

T: 0207 692 0643  
M: 07900 413080

E: [stuart@smplanning.com](mailto:stuart@smplanning.com)  
W: [www.smplanning.com](http://www.smplanning.com)

The logo for SMPlanning, featuring the text "SMPlanning" in a light blue, sans-serif font against a dark rectangular background.

80-83 Long Lane,  
London,  
EC1A 9ET

12<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**Via Planning Portal only**

Dear Sir/Madam

**PLANNING APPLICATION - THE TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

**ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION, ALTERATIONS TO BASEMENT INCLUDING FRONT LIGHTWELL AND PLANTER, SIDE LIGHTWELL, REAR ROOF LIGHTS AT GROUND LEVEL, AND THE INSTALLATION OF AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMP AND ENCLOSURE, THE REPLACEMENT OF FRONT GARAGE DOOR WITH WINDOWS AND THE INSTALLATION OF FIVE ROOF LIGHTS AT ROOF LEVEL.**

**31 ELSWORTHY ROAD, LONDON, NW3 3BT**

Please accept this covering letter as an accompaniment to this full planning application for proposed extensions to the existing property at 31 Elsworthy Road, London, NW3 3BT ('the site'). This letter provides a summary of the site and the proposed development and incorporates the Design and Access Statement, Heritage Statement, Thermal Analysis, Noise survey and acoustic detailing, and updated Basement Impact Report.

Please also find enclosed a completed application form, CIL form, existing and proposed plans including site location plan.

**The Proposal**

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a single storey rear conservatory, the replacement of the front garage door with window to match the fenestration of the original dwelling, alterations to the previously consented basement scheme (2021/1527/P) comprising a new front lightwell and planter, side lightwell and rear ground level roof lights, the installation of an air source heat pump with associated garden enclosure, installation of five roof lights at roof level and minor alterations to openings on the side elevation.

For full details of the proposed development please refer to the Design and Access Statement and supporting plans.

## **The Site**

The application site is located on the southern side of Elsworthy Road and comprises a large, three storey detached dwelling with roof accommodation. The site has direct access onto Primrose Hill via a door in the boundary wall to the rear of the garden.

Elsworthy Road is a residential street situated to the north of Primrose Hill. The street is comprised of large properties of mixed architectural design, including a variety of flats, semi-detached and detached houses. The character of the street is well established as a spacious garden suburb, with generously laid out plot sizes, greening from street trees, front gardens and communal gardens. There have been a multitude of schemes to extend and improve the dwellings in the street, a few examples of this are highlighted below in the planning history section. The resulting character of the area is of a green, verdant environment and quiet residential street.

The site has a public transport access level of 2, indicating a moderate/poor level of transport accessibility. The site is within Flood Zone 1, indicating a low probability of flooding.

## **Conservation Area**

The site is located within the Elsworthy Conservation Area which covers the area from Primrose Hill in the south-east to Avenue Road in the west and forms the boundary between the City of Westminster and the London Borough of Camden. The area was developed between 1840 to 1912 with a large amount of speculative residential development of an affluent nature, this character, as a wealthy residential suburb, has remained to the present day.

The Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy sets out the spatial qualities of the conservation area and states *'The area's spatial character derives from the spacious leafy streets and generously laid out plot sizes, complemented by areas of semi-private communal amenity space. Terraced development is predominantly of four storeys in the Conservation Area and two to three storeys where detached houses and semi-detached villas predominate. Buildings are setback from the street and the original boundary treatments of small walls, privet hedging, and wooden gates and gateposts were designed to increase the green, leafy environment of the quiet residential streets'*.

There are no statutorily protected buildings on the application site. There are no statutorily listed buildings on the street. The existing building at No. 31 Elsworthy Road is highlighted as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Elsworthy Road Conservation Area.

The accompanying Heritage Statement provides significant detail with regards to the Conservation Area, an assessment of the site and the relationship between the proposal and this designated asset.

## **Pre-Application Engagement**

The NPPF states that 'early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community'.

The Applicant consulted with the Local Planning Authority throughout the drafting of this application in order to inform, identify and, where appropriate, address any issues or concerns throughout the pre-application period through to the submission of this application.

This engagement has been managed through a targeted pre-application advice meeting with the London Borough of Camden. Following the pre-application engagement, the scheme has been amended to address the issues raised within the LPA's pre-application responses, and a second pre-application submitted. A summary of the applicant's programme of pre-application engagement is provided below;

### ***Camden Pre-Application Advice Service***

The Applicant submitted a request for formal pre-application advice in June 2024 which sought advice on the principle of the proposed single storey rear extension as well as alterations and improvements to the previously consented basement scheme.

A site meeting was undertaken on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2024 with a planning officer from Camden Council, where the existing building was viewed, and the proposals were discussed. Following the site meeting, there has been ongoing dialogue and discussion with the case officer and the Council's conservation officer, who have provided comments on the merits of the scheme and key aspects to those responses can be summarised as follows;

- ***Basement and Lightwells***

Side lightwell is considered acceptable as it is small in scale and location between host building and neighbours and set back from front elevation.

Front lightwell could be supported, given the setback from the street to the front of the dwelling house, provided it is surrounded by planting rather than railings. The lightwell would need to be imperceptible from the street and demonstrated as such in the application.

The rooflights in rear garden would not greatly impact on the overall appearance of the building and no objection is raised, however they should be flush and incorporated into landscape finishes.

- ***Rear Extension***

The single storey rear extension, designed a metal and glazed conservatory structure, which allows for the existing bays to remain legible, is welcomed. The extension should be subservient to the original building and currently feels slightly overbearing and therefore should be reduced in scale, particularly in relation to the roof ridges which almost reach the height of the first floor window. However, a lightweight conservatory structure that retains the rear bays is supported in principle.

- ***Alterations to Garage Door***

The removal of the garage door and replacement with a fine glazing pattern window to match the fenestration of the house would be welcomed.

- *Rooflights*

The proposed installation of rooflights on the flat roof could be supported, however they should be subordinate to the roof and conservation style.

- *Air Source Heat Pump*

A noise impact assessment report should be submitted with any full application to demonstrate that the proposal would not harm amenity. The use of the pump for active cooling is strongly discouraged and not supported by the Council. If active cooling is proposed, full justification is needed, including an Energy Statement and overheating assessment.

Following this response from the Council, alterations and amendments to the proposed rear extension were considered, namely reducing the height of the proposal by 100mm to increase the distance between the extension and the existing first floor windows, altering the ridge detail on the proposed conservatory, and replacing the proposed glass roof of the conservatory with a solid roof to minimise solar gain to the interior. These changes were submitted to Camden Council on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August and the response can be summarised as follows;

- *Front Lightwell*

Height of the planter has been increased from 0.7m to 0.85m, in order to completely minimise any visibility.

- *Rear Extension*

Despite marginal reduction in height, the proposed rear extension would be acceptable at application stage. Solid panels in the roof are welcomed and details of materials should be submitted at application stage.

- *Landscaping*

It is encouraging that landscaping would be more in line with consented scheme, and it should aim to maximise the amount of planting and biodiversity on the site, with details submitted as part of the application.

Following these final comments, the final version of the application has now been prepared and is submitted for the Council's consideration.

### **Planning History**

#### ***The site:***

**2021/1527/P** – New basement extension to include a pool and rear lightwell, alteration and retention of balconies at second floor rear, alterations to window openings to side elevation, new garage doors and changes to the rear elevation, all to dwelling – APPROVED

**2022/4491/P** – Single storey rear extension – WITHDRAWN

**2022/5379/P** – New front boundary wall and gates - (Certificate of Lawfulness) – GRANTED

**J8/4/15/5720** – Alterations including new bay window and construction of new brick boundary wall – APPROVED

**27617/R1** – Erection of a new garage – APPROVED

***Surrounding sites:***

**35 Elsworthy Road (2022/1085/P)** – Basement extension with front and rear lightwells, two storey bay to rear and other alterations – APPROVED.

**41 Elsworthy Road (2010/5687/P)** – Erection of part two storey part single storey side extensions, single storey rear extension, basement extension with two front lightwells, removal of rear bay. APPROVED.

**42 Elsworthy Road (2019/0149/P)** – Erection of a two-storey side extension, basement excavation including front lightwell, and other alterations. APPROVED.

**Planning Policy and Legislation:**

**LEGISLATION**

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that when making any determination under the Planning Acts, that determination should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 72 of the Planning and Conservation Act 1990 requires that local planning authority, in exercising their planning functions within conservation areas, pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

**NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY**

*National Planning Policy Framework (2023)*

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration in formulating local planning policies and taking decisions on planning applications. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which incorporates three key strands – economic, environmental and social.

The following sections are relevant to the consideration of this application;

- Section 11 (Making effective use of land)
- Section 12 (Achieving well designed and beautiful places)
- Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

## **LOCAL PLANNING POLICY**

For the purposes of this pre-application, the adopted development plan for the London Borough of Camden comprises the London Plan (2021) the Camden Local Plan (2017) and the Camden supplementary planning documents and guidance. The following policies will likely be considered relevant to the proposed development:

### **London Plan (2021)**

- D1 London's form, character and capacity for growth
- D3 Optimising site capacity through the design-led approach
- D4 Delivering good design
- HC1 Heritage conservation and growth

### **Camden Local Plan (2017)**

- Policy A1: Managing the impact of development
- Policy D1: Design
- Policy D2: Heritage

### **Camden Planning Guidance (CPG)**

- Amenity CPG (2021)
- Design CPG (2021)
- Basements CPG (2021)
- Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2009)

## **Planning Assessment**

### **Design, Visual and Heritage Impacts:**

Camden Local Plan (CLP) Policy D1 requires development to be of the highest architectural and urban design quality, and have particular regard to design and visual impact and to the context within which it is placed, and the contribution it makes to the landscape qualities of the area. The aim of this policy is reflected in London Plan Policy D4 (Good Design). Specific guidance in relation to extensions to existing properties and achieving good design is further provided in the 'Home Improvements' and 'Design' Camden Planning Guidance (CPG).

CLP Policy D2 states 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. These aims are further reflected in London Plan Policy CH1 (Heritage Conservation and Growth).

To the front elevation, the scheme includes minor amendments to the existing garage, namely removing the garage door and its replacement with glazing. The alterations to the garage have been sensitively designed to ensure the proposal enhances the architectural merit of the building. The replacement windows will be in the same materials as the existing bay (white painted timber) and the same scale, design and detailing as the existing. The proposed front lightwell would be sited underneath the existing bay window, obscured from view by the introduction of a planter which is consistent with the location of existing planting and ensures the lightwell would remain completely

screened from view from the street scene. The planter would also serve to reflect the leafy, landscaped character of Elsworthy Road and the wider conservation area. Overall, the alterations to the front elevation of the dwelling are considered to be minor in nature and will return the dwelling to its original appearance, preserving and enhancing the character of the dwelling, and the surrounding conservation area.

With regards to the basement, the footprint of the previously approved scheme will remain unchanged. To the front, the basement roof will step in to allow for the front lightwell (as described above). To the eastern side, a small step in to allow for a new side lightwell that will provide light into the basement. The proposed basement alterations will have a limited visual impact to the surrounding area as the proposed lightwells have been sensitively placed to avoid any adverse amenity impacts or adverse impacts to the front façade of the property, and the surrounding garden area remains unaffected. The alterations to the basement also include the installation of two roof lights within the rear terrace, which will allow for an increase of light into the basement. The rooflights will remain within the existing terrace area and flush with the ground, so that they will have no impact on the character or appearance of the dwelling, the garden or the wider conservation area.

To the rear elevation, at ground floor level, the proposed scheme includes the introduction of a single storey, glazed conservatory. The structure has been designed to appear as a lightweight extension to the rear of the property that allows for an increase in habitable space without impacting on the existing bay window detailing. The conservatory would be constructed with metal framing and glazing, giving a transparent and transient appearance that would enable the existing bay window detailing to remain wholly visible and the architectural character of the building legible. The conservatory is designed with solid roof panels with integrated openable roof lights, which will assist with maintaining appropriate internal temperatures. The proposed conservatory has also been stepped down in height from the pre-application submission, in accordance with previous advice from the planning officer. The proposal is considered to result in a well-designed and appropriate extension of the rear elevation that preserves and protects the character and appearance of the building, and the wider conservation area. Additionally, the extension is modest with regard to footprint and encroachment into the rear garden, and as a result, the verdant character of the rear garden will be preserved.

To the roof, an additional five roof lights are proposed within the flat roof section of the roof. The rooflights will be flush with the roof and of conservation style. They will remain obscured from view and will not impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling or the wider conservation area.

The side elevation (facing No. 33) involves the replacement of two modern windows with two windows that replicate the traditional windows elsewhere on the elevation and the inclusion of a fixed sidelight next to the side access door, to allow additional light into the prep kitchen. These minor alterations are wholly in keeping with the character and appearance of the building and the wider conservation area.

In summary, the proposed extensions and alterations by virtue of their design, scale and massing have a sensitive visual impact on the character and appearance of the property and the wider conservation area. The proposed extensions and alterations present a high-quality design which is sympathetic to the conservation area. The development therefore complies with CLP Policies D1 and D2.

For further details please refer to the supporting design and heritage statements.

**Neighbouring Amenity:**

CLP Policy A1 seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered. It seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. Further guidance is provided in CPG Amenity which sets specific standards of development with regard to amenity.

The proposed extensions do not impact the building line at the front of the house. The building line at the rear of the property does not extend as far as either of the extensions on the neighbouring properties, which is clearly demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement. The size, scale and massing of the rear extension will ensure that it would not have an adverse impact on neighbours through a sense of overbearingness, enclosure, loss of privacy, sunlight or daylight, and as such the scheme is considered compliant with CLP Policy A1.

The other proposed alterations to the previously approved scheme (replacement windows, roof lights and lightwells) are all considered to be minor in nature and will have no discernible impact on either adjacent dwelling.

For the reasons outlined above the proposal will have an acceptable impact on neighbouring amenity.

**Basement Development:**

The Council's Local Plan Policy A5 refers to basements and sets out a number of criteria to be adhered to. The basement has been previously consented and the proposed changes, presented in this pre-application submission, are minor and continue to ensure compliance with the policy.

Taken from CLP Policy A5, the policy states that basements should:

*f. not comprise of more than one storey*

Passes – as consented.

*g. not be built under an existing basement*

Passes – as consented.

*h. not exceed 50% of each garden within the property;*

Passes – As consented.

*i. be less than 1.5 times the footprint of the host building in area;*

Passes – As consented.

*j. extend into the garden no further than 50% of the depth of the host building measured from the principal rear elevation;*



Passes – As consented.

*k. not extend into or underneath the garden further than 50% of the depth of the garden;*

Passes – As consented.

*l. be set back from neighbouring property boundaries where it extends beyond the footprint of the host building;*

Passes – As consented.

*m. Avoid the loss of garden space or trees of townscape or amenity value.*

Passes – As consented.

In addition to local plan policy, the Council's guidance also includes Basements (2021) CPG, which provides specific guidance on basement development, including details on lightwells. Compared the previously approved application, this scheme proposes a front and side lightwell, along with two rear rooflights located on the existing terrace. These alterations are required specifically to allow more light into the basement rooms and have been designed to be as discreet as possible and as a result do not harm the architectural character of the host building, the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area or the relationship between the building and the street.

In terms of the front lightwell, this will be sited to the immediate front of the existing bay with a planter proposed to screen the lightwell from the street, the lightwell will be screened by a planter and will remain obscured from view, with little difference between the existing appearance of a bay window with planting and the proposed lightwell with planting. The lightwell will not impact on access into or out of the site, parking areas or the area available for soft landscaping. Furthermore, the lightwell is proposed within the footprint of the previously approved basement excavation and actually requires less excavation than the previously consented basement. The result will be a softened, unobtrusive addition to the front façade of the dwelling.

The Basements CPG further outlines the importance of lightwells being introduced only when they are already established along a street, to ensure they are not out of keeping with neighbouring properties. Lightwells are visible to the front of 15 Elsworthy Road, 18-20 Elsworthy Road, 35 Elsworthy Road, 41 Elsworthy Road and 42 Elsworthy Road. Lightwells are therefore evident along the street and the proposed front lightwell is therefore in keeping with the established character of the street, in accordance with Camden's Planning Guidance.

In terms of the proposed side lightwell, this is a very small addition, to allow light into the basement playroom. The location of the lightwell means it will not be seen from outside the site or from any neighbouring view points. The side lightwell is considered to comply with the requirements of the Basements CPG.

To the rear, the pre-application scheme involves the creation of two rear rooflights within the existing terrace. These rooflights will provide direct access to light to the basement and in particular the previously consented pool. The rooflights are proposed to be flush to the terrace, within close proximity of the rear wall. By siting the rooflights within the terrace area, it ensures that there will be

no loss of garden or planting and will not impact on topsoil or drainage. The rooflights are discreet and minor additions that will have little impact on the architectural merit of the dwelling or the wider conservation area.

The proposed alterations to the basement, from the approved scheme, are considered to meet the relevant criteria set out in the Council's policy and guidance.

**Energy, Sustainability and Noise:**

The proposal also includes the installation of an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP), which will assist in heating the property, and particularly the basement level pool. The Pump will also provide active cooling, but only to the basement area of the property, when required. To accompany the application, a noise survey, overheating assessment with thermal modelling and acoustic detailing has been provided.

The ASHP will be installed within the basement and will require air flow ventilation, which has been designed as a planter to sit within the garden area to the rear of the terrace. The planter will be fitted with discharge grilles that face into the garden area of the application site. The accompanying noise survey and acoustic detailing confirm that the ASHP and the discharge grille will not have detrimental impact on noise, disturbance or neighbouring amenity.

Council policies CC1 and CC2 of the Local Plan provide support for sustainable development principles to be incorporated into the design and implementation of development. The Council's CPG Energy Efficiency and Adaption sets out that ASHP, for the purposes of heating, are appropriate where heating demand is isolated (for example for the pool) and where it is more efficient than gas. It is noted that Local Plan policy CC2 discourages active cooling and will only be permitted where thermal modelling demonstrates a clear need for it after all preferred measures are incorporated in line with the London Plan cooling hierarchy. In this instance, thermal modelling has confirmed that only the basement area is at risk of overheating. The assessment confirms that only when mechanical ventilation and cooling is incorporated, will the basement area meet the overheating criteria. It is noted that the remainder of the dwelling complies with relevant targets and is not at risk of overheating. Therefore, the proposed active cooling of the basement area is supported by dynamic thermal modelling which demonstrates that there remains a clear need for active cooling, even after all of the preferred measures of the cooling hierarchy have been incorporated. The proposal is therefore considered to be in line with policy CC2 of the Local Plan.

**Arboricultural Impact:**

CLP Policy A3 states that the Council will resist the loss of trees and vegetation of significant amenity, historic, cultural or ecological value. It further requires trees and vegetation which are to be retained to be satisfactorily protected during the demolition and construction phase of development. This is echoed in the guidance contained in the Trees CPG.

The landscaping details and Arboricultural assessment were agreed under the previous application 2021/1527/P, and tree protection details consented under 2024/1371/P. This application proposes a new landscape design that maintains the same trees to be removed and the same number of

additional trees as per the consented landscape design. The landscaping details have been set out on the Proposed Site Plan 23045(01)006.

In summary, the proposed extensions have been designed to limit impacts on trees and to avoid potential encroachment into the root protection area of trees. The proposed development will focus on retaining the verdant character of the front and rear gardens and will accord with Policy A3 of the CLP.

### **Summary**

As demonstrated within this letter and supporting documents, the proposed works are considered to have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the property and Conservation area, and neighbouring amenity. The development is therefore in accordance with the aforementioned Development Plan policies, and it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

I trust this letter and the enclosed documents provide you with sufficient information to determine the application but if you require any points of clarification or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

**Lauren Westley**  
**Principal Planner**  
**SM Planning**