

Planning, Design & Access Statement

London Borough of Camden

Lowlands, 2-8 Eton Avenue, Belsize Park, London, NW3 3EJ

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architecture
building surveying
building services
planning
interior design
sustainability
civil and structural
quantity surveying
project management
CDM and H&S services

Vision, form and function



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Ingleton Wood LLP on behalf of Lowlands Residents Limited (“the Applicants”) to London Borough of Camden (“LBC”), in support of a Full Planning Application for replacement windows and balustrades at Lowlands, 2-8 Eton Avenue, Belsize Park, London, NW3 3EJ (“the Site’). The Application is submitted with the following description of development:

“Replacement of steel crittall windows with aluminium framed like-for-like windows and replacement balustrades to various elevations at all floor levels”.

This Statement sets out the detail of the proposed development, establishes the relevant planning policy framework against which the application is to be determined, and assesses the acceptability of the proposals in the context of the framework and other material considerations. This Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 identifies the Applicant;
- Section 3 describes the site context;
- Section 4 summarises relevant planning history;
- Section 5 outlines the proposed development;
- Section 6 considers the main planning policy relevant to the proposals;
- Section 7 provides a justification against planning policy requirements;
- Section 8 provides design and access details;
- Section 9 draws the overall conclusions in support of the proposed development.

This Planning, Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the supporting plans and documents, which are submitted as part of the application for LBC’s consideration.

Plan Title	Plan Ref
Site Location Plan	812090 IWD XX XX DR B 2004 P01
Block Plan	812090 IWD XX XX DR B 2003 P01
Existing Elevations	812146 IWD XX XX DR B 2000 P01
Proposed Elevations	812146 IWD XX XX DR B 2001 P01
Site Layout- Elevations	812090 IWD XX XX DR B 2002 P01
Window Sections	812146 IWD XX XX DR A 2006 P01
Window Schedule	812090 IWD XX XX DR B 2005 P01
Balustrade Details	IQ Glass



2.0 APPLICANT AND BACKGROUND

This Application is submitted on behalf of Lowlands Residents Limited ('the Applicant') to facilitate the much-needed provision of replacement windows at the property.

3.0 SITE CONTEXT

The property is known as Lowlands which is a traditional residential block sites on the northern side of Eton Avenue and western side of Belsize Park Gardens.

The Adopted Proposals Map for LBC identifies that the property but is located in the Belsize Park Conservation Area.



Figure 1: Aerial Image of Site



Figure 2: Site Location Plan Extract



Figure 3: Site Extract from Adopted Local Plan Proposals Map (Approximate Site Location highlighted)



4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

A search of the LBC's public planning register identifies applications for tree works only and no planning history of relevance to these proposals.

5.0 THE PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the installation of 106 replacement windows. It is proposed to replace the existing 106 no. steel windows to the five floors with improved Heritage profiles which utilise innovative polyamide thermal break technology which creates a barrier between the cold air outside and the warm air inside, enhancing the thermal efficiency/thermal comfort for the building occupants. The new windows will be installed within existing window openings and will follow the same fenestration patterns.

The existing metal frame balconies are proposed to be replaced with a frameless toughened laminated structural glass, specially designed for use as frameless balustrades. Currently several of the balconies are in need of minor repairs. The proposed balconies will need less maintenance and provide longer life than is replaced like for like.

Condition reports have been undertaken for this Site. These have identified poor condition of the windows and external fabric, and overall poor thermal performance building. The proposed works are designed to address the defects in the building, prevent further deterioration, improve thermal performance, reduce carbon emissions and improve security

Thermal Effectiveness

The existing windows are single glazed and thermally ineffective. It is acknowledged that the London Plan and Camden's local planning policies place a significant emphasis on tackling climate change and supporting development that improves energy efficiency. The current windows are resulting in a significant cost to residents due to thermal ineffectiveness.

6.0 PLANNING POLICY REVIEW

This Section identifies the planning policy framework within which the proposed development is to be assessed, and further identifies other material considerations relevant to the proposal. In identifying the planning framework, consideration has to be given to Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which states that:

'If regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Act, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.'

The statutory development plan for LBC is as follows:

- The Camden Local Plan (July 2017)
- The Local Plan Proposals Map (July 2017)
- The London Plan (March 2021)

The District Local Plan sets out the comprehensive framework of policies to enable the Council to control most forms of development for the foreseeable future. The Plan incorporates 'sustainable development' and therefore encourages, good design. Relevant policies are summarised below.

The following SPD's have also been adopted:

- Design (January 2021);
- Belsize Conservation Area Statement (2003)

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose for any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The document is a material consideration that is afforded significant weight in the determination of planning applications. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

At the heart of the document is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In this regard, the framework advises that where development proposals accord with the development plan, they should be approved without delay, and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless:

- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or;

- Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2019) states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF (2019) states that in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design.

The Camden Local Plan (July 2017)

Policies D1 & D2 (Design & Heritage)

At a local level, Local Plan Policies D1 and D2 set out the borough's aspirations for the promotion of high quality places and conserving heritage, going on to state that the Council will ensure that Camden's places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings. The aim of Local Plan Policy D1 is to require all developments, including alterations to existing buildings or replacement buildings, to be of the highest standard of design.

The proposed window replacement has been developed through careful studies in order to respond to the townscape and unique setting of the site. Particular regard was given to the importance of surrounding conservation area.

Belsize Park Conservation Area Appraisal (2016)

The Conservation Area Appraisal document recognises that the majority of applications for planning permission within the Belsize Conservation Area involve minor alterations and extensions to existing dwellings.

In all cases, existing/ original architectural features and detailing characteristic of the Conservation Area should be retained and kept in good repair, and only be replaced when there is no alternative, or to enhance the appearance of the building through the restoration of missing features.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The document is a material consideration that is afforded considerable weight in determining planning applications.

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which advises that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change.

In determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities need to approve development which accords with an up-to date development plan without delay.

The NPPF sets out requirements for good design. The NPPF states that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. More specifically, The NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development (Paragraph 130);
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping;
- are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangements of streets, spaces building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain, an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users, and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

The NPPF states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, considering any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development.

8.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: DESIGN STATEMENT

Use

The proposed works do not affect or change the existing residential use of the property.

Amount, Layout and Scale

There are no planned changes to the amount, layout, scale or landscaping of the buildings as it is purely a refurbishment of the existing building.

Landscaping

The proposed works will not affect/change the existing landscaping to the site.

Appearance

Careful consideration has been given to the age of the building and its contribution to the street scene. Accordingly, the proposals have been designed to reflect this. The window configurations won't change. The proposed works will have no adverse impact upon the existing building or surrounding area. All minor repairs will match the existing in appearance and materials.

Given that the windows would replace existing windows within the building and no further openings are being created, it is not considered that the proposed development would not be harmful to neighbouring residential amenity.

The proposed development is not, therefore, considered to result in unacceptable harm to the amenities of neighbouring residential occupiers.

9.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: ACCESS STATEMENT

Highway Impacts

Vehicular and transport links to the site will not be affected by the proposed works.

Inclusive Access

The philosophy of the design of the development is to be as fully inclusive as possible and this includes, but is not limited to, the needs of people with disabilities, young children, people with pushchairs, elderly people and people with restricted mobility. The nature of the building and the extent of the works will of course be restrictive in the extent of this, but the aim is to cater for a range of people and their disabilities.

10.0 CONCLUSION

The Applicant (Lowlands Residents Limited) are seeking approval of full planning permission for the Replacement of steel crittall windows with aluminium framed like-for-like windows to various elevations at all floor levels. In addition, the existing metal frame balconies are proposed to be replaced with a frameless toughened laminated structural glass, specially designed for use as frameless balustrades.

Due consideration has been given to the design of this proposal to ensure that the overall scheme respects the local context with regard to scale and layout, whilst protecting residential amenity.

Overall, the proposal is considered to provide benefit to the wider area by providing housing need and sustainable development. Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable when assessed against the key policies of the adopted Development Plan. The principle of development is clear, and this Planning, Design and Access Statement demonstrates that there are no adverse impacts that would outweigh the benefits of the proposed development. On this basis, it is respectfully requested that the application is approved.