

DISCLAIMER

Decision route to be decided by nominated members on ----- (date to be inserted). For further information see

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

Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:	29/11/2007
				Consultation Expiry Date:	12/11/2007
Officer			Application Number(s)		
Jenny Fisher			2007/5087/P		
Application Address			Drawing Numbers		
55 Lancaster Grove London NW3 4HB					
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal(s)					
Enlargement of existing basement together with lightwells to front and rear elevations and enlarged side window at ground floor level of house (Class C3).					
Recommendation(s):		Grant planning permission with conditions			
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission			

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
			No. Electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:						
CAAC/Local groups* *Please Specify	<p><u>Belsize CAAC</u> No objection</p> <p><u>Belsize Resident's Association</u> Typical of very many proposals for basement excavations in our area, which would have a devastating effect on adjoining residents. Especially damaging to 53. Refer to joint paper with the Heath and Hampstead Society on the subject. Water table and tree damage, as well as the more obvious effects on adjacent structure, will occur and adjoining residents should not be compelled to tolerate what amounts to industrial development so close to them; they look to the Council for protection.</p> <p><u>Officer comment</u> The council's Building Control Officer comments: The area around Lancaster Grove is not known to be geologically unstable. Parts of the borough are prone to isolated incidents of subsidence however Building Control can take these factors into account when checking the design and construction under the Building Regulations 2000.</p>					

Site Description

This is a large double fronted red brick semi-detached property. It is a single-family dwelling comprising ground, first and second floors.

The building is located on the north side of Lancaster Grove within the Belsize Conservation Area. Not identified as a building that makes a positive contribution to the conservation area; a number of buildings in Lancaster Grove have been, up to No. 35.

Relevant History

51 Lancaster Grove

30/03/2007 2007/0557/P Planning approval for the enlargement of existing basement to provide additional habitable accommodation for dwelling house, with creation of new lightwell to the front elevation and enlargement of existing lightwells to the side and rear elevations.

45 Lancaster Grove

21/08/2007 2007/2133/P Planning permission for the demolition of existing single-storey rear extension and erection of a new two-storey rear extension at basement and ground floor level for the existing flat.

2007/4905/INVALID

Excavation of basement level with front lightwell enclosed by railings and with bridge over to front entrance door all in connection with additional accommodation for the ground floor level flat; as a revision to planning permission granted 21st August 2007 (ref: 2007/2133/P) which allowed for 'Demolition of existing single-storey rear extension and erection of a new two-storey rear extension at basement and ground floor level for the existing flat.'

Relevant policies

London Borough of Camden Replacement UDP 2006

S1/S2 – Sustainable development; SD1 – Quality of life; SD6 – Amenity for occupiers and neighbours
B1 – General design principles; B3 – Alterations and extensions; B7 – Conservation areas; N8 - trees

Camden Planning Guidance 2006: conservation areas; daylight; extensions; landscaping and trees; residential development standards

Belsize Conservation Area Statement

Assessment

Proposal:

Permission is sought for basement excavation to create additional space for an existing single-family dwelling. There is currently a cellar in the basement, additional space would accommodate a cinema, gym, office, storage, utility room and plant room for the sole use of the current occupants of the premises.

The cinema, gym and office would be naturally lit and ventilated by lightwells to the front and rear. Adequate space would be retained for the parking of a vehicle on the forecourt. Parking of vehicles over the grilles is not proposed, nevertheless for the purpose of safety the two lightwells to the front of the building would be covered with vehicular rated grilles (able to support the weight of a vehicle). To the rear the lightwell grille would be able to support a person.

Internal stairs to the basement would be removed and a new flight of stairs linking the ground floor with the basement installed. Associated with this alteration would be the installation of a larger window to replace existing. The new window would be 0.3m. wider and 0.8m. longer than existing and increase natural light to the new stairwell.

Main issues:

The basement would be used as ancillary accommodation to the single-family dwelling. The application site is not located in an area of known geological instability, therefore the excavation of the basement is considered acceptable in principle.

The main issues material to the assessment of this application include the visual impact of the proposal, impact on adjoining occupiers and the standard of residential accommodation that would be provided.

Visual impact

The extent of the basement works would be contained wholly within the footprint of the existing structure. The proposal has been assessed for compliance with policy B3 that states that the creation of new basements can harm the appearance of the building and the streetscape and may result in the loss of garden or other amenity space.

There is a 3.6m. deep forecourt to the building between the pavement and front elevation. The forecourt is a paved area with a brick wall at the outer edge and a 4.5m. opening for access from the highway. There are tall hedges along the outer boundary and between this and neighbouring properties either side. Grilles would be installed on either side of the entrance to the property beneath ground floor windows. Each grill would extend 1m. into the forecourt, they would be installed flush with the forecourt paving. The grille to the east side of the entrance would hardly be visible, due to planting in front. The grille on the other side would be more visible, however it is considered that it would not be a significant alteration to harm the appearance of the building or character and appearance of the conservation area. The garden to the rear is more than 20m. in length. The lightwell proposed would be excavated in an area set back from the rear elevation of the ground floor extension. There is a high boundary wall between this and the neighbouring property. The grill would be flush with patio paving and would hardly be visible.

The window opening that would be enlarged overlooks a passageway to the side of the house facing a boundary wall 1.6m. in height. Given that this is a single-family dwelling this alteration could be carried out as permitted development under Class A, Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the T & C Planning (General permitted Development) Order 1995.

It is considered that the alterations proposed would not harm the appearance of the building or character and appearance of the conservation area in line with policies B1, B3 and B7.

Amenity

The walls of the lightwells would be painted white to maximise daylight into basement areas. The uses proposed for the space created do not include habitable rooms. Therefore, although the 30⁰ angle is intercepted by the outer edge of the lightwell, it is considered that given the uses of the basement proposed, this is not a reason to refuse the scheme. Basement floor – ceiling height would be 2.6m. that adequately meets the res. standard of 2.3m.

There would no adverse impact on amenities of adjoining occupiers in line with SD6.

There are no trees within close proximity that could be affected by the proposed excavation.

The issue of drainage would be less of a concern as most of the excavation falls under the existing house structure.

The proposal complies with UDP policies and supporting planning guidance, approval is therefore recommended.