



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 April 2025

by **D Cleary MTCP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/D/25/3360545

69 Belsize Lane, Camden, London NW3 5AU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Michael Jampel against the decision of the London Borough of Camden Council.
 - The application Ref is 2024/4627/P.
 - The development proposed is described as the demolition of existing pitched roof. Proposed new raised roof and formation of a second floor to provide 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) on 12 December 2024. Those parts of the Framework most relevant to this appeal have not been amended. As a result, I have not sought submissions on the revised Framework, and I am satisfied that no party's interests have been prejudiced by taking this approach.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the building and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Belsize Conservation Area (the BCA).

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a two-storey mid-terraced dwelling which lies within the BCA. The statutory requirement¹ requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. The Belsize Conservation Area Statement (the BCAS) provides a good understanding of the BCA, identifying its historic origins as a residential suburb and subsequent development through time, while identifying features and characteristics of importance within the area. Insofar as is relevant to this appeal the significance of the BCA derives from the historic origins and tight urban grain, the architectural quality of the buildings, and the relationship between buildings and streets.

¹ Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

5. It is understood that the appeal dwelling was constructed in the 1980's. It is of simple appearance, with brickwork elevations and a shallow pitched roof which is set behind a parapet wall. The height of the parapet largely obscures the pitched roof from street level. The BCAS does not identify the building as being a negative feature, and I would agree with the Council that the building itself makes a neutral contribution to the overall character and appearance of the BCA.
6. The dwelling is located within a group of buildings (No.65 – 69a Belsize Lane). These have varying window proportions to the roadside façade. A roadside gable to the front of No.67 Belsize Lane (No.67) provides a focal point to the group. However, this is flanked by a largely consistent parapet roof which provides a strong horizontal emphasis to the group. Part of No.69a is set back and has a lower eaves, although this appears as a subservient bookend to the group. Nonetheless, the position of the remainder of the group of buildings, at the back of the pavement, provide a sense of enclosure to Belsize Lane. In this regard, I find that the form and siting of the group does make some positive contribution to the BCA.
7. The appeal relates to a roof extension which would essentially add an additional storey to the dwelling. The extension would be full width with a roof that would be close to flat. It would be set back slightly from the roadside parapet but would occupy the remaining two storey depth of the dwelling. The form of the extension would result in a box like addition to the dwelling. The proportions and design of the roof extension would protrude above the parapet, and would appear prominent to the front and in views along Belsize Lane. While the continuity of the parapet would be retained, the additional height, width and overall bulk of the extension would appear as a standalone and markedly contrasting element to the roof. This would disrupt the general form and rhythm of this row of properties. In addition, the roof extension would be sited next to the roadside gable at No.67. The roof extension would be of greater height than the gable, and its box like form, along with its very close proximity, would jarringly contrast with this feature and would add visual confusion to the roofscape.
8. I note the roof alterations at No.63a and 63b Belsize Lane which have a similar form to the appeal development, and can be viewed in the same context. Notwithstanding their proximity to the appeal site, these form part of a different block of buildings and appear as a standalone development. Together, those roof top additions form a cohesive development across the whole roof of those properties. This is a markedly different arrangement to the appeal scheme and, therefore, I do not consider the presence of these roof additions to be comparable.
9. For the above reasons, I conclude that the development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the building, and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the BCA. Therefore, the development would conflict with Policies D1 and D2 Camden Local Plan 2017. Together, amongst other things these seek to deliver development which is of high quality design and ensure that it preserves or enhances the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

10. As the development would be harmful to the significance of the BCA, having regard to the Framework², the degree of harm would be less than substantial and should therefore be weighed against the scheme's public benefits. I return to this below.

Other Matters

11. I acknowledge that the development would provide improved and greater accommodation for the appellant. Improvements to the existing housing stock would bring some public benefits although, as this appeal relates to a single dwelling, it is a matter which only attracts limited weight. Other benefits of the scheme are likely to be private. I also note that the scheme has been designed to consider the effects on neighbouring properties and I note that no concerns have been raised by the Council in this regard. However, the absence of such harm is a neutral matter in my overall consideration of this appeal.
12. Finally, I also note the comments and letters of support for the scheme. While some local residents may be supportive of the proposed design, I have found the development to be harmful to the building and BCA and, therefore, such letters of support do not lead me to a different conclusion on the main issue.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

13. I have identified that the proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the BCA. The preservation of heritage assets are matters to which I am required to attach considerable importance and great weight. I have identified that the scheme would deliver some limited public benefits. However, such public benefits are insufficient to outweigh the great weight to be attached to the harm that would be caused to a designated heritage asset.
14. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

D Cleary

INSPECTOR

² Paragraph 215