, daylight and ventilation;

In addition, the following may be taken into account -

- ❖ Within the Suburb there are many narrow roads and closes where the excavation and construction of a basement may be unreasonable because of the disruption and loss of amenity to other households during the works. Consequently basements in closes or narrow roads may not be approved.
- ❖ Because of the risk of differential movement when constructing a basement under one property in a terrace or adjoining another, basements will not normally be approved under semi-detached houses or houses in a terrace.
- ❖ In order to protect the range of house types and sizes that is a significant part of the Suburb's architectural and social character, basements will not normally be approved under small cottages or modest family houses.

The following should be noted:

Each application will be treated on its merits and on occasion consent may be refused even if the proposal appears to meet the guidance if there are reasons for doing so in order to protect the character and amenities of the Suburb. On the other hand, consent may be exceptionally given even though the proposal does not fully comply with this guidance if the Trust is satisfied that the character and amenities of the Suburb will not be compromised by the approval.

Approved by the Trust Council 21 July 2015