

*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**

**CREATION OF ROOF TERRACE ABOVE EXISTING REAR OUTRIGGER TO INCLUDE THE INSTALLATION OF RAILINGS AND THE FORMATION OF A RECESSED ACCESS DOOR WITHIN THE REAR ROOF SLOPE.**

**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 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.

## **Relevant Planning History**

### **The Site**

On the 18<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **Surrounding Area**

#### *- 23 Belsize Square -*

On the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2022, a planning application was withdrawn (ref: 2021/3387/P) for the replacement of existing front and rear dormers, creation of a rear roof terrace, including formation of a decking area on the roof of the bay extension at the rear and installation of metal railings all in association with the top floor flat.

#### *- 2 Belsize Square -*

On the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021, planning permission was granted (ref: 2021/3035/P) for the erection of a single storey rear extension with associated roof terrace and the erection of a single storey outbuilding.

#### *- 12 Lancaster Drive –*

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021, planning permission was granted (ref: 2012/4335/P) for the removal of existing pitch roof to rear bay at first floor level and creation of roof terrace enclosed by balustrading and replacement of rear first floor level window with door all in connection with existing flat (Class C3).

#### *- 8 Belsize Park -*

On the 17<sup>th</sup> August 2007, planning permission was granted (ref: 2007/3011/P) for the conversion of ground and first floor flats into one self-contained maisonette, plus rear balcony and external staircase by an enlarged balcony and staircase.

#### *- 1 Belsize Park -*

On the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2010, planning permission was granted (ref: 2010/3073/P) for the installation of new doors to existing rear dormer and the erection of railings to create rear roof terrace and re-instatement of timber sash window to the side elevation at third floor level to existing flat (Class C3).

#### *- 7 Belsize Park Gardens -*

On the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2021, planning permission was granted (ref: 2020/4194/P) for the amalgamation of 2x (3-bed and 1-bed) self-contained flats into 1x self-contained 4-bedroom flat on the second and third floor level, alterations to front roof terraces and balustrade, installation of roof terrace and balustrade to rear dormer window, and replacement of front and rear elevation windows.

*- 7 Belsize Park Gardens -*

On the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, planning permission was granted (ref: 2019/5314/P) for the removal of dormer windows and erection of new front, side and rear dormer windows and rear roof terrace and enlargement of side rooflights.

*- 15 Belsize Park Gardens –*

On the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2015, planning permission was granted (ref: 2015/3426/P) for extension of existing rear roof terrace and installation of new balustrade.

### **The Proposal**

The proposed development seeks planning permission for the creation of roof terrace above existing rear outrigger to include the installation of railings and the formation of a recessed access door within the rear roof slope.

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
- A2 Open Space

### 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-19<sup>th</sup> 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.

The proposed development is assessed below, with regard to the above policies, surrounding context and the identified significance of the Belsize Conservation Area.

The surrounding area provides the design context for the proposal. There are numerous roof terraces and associated railings in the immediate vicinity of the site, which form part of the established character and appearance of the area (see Appendix 1). A number of these are visible from the street scene, including that on the opposite side of the terraced group to which the application property relates (No.30); those amongst the terraced properties immediately adjacent (No's 23-26 Belsize Square and 1-7 Lancaster Drive (odd)); and those at No.1 and No.8 Belsize Park (subject of approval refs: 2010/3073/P and 2007/3011/P respectively).

Given the abundance of roof terraces and other roof level alterations in the immediate area, the conservation area is not as sensitive to such developments than it once would have been. It is also notable that No.'s 27-30 Belsize Square have been subject to a number of alterations and extensions to the rear, including replacement windows, dormer extensions and the replacement of the original curved glass bay window with a later extension and roof terrace atop at No.30 (image below). These alterations have altered the character and appearance of the roofscape, resulting in a substantial loss of the original unity and symmetry to the rear of the terraced group.



*Rear elevations of No.'s 27-30 Belsize Square*

The identified pattern of roof additions in the immediate area and the existing roof additions on the host property and wider terraced group establishes the 'in principle' acceptability of the proposed development. The principle of the proposed roof terrace and associated works would not be out of character with the area. This is a matter of recognition within the delegated report for approval ref: 2020/4194 which relates to front and rear roof terraces at 7 Belsize Park Gardens.

The Home Improvement CPG (2021) confirms that roof terraces should be subordinate to the roof slope being altered and roof form overall; preserve the roof form and complement the elevation upon which they are to be located; maintain the existing parapet height; incorporate guarding set back behind the line of the roof slope or parapet and carefully consider materials for enclosure.

In this connection, the proposed roof terrace is limited to above the rear outrigger and incorporates a modest sunken/inset access door to respect and preserve the existing roof form. The guard rails would be set behind the existing parapet and extend less than 0.5m above it, which would limit their visibility within the street scene. The new railings would be in black painted metal with cylindrical spindles and 'flat bar' tops, while the new terrace door would be white painted timber frame with double glazed units.

Given the above, the proposed roof terrace and associated works would be sympathetic and subordinate additions to host property. The proposed development is of traditional and high-quality design which would complement the style and appearance of the local area. The proposal would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the host property, terraced group and wider conservation area, in accordance 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).

It is also noteworthy that CLP Policies D1 and A2 requires developments to seek opportunities to providing private amenity space. Paragraph 7.23 of the CLP confirms that private outdoor amenity space, including balconies and roof terraces, can add significantly to resident's quality of life. This aligns with the provisions of the London Plan (2021) and the Mayors Housing Design Standards LPG and Housing SPG.

In this connection, the proposal would provide much needed external amenity space to the existing maisonette and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floor level. This would enhance existing and future occupier's standard of living and quality of life, in line with the aims and objectives of the development plan and relevant SPG's/SPD's.

**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.

The Amenity CPG confirms that while roof terraces can provide amenity space for flats that would otherwise have little or no exterior space, they also have the potential to increase opportunities for overlooking. They should therefore be carefully sited and designed to reduce potential overlooking of habitable rooms or gardens of neighbouring residential buildings.

The application site is bounded by Belsize Square Synagogue and grounds to the rear. By virtue of the scale and siting of the proposed roof terrace and its relationship to surrounding development, the proposal would not directly overlook any habitable rooms or gardens of neighbouring residential buildings. As previously identified, there are a number of roof terraces in the immediate area, including at No.30 Belsize Square on the opposite side of the terraced group. The proposal would not depart from this context.

Given the above, 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 upon residential amenity in compliance with CLP Policy A1.

### **Summary**

As demonstrated within this letter and supporting documents, the proposed works are considered to preserve the character and appearance of the host property, terraced group 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**