

London Office:

80-83 Long Lane

London, EC1A 9ET

13 September 2024

Sent via planning portal only:

Dear Sir/Madam

PLANNING APPLICATION – THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

REPLACEMENT FRONT AND REAR DORMERS, REPLACEMENT ROOF TILES (LIKE-FOR-LIKE), REPLACEMENT EXISTING WINDOWS WITH DOUBLE GLAZED WINDOWS (LIKE-FOR-LIKE), NEW ROOF LIGHT TO SIDE FACING ROOF SLOPE AND NEW SIDE FACING WINDOW IN ALTERED OPENING.

27 BELSIZE SQUARE, LONDON, NW3 4HU.

Please accept this covering letter as an accompaniment to this planning application for the proposed works at 27 Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HU ('the site'). This letter provides a summary of the site and the proposed development.

Please also find enclosed for your consideration a completed application form, CIL Form, location plan and full set of existing and proposed plans.

The Site

The site comprises a three-storey end-of-terrace Victorian townhouse with accommodation in the roof space. The application property relates to a group of four terraced properties (No's 27-30) at the southeastern end of Belsize Square within Belsize Conservation Area. The site is subject of an Article 4 Direction which has removed various householder permitted development rights.

The property has been subdivided into four flats and all properties within the terraced group are identified as buildings which make a positive contribution to the conservation area. The nearest listed building is the Grade II listed Church of St Peter, located approx. 140m northwest of the site.

No's 27-30 Belsize Square form one of three rows of terraced villas at the southeastern end of Belsize Square. A number of later extensions and alterations to the individual properties have resulted in a partial loss of the original unity and symmetry amongst the terraces. This is particularly notable with regards to inappropriately designed and proportioned dormers and the loss of the original curved glass bay window to the rear at No.30 – a distinguishing feature of Tidey's Belsize Park development.

Planning History

A search of records available on the council's public register identifies one previous application at the site.

On the 18th December 2001, planning permission was granted (ref: PW9902756) for the change of use and works of conversion from 3 self-contained flats and 1 self-contained maisonette to 5 self-contained flats, including the replacement of the existing dormer windows in the front and rear roof slopes.

The Proposal

The proposed development seeks planning permission for replacement front and rear dormers, replacement roof tiles (like-for-like), replacement windows (like-for-like), new roof light to the side facing roof slope and new side facing window in altered opening.

Further details are provided within the Planning Assessment below.

Planning Policy & Guidance

Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act provides that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which incorporates three specific strands – economic, environmental and social. The NPPF is a material consideration in plan and decision making. The following sections are relevant to the consideration of this application: Section 2 (achieving sustainable development); Section 12 (achieving well designed and beautiful places); and Section 16 (conserving and enhancing the historic environment).

Development Plan

The adopted Development Plan for the London Borough of Camden comprises the London Plan (2021) and the Camden Local Plan (2017). Camden's Planning Guidance (CPG's) and Conservation Area Appraisals provide advice and information on how the council will apply the development plan policies and manage development within conservation areas, which can be material considerations in planning decisions.

The following policies and guidance are considered relevant to the proposed development:

London Plan (2021)

- D4 Delivering good design
- HC1 Heritage conservation and growth

Camden Local Plan (2017)

- D1 Design
- D2 Heritage

Camden's Planning Guidance (CPG's)

- Design (2021)
- Home Improvements (2021)
- Amenity (2021)

Camden's Technical Documents

- Belsize Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2003)
- Belsize Conservation Area Design Guide (2010)

Planning Assessment

Design and Heritage:

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

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).

The application property is identified as a building which makes a positive contribution to Belsize Conservation Area. The key policy objective is to preserve and enhance elements of the building and features of the site that make a positive contribution to the conservation area, while also ensuring that new interventions are of high-quality design appropriate to their context.

There are two listed buildings within the conservation area, the nearest being the Grade II listed Church of St Peter, located approx. 140m northwest of the site. Given the small scale of the proposed development and intervening distance and development, it is not considered that the proposal falls within the setting of the identified listed building.

The character of Belsize is largely derived from mid-19th century Italianate villas with a number of distinct areas of varying character and appearance. Despite a scattering of some post-war developments and the imposition of the motor car into the public realm, the majority of the area retains the essence of the character and appearance that would have prevailed in the 1930's.

The most notable alterations and extensions to existing dwellings which have failed to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area including overly large, inappropriately proportioned dormers and the addition of mansard roofs, replacement windows or other features which are inappropriately scaled and constructed in modern materials, and inappropriately designed roof terraces.

Belsize Park, Belsize Park Gardens, Buckland Crescent and Belsize Square represent the core area of the Belsize Park development undertaken by developer Daniel Tidey. The streets are predominantly residential, characterised by the repeated forms of the stucco villas, whose design gives a strong identity and unity of appearance to the area.

The terraced group to which the application property relates encompasses a great deal of symmetry, namely in regard to the book-end hipped roofs and rusticated quoin detailing, recessed sash windows diminishing in size on successive upper floors with classically detailed surrounds, canted three-light bays on the ground floors, steps up to porticoes. Additional distinguishing features are the curved glass bay windows at the rear and front and rear doors with two panels, characteristically of etched glass with rounded heads.

Nevertheless, a number of later extensions and alterations to the individual properties have resulted in a partial loss of the original unity and symmetry amongst the terraced group. This is particularly the case with regards to the loss of original dormer windows and unsympathetic dormer extensions. Additionally, No.30's original curved glass bay window at the rear has been replaced by a later three-storey extension.

Each element of the proposed development is assessed below, with regard to the above policies and identified significance of the Belsize Conservation Area, principally deriving from the illustrative value of the 19th century stucco villas and the aesthetic value of distinct areas of development which encompass a strong sense of identity and unity, despite some unsympathetic additions and alterations to individual properties.

– Replacement front and rear dormers –

No.27 is the only property within the terraced group encompassing two smaller front dormers rather than a single front dormer. The front and rear dormers have been poorly constructed and the southern-most of the front two dormers has been built astride the original hip line.

The proposal involves the removal of the two existing smaller front dormer windows to reinstate the original hip line and provide a new single front dormer window, set in from the hip line and matching the size, design and siting of the adjoining property. Similarly, the existing single rear dormer would be replaced with a new single dormer set in from the hip line to match the height, depth and alignment of the neighbouring property. Each of the proposed new dormers are of traditional design in lead sheet external finish and white painted timber frame windows to match the style and appearance of the original property.

The proposed replacement front and rear dormers would therefore reinforce the identity and unity of the terraced group and appear as a sensitive and subservient additions to the roofscape. This would result in an enhancement to the character and appearance of the host property, terraced group and the wider conservation area in line compliance with provisions of CLP Policies D1 and D2, the Home Improvements CPG and the guidelines set out within Belsize Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy (2003).

– Replacement roof tiles and windows (like-for-like) –

It is proposed to replace the pitched roof covering in natural slate tile and lead sheet flashing to match the existing. It is also proposed to replace the existing windows with timber framed double glazed windows to match the style and appearance of the existing.

Given these elements of the proposal are like-for-like replacements, the character and appearance of the host property and conservation area would be preserved in line with the provisions of CLP Policies D1 and D2, the Home Improvements CPG and the guidelines set out within Belsize Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy (2003).

– New roof light to the side facing roof slope –

It is proposed to insert a small new roof light to the side facing roof slope. This would be aligned with the existing adjacent roof light and flush with external finishes to match the style and appearance of the original property.

It is notable that a number of rooflights can be seen within the street scene of the immediate area. However, in this case, given the siting of the proposed new roof light, it would not be visible from public vantage points.

The proposed new ‘Conservation-style’ roof light would therefore be a high-quality and sensitive addition that would preserve character and appearance of the host property and conservation area in accordance with CLP Policies D1 and D2, the Home Improvements CPG and the guidelines set out within Belsize Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy (2003).

– New side facing window in altered opening –

The proposal includes the widening of the existing side-facing second floor opening to install a new side facing white painted timber framed casement window.

Given the modest enlargement to the existing opening, use of traditional materials to match the existing and the varied sizing and arrangement of windows to the flank elevations of the three terraced rows in the immediate vicinity of the site, this element of the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the host property and conservation area in compliance with CLP Policies D1 and D2, the Home Improvements CPG and the guidelines set out within Belsize Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy (2003).

Residential 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.

By virtue of the scale and siting of the proposed replacement dormers, new roof light and new side facing window in an altered opening, the proposal would have no material impact upon neighbours

with regard to overlooking or daylight/sunlight. As such, the proposed development will have an acceptable impact on neighbours in compliance with CLP Policy A1.

Summary

As demonstrated within this letter and supporting documents, the proposed works are considered to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the host property and wider conservation area. Therefore, there would be no harm to the significance of Belsize Conservation Area. The proposal would have no adverse impact upon neighbouring amenity.

The development is in accordance with the relevant Development Plan policies, CPG's and the guidelines set out within Belsize Conservation Area appraisal and management strategy (2003). It is therefore 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,

Danielle Shaw
Planner
SM Planning