



75 Belsize Park Gardens, London, NW3 4JP Planning Statement

On behalf of: GAMA Property Investment

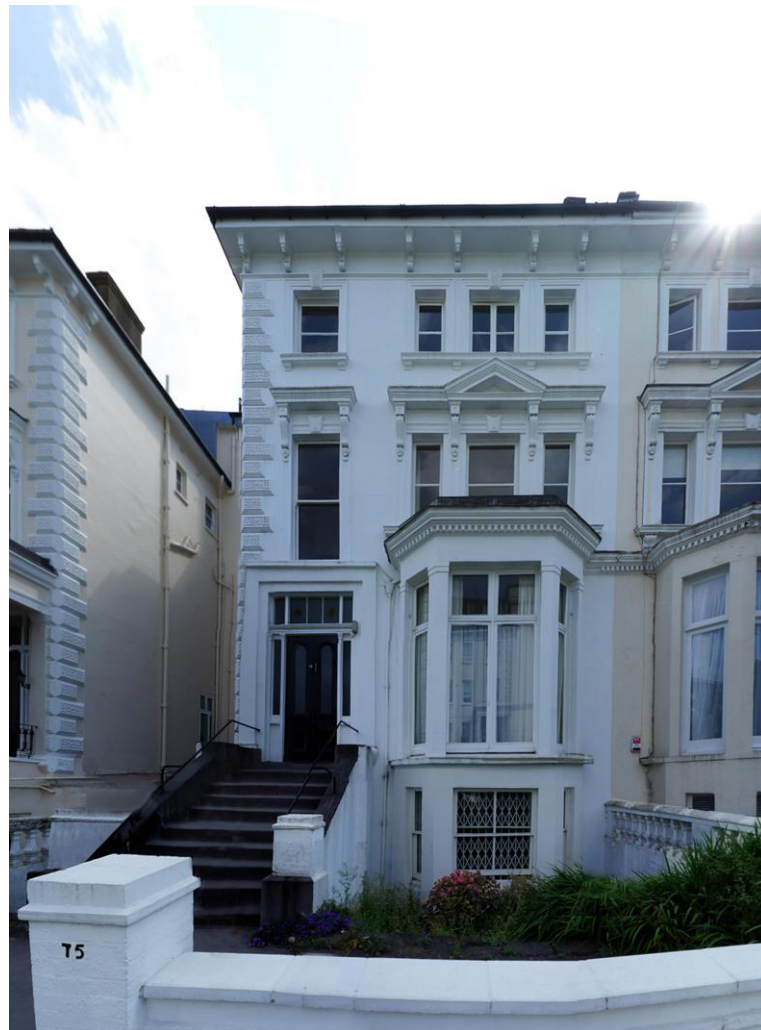


Image of no. 75 Belsize Park Gardens

17 August 2015

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared to support the planning application for alterations and extensions to 75 Belsize Park Gardens (herein referred to as “the building”).
- 1.2 The building is currently in residential use and is arranged as five flats (one x one bedroom, one x two bedroom and three x three bedrooms).
- 1.3 This planning application relates to the whole building.
- 1.4 Planning permission is sought for:-

“the extension of the building at lower ground, upper ground and roof level through extension of the existing dormers and associated external alterations including terraces at upper ground, first and roof level”

- 1.5 The building is located in the Belsize Conservation Area.
- 1.6 This planning statement is one of a number of documents which are submitted in support of the planning application. The other supporting documents are:-
- Planning application forms
 - Ownership Certificate (Certificate A)
 - Site location plan (Ref: 1529-050)
 - Site block plan (Ref: 1529-100)
 - Existing plans and elevations (Refs: 1529-101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109)
 - Proposed plans and elevations (Refs: 1529-211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216)
 - Design and Access Statement
 - Photographic Survey
- 1.7 The objective of the proposal is to create significantly enhanced residential floorspace which will make a positive contribution to the Borough’s housing stock.

- 1.8 This planning statement provides a comprehensive review of national, regional and local planning policy and guidance relevant to the nature of the proposals and the specific degree to which the proposals would accord with the policies of the statutory development plan. It also considers other material considerations, in accordance with the requirements of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2005.
- 1.9 It is concluded that the development proposals accord with the aims and objectives of national, strategic and local planning policy and therefore support the grant of planning permission.

2 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The building is located on the south side of Belsize Park Gardens, close to its junction with Lambolle Place.



Image 1: Location Plan

- 2.2 The area is predominantly in residential use and the majority of the buildings are white stucco fronted villas. Belsize Park Gardens itself is characterised by pairs of semi-detached properties.
- 2.3 The roof profile of the buildings along the south side of Belsize Park Gardens is extremely varied with a number of dormers of varying designs and sizes evident along the front and side elevations of these semi-detached houses.



Image 2: Street view

- 2.4 The building forms part of a pair of large semi-detached houses. It is in need of some updating and at some point in the past the portico covering the front entrance door and the two storey bay window at the rear has been removed which detracts from the appearance of this building. Although many of its other architectural features remain including the quoins and eaves detailing.



Image 3: Front elevation of 75 Belsize Park Gardens

- 2.5 The existing building comprises five storeys (lower ground, upper ground, first, second and third floors) and is currently in residential use throughout providing five flats.
- 2.6 The building is not listed but it is located within the Belsize Conservation Area
- 2.7 The property is located in a sustainable location with local retail uses being found on nearby England's Lane and with Belsize Park and Swiss Cottage Underground Stations being located within walking distance.

3 Planning History

- 3.1 A comprehensive review of the Statutory Register of Planning Applications held by the London Borough of Camden has been carried out.
- 3.2 With regards to the property itself, there is only one relevant planning application. Planning permission was granted (Ref: 23677) in December 1976 for alterations to the roof including the enlargement of an existing dormer on the side elevation and the formation of a roof terrace to the rear.
- 3.3 It does not appear that the roof terrace was ever implemented but it was located in the same position as that currently proposed.
- 3.4 There are numerous examples of planning approvals for rear extensions and the creation of dormer windows along Belsize Park Gardens.

4 Proposed Development

- 4.1 It is proposed to retain the existing residential use within the building. Five flats will remain but the unit mix will be altered slightly from that which currently exists. As shown on the table below:-

	Existing	Proposed
One bedroom	1	0
Two bedroom	1	1
Three bedroom	3	4
TOTAL	5	5

- 4.2 The proposal involves the following extensions and alterations to the existing building.
- 4.3 The building will be extended to the rear at lower ground floor level by 3.5 metres.
- 4.4 At upper ground floor level the building will be extended to the rear through the reinstatement of the bay window which was removed at some point in the past. A terrace will be created at this level on the flat roof of the proposed extension below.
- 4.5 The portico over the entrance door on the front elevation will be reinstated.
- 4.6 A terrace will be created at first floor level over the reinstated bay window to the rear.
- 4.7 At third floor level the building will be extended along its side elevation, effectively consolidating the two existing dormers and stepping back the existing dormers from the front and side elevation. To the front of the building the existing dormer will be extended as will the dormer to the rear to create symmetry between no. 75 and no.73. A terrace will be created to the rear in front of the extended dormer.

5 Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1 National Policy Guidance is produced by Central Government in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework, adopted in March 2012. This is a material consideration when determining planning applications.
- 5.2 The Statutory Development Plan comprises of regional policies with the Mayor's London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2011) (herein referred to as "LP"), adopted in March 2015 and at a local level the London Borough of Camden Core Strategy (November 2010) and Development Policies Document (November 2010).
- 5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance known as Camden Planning Guidance is also a material consideration along with the Belsize Conservation Area Statement.
- 5.4 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

- 5.5 The NPPF document sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It summarises in a single document, previous national planning policy statements. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 5.6 The NPPF introduces the presumption in favour of sustainable development although it makes plain that the development plan is still the starting point for decision making.

Regional Planning Policy - The London Plan

March 2015 (Consolidated with Alterations since 2011)

- 5.7 The LP sets out the relevant London-wide planning policy guidance, the relevant regional planning policy guidance for the Royal Borough and forms a component part of the statutory development plan.

- 5.8 It aims to set out a framework to co-ordinate and integrate economic, environmental, transport and social considerations over the next 20-25 years. The LP is the London-wide policy context within which the boroughs set their local planning agendas.
- 5.9 The proposal has taken into account the most relevant LP policies and guidance affecting the proposals for the building. LP policies are referred to, where relevant, in Section 6 (Planning Considerations) of this Statement.
- 5.10 In addition to the LP, the Mayor has produced more detailed strategic guidance of issues, which cannot be addressed in sufficient detail in the Plan, through SPG documents. This does not set out any new policies but provides guidance of policies established by the LP.
- 5.11 The following policies from the LP are considered relevant to the planning application:-
- Policy 7.4 - Local character
 - Policy 7.6 - Architecture
 - Policy 7.8 - Heritage Assets and Archaeology

Camden Core Strategy (2010)

- 5.12 The following Core Strategy Policies are considered relevant to the determination of this application:-
- CS6 - Providing quality homes
 - CS14 - High Quality Places and Conserving Heritage
- 5.13 The following Development Policies are considered relevant to the determination of these applications:-
- CP24 - Securing High Quality Design
 - CP25 - Conserving Camden's Heritage
 - DP26 - Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 5.14 The relevant LBC Supplementary Planning Guidance includes:-
- The Belsize Conservation Area Statement (April 2003)

Camden Planning Guidance 1(CPG1) - Design
Camden Planning Guidance 2 (CPG2) - Housing
Camden Planning Guidance 6 (CPG6) - Amenity

6 Principal Planning Considerations

6.1 This sections assesses the key planning considerations associated with the proposed development.

6.2 These are:-

- a) Design of the proposed extensions and alterations
- b) Impact upon the Conservation Area
- c) Amenity

Design

6.3 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment in the NPPF. Paragraph 56 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positive to making places better for people.

6.4 At paragraph 57 the NPPF stipulates that it is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

6.5 LP policies 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 relate to ensuring that development respects the local character of the area, promotes high quality public realm, and ensures that the architecture makes a positive contribution to a coherent public realm, streetscape and wider cityscape.

6.6 At a local level Policy CS14 seeks to ensure that new developments are attractive, safe and easy to use.

6.7 The aim of development policy DP24 is to require all developments to be of the highest standard of design. It states that developments should consider:-

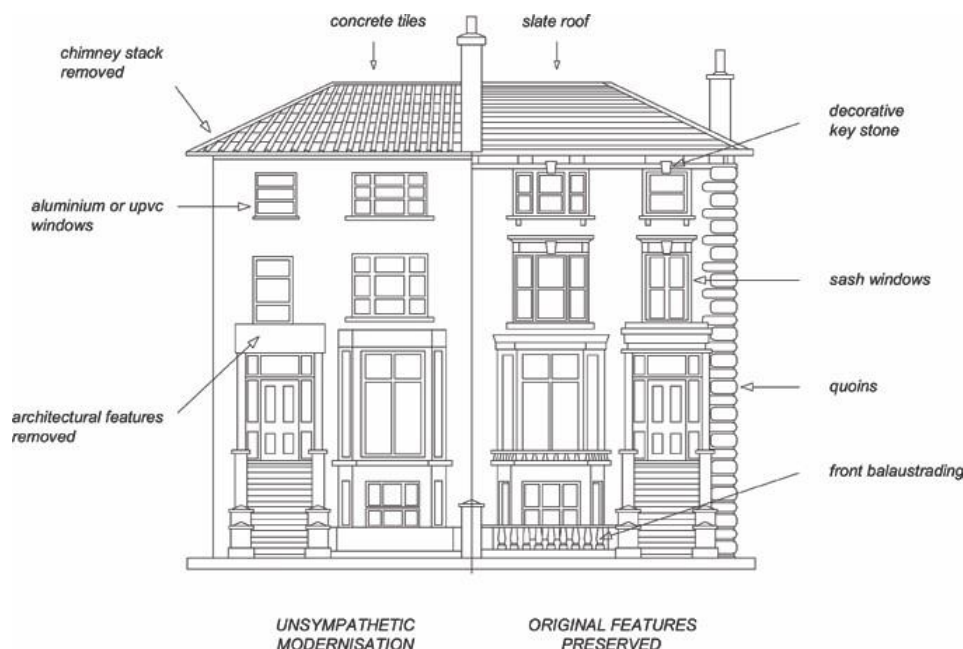
- The character, setting, context and form and scale of neighbouring buildings;
- The character and proportion of the existing building;
- The quality of materials to be used;
- The provision of visually interesting frontages at street level;

- The appropriate location for building services equipment
- The provision of hard and soft landscaping; and
- The provision of appropriate amenity space.

6.8 The Camden Planning Guidance (2015) on Design (CPG1) provides more detailed information on design issues.

6.9 In relation to alterations, the CPG states that (in summary), timber is the traditional window material and new windows should match the originals as closely as possible, characteristic doorway features such as porches should be retained where they make a positive contribution to the character of groups of buildings. Materials should complement the colour and texture of materials in the existing building.

6.10 The CPG includes a diagram demonstrating appropriate and inappropriate alterations to residential facades. This is attached below.



6.11 With regards to rear extensions, the CPG provides some general principles. It states that rear extension should:-

- Be secondary to the building being extended, in terms of location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;

- Respect and preserve the original design and proportion of the building, including its architectural period and style;
- Respected and preserve existing architectural features such as projecting bays, decorative balconies or chimney stacks;
- Respect and preserve the historic pattern and established townscape,
- Not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties with regard to sunlight, daylight, outlook, overshadowing, light pollution, privacy/overlooking and sense of enclosure;
- Allow for the retention of a reasonable sized garden;
- Retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity.

6.12 Paragraph 4.12 states that ground floor extensions are generally considered preferable to those at higher levels and the width of extension should be designed so that they are not visible from the street and respect the rhythm of existing rear extensions.

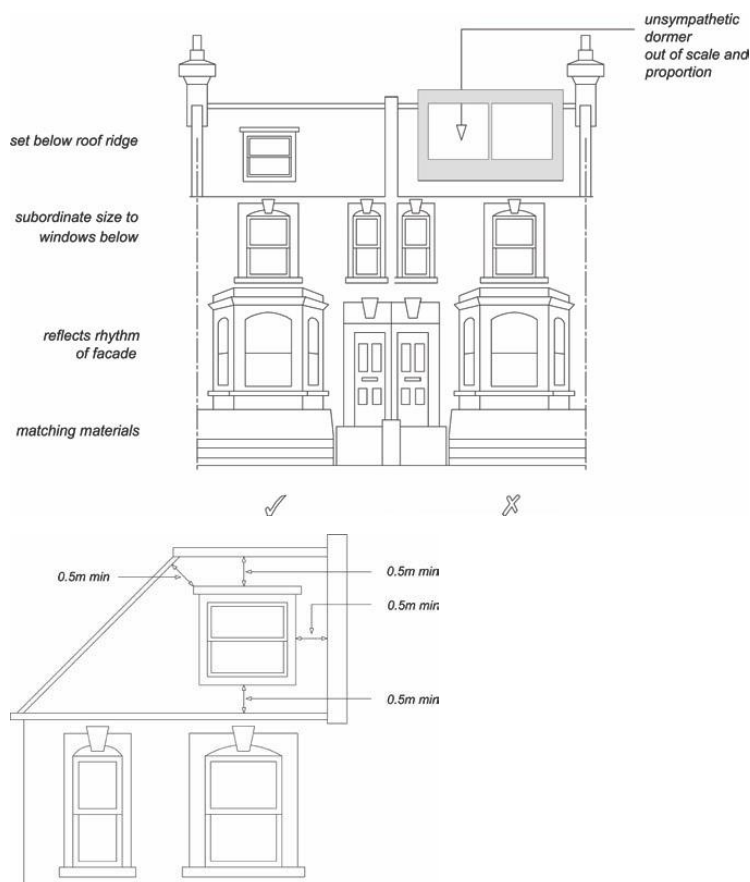
6.13 With regards to roof extensions and terraces, the CPG states that additional storeys and alterations are likely to be acceptable where:-

- There is an established form of roof addition or alteration to a terrace or group of similar buildings and where continuing the pattern of development would help to re-unite a group of buildings and townscape;
- Alterations are architectural sympathetic to the age and character of the building and retain the overall integrity of the roof form;
- There are a variety of additions or alterations to roofs which create an established pattern and where further development of a similar form would not cause additional harm.

6.14 The CPG sets out specific guidance with regards to roof dormers. It states that alterations to or the addition of, roof dormers should be sensitive changes which maintain the overall structure of the existing roof form. Proposals that achieve this will generally be considered acceptable providing that all the following circumstances are met:

- a) The pitch of the existing roof is sufficient to allow adequate habitable space without the creation of disproportionately large dormers or raising the roof ridge;
- b) Dormers should not be introduced where they cut through the roof ridge or the sloped edge of a hipped roof. They should also be sufficiently below the ridge of the roof in order to avoid projecting into the roofline when viewed from a distance.
- c) Dormers should not be introduced where they interrupt an unbroken roofscape;
- d) The dormer and window should relate to the façade below and the surface area of the roof. They should appear as separate small projections on the roof surface. They should generally be aligned with the windows on lower floors.
- e) Where buildings have a parapet the lower edge of the dormer should be located below the parapet line.
- f) Materials should complement the main building and the wider townscape and the use of traditional materials such as timber, lead and hanging tiles are preferred.

6.15 The CPG includes a diagram demonstrating how dormers can be successfully integrated into existing buildings. This is attached below.



6.16 In terms of balconies and terraces, the CPG recognises that these can provide valuable amenity space for flats. Considerations should be given to:-

- The detailed design to reduce the impact upon the existing elevation
- Careful choice of materials and colour to match the existing elevation
- Possible use of setbacks to minimise overlooking
- Possible use of screens or planting to prevent overlooking of habitable rooms or nearby gardens;
- Need to avoid creating climbing opportunities for burglars.

6.17 Terraces at roof level should be set back behind the slope of a pitched roof or behind a parapet on a flat roof. The guidance states that a terrace will only normally be acceptable on the rear of properties. Where a terrace is provided within the slope of a pitch the tiles and slates should be kept unbroken and the width of the terrace should be no wider than a dormer opening.

Assessment

6.18 Limited alterations are proposed to the front elevation. The porch over the front entrance door which was removed will be reinstated. As illustrated by the image taken from CPG2 relating to design, the removal of architectural features such as porches results in unsympathetic modernisation. In respect of 75 Belsize Park Gardens, the reinstatement of this lost feature (the entrance portico) will enhance the architectural composition of the façade and is a significant benefit to the proposal.

6.19 This improvement is evident when comparing the existing and proposed elevations.



Existing front elevation

Proposed front elevation

- 6.20 Turning to the alterations and extensions to the rear of the property
- 6.21 At lower ground floor level, the property will be extended across the whole width of the property. This will create an additional 26 square metres of floorspace for this unit. A generous rear garden will be maintained.
- 6.22 As this extension is at lower ground floor level, it will have a minimal impact both on surrounding properties and the appearance of the building and the Conservation Area as a whole. The extension extends to 3.5 metres from the rear building line and only occupies lower ground floor level which will ensure it reads as a subordinate addition to the original building in accordance with the provisions of the CPG.
- 6.23 A bay window will be reintroduced at upper ground floor level which will sit on the extension to the lower ground floor. A terrace will be created at upper ground floor level which will be accessed by traditional French doors within the new bay window.
- 6.24 This is considered to be a significant enhancement to the appearance of the rear of the building reinstating what is recognised within the Conservation Area statement as a key original feature of these houses.

- 6.25 A balcony is proposed at first floor level which is in an identical position to the balcony on the adjacent property of no. 73 Belsize Park Gardens. The railings will be of the same style and size as those at no. 73 Belsize Park Gardens.
- 6.26 In respect of the changes at roof level, alterations and extensions are proposed to the existing dormers.
- 6.27 The existing rear dormer window will be enlarged to reflect the design of the adjacent property. It will remain substantially below the roof ridge and reflect the rhythm of the façade. The materials will match that of the adjacent property. It will be in proportion to the scale of the property as shown on the illustrations provided within CPG.
- 6.28 The proposed extension to the existing side dormer windows effectively consolidates the existing dormer windows. The dormer window which is located towards the front of the building will be stepped back, thereby reducing its visual impact from street level.
- 6.29 The windows within the dormer will be small and subordinate to the existing building.
- 6.30 This element of the proposal will not be noticeable from any point within the conservation area as it effectively sits between two existing dormers.
- 6.31 The dormer window on the front elevation will be slightly enlarged but this will not result in a material change in the appearance of the building. The window remains within the size and proportion parameters suggested by the CPG and this will create greater architectural alignment with the adjacent property.

Impact upon the Conservation Area

- 6.32 Under paragraph 128 of the NPPF, in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.
- 6.33 Paragraph 131 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:-

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation
 - The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 6.34 A proposal should not lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset unless it can be demonstrated that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits (paragraph 133).
- 6.35 Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (paragraph 134).
- 6.36 The effect of an application on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should be taken into account in determining the application (paragraph 135).
- 6.37 Core Strategy Policy CS14 aims to manage growth in Camden in a way that conserves and enhances the heritage and valued places that give the Borough its unique character.
- 6.38 Development policy DP25 relates to conservation areas and states that the Council will only permit development that enhances the character and appearance of the area.
- 6.39 Belsize Park Gardens falls into sub area 1 within the Conservation Area Statement. The area was developed by Daniel Tidley in the mid-1850s. Belsize Park Gardens is a “long, straight and consistent street” of closely spaced villas. The area has a strong identity and unity of appearance. This notes that a “distinguishing feature of Tidley villas are their curved glass bay windows at the rear”.

Assessment

- 6.40 The existing building does make a contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area but the extent of that contribution is somewhat limited by the

removal of the front entrance portico and the bay window to the rear which are important architectural features of these buildings.

- 6.41 The reinstatement of both of these elements will undoubtedly enhance the contribution that the building makes to the Conservation Area and undo the harm caused by the removal of these important architectural features.
- 6.42 The lower ground floor rear extension will have a limited impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It will not be visible from the street and only extend from the rear building line by 3.5 metres.
- 6.43 The roof level alterations will improve the symmetry between this building and its neighbour at 73 Belsize Park Gardens. The alterations proposed to the existing dormers are fairly minor and will not have a noticeable impact upon the overall character and appearance of the conservation area.

Amenity

- 6.44 Core Strategy Policy CS5 relates to managing the impact of growth.
- 6.45 Development policy DP26 states that when considering applications for new development and changes of use, the Council will seek to protect or enhance the amenities of the area.
- 6.46 Camden's Planning Guidance relating to amenity provides detailed information relating to overlooking, privacy and outlook.
- 6.47 This states that development should be designed to protect the privacy of both new and existing dwellings to a reasonable degree. It states that design measure to reduce overlooking and loss of privacy include obscured glazing, screening.

Assessment

- 6.48 The proposed terraces will provide important outdoor amenity space for the future occupants of the lower ground, first and third floor flats.

- 6.49 Issues surrounding amenity have been carefully considered as part of the design development stage, particularly in relation to the creation of terraces.
- 6.50 At upper ground floor level the terrace will be separated from the adjacent property (no. 73) by the existing wall that divides the two properties. There will not be any overlooking between the two properties at this level.
- 6.51 At first floor level, the terrace on the roof of the reintroduced bay window is stepped in from the party wall of the adjacent property. This element of the proposal matches the terrace on the adjacent property and will ensure the rear elevation is symmetrical through the use of railings of a similar style, colour and size.
- 6.52 The third floor terrace is recessed within the roof and the railing is offset from the roof edge by 500mm to limit the potential for any overlooking of and loss of privacy to adjacent properties.
- 6.53 In the side elevation, the window which directly faces the dormer within no. 77 Belsize Park Gardens will be fitted with obscured glazing to prevent any overlooking issues.

7 Summary and Conclusions

- 7.1 The proposed refurbishment of this building will provide improved residential floorspace and a high quality environment for these flats. The scheme is an excellent design conceived by Nash Baker Architects.
- 7.2 The proposed extensions and alterations are fairly minor in nature and have been carefully designed to ensure they read as subordinate additions and alterations to the property.
- 7.3 Careful consideration has been given to the relevant policies and in particular the Camden Planning Guidance relating to design, throughout the design development process.
- 7.4 The scheme includes the reinstatement of important architectural features namely the front entrance portico and rear bay window. These alterations will result in a significant enhancement of the appearance of the building and its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 7.5 The lower ground floor extension is subordinate to the existing building and not noticeable from the street. It will create important additional residential floorspace whilst retaining a generous rear garden.
- 7.6 The alterations at roof level, whilst increasing the size of the existing dormers will create symmetry with the adjacent building which will result in an overall enhancement of its appearance.
- 7.7 The proposed terraces will not have any adverse impacts upon the amenity enjoyed by surrounding residents and will provide important outdoor amenity space for the future occupants of these flats.
- 7.8 Overall, the proposal complies with the relevant policies at national, regional and local level and planning permission should be granted.