



Regeneration and Planning  
London Borough of Camden  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 5 Pancras Square  
C/o Town Hall, Judd Street  
London  
WC1H 9JE

01 August 2024

Our Reference: 32907

Dear Sir / Madam

Full planning application for a recreational outbuilding and pergola at Flat A, 75 Belsize Park Gardens, London, NW3 4JP (Planning Portal ref: PP-13269336)

On behalf of the owner of the above property we hereby submit a full planning application for:

*'Removal of shed and decking. Construction of a recreational outbuilding, pergola and decking'*

In addition to this planning cover letter, which includes details on design and access, heritage and sustainability, this planning application submission comprises the following information submitted in accordance with the national and local requirements:

- Completed application form, including certificate of ownership
- Arboricultural Report (AAAIA75BE)
- Application drawings
  - Location Plan and Block Plan (C32907A) - 1:1250@A4 and 1:500@A4
  - Site Plan and Sections - Existing (C32907B) - 1:200@A4
  - Floor Plan (C32907C) - 1:50@A4
  - Elevations (C32907D) - 1:100@A4
  - Foundations (C32907E) - 1:50@A4
  - Green Roof Details (C32907F) - 1:20@A4
- Illustrative drawings
  - Rendered Images (C32907G)
  - Site Photos (C32907H)

The proposal satisfies the requirements contained within the Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) - Home Improvements (2021), and complies with London Borough of Camden's (LBC) Local Plan Policies D1 (Design), D2 (Heritage) and A1 (Managing the impact of development). Further, the proposal has had regard to the Belsize Conservation Area Statement (2003).

## **Site and surrounding area**

The application site is the rear garden of a 19th-century semi-detached house located in a residential area in Belsize Park on the south side of Belsize Park Gardens within the London Borough of Camden. The property forms one half of a pair of five storey villas (including lower ground floor), currently it comprises five flats (flat A – E), a pitched roof and a varied palette of materials on the facades. There is no vehicle access to the property. Pedestrian access to the property is via Belsize Park Gardens. A paved path on the east side of the property provides access to the rear garden which is only for the benefit of Flat A.

The rear garden is on two levels. The smaller lower level consisting of the side entrance and a patio approximately 2m deep at the rear of the lower ground floor extension is fully paved, the larger upper level comprises a mix of paving slabs, grassed area, timber decking and a garden shed. The rear garden is long and enclosed on three sides, two sides by brick walls with trellis above to the south and east boundaries, with brick pillars and in fill timber fencing and hedging to the west boundary.

The site lies within flood zone 1, is not subject to any technical constraints or natural designations. The building itself is not listed, however the site contributes towards the special character and appearance of the Belsize Conservation Area.

## **Need for the development**

The owner is keen to incorporate some additional space to use as a hobby/relaxation room, however the current internal arrangement does not allow for this type of space. The owner has considered incorporating an additional room within the flat for the purposes of a hobby/relaxation room but this would not be ideal due to the current internal layout, as it would result in a reduction in the space enjoyed by the other rooms. Alternatively, an extension to the property is not considered feasible.

Accordingly, a detached outbuilding is considered to be the most appropriate approach to providing a dedicated hobby/relaxation space. It will also provide storage for garden furniture and tools. An outbuilding would also provide a practical and cost effective means of providing this additional space.

## **Design and access details and planning considerations**

No changes to the property access are proposed. Access to the property will remain the same and the proposed outbuilding will not affect the fire integrity or escape route for occupants.

The modest single storey outbuilding is proposed to be located at the rear of the garden and would be incidental to the residential use of Flat A, intended as a relaxation and hobby space. It comprises sensitive materials, such as timber, fibre cement, glass and aluminium which are used to create a high quality finish. The design ensures the building would respond to its context, making a positive contribution to the character of the area and providing a high quality, functional hobby and relaxation space.

The provision of a detached outbuilding is considered more desirable than subdividing the internal flat space or seeking an extension to the property, which could detract from the visual amenity of the building and its contribution to the character of the conservation area.

In accordance with the requirements of the CPG the proposed outbuilding would be visually subservient to the main building, as the proposed single storey hobby / relaxation outbuilding would be located in a part of the garden, which benefits from excellent screening provided by brick walls, timber fences, trellis, tall trees and vegetation. Further, the proposed outbuilding would have a flat roof, helping to lessen any visual impact and would be 6.5m wide, 3m deep and 2.6m high. An open sided 3m wide, 3m deep and 2.5m high aluminium louvred roof pergola will be attached to the outbuilding to provide a covered outdoor decked seating area.

The proposed outbuilding would have a total GEA floorspace of 19.5m<sup>2</sup>, (plus 9m<sup>2</sup> of covered outdoor space for the pergola) which is in line with the requirement in the CPG as it proposes an appropriate scale, noting that the entire rear garden is approximately 272m<sup>2</sup>, the outbuilding would not result in excessive loss of garden amenity space. The outbuilding will be set in 0.5m from the boundaries with neighbouring gardens retaining space for suitable soft landscaping. This space around the outbuilding creates a green corridor for wildlife and provides sufficient space to carry out long-term maintenance and repairs to the property boundaries and to the outbuilding,

if required.

The proposed scale, siting and location of the outbuilding is also considered acceptable given the size and layout of the garden as it represents a marginal area in the context of the rear garden as a whole, and in terms of the overall plot. As a result, it would not adversely impact on neighbouring amenity and would not be detrimental to the character of the local area. This is explained in detail below.

The proposed hobby and relaxation outbuilding would be modest in size and subordinate in scale to the main building. The height and area of the development are considered necessary to ensure that enough space would be available to provide a high-quality internal recreational environment, however its modest scale, siting and appearance would ensure that it remains subordinate to the main building.

The proposal would sit comfortably within the garden and would not result in it appearing overcrowded. Indeed, the proposed outbuilding would only occupy approximately 3.99% of the whole plot which is approximately 489m<sup>2</sup>. A sufficient proportion of the garden space would be retained to provide a high quality and useable amenity space for Flat A. The proposed outbuilding would be subordinate in scale to the building when viewed within the plot or the surrounding area. The substantial separation of approximately 15.6m between the main building and outbuilding would reinforce this subordinate relationship. Its location within an area that is reasonably well contained and screened, as well as the benefits of the proposed green roof helps to minimise any visual impact and helps to ensure the outbuilding does not detract from the open character and garden amenity of neighbouring gardens and the wider surrounding area. Further, the siting of the outbuilding would not harm any existing trees. This is discussed in further detail as part of the arboricultural report.

In line with London Plan Policy 7.6 there would be no significant detriment to the amenities of neighbours and the character and appearance of the street scene or locality in the vicinity of the outbuilding.

The proposed outbuilding would not result in a significant change in the relationship of the site to the surrounding area. It would not be visible from Belsize Park Gardens ensuring that there would be no material change in views from public areas.

There would also be no detrimental impact on the residential amenity of the neighbouring properties. It is not envisaged that the use of the outbuilding as a hobby/relaxation space would result in a material increase in noise over and above that from the use of the existing garden. Importantly, the location of the proposed outbuilding deep within the plot maximises the separation distance to the buildings at 73 and 77 Belsize Park Gardens. Overall, the location and boundary distance of the outbuilding from 77 Belsize Park Gardens and 44 Lambolle Road (0.5m distance from both boundaries) helps to reduce any potential impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, in line with London Plan Policy 7.6 and LBC's Local Plan Policy A1. It is anticipated that there would also be minimal, if any, impact on privacy, outlook, sunlight and daylight on neighbouring properties. Further, the existing brick walls, trees and planting along the boundaries would contribute to screen views of the outbuilding from the neighbouring properties and soften most views of the outbuilding from neighbouring gardens.

The full height glazing will allow for views from the recreational outbuilding into the rest of the rear garden and generally towards the west boundary. There would be some limited views towards the rear of the host property, which is roughly 15.6m from the proposed outbuilding. Small high level windows with restricted openings on elevation R facing the east boundary are required for room ventilation. The glazing in these windows is obscured and the height is above eye line. It is important to note that these views are not at close quarters and they are restricted by the existing boundary brick wall, trellis, foliage and trees, as such any overlooking would not be considered to be significant.

The outbuilding will have a power supply and internal lights, this will evidently result in a limited low level of background light glow when used during the hours of darkness. No external lights are proposed on the structure, and the internal lights are low wattage recessed into the ceiling out of direct sight. The outbuilding is more than 15m away from the rear elevation of the host property and even further from the upper floors. It is well screened from neighbouring properties. Other sources of light pollution in the area such as neighbouring properties and local street lights are considered to be more polluting than what might be produced by the proposed outbuilding, therefore light pollution is not considered to be a problem.

The clean and elegant appearance of the proposed outbuilding, which would be constructed using a range of carefully selected natural sustainable materials including wood, metal and fibre cement products, would provide

an attractive building. The wood cladding on two elevations with doors and windows set within grey aluminium frames would be complemented by the grey roof trim and fibre cement cladding boards, with a natural finish on the side and rear elevations. In accordance with the CPG and the guidelines in the Belsize Conservation Area Statement for Belsize Park Gardens, the scale of the outbuilding and the careful selection of materials and colours would ensure that the proposed outbuilding would sympathetically tie in with the appearance of the main building and the overall character of the surrounding area.

The proposed use of the outbuilding as a recreational space would be entirely incidental to the residential use of Flat A. The outbuilding will contain a modest WC facility to allow occasional overnight use by visiting friends and family, however, the proposed outbuilding couldn't be used as a separate dwelling as it would rely on the access and utility connections enjoyed by Flat A. The applicant would welcome a suitably worded condition attached to a planning permission that restricts any use of the outbuilding as a separate residential dwelling or a business premises for financial gain.

### ***Heritage considerations***

LBC Local Plan Policy D2 (Heritage) outlines that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings.

The outbuilding, which is located within the Belsize Conservation Area, is well designed, unobtrusive, well contained and subordinate to the main property. Further, the materials and colours including timber cladding, aluminium frames and green roof would ensure that the proposed outbuilding would be sensitive to the appearance of the main building, and would help to preserve and enhance the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with Policy D2 and the Belsize Conservation Area Statement.

### ***Arboricultural report***

The submitted Arboricultural Report confirms that no trees are proposed for removal and that minor facilitation pruning will be required to face back and lower the overhang of one grade C tree (the Leyland Cypress T2) to accommodate the outbuilding. The overhang of the trees is located within the boundary of the application and the tree is located within the garden of the neighbouring property at 77 Belsize Park Gardens. This will be minor and have no adverse impact on the health or form of the tree in question.

The outbuilding does not require conventional foundations or a concrete slab. It is designed to be suspended above the ground on a steel frame with adjustable micro pile footings; therefore ensuring minimum disruption to the site and eliminating harm or damage to nearby trees.

A methodology included within the Arboricultural Report details tree protection measures and working practices to safeguard the trees during demolition and construction.

### ***Sustainability***

The proposed outbuilding would be built in accordance with sustainable development principles with regard to LBC Local Plan Policy CC1 (Climate change mitigation) and CC2 (Adapting to climate change). The core structure and cladding are timber which is a preferred material for garden structures, as it's a renewable resource with a low embodied energy. The green roof will not only offer biodiversity benefits and reduce water run-off but will also add aesthetic benefits to neighbouring properties when looking down onto the building. A bird box is included in the proposal for the benefit of wildlife. Surface water will be harvested and stored in a water butt for future use in the garden. Foul water will discharge via a new connection into the existing foul water drainage system. For refuse and recycling the existing facilities in the host property will be used. The proposed outbuilding and pergola will be pre-fabricated which will reduce the volume of waste to be removed from site.

The lockdowns during Covid-19 have revealed the importance of having high quality homes that are capable of meeting a wide range of needs, including for recreational purposes. The proposed hobby / relaxation outbuilding would enable the applicant to enjoy additional space at home in a comfortable and relaxing environment helping to promote general health and wellbeing.

## **Community Infrastructure Levy**

The proposal will not be liable for a CIL charge as the net increase in residential floor space does not exceed 100m<sup>2</sup>

## **Planning benefits and conclusion**

The proposal is considered to be compliant with the strategic and local policy frameworks and would secure the following planning benefits:

- The proposed hobby and relaxation outbuilding would meet the need for additional space at Flat A, 75 Belsize Park Gardens without resulting in a detrimental impact on the character of the local area or amenity of neighbouring properties that could result from extensions to the building.
- The outbuilding would help to create a more useable, attractive and high quality garden space, and provides an opportunity to improve the quality of the garden area and the way it functions.

We look forward to progressing this application with LBC and to receiving confirmation of validation. Should you have any queries, or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

*John Keenan*

John Keenan B.Eng. (Hons)  
Managing Director