



Design, Access & Heritage Statement

59a Eton Avenue,
Belsize Park,
London,
NW3 3ET

27th September 2024



59a Eton Avenue, Belsize Park, London, NW3 3ET

APPLICATION FOR HOME OFFICE

Design & Access Statement– August 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement is submitted in support of a planning application for the erection of a single storey garden studio within the curtilage of 59a Eton Avenue.
- 1.2 The creation of a garden studio would fall within permitted development if the property was still in use as a single self-contained dwelling as originally constructed and if the building was 2.5m in height. However, given the sub-division, it is necessary to apply for planning permission for the create ancillary accommodation that accords with the pattern of development in the local area.
- 1.3 The purpose of this Statement is to set out the planning policy context within which the application should be considered and to provide an overview of the key planning considerations relevant to the application.
- 1.4 For the reasons set out in this Statement it is considered that the proposals are an appropriate form of development which accords with the relevant policy considerations, would not give rise to any harm and is consistent with other planning approvals in the local area.

2.0 Pre-Application

- 2.1 A pre application was issued to Camden Planning department with feedback issued from Jennifer Walsh on 05/06/24. The planning reference is 2024/1521/PRE.
- 2.2 Design and Heritage feedback: It is considered that the spatial quality of the conservation area would not be eroded by the proposal, which would read as an ancillary structure, and would not alter the legibility of the area as a private garden space. The proposed garden structure would not impact on the setting or the special character of the listed building. Previous permissions for similar structures are noted at nos. 9, 39 and 59B Eton Avenue. A condition would be added to any permission to ensure that the use of the outbuilding was solely in connection with Flat A, 59 Eton Avenue and that it would be used for incidental purposes.



2.3 Trees and Landscaping feedback: Whilst it is stated within the submitted documents that no trees would be harmed through the proposal, as there are trees within the vicinity of the proposed outbuilding and the site is located within the conservation area, a full Arboricultural Report would need to be submitted in support of any planning application. Further information can be found in Camden Planning Guidance (Trees).

2.4 Neighbouring Amenity feedback: The proposed outbuilding would sit at the rear of the garden, away from the adjacent properties. As mentioned above, concern is raised to the side window fronting the neighbouring outbuilding and this should be revised to ensure all window openings face the main building. **PLEASE NOTE: The side window has since been removed from the design.**

2.5 Conclusion: Overall, it is the officer's informal view that subject to the design amendments noted above, the principle of an outbuilding in this location is accepted.

This document represents the Council's initial view of your proposals based on the information available to us at this stage. It should not be interpreted as formal confirmation that your application will be acceptable, nor can it be held to prejudice formal determination of any planning application we receive from you on this proposal.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with relevant development plan policies, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.2 For this purpose, the statutory development plan comprises The London Plan and the Camden Local Plan. These documents provide spatial strategies, development management policies and sites allocations to guide and manage development in the borough. In addition, national planning policy, supplementary guidance and emerging policies are relevant material considerations.

3.3 We set out below the planning policy context within which the application should be considered.

National Planning Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012); and
- National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)



Regional Planning Policy

- The London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for London (2021)

Local Planning Policy

- Camden Local Plan (2017);
- Camden Planning Guidance – Altering and extending your home (Draft 2018); and
- Belsize Conservation Area Appraisal

4.0 Planning assessment

(i) Principle of development

- 4.1 The general thrust of national, regional and local policies is to secure sustainable patterns of development and the efficient use of resources. This objective is a common thread running through the NPPF, The London Plan and the Camden Local Plan.
- 4.2 Whilst the proposed garden studio represents a small-scale proposal it would contribute towards the objectives of sustainable development by making better use of land in an accessible and sustainable location.
- 4.3 The proposed garden room would provide accommodation ancillary to main residential use of the property, and would enable the applicant to work from home thus reducing the need for private car-based forms of travel in accordance with sustainable development objectives.
- 4.4 As noted above, the proposed garden studio room would be considered permitted development if the property was still in use as a single self-contained dwelling. In this instance, the impacts of the proposal do not materially change as a result of the building having been converted to flats (which removed permitted development rights).
- 4.5 The presumption in favour of sustainable development is clearly set out in the NPPF and the benefits of applications proposals (no matter how small they may be), particularly in the absence of any demonstrable harm, and the otherwise permitted development nature of the proposals, should be afforded weight in the determination of this application.

(ii) Design and conservation considerations

- 4.6 The NPPF places considerable emphasis on the importance of achieving high-quality design. The Framework states that *“Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better*



places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.”
(paragraph 124).

4.7 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that, *“permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions”*. As a corollary to this, paragraph 131 states that *“in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.”*

4.8 Chapter 7 of the London Plan sets out policies on a range of issues about the places and spaces in which Londoners live, work and visit that are integral to delivering the Mayor’s vision and objectives (paragraph 7.1).

4.9 At a local level, Local Plan Policy D1 states that the Council will seek to secure high-quality design in development, including *inter alia* development that:

- (a) respects local character and context;
- (b) preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets;
- (c) is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- (d) is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;
- (e) comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;
- (f) integrates well with the surrounding streets and open spaces, improving movement through the site and wider area with direct, accessible and easily recognisable routes and contributes positively to the street frontage;
- (g) is inclusive and accessible for all;
- (h) promotes health;
- (i) is secure and designed to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour;
- (j) responds to natural features and preserves gardens and other open space;
- (k) incorporates high quality landscape design (including public art, where appropriate) and maximises opportunities for greening for example through planting of trees and other soft landscaping, incorporates outdoor amenity space;
- (l) preserves strategic and local views;
- (m) for housing, provides a high standard of accommodation; and



- (n) carefully integrates building services equipment.
- 4.10 More detailed guidance is set out in the Council's draft Supplementary Guidance 'Altering and extending your home' published in December 2018.
- 4.11 Chapter 5 of the draft Guidance deals specifically with 'gardens, garden buildings and bio-diversity' and notes that these amenity spaces contribute to the setting of individual buildings and Conservation Areas, and have become particularly prone to development pressure.
- 4.12 Paragraph 5.22 of the Guidance deals with development within rear gardens and states that proposals should,
- ensure the siting, location, scale and design of the proposed development has a minimal visual impact on, and is visually subordinate within, the host garden.
 - not detract from the open character and garden amenity of neighbouring gardens and the wider surrounding area use suitable soft landscaping to reduce its impact
 - ensure building heights will retain visibility over garden walls and fences
 - ensure the size of the outbuilding will not result in excessive loss of garden amenity space ensure the siting of the outbuilding will not harm existing trees of high amenity value
 - use materials which complement the host property and the overall character of the surrounding area. The construction method should minimise any impact on trees (also see [CPG on Trees](#)), or adjacent structures
 - address any impacts of extensions and alterations upon water run-off and groundwater flows, both independently or cumulatively with other extensions, and demonstrate that the impact of the new development on water run-off and groundwater flows will be negated by the measures proposed. Reference should be made to [CPG on Water and flooding](#).
- 4.13 The Camden Planning Guidance notes that the construction of garden buildings can sometimes have an adverse impact on the character of the area. Accordingly, the guidance seeks to ensure that the siting, location, scale and design of proposals has a minimal visual impact on, and is visually subordinate to, the host and surrounding gardens.
- 4.14 The proposed garden room is modest in scale compared to the size of the existing garden, extending to 26.6sqm and 2.8m in height. This is similar in footprint to the garden room in the



neighbouring garden. The garden room is sited at the end of the garden at its furthest point from the main property. The size of the rear garden is approximately 180sqm, and so the garden room will take up c.15% of the usable garden space.

- 4.15 The design of the building is very sympathetic, the garden studio will be located away from the existing house offering it's own architectural aesthetics that compliment the existing architecture in many ways. The stained black cladding, black door and window frames provide a sleek minimalist design. The sedum roof will not only offer biodiversity benefits but will also add aesthetic benefits to neighbouring properties when looking down onto the building.
- 4.16 Overall, the proposed outbuilding is considered to be of a scale which relates to the host building and garden plot, and is of a size and character similar to buildings and structures in the local area. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Belsize Park Conservation Area and represents an appropriate form of development at the site.

(iii) Amenity considerations

- 4.17 The Camden Local Plan seeks to protect amenity and states that the Council will only grant permission for development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- 4.18 The proposed outbuilding would provide accommodation ancillary to the existing residential use of the main flat which could be further secured via condition to prevent any independent use thus ensuring there was no impact on the wider amenity of the area and neighbouring properties.

(iv) Trees and bio-diversity

- 4.19 The Local Plan seeks to protect nature conservation and bio-diversity, and states that proposals should seek to preserve trees and garden spaces that contribute to the character of the borough.
- 4.20 A sedum roof will be installed across 85-95% of the roof area providing biodiversity and aid site drainage.
- 4.21 Foundation design will be carefully considered to minimise the amount of excavation on-site which would minimise the risk of any nearby tree roots in being damaged.



- 4.22 The proposed outbuilding would not result in the loss of any trees, whilst the garden will be re-stocked as part of the landscaping works and a sedum roof will be provided as part of the proposal. A green roof provides a [habitat](#) for micro ecosystems, which, in turn, provide habitat for all types of wildlife.

5. Heritage Statement

- 5.1 **Introduction** This statement is written to comply with paragraphs 128 and 129 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) which requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by alterations, including any contribution made by their setting, stating that ‘The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance’.

Such an approach is also identified as best practice in Historic England’s ‘Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment’ (March 2015), which notes that ‘the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision’.

- 5.2 **The Heritage Asset** 59 Eton Avenue was included on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest at Grade II in September 1995. The description of the listing states:

Detached house. c1889. By Harry Measures; built by William Willett & Son. Red brick ground floor; upper floors yellow brick with red brick dressings and pilasters at angles; terracotta enrichment. Tiled hipped and gabled roofs with dormers and elaborate tall brick chimneys with projecting cornices. Asymmetrical design. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys, attics and semi-basement. Irregular fenestration of 3 windows. Ground floor windows with small pattern glazed top lights; upper floor sashes with patterned glazing to upper halves only which also have glazing bars; all with gauged brick flat arches and central keystones. Left hand gabled bay with ground floor 5-light canted bay window supporting a balustrade the moulding of which continues in 2 bands across the facade. Tripartite sashes to 1st and 2nd floors with shaped aprons. 2nd floor terracotta swag enriched frieze which continues across the facade. Gable has round-arched window set in red brick band terminating with flanking ball finials; terracotta coped eaves with steps and pediment with ball finial. Slightly recessed central entrance bay has cornice hood supported on a brick bracket, above which a pedimented



overlight with patterned glazing; part-glazed panelled door with sidelights. Sashes to upper floors, 2nd floor with pediment. Right hand bay with 3-light canted bay window, having continuous bracketed sill, rising from the semi-basement through the 1st floor to terminate with a parapet to the 2nd floor sash. Pedimented gable. INTERIOR: not inspected.

(Sourced from Historic Listed England - List Entry 1078311)

59 Eton Avenue was also included on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest for its front garden boundary walls and gate piers listed at Grade II in January 1999.

The description of the listing states:

Front garden boundary walls and gate piers to Nos.57-65

Garden boundary walls and gate piers. c1889. By Harry Measures; built by William Willett & Son. Red brick panelled walls with moulded coping; No.65 mostly restored. Gate piers, mostly with stone bands, have enriched terracotta friezes and cross gabled caps.

(Sourced from Historic Listed England - List Entry 1342059)

5.3 **The Proposal:** Planning permission is sought for the erection of a single storey home office in rear garden of garden to replace an outside sauna and storage box. The existing boundary lines will all remain as existing.

5.4 **Assent of Impact and Mitigation:** Section 7 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that “no person shall execute or cause to be executed any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised.”

As such, for the erection of a single-story outbuilding to require listed building consent it must constitute an alteration in a manner which affects the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

There is no question that the erection of a single-story outbuilding constitutes an alteration to the listed building setting. However, it is not an alteration which affects the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building itself.

5.5 **Use:** This application is submitted in support of full planning permission for an outbuilding within the rear garden of 59a Eton Avenue. The outbuilding will be used to provide a home office and occasional gym and will remain entirely ancillary to the dwelling house.



6.Access

6.1 Access arrangements are not affected by the proposed alteration. Clear and safe access will be available via side access through a gate into the garden.

7.Trees

7.1 An arboricultural assessment & tree survey will be submitted separately.