

Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		30/07/2010	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		22/07/2010	
Officer				Application Number			
Aysegul Olcar-Chamberlin				2010/3047/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
54 Howitt Road London NW3 4LJ				See decision notice			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
				Charlie Rose – 20/07/2010			
Proposal							
Basement extension with associated front and rear lightwells to dwelling house (Class C3).							
Recommendation:		Grant Planning Permission					
Application Type:		Householder Application					

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	16	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. Electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>A site notice was displayed from 23/06/2010 to 14/07/2010.</p> <p>No reply from the adjoining occupiers has been received.</p>					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>	<p>Belsize CAAC made no comments to the proposed development.</p> <p>Belsize Residents Association recommended that the proposed development should be refused permission as it would have a negative impact on the adjoining properties and wider neighbourhood. In summary they considered the proposal to be polluting, noisy, dangerous subterranean structure – especially in a high-density area of terraced houses on Howitt Road.</p> <p><i>Response: Noise from demolition and construction works is subject to control under the Control of Pollution Act 1974. An informative advises the hours of building works in the decision notice. In terms of structural instability and subsidence are issues that are subject to control under the Building Regulations.</i></p>					

Site Description

The application relates to an Edwardian three-storey mid-terrace property with a small basement cellar featuring a true/double mansard roof with dormer windows in both the front and rear planes of the lower pitched roof element on the west side of Howitt Road. Access to the basement cellar is via the existing staircases in the front lightwell in front of the entrance door. The property is in use as a single family dwellinghouse.

The property is located within the Belsize conservation area and is identified as making a positive contribution to the appearance and character of the conservation area.

Relevant History

Application property:

2010/0787/P – Planning permission was refused on 22/04/2010 for the erection of new dormer extension and installation of rooflight to rear roof slope of existing dwelling house (Class C3).

Neighbouring properties:

1 Howitt Road – Planning permission was granted on 01/11/2007 for the excavation to enlarge the existing basement with the provision of a front lightwell, rear lightwell with ground level bridge link to garden and stairs leading from basement to ground level, and alterations to windows/doors at rear ground floor level all in connection with the existing ground floor flat (ref: 2007/4496/P).

8 Howitt Road – Planning permission was granted on 12/08/2008 for the additions and alterations including excavation of basement, rear lightwell and erection of two storey (basement and ground floor) rear extension ,following demolition of original ground floor extension to create additional residential floor space to ground floor flat (ref: 2008/2231/P). An amendment to this planning permission including re- landscaping and two pavement lights to the front garden was granted permission on 16/12/2008 (ref: 2008/5040/P).

11 Howitt Road – Planning permission was granted on 23/01/2008 for the excavation works to enlarge the existing basement with the provision of a rear lightwell with glass bridge and balustrades above at ground floor level on the rear elevation of the dwellinghouse (ref: 2007/5695/P).

29 Howitt Road – Planning permission was granted on 17/08/2009 for the installation of three rooflights within the front roof slope, a dormer extension within the rear roof slope, alterations to fenestration to the rear, excavation to enlarge the basement area and to create a sunken terrace to the rear and the conversion of the existing residential dwelling from three x 1 bed self - contained flats to one x 3 bed lower ground/ground floor and one x two bedroom second/third floor self-contained maisonettes and a one bedroom first floor flat. (ref: 2008/4810/P).

51 Howitt Road – Planning permission was refused on 17/07/2009 for the excavation of basement including front lightwell, in connection with the creation of a self contained studio flat at basement level (ref: 2009/1752/P). An appeal was logged against the refusal and dismissed on 24/02/2010. The proposed front lightwell which involved the total extraction of the basement area in front of the bay window was considered to be readily visible from the street and therefore to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the building and the conservation area.

57 Howitt Road - Planning permission was granted on 02/06/2010 for the renewal of planning permission granted on 18/05/2007 (2007/1620/P) for the excavation works to enlarge the existing basement with the provision of a rear lightwell with steel/timber bridge over and alteration to the front basement window to provide a door for the ground and basement maisonette.

Relevant policies

Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006

SD6 – Amenity for Occupiers & Neighbours

B1 – General Design Principles

B3 – Alterations & Extensions

B7 – Conservation Areas

T12 – Works affecting Highway

Camden Planning Guidance (2006)

Belsize Conservation Area Statement (2003)

Camden Guidance Note: New Basement Development and Extension to Existing Basement Accommodation (Draft February 2009)

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

As the draft LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies documents have now been published, they are material planning considerations. However, as a matter of law, limited weight should be attached to them at this stage.

The following policies in the draft LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies documents have been taken into consideration

CS1 – Distribution of growth

CS5 – Managing the impact of growth and development

CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

DP24 – Securing high quality design

DP25 – Conserving Camden's heritage

DP26 - Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

DP27 – Basement and lightwells

Assessment

Proposal:

It is proposed to excavate basement level below the entire footprint of the house (including the ground floor rear extension) to add a floor area of approximately 59sqm to the house. There would also be associated front and rear lightwells which would be covered with steel grilles. The front lightwell would be 0.8m by 2.7m in front of the bay windows. The rear lightwell would be between the rear extension and the shared boundary with no. 56 and would project approximately 2m beyond the rear wall of the house.

Design and Impact on Conservation Area:

The properties on Howitt Road generally have shallow gardens with low front boundary walls. Many of them including the application property also have small basement lightwells adjoining the front entrances.

The proposed front lightwell would be on a shallow front garden area and set back by approximately 1m from the front boundary wall. As it would be enclosed by dense grille set flush with the garden level the front elevation of the proposed basement level would not be read as an additional basement level on the building. As a general rule, the insertion of a lightwell below the bay windows in such shallow front garden areas would be considered inappropriate in design terms. Given the existing front boundary wall and the grille cover would significantly minimise the visibility of the proposed front lightwell from the public realm the proposed front lightwell is considered not to harm the appearance and character of the building and the wider conservation area. Furthermore, the design, positioning and proportions of the proposed front lightwell would be similar to the recently approved front lightwell to 1 Howitt Road.

The house has a small rear garden which is well screened from the street views. As the proposed rear lightwell would be covered with grille the rear elevation of the basement level would not read as an additional floor to the house. Given the location and size of the proposed rear lightwell it is considered that the proposal would not significantly reduce the amenity value of the existing rear garden.

The fenestration detailing of the openings on the front and rear elevations of the proposed basement level would be appropriate to the form and age of the building. As their visibility would be minimised by the grille covers the proposed basement extension including the lightwells would not significantly affect the overall proportions of the existing building. The proposal complies with the aims of policies B1, B3 and B7 of the UDP.

Standard of accommodation

The new basement level accommodation would provide an open plan family/living room and utility and storage rooms. The ceiling height of the basement level would be around 2.6m and would provide adequate headroom in accordance with the Council's standards. The proposed front lightwell would serve the new utility room. The proposed rear lightwell would serve the new family room.

The Council's living standards would be applicable to the new family room as this is the only proposed habitable room on the basement level. The proposed rear lightwell would have a depth of 2m and a width of 3.9m. It would be located on south facing section of the rear garden. The new living room would receive adequate natural light through the largely glazed doors on the rear basement elevation which face the rear lightwell. The rest of the house is also generously sized and have good access to natural light. Overall, the house with new basement level is considered to provide good living standards for the occupiers.

Amenity

The proposed basement excavation including the new lightwells to the front and rear is not considered to raise any material amenity issues in terms of loss of daylight, sunlight or outlook to neighbouring residential properties and therefore the proposal complies with Policy SD6 of the Unitary Development Plan (2006).

Other Issues

There are no trees that would be affected by the proposed excavation work on the application and adjoining sites.

The site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 3 (moderate) and has no vehicular access from the street. The proposal involves a significant extension to the basement floor level which will require a large amount of earth excavation. However, as the existing building is being retained, the existing house will have to be underpinned.

As these excavations will have to be done by hand, and not machines; the daily limit of material excavated will not be large. Therefore construction is likely to take a longer period of time, and hence the number of construction vehicles going to and from the site on a weekly basis will not be large. Given this 'spreading of the load' on the transport network, a construction management plan will not be necessary. Any occupation of the highway, such as for hoarding, skips or storage of material would require a licence from Highways Management and this, along with the existing on-street waiting and loading controls, should be sufficient to ensure the work is carried out in such a way as to not adversely affecting the safety or operation of the public highway.

Recommendation: Grant conditional planning permission.

DISCLAIMER

Decision route to be decided by nominated members on Monday 26th July 2010. For further information see

<http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/planning-applications/development-control-members-briefing/>