

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		24/10/2007	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		31/10/2007	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Philip Niesing				2007/3942/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
Flat 1 & 2 21 Lambolle Road London NW3 4HS				Drawing No. 1026-001A; 101; 103; 102; 100.			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
Change of use from two selfcontained flats to 1 no. self-contained maisonette (Class C3 use) and associated alterations including excavation works to extend the existing basement area with new front lightwells, erection of balcony to the rear at first floor level and replacement of basement window with french doors..							
Recommendation(s):		Granted with Conditions					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	18	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		Site notice placed on 10/10/2007					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		No response					

Site Description

The site is located on the southern side of Lambolle Road and falls within the Belsize Park Conservation Area. The property, which makes a positive contribution to Belsize Park conservation area, comprises of a three-storey with lower ground floor semi-detached house. The dwelling house has been converted into four self-contained flats, one flat on each floor.

Relevant History

1957 planning permission was granted to convert the dwellinghouse into four self-contained flats and to erect an access gallery at the ground level.

1966 permission was granted to create an additional room in the unexcavated area and to provide of a new bay window in the basement flat.

1985 permission was granted for alterations to the rear bay at ground level to produce a part-glazed balcony

Relevant policies

SD1 - Quality of life

SD6 - Amenity for occupiers and neighbours

B1 - General design principles

B3 - Alterations and extensions

B7 - Conservation Areas

H3 - Protecting existing housing

Camden Planning Guidance Section: 10 Conservation Areas

Camden Planning Guidance Section: 19 Extensions, Alterations and Conservatories

Camden Planning Guidance Section: 40 Residential development standards

Belsize Conservation Area Statement

Assessment

The applicant proposes to convert the existing self-contained flats on lower ground floor level and ground floor level into one self contained maisonette. Associated works include:

- a. Extending the existing basement area to the front of the building with a new front light well
- b. Erection of a balcony at the rear on first floor level
- c. Replacement of basement window at rear with French doors

The existing lower ground floor flat comprises of a bathroom, kitchen, one bedroom and a living room and it has a floor area of approximately 50m². The entrance door to the flat is located on the western side elevation, adjacent to number 19. The ground floor flat is a two bedroom flat and has a floor area of approximately 74m². Other than internal alterations the applicant proposes to erect a balcony at the rear.

Conversion

The conversion of the first floor and basement flat would result in the loss of one residential unit. Policy H3 of Camden Unitary Development Plan seeks to protect the existing housing, it states that *'The Council will not grant planning permission for a development that would result in the net loss of two or more residential units...'* The loss of one residential unit is therefore considered acceptable and in accord with Camden's policies. The main entrance to the proposed maisonette would be the existing entrance to the upper ground floor flat. The entrance at the side would be blocked.

Excavation with front light well

The applicant proposes to enlarge the basement floor area through excavating the remaining unexcavated area. Part of the excavated area would be used as a walk-in wardrobe and an en-suite bathroom for a proposed main bedroom at basement level. The front part of the excavated area would be used as a storage area. In order to provide daylight and sunlight to the proposed storeroom the applicant proposes to construct a light well in the front garden. The first floor bay window would be extended downwards into the basement area and three new high-level windows would be incorporated.

The light well would be covered with a galvanised metal grating that would blend in with the existing gravel of the front garden. No off street parking exists. The front garden is currently being used as a bicycle storage area.

Although no other light wells have been constructed at adjoining properties, planning permission was granted in 1997 for front windows at basement level at number 19. At number 17a planning permission for the subdivision of a maisonette at number 17a onto two flats, including *excavations in the front garden to create an area with railings and a bay window at basement level* and the replacement of an existing conservatory at the rear with a new extension was refused in 2002. The council considered the conversion not suitable for family occupations and the *light well to 'detract from the original design of the building, spoil the symmetry with its semi detached pair, detract from the established character of the street and create an undesirable precedent'*. On appeal however the planning inspector felt that proposed building works, including the light well, was acceptable but refused to grant planning permission due to the unacceptable loss of family accommodation.

The planning inspector stated in section 10 of the decision notice: *'... This part of Belsize Conservation Area contains many properties with basement rooms, set below garden level and lit by various types of lightwells, some very visible from the highway. In my opinion the provision of a small lightwell and the construction of a new bay window, while not part of the original design, would therefore accord with this element of the Conservation Area's character. Indeed the adjacent house number 17, while differing in design from number 17a, has two basement windows, each lit by lightwells. Number 19, the other half of the pair, has none but I do not consider that the proposal would be seen as unbalancing the pair, as the high boundary hedge prevents the basement areas being viewed together. In my opinion the proposal would neither detract from the house's original design nor harm the street scene, and would accord with the UDP'*.

In the light of the above I consider the proposed excavation with the incorporation of the lightwell in the front garden acceptable and complying with the UDP.

Balcony

In addition the applicant proposes to construct a balcony at the rear of the building. The proposed balcony will be accessible from an existing French door at upper ground floor level and it would not project further than the terrace at lower ground floor level. The neighbouring property number 23 has a rear extension which projects further than the proposed balcony the roof of the extension, however the roof of this extension is not being used as a roof terrace. The proposed balustrade is 1 metre high perforated metal sheeting with a handrail. The balustrade is considered acceptable.

The two windows that would be affected most by the balcony in terms overlooking and the resulting loss of privacy would be the upper ground floor bay windows of the adjoining properties. The amount of overlooking however is considered marginal due to the distance from the bay windows and the depth and angles of the bay windows. The proposed balcony is therefore considered acceptable, as it would not result in unacceptable disturbance to the privacy of the neighbouring properties, complying with Camden Unitary Development Plan and Guidance.

French doors at lower ground floor

In order to provide access from a new bedroom onto the rear garden terrace the applicant proposes to replace the existing windows at lower ground floor with French doors. The proposed French doors will be timber and matching the existing design and proportions of the existing rear bay doors. The replacement French door is considered acceptable.

In the light of the above the proposal is considered to comply with Camden Unitary Development Plan, Camden Planning Guidance and Belsize Park Conservation Area Statement.

Recommendation: **Grant planning permission subject to Conditions**

