

65 Hillfield Court
Belsize Avenue
London NW3 4BG

Design and Access Statement

Prepared by Baruch Coutts, June 2024

THE BUILDING

Hillfield Court is a 1930's six-storey mansion block containing 114 flats set around a communal courtyard. The building is not listed or recognised as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Belsize Park Conservation Area of which it is part. Whilst the overall scale, form, design and layout of the building has remained largely unaltered, a significant number of the original Crittall windows (and doors) to residential flats and communal stairwells have been replaced over time with either uPVC frame equivalents which are much thicker in appearance, or aluminium frames.

With regards the two elevations in question that will have their windows replaced:

- the north east elevation can be viewed only from within the courtyard of the building complex and is not visible from Belsize Avenue
- the windows on the south west elevation can partly be seen from Belsize Avenue but they are some distance away and are on the 3rd floor of the building; most original Crittall windows on that elevation

PROPOSAL

Replacement of single glazed Crittall windows within the brick facade, with double glazed aluminium on the south west front elevation (2 windows) and the north east rear elevation (5 windows).

The building has seen a number of alterations to windows and balcony doors over time. It is estimated that over half of the flats in the building have had their original Crittall windows or balcony doors replaced with modern uPVC or aluminium versions. In addition, the full height windows in the communal stairwells have all been replaced with uPVC components.

It is considered that the proposed replacement aluminium windows will be sufficiently high quality in material and detailing to be acceptable, and will be a closer match to the original Crittall windows than

uPVC, as the frames will be thinner. We do not consider that the new windows will harm the character and appearance of the Belsize Conservation Area.

The new windows will also have an overall positive environmental impact on the building as they will be double glazed and will be much more energy efficient than the existing single glazed Crittall windows. The new windows will fall in a much higher band of energy conservation than what was previously achievable and will also provide financial savings for the property owner. The new windows will also serve to improve the overall aesthetic of the building's façades without negatively impacting the original design intention.

LOCATION

With a PTAL of 4, the windows are all located in apartment 65, on the third floor of a residential building located in the Belsize Conservation Area (Camden). It is close to the amenities around Belsize Park tube station and near those of Belsize Village, South End Green and Hampstead, the property is located on the third floor of a 6-storey (above ground) art deco building.

INTENDED USE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

There will be no change to the use of the building as residential use.

LAYOUT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

There will be no changes to the layout of the property. This will not affect conservation in any way.

SCALE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

In terms of additional space, there will be no change to the footprint of the property in any way. The replacement windows will be of the same dimensions as the existing windows.

PRIVATE/PUBLIC SPACES

There will be no changes to the landscaping of the property. The proposed work will not affect conservation in any way.

APPEARANCE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The replacement windows will match the design of the existing Crittall windows, but will be double glazed. All windows and panels will be in matching white colour to be consistent with the existing white colour.

DESIGN WITH REGARDS LOCAL CONTEXT

The proposed replacement windows are similar in design to all the other replacement windows within the building. For the upgrade, we have chosen the Alitherm Heritage 47 aluminium windows by Smart Systems.

This is a system already used by others within the building because the slimline aluminium sections replicate the Crittall style windows. The windows' specification will include:

- Slimline aluminium sections to match Crittall style windows.
- Outward opening
- PPC to a white gloss finish (to match the other apartments)
- Internal glass beading: opening lights
- External glass beading: fixed lights
- Reverse espagnolette locking.
- Push to release key locking handles: white
- Easy clean egress hinges: side hung
- Friction hinges: top hung
- Obscure glass: Stippolyte (Window no.4)
- 25mm flat astragal Georgian bars with duplex spacer bars.
- Double glazed with 4mm low iron/ soft coat annealed glass (or toughened where required)
- Centre pane U value of 1.2W/m²K.2214

(The drawings provided for each window are typical of a Smart System window as described above)

CRITTALL STACK

The only window not being altered or replaced can be found on the front elevation within the Crittall stack. Previous applications have noted that the stack bay was built as a series of frames stacked on the top of each other interconnected by coupling bars horizontally and round corner posts vertically.

Because of the age of the stack, some damage or deformation would likely occur when removing the original glazing frames. Furthermore, there is no similar product that can be used to replace the original windows and any replacement would not address cold-bridging or meet current thermal requirements.

We have therefore decided not to replace this unit.

PRECEDENTS

The planning records indicate that a number of past applications within the building have been approved for the replacement of the Crittall windows with a different product/material.

- (upvc) Flat 106 **Application ref. 2012/1098/P** - Allowed on appeal 31/10/2012
- (aluminium) Flat 73 **Application ref. 2013/2878/P** - Granted 18/07/2013
- (aluminium) Flat 101 **Application ref. 2023/1049/P** - Granted 19/07/2013
- (upvc) Flat 46 **Application ref. 2017/4698/P** - Granted 04/10/2017
- (aluminium) Flat 24 **Application ref. 2021/1395/P** - Granted 18/05/2021
- (aluminium) Flat 38 **Application ref. 2022/0281/P** - Granted 28/06/2022
- (aluminium) Flat 62 **Application ref. 2022/2738/P** - Granted 07/11/2022
- (aluminium) Flat 59 **Application ref. 2023/3550/P** - Granted 30/01/2024

PROPOSED ACCESS TO THE SITE

The proposed works will have no adverse effect to the existing accessibility to or within Hillfield Court.

FRONT ELEVATION - SOUTH WEST FACING



REAR ELEVATION - NORTH EAST FACING

