

Introduction

1. My name is Simon Haslam and I will be representing Basement Force (Force Foundations Ltd) with the assistance of others who have contributed to the evidence I rely on and the representations Basement Force has made. In this introduction I draw attention to my qualifications and experience, and the role I have played in the Council's review of basement policy. I also provide a list of the other Hearing Statements relied upon by Basement Force.
2. Basement Force (Force Foundations Ltd) has been completing underpinning and structural repair works to buildings since 1993 and building basements since about 2004. We have also completed specialist works such as tunnelling underneath large multi-storey commercial buildings in order to strengthen foundations so that additional storeys may be built on top of the existing building.
3. I have been the Managing Director of the company for over six years. We both design and construct basements, and we construct basements designed by others. In the last six years we have built in the order of 70 to 90 basements of various sizes and complexity in London and particularly in RBKC. On design and build projects we complete the architectural design, engineering design, gain planning permission, put in place party wall agreements, and finally undertake the construction.
4. I have a BSc (Hons) in Geological Sciences from the University of Durham.
5. I was a member of the RBKC Basements Working Group for the First and Second Draft Policy. I attended all of the group's meetings and provided written input on several occasions.
6. Basement Force (Force Foundations Ltd) is a member of the Association of Specialist Underpinning Contractors (ASUC). I sit on the Executive Committee of ASUC as the basement members' representative.
7. I was the lead author on the ASUC publication 'Guidelines on safe and efficient basement construction directly below or near to existing structures'. These were published in October 2013 and were included in the ASUC submission to the RBKC Basements Publication Planning Policy (Feb-Mar 2014). These guidelines were supported and reviewed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and were part funded by the Construction Industry Training Board. I am currently revising these guidelines, at the request of the HSE, with the intention that the revised guidelines are officially endorsed by the HSE and can bear the HSE logo.
8. Prior to the last HSE inspection surge on basement developments I was invited, with two other members of the ASUC Executive Committee, to present to the HSE Inspectors the recently launched ASUC basement guidelines and to give our opinion to the HSE Inspectors on the main health and safety issues that are faced on basement construction sites.
9. The development of subterranean accommodation – whether for residential, commercial, or leisure use – is capable of making a valuable contribution to the space London needs. The engineering and other construction challenges are, naturally, different to those above ground but are well understood by those who take a responsible approach to development. The Matters Issues and Questions for Examination posed by the Inspector [ID/9A] will be addressed within

Hearing Statement

individual Hearing Statements, prepared (as requested) as succinct responses to the questions posed within document ID/9A. My failure to make an argument made by other objectors should not be interpreted as disagreement. I have taken a pragmatic approach to the consultation. I hoped that my views would have been given some weight and that the policy would be drafted in a way which is proportionate and fair to the basement development industry. Unfortunately this has not proved to be the case.

10. A list of Hearing Statements submitted by Basement Force follows, and may be elaborated on during the Hearing Sessions. We have, as requested, kept them very focussed in particular questions raised by the Inspector and they are consequently well within the 3,000 word limit. We would ask that they are read as a whole and we continue to rely on, and may well need to refer to, the considerable body of evidence we have produced.

11. Our Hearing Statements comprise:

- a. Hearing Statement – Introduction (this Statement)
- b. Hearing Statement Matter 1 - Legal Compliance
- c. Hearing Statement Matter 2 - Definitions and use of terminology
- d. Hearing Statement Matter 3 - The order of the reasoned justifications for the Policy
- e. Hearing Statement Matter 4 - Restriction on the use of garden/open area
- f. Hearing Statement Matter 5 - One storey restriction
- g. Hearing Statement Matter 6 - Restriction on excavation under a listed building
- h. Hearing Statement Matter 7 - Light wells and railings
- i. Hearing Statement Matter 8 - Requirement for one metre of permeable soil
- j. Hearing Statement Matter 9 - Energy, waste and water conservation
- k. Hearing Statement Matter 10 - Structural stability
- l. Hearing Statement Matter 11 - Other CL7 criteria and alternative policy wording

- END OF HEARING STATEMENT -