

Planning Services
Camden Town Hall
Argyle Street
London WC1H 8EQ

22nd November 2023

REF: 93b Gaisford street London NW5 2EG

Design Process, Appearance & Access

Key points

The property is a first and second floor flat located within a regular Victorian terrace run.
The property is located within the Bartholomew Conservation Area (BCA).

The proposed works are a modest increase in size to two windows to the rear elevation and two new skylights to the roof

The original kitchen window was reduced in height and a steel window installed
We are proposing re-instating the original opening size and installing a hardwood sash in line with the existing period property design

We are changing the existing bathroom on the half landing into a study. As such we would like to increase the opening size of the window to create a more amenable space.

The proposed skylights are not visible from the public highway



Gaisford Street is the southern most street of the Christ Church Estate laid out in 1863-5. The overall grain of the street is very similar to Caversham Road but less softened by street trees. These are largely located at the western end and mainly silver birch. Front gardens areas are also smaller although these do contain some trees and low hedges which are enclosed by brick walls with piers.

Continuous four storey housing with a strong parapet line encloses the north and south sides of the street with raised entrance porches flanked by Doric columns. The west end of the street Nos.2-40 and Nos.1-45 Gaisford Street have a raised centrepiece of five storeys, echoing the Georgian form of the palatial terrace. First floor balcony railings are a feature of this street although the original designs have been lost and replaced with inappropriate modern versions. At the junction of Hammond Street the townscape subtly alters with architectural details alternating between Corinthian and Ionic pilasters flanking entrances but retaining the

overall four storey terrace form. No.45a Gaisford Street is an anomaly in the street - a three storey detached Victorian dwelling which attractively terminates the view along Hammond Street. Opposite on the corner of Hammond Street and Gaisford Street is the only remaining Public House in the Conservation Area "The Lion and the Unicorn". This is an important double aspect corner building, which is set back and a small front seating area has been created enclosed by railings. The paving retains remnants of York stone slabs. There is an established uniformity to the building types along Gaisford Street with only incidental stylistic changes in elevation treatment which enrich the townscape.



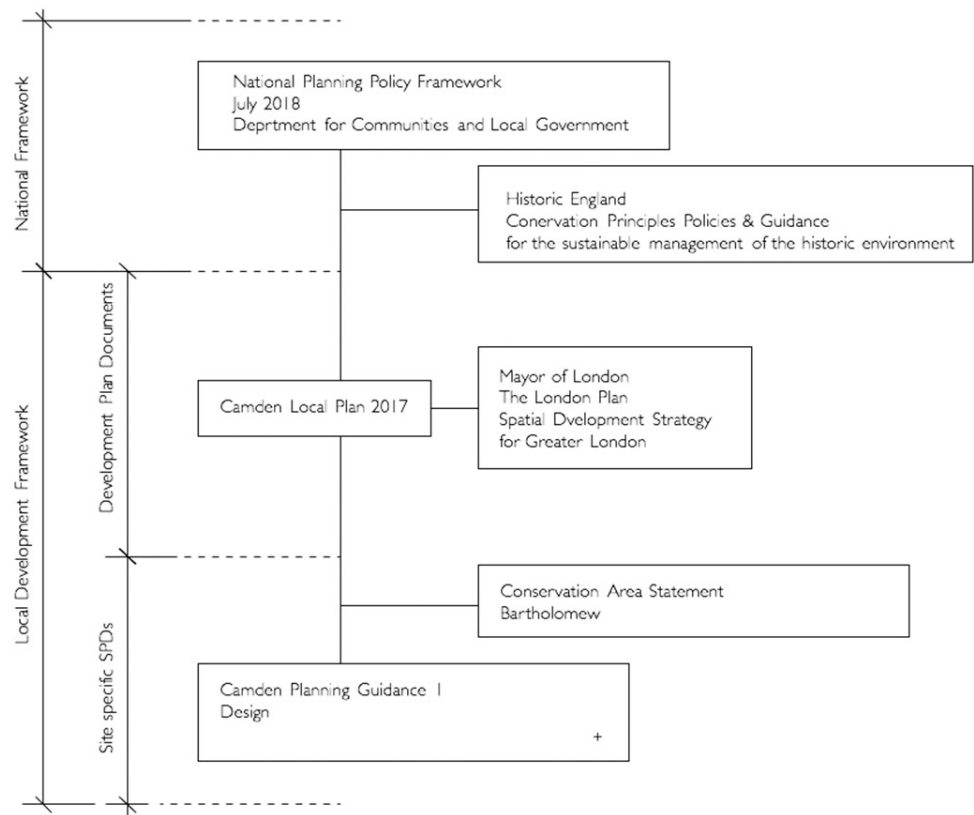
In contrast to the hipped roof form of Caversham Road, Gaisford Street has a defined parapet with valley roof set behind. This has been largely unaltered with only incidental dormer windows at the west end of the street. This results in an attractive and continuous composition of valley roof profiles at the rear which can be enjoyed in a number of glimpse views.

Nos.106 and 127 are architecturally distinct in the townscape, both properties terminate the street terraces at the east end adjacent to the railway. The red brick, shallow pitch roof, gothic style lintels and stock brick double canted bay contrast with the otherwise monochrome palette of materials and consistent character of Gaisford Street and the wider Conservation Area.



Statutory Context

The following framework documents are referred to:



National Framework

Communities & Local Government
Planning Policy Statement 5
Planning for the Historic Environment

Policy HE7: Policy principles guiding the determination of applications for consent relating to all heritage assets

HE7.5 Local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. The consideration of design should include scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and use.

ANNEX 2: TERMINOLOGY

CONSERVATION

The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and where appropriate enhances its significance.

In our view the proposed works are respectful of the local heritage and seek to celebrate and enhance the historical character.

The development seeks to enhance the local heritage by creating a contemporary new addition that responds to current needs.

Historical England, English Heritage (EH)

CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES POLICIES AND GUIDANCE FOR THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Assessing Heritage Significance

Understand the fabric and evolution of the place

62 To identify the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, its history, fabric and character must first be understood. This should include its origins, how and why it has changed over time (and will continue to change if undisturbed), the form and condition of its constituent elements and materials, the technology of its construction, any habitats it provides, and comparison with similar places. Its history of ownership may be relevant, not only to its heritage values, but also to its current state.

We would like to see this statement from EH as an acknowledgement that change is a natural and welcome process. Granted the historical character of the property should be preserved and enhanced where possible but changes and additions from part of the natural development of buildings.

Local Development Framework

Mayor of London
The London Plan
Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London

Policy Areas

Design principles

4B.1 Design principles for a compact city

The Mayor will, and boroughs should, seek to ensure that developments should:

- * maximise the potential of sites*
- * promote high quality inclusive design and create or enhance the public realm*
- * contribute to adaptation to, and mitigation of, the effects of climate change*
- * respect local context, history, built heritage, character and communities*
- * provide for or enhance a mix of uses*
- * be accessible, usable and permeable for all users*
- * be sustainable, durable and adaptable in terms of design, construction and use (see Chapter 4A)*
- * address security issues and provide safe, secure and sustainable environments (policy 4B.6)*
- * be practical and legible*
- * be attractive to look at and, where appropriate, inspire, excite and delight*
- * respect the natural environment and biodiversity, and enhance green networks and the Blue Ribbon Network*

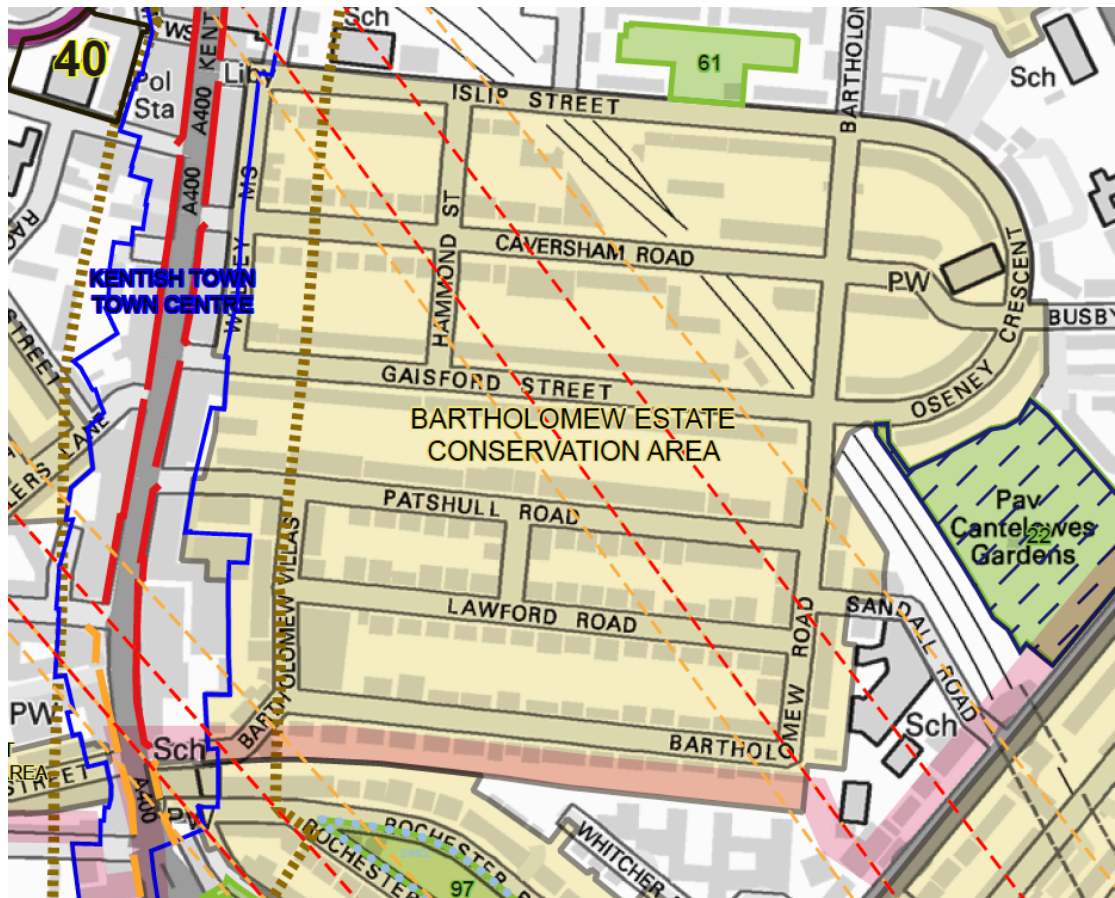
* *address health inequalities (policy 3A.23).*

These principles should be used in assessing planning applications and in drawing up area planning frameworks and DPD policies. Design and access statements showing how they have been incorporated should be submitted with proposals to illustrate their impacts.

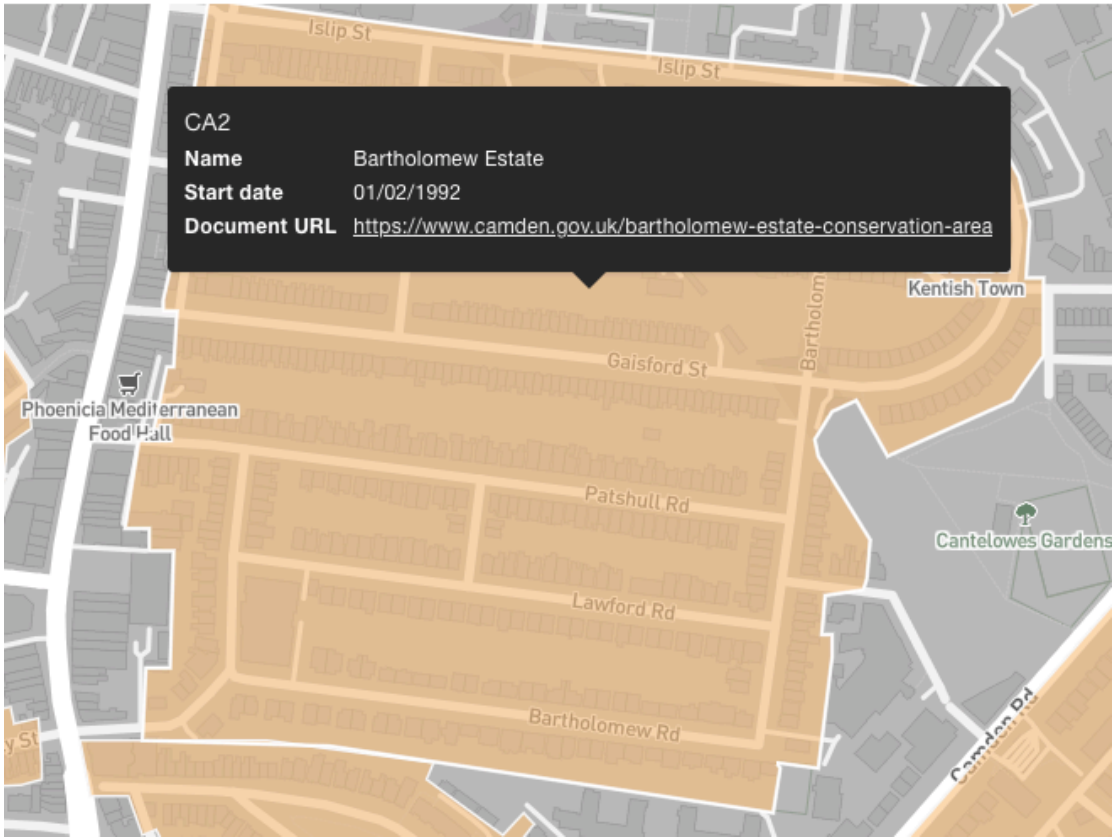
We would like to offer that in the spirit of the London Plan the proposed development seeks to maximize the use of the historical property.

Council Policy

Extract from the Camden Policy Map:



Extract from the GIS Interactive planning map:



Camden Local Plan 2017

7 Design & Heritage

Local Context & Character

7.2 The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider:

*character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;
the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed
the prevailing pattern, density and scale of surrounding development;
the impact on existing rhythms, symmetries and uniformities in the townscape
the composition of elevations
the suitability of the proposed design to its intended use;
inclusive design and accessibility;
its contribution to public realm and its impact on views and vistas; and
the wider historic environment and buildings, spaces and features of local historic value*

7.3 The Council will welcome high quality contemporary design which responds to its context, however there are some places of homogenous architectural style (for example Georgian Squares) where it is important to retain it.

7.4 Good design takes account of its surroundings and preserves what is distinctive and valued about the local area. Careful consideration of the characteristics of a site, features of local distinctiveness and the wider context is needed in order to achieve high quality development which integrates into its surroundings. Character is about people and communities as well as the physical components.

In line with HE and the London Plan there is an emphasis to preserve and enhance the historical context. It is our view that the proposal is respectful of the historical building and contributes positively to the local context and character.

The on-going development of the historical neighbourhood is as important as the preservation of the historical fabric. We believe that from the future's perspective the proposed development will be seen as a positive contribution to the evolution of the neighbourhood.

Details & Materials

7.9 Architectural detailing should be carefully integrated into a building. In new development, detailing should be carefully considered so that it conveys quality of design and creates an attractive and interesting building. Architectural features on existing buildings should be retained wherever possible, as their loss can harm the appearance of a building by eroding its detailing. The insensitive replacement of windows and doors can spoil the appearance of buildings and can be particularly damaging if the building forms part of a uniform group.

7.10 Schemes should incorporate materials of a high quality. The durability and visual attractiveness of materials will be carefully considered along with their texture, colour, tone and compatibility with existing materials. Alterations and extensions should be carried out in materials that match the original or neighbouring buildings, or, where appropriate, in materials that complement or enhance a building or area.

We consider the proposed design carefully integrates with current period context.

The proposed materials have been specified to respect the existing building and enhance the character

Conservation areas

7.46 In order to preserve or enhance important elements of local character, we need to recognise and understand the factors that create that character. The Council has prepared a series of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans that assess and analyse the character and appearance of each of our conservation areas and set out how we consider they can be preserved or enhanced. We will take these into account when assessing planning applications for development in conservation areas. We will seek to manage change in a way that retains the distinctive characters of our conservation areas and will expect new development to contribute positively to this. The Council will therefore only grant planning permission for development in Camden's conservation areas that preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the area.

7.47 The character of conservation areas derive from the combination of a number of factors, including scale, density, pattern of development, landscape, topography, open space, materials, architectural detailing and uses. These elements should be identified and responded to in the design of new development. Design and Access Statements should include an assessment of local context and character and set out how the development has been informed by it and responds to it.

We consider the proposed works are very minor and will have no effect on the existing character of the area

Camden Planning Guidance I, Design

2 Design Excellence

General guidance on design

2.6 Camden is committed to excellence in design. The borough contains many special and unique places, many of which are protected by conservation area status. In accordance with draft London Plan policies

7.1–7.7, Core Strategy policy CS14 requires development schemes to improve the quality of buildings, landscaping and public spaces and we will not approve design which is inappropriate to its context or fails to improve the character of an area.

2.7 We are working with our partners to promote design excellence and improve public buildings, landscaping and the street environment. We have established the Camden Design Initiative which seeks to encourage involvement, awareness and understanding of good design and this is promoted through the bi-annual Camden Design Awards which acknowledge high quality and innovative design. We are also a promoter of the national Civic Trust Awards which are awarded to buildings judged to have made a positive cultural, social or economic contribution to the local community.

2.8 In order to achieve high quality design in the borough we require applicants to consider buildings in terms of context, height, accessibility, orientation, siting, detailing and materials. These issues apply to all aspects of the development, including buildings and other structures (e.g. substations, refuse or cycle storage), outdoor spaces, landscaping and access points and should be considered at an early stage in the design of a development, as these elements are often difficult to change in later stages.

Context

2.9 Good design should:

- positively enhance the character, history, archaeology and nature of existing buildings on the site and other buildings immediately adjacent and in the surrounding area, and any strategic or local views. This is particularly important in conservation areas...

Building design

2.10 Good design should:

- ensure buildings do not significantly overshadow existing/proposed outdoor spaces (especially designated open spaces), amenity areas or existing or approved renewable energy facilities (such as solar panels). For further information, refer to CPG3 Sustainability Renewable energy (A shadowing exercise may be required for tall buildings or where they are near open spaces);
- consider the extent to which developments may overlook the windows or private garden area of another dwelling;
- consider views, both local and London wide, and particularly where the site is within a recognised strategic viewing corridor (as shown on the policy Proposals Map);
- consider the degree of openness of an area and of open spaces, including gardens including views in and out of these spaces
- contributions to the character of certain parts of the borough;
- provide visual interest for onlookers, from all aspects and distances. This will involve attention to be given to both form and detail;
- consider opportunities for overlooking of the street and, where appropriate, provide windows, doors and other 'active' features at ground floor; and
- incorporate external facilities such as renewable energy installations, access ramps, plant and machinery, waste storage facilities and shading devices into the design of the development. Careful consideration must be given to ensure that the facility does not harm the built environment.

The proposed works comply with these requirements

Materials

2.12 Materials should form an integral part of the design process and should relate to the character and appearance of the area, particularly in conservation areas or within the setting of listed buildings. The durability of materials and understanding of how they will weather should be taken into consideration. The quality of a well designed building can be easily reduced by the use of poor quality or an unsympathetic palette of materials. We will encourage re-used and recycled materials, and further guidance is contained within CPG3 Sustainability (Sustainable use of materials).

In line with these requirements the proposed changes comply with the statutory requirements

4 Extensions, alterations and conservatories

KEY MESSAGES

- Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings.
- Windows, doors and materials should complement the existing building.
- Rear extensions should be secondary to the building being extended.
- You can make certain types of minor alterations without planning permission (see below) external alterations.

In line with the key message, the proposed works are subservient to the main building, respectful of the period character and compliant with the material requirements



Aerial view of the rear of the terrace showing the existing context

Conclusion

In our opinion the proposal complies with all the requirements established in the Local Plan, the Design Guidelines and the conservation area statement.

Use

The current use of residential is maintained.

Layout

The internal layout remains exactly the same, access from the highway remains the same. The only change to the internal layout is to create a larger bathroom on ground floor.

Yours sincerely,

Sebastian Camisuli

On behalf of:
Martins Camisuli Architects