



# Design and Access Statement

7 Crossfield Road, London

## 1.0 **Introduction**

- 1.1 This is a retrospective planning application for a pergola and associated works to the rear of no 7 Crossfield Road, London.
- 1.2 The applicant is a long leaseholder of Flat 2 in this building. The pergola has been erected in the rear of the garden, which is associated with Flat 2.
- 1.3 This design and access statement is supported by a site layout and location plans.



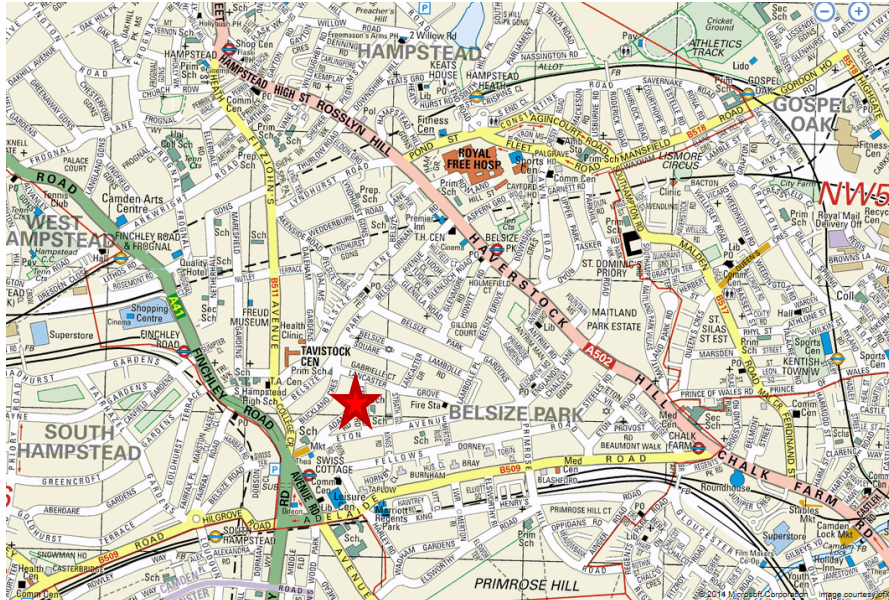
Despite the verdant setting it is common place to see domestic outbuildings.

## **Executive Summary**

- The changes made to the rear garden of the site are an improvement for the current occupiers, future occupiers and neighbours from what was there before and such personalisation is supported by the NPPF.
- The improvements mean that the garden area of this property is now more useable.
- The applicant has designed the pergola to be as unobtrusive as possible in the area, and has been trying and continues to try to work with neighbours and the freehold committee to make any changes required to the structure that are requested.
- The pergola is lightweight in structure design to allow views through.
- This development accords with both local and national policy.

## 2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Crossfield Road is located in north London and is close to good rail and road links, with Swiss Cottage tube station a 5 minute walk from this property.



- 2.2 Crossfield Road is approximately a 20 minute walk to both Hampstead Heath to the north and Primrose Hill and Regents Park to the south.
- 2.3 Crossfield Road is located within the Belsize Conservation Area. This area is characterised by larger period terraced houses and flats, with tree lines roads and enclosed gardens to the rear.
- 2.4 The rear gardens of these properties have a variety of styles. Some are grassed with trees and shrubs, others are paved or feature astroturf, and many hold structures such as conservatories, sheds, trampolines and summer houses. Many of these gardens are at different levels. The heights of walls that separate one garden from another also vary. The gardens are well used with domestic personalisation, typical for an urban area, with a range of structures visible.
- 2.5 All of the gardens are overlooked by windows from the dwellings in front, as well as the neighbouring dwellings.

### 3.0 Planning History

3.1 There is no recent relevant planning history on Flat 2 of Crossfield Road, however there is a recent application for an extension onto the lower ground floor flat:

**2013/5752/P** Erection of single-storey rear extension to lower ground floor level with roof terrace above with balustrade and replacement of stairs to rear garden

This application was granted permission on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014

3.2 There are a number of applications for similar garden structures on Crossfield Road, and the surrounding roads. I have included details of many of these below:

Application Reference Number	Address	Application Details	Decision	Decision Date
2012/2767/P	17 Crossfield Road, London, NW3 4NT	Retrospective application for the erection of a garden shed at the rear ground floor elevation associated with existing residential flat (Class C3)	Permission Granted	13/11/2012
2010/6066/P	Garden Flat, 49 Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DJ	Erection of a single storey summer house in the rear garden of the property following the removal of the existing shed	Permission Granted	18/1/2011
2009/0680/P	51b Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DJ	Erection of single-storey flat roofed timber structure in rear garden for use as an ancillary to the garden flat (Class C3)	Permission Granted	15/2/2010
2007/5671/P	Garden Flat, 33 Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DJ	Erection of single storey garden building with green roof (ancillary building in connection with garden flat)	Permission Granted	16/1/2008
2006/0936/P	39 Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DJ	Erection of summer house in rear garden for use by the garden flat	Permission Granted	18/4/2006
PWX0202769	10A Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DX	Erection of a single storey flat roof timber outbuilding in the rear garden to be used as an office incidental to the residential use of the ground floor flat	Permission Refused	8/5/2003
PWX0302184	Flat A, 10 Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DX	Erection of a single storey flat roof timber outbuilding in the rear garden	Permission Granted	29/4/2003

PW9902574	Garden Flat, 41 Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DJ	The erection of a timber summerhouse/studio in the rear garden	Permission Granted	11/10/1999
PWX0002528	33A Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DJ	The erection of a timber summerhouse in the rear garden	Permission Granted	12/9/2000
2010/5595/P	Lower Ground Floor Flat, 26 Adamson Road, London, NW3 3HR	Erection of a single storey rear extension and a garden outbuilding to the existing flat following the demolition of an existing single storey conservatory and existing garden shed	Permission Granted	14/12/2010
2005/0413/P	17A Belsize Square. London, NW3 4HT	Removal of existing greenhouse in rear garden, and erection of new single storey timber framed extension with pergola for use as an artist's studio	Permission Granted	3/5/2005
2005/2651/P	The Coach House, 50A Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HN	Erection of a timber summerhouse in rear garden of single family dwellinghouse	Permission Granted	9/9/2005
2006/0403/P	Garden Flat, 23A Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HU	Erection of a free standing timber-clad summerhouse in rear garden of ground floor flat	Permission Granted	8/3/2006
2005/2211/P	14 Lancaster Grove, London, NW3 4PB	Erection of a timber outbuilding in rear garden of single family dwellinghouse	Permission Granted	28/7/2005
2005/3813/P	Garden Flat (Flat A), 2 Lancaster Grove, London, NW3 4NX	Erection of a garden shed on the rear part of the garden, for the ground floor flat	Permission Granted	18/11/2005

3.3 There are also a number of applications for other types of garden structures, such as conservatories. I have included a selection of these below:

Application Reference Number	Address	Application Details	Decision	Decision Date
2011/1988/P	17 Crossfield Road, London, NW3 4NT	Retention of single storey rear conservatory at raised ground level in connection with residential flat (Class C3)	Permission Granted	22/9/2011
2004/0886/P	Garden Flat, 1A Crossfield Road, London, NW3 4NS	The erection of a timber fence inside part of the garden boundary wall along Lancaster Grove	Permission Refused	23/6/2004
2013/5848/P	45 Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DJ	Erection of a single storey outbuilding to rear garden of dwelling house (Class C3)	Permission Granted	21/10/2013
2006/2894/P	Lower Ground Floor Flat, 9 Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DH	Erection of conservatory at rear lower ground floor flat with two rooflights, an infill extension at lower ground floor level under existing cantilevered upper ground floor level side extension, alterations to fenestration at lower ground floor level including a new entrance door and new windows, and erection of a gazebo in the rear garden	Permission Granted	28/9/2006
2005/4008/P	51A Buckland Crescent, London, NW3 5DJ	Erection of 2 conservatories at rear lower ground floor level and 1 conservatory at rear upper ground floor level, erection of new metal balcony and access staircase to rear, and installation of replacement guardrailing to rear upper ground floor window of the existing maisonette	Permission Granted	17/11/2005
2004/3802/P	15 Lancaster Grove, London, NW3 4EU	The erection of an outbuilding in the rear garden	Permission Granted	29/10/2004
2005/4406/P	1 Belsize Square, London, NW3 4HT	The construction of an uncovered swimming pool in rear garden	Permission Granted	2/11/2005



## 4.0 Proposals

- 4.1 This is a retrospective planning application for a structure and associated works erected in the rear half of the rear garden of this property, which the applicant has a long lease on the associated property, Flat 2.
- 4.2 The pergola is a wooden structure which has been built with a flat roof, and is held up by two wood covered beams, which are situated next to the wall between this garden and the next. The picture below shows the structure:



- 4.3 The applicant has designed this pergola with the nature of this area in mind, and has planted climbing plants (some of which are evergreen) at the bottom of this structure, which will in the spring/summer of 2014 grow to cover the roof of this structure so it will have a green roof all year round.
- 4.4 When the applicant moved into this property the garden was very overgrown, and unusable in the condition that it was in. The applicant has worked hard in order to make this into a habitable garden and has included the pergola to provide shade over this part of the garden using materials that blend into the garden setting and of utilitarian design.
- 4.5 In the vicinity of this building there are other types of structures of a similar type, including sheds and other summer houses. These are more urban in form, with design flourishes that ensure they are visible. To the right of this garden a summer house with a far larger and more intricate and noticeable roof which can be seen over the back wall, as shown in the picture below:





## 5.0 Planning Policy

### National Planning Policy Framework March 2012

- 5.1 The ministerial foreword of this document sets out the importance of sustainable development within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and states that *“planning must not simply be about scrutiny. Planning must be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives,”* and that *“development that is sustainable should go ahead, without delay”*.
- 5.2 Section 9 of the NPPF states that sustainable development seeks *“positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people’s quality of life, including (but not limited to:*
- *replacing poor design with better design;*
  - *improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and*
  - *widening the choice of high quality homes.”*
- 5.3 Section 14 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision taking means:
- *“approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
  - *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
    - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
    - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”*
- 5.4 There are 12 Core Planning Principles set out within the NPPF. The ones that are relevant to this application are as follows. *“Planning should:*
- *not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*
  - *proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs;*
  - *always seek to secure high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
  - *take account of the difference roles and character in different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas...*

*- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has previously been developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value;*

*- conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance...”*

5.5 Section 58 sets out the importance of good design as an major part of sustainable development, and states that planning decisions *“should aim to ensure that developments:*

*- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

*- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*

*- respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*

*- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.”*

5.6 Section 61 states that *“although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations....planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development in the natural, built and historic environment”*.

5.7 Section 66 shoes the importance of applicants working closely with those that would be affected by the proposals to take into account their views and to design the proposal accordingly.

5.8 In terms of conserving and enhancing the historic environment section 126 advises that *“local planning authorities should take into account:*

*- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

*- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*

*- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*

*- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by historic environment to the character of a place.”*

5.9 Section 137 states that *“local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development with Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably”*.

- 5.10 Section 187 covers the decision taking process and states that *“local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local planning authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area”*.
- 5.11 *In assessing and determining development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development”*.

Camden Core Strategy 2010-2025 – Adopted 2010

- 5.12 Policy CS14 of this plan promotes high quality design of places and conservation. It requires that places are attractive and safe by:

*“a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;*

*b) preserving and enhancing Camden’s rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas...;*

- 5.13 Section 14.4 covers the importance of improving the quality of buildings and landscaping which will, in turn, improve the area for both residents and visitors.

- 5.14 Section 14.7 states that high quality design *“takes account of its surroundings and what is distinctive and valued about the local area”*.

- 5.15 Policy DP24 requires that all developments, which includes alteration be of the highest standards, and thoughts should be given to:

*“a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;*

*b) the character, proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;*

*c) the quality of materials to be used;*

*f) existing natural features, such as topography and trees;*

*h) the provision of appropriate amenity space.”*

- 5.16 Section 24.7 of the Development Policies also asks to consider the *“pattern, density and scale”* of the surrounding development and buildings, *“the impact on existing rhythms, symmetries and uniformities in the townscape, the compatibility of materials..., the suitability of the proposed design to its intended use, and the wider historic environment and buildings”*.

- 5.17 Policy DP25 covers the maintenance of conservation areas. In terms of planning applications the Council will:

*“a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas;*

*b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;*

*c) prevent the total or substantial demolition of an unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area...;*

*e) preserve trees and garden spaces which contribute to the character of a conservation area and which provide a setting for Camden’s architectural heritage.”*

5.18 DP26 states that factors considered by the Council to minimise the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours includes:

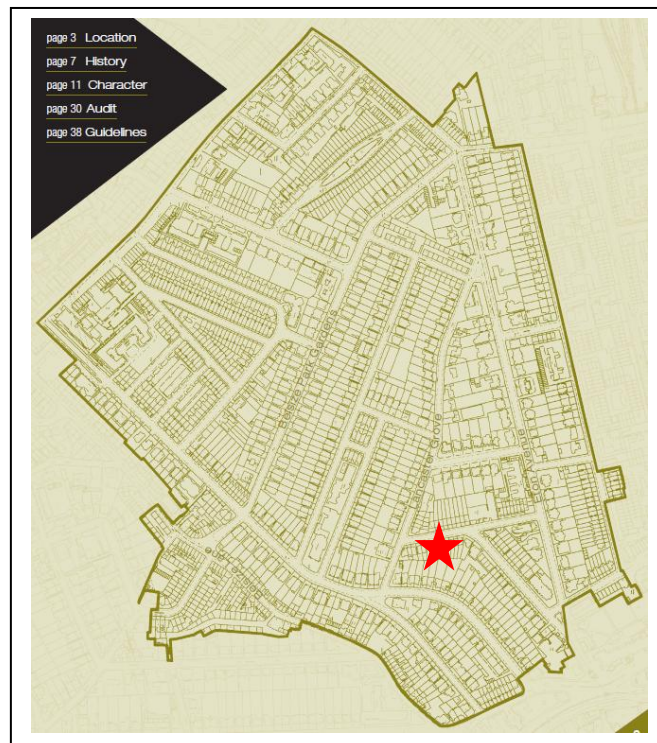
*“a) visual privacy and overlooking’*

*b) overshadowing and outlook*

*c) sunlight, daylight...”*

Conservation Area Statement – Belsize Park

5.19 Crossfield Road is within the Belsize Park Conservation Area. I have included below the map from this statement, and have marked the site:



5.20 Negative features of this area are described as *“inappropriate dormer extensions, prominent roof terrace areas and prominent, unsympathetic extension...Inappropriate replacement*

*windows, loss of detailing and dormer extensions...Introduction of frontage parking resulting in the loss of boundary walling and gardens..."*

## **6.0 Justification**

- 6.1 When the applicant originally moved into this property the garden was overgrown and unusable as a family space. The applicant has landscaped this and provided a grassed area and a patio area, which is covered by the pergola that permission is being sought for.
- 6.2 In designing the pergola the applicant has tried to keep this looking as natural as possible, by using wood to build the structure and incorporating evergreen plants into this so that by the summer the roof of the pergola will be covered in greenery, and will therefore look pleasant and in keeping with the garden for anyone looking down on this garden. The pergola will weather well and will continue to blend in with the area.
- 6.3 The applicant has been working with the freehold committee, and is prepared to make any changes required to the structure, or to change it completely if this is what is requested by the neighbours and freehold committee. Indeed the top floor flat originally was against this structure, and in conversing with this occupier the green roof was suggested, which the applicant has incorporated, thereby ensuring that this neighbour is happy with the view from their property.
- 6.4 As shows by the planning history search of this area, and indeed just viewing from the garden itself there are a number of similar structures in this area. The garden to the rear of the right of the applicant has a summer house with a much larger roof, which is visible over the rear wall, which is much taller and less in keeping with the natural surroundings. Similar the gardens on each side of the applicant vary vastly. To the left this has been dug down and landscaped in a completely different style to other gardens visible from here (as shown below), while the garden to the right has non-permanent features such as a trampoline, which while moveable, is also noticeable for any other occupiers overlooking the garden.
- 6.5 The guidance on this Conservation Area outlines a number of negative types of development, and the one involving gardens is that they should be retained. The applicant has only made improvements to the garden of this property, making it for more useable as a family garden, and a much more efficient use of the space than the overgrown and unusable area that was there previously.
- 6.6 The shelter will make the garden much more usable for the current occupiers, as well as any future occupiers, and will create more privacy for them while also using the land much more efficiently than the overgrown garden that was there before.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

- 7.1 In conclusion this is retrospective application for a wooden pergola with a flat roof, which by the summer will have vegetation on top.
- 7.2 The development represents a significant improvement to the garden area of this property, and has been designed in a manner to be as unobtrusive as possible to any neighbours, while providing the sheltered area that the occupier requires for his young family in order for them to fully use their garden space.
- 7.3 The design of the new development is appropriate in this setting in terms of the landscape, area, materials used, siting and scale. This development accords with policy.