

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS & HERITAGE

IMPACT STATEMENT

for

3 BELSIZE CRESCENT

LONDON

NW3 5QY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared and submitted in support of a planning application for a mansard roof extension to provide additional habitable accommodation to an existing second floor flat (“the proposal”) at 3 Belsize Crescent, NW3 5QY (“the Site”).

The Application Site and its Context

- 1.2 The Site comprises an attached property and lies on the southern side of Belsize Crescent. The property provides office accommodation at basement, ground and first floor level, with a 1 bedroom flat located at 2nd floor. The existing flat is accessible via the main front entrance and communal hall/stairs.
- 1.3 The building extends up to the back edge of the pavement and is attached to the arch of Burdett Mews to the south east and 5 Belsize Crescent to the north west. The front elevation retains much of its original architectural integrity and is defined by London stock brick and stucco detailing. The rear elevation has been subject to alterations over the years and does not benefit from the architectural detailing evident on the front façade. The building benefits from a raised front and rear parapet, behind which is a flat roof.
- 1.4 The site lies within the Belsize Park Conservation Area (CA) and specifically within Sub Area 2, Belsize Village. The property is not listed.
- 1.5 The immediate area is predominantly residential in character and comprises a range of mid to late C19th buildings. The levels along Belsize Crescent fall from west to east.
- 1.6 The properties along the Crescent are typically grand in scale and extend to three and four storeys. The terrace to the west (5 – 19 Belsize Crescent, odds) is stepped back from the back edge of the pavement and many of the properties benefit from roof extensions and alterations. Burdett Mews lies to the east and is attached to the application site by an arch that leads through to the Mews at the rear, the latter of which is also partially attached to the application property. A mansard roof is located over the arch that forms part of Burdett Mews.

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- 1.7 A more detailed analysis of the CA and its significance is provided in Section 4 below.

Planning History

- 1.8 The planning history for the site is summarised in Table 1 below.

Application Number	Development	Decision
P9602335	Metal staircase to link 2 nd floor with roof and use of the roof as a terrace.	Refused

Schedule of Works

- 1.9 Planning permission is sought for the formation of a mansard roof with associated dormer windows at roof level to provide additional accommodation for the existing residential unit at 2nd floor level. The external works associated with this proposal include;
- The formation of a mansard roof across the existing flat roof;
 - The formation of three dormer windows on the front roof slope;
 - The formation of two dormer windows on the rear roof slope;
 - Raising the party wall with the adjacent property;
 - The formation of rooflights on the mansard roof extension; and
 - The insertion of an additional window at second floor level.
- 1.10 Full details of the proposal are shown on the submitted drawings that comprise part of this submission.

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2.0 DESIGN & ACCESS COMPONENT

Amount

- 2.1 The proposal would generate an additional 38sqm (GIA) of floor space which would provide additional habitable accommodation for the existing flat at 2nd floor level. The resulting flat would provide 3 bedrooms and bathrooms at 2nd floor level with an open plan kitchen/dining and living area and WC within the mansard roof extension. An internal flight of stairs would provide access to the additional space at roof level.

Scale and Appearance

- 2.2 A flat topped mansard roof is proposed over the existing flat roof and behind the existing raised parapet wall. The mansard roof would have a hipped design on the flank elevation.
- 2.3 The dormer windows are vertically proportioned and finished with lead. Those on the front elevation would align with the windows on the lower floors.
- 2.4 The mansard roof would be finished in slate with timber sash windows.

Use

- 2.5 The residential use of the 2nd floor would be retained as single dwelling, with the proposal providing additional accommodation. There would be no net increase in the number of dwellings as a result of this proposal.

Access

- 2.6 No change is proposed to the main pedestrian access to the site which is from a communal entrance from Belsize Crescent.

Layout

- 2.7 Access to the new unit would be via an internal staircase leading from the internal landing within the existing dwelling. The new staircase would lead up to an open plan kitchen/living area.

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3.0 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development which lies at the heart of decision making. Paragraph 14 makes it clear that development that accords with an up to date Local Plan should be approved without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impact of doing so would significantly outweigh the benefits or specific NPPF policies indicate development should be restricted.
- 3.2 Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning. Paragraph 58 requires development to respond to local character, reflecting the identity of local surroundings and materials whilst not preventing or discouraging innovation.
- 3.3 The NPPF specifically states that design policies should avoid unnecessary detail and not be unduly prescriptive. Paragraph 60 goes on to state that *"Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles."*
- 3.4 The NPPF encourages design to secure the optimal and efficient use of a site whilst responding to local character and history.
- 3.5 Paragraph 126 recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and seeks to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. It is appropriate to consider the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness.

Development Plan

- 3.6 The relevant policies of the Core Strategy & Development Policies include:
- CS1 Distribution of growth
 - CS5 Managing the implication of growth and development

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- CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage
- DP24 Securing high quality design
- DP25 Securing Camden's Heritage
- DP26 Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

3.7 Camden Planning Guidance, updated in 2013, is also relevant and in particular CPG1 'Design'.

3.8 The Belsize Conservation Area Statement is also a material consideration in respect of this proposal.

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4.0 THE HERITAGE ASSET AND ASSESSMENT

Belsize Conservation Area

- 4.1 The application site forms part of a row of terraced properties on the southern side of the road and within the Belsize Conservation Area (CA). The CA was designated in 1973 and subsequently extended in 1984, 1985, 1988, 1991, 1994 and most recently in 2002. The CA Statement states the development of the Belsize area as a residential suburb began in the mid C19th and its Italianate villas dating from this period are most commonly associated with it and from which its character derives.
- 4.2 The Site lies within Sub Area 2 of the CA, known as Belsize Village. The CA Statement notes that this is typically defined by 3 and 4 storey terraces, built to the back edge of the pavement and giving a strong sense of enclosure. The vertical proportions of the windows with their diminishing height on successive upper floors and classical ornamentation contribute to the character and appearance of the area.
- 4.3 With regard to Belsize Crescent, the CA Statement notes that this differs slightly in that it is an entirely residential street, with terraces set back from the road. The properties are finished in London stock brick with Stucco and banding. It goes on to note there is considerable visual consistency, with pitched slate roofs and barell topped dormers some of the key architectural detailing evident.
- 4.4 No.3 Belsize Crescent is noted as making a positive contribution to the character of the area.

Significance Findings

- 4.5 The significant findings are;
- No.3 Belsize Crescent is recognised as a building that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA;

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- Belsize Crescent is almost entirely residential with considerable visual consistency;
- The overall character of the area is defined by the height of properties, the relationship between the buildings and the road and the visual consistency that exists.

Significant Issues

- 4.6 The significant issue is therefore whether the proposed mansard roof and dormer windows would preserve or enhance the identified significance (paragraph 4.5) of the CA.
- 4.7 The impact of the works on the significance of the designated heritage asset is considered in section 5 below.

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5.0 PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

NPPF

- 5.1 The NPPF notes that good design is a key component of sustainable development and that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. As demonstrated in detail below, the proposal is based on principles of good design, would not harm the significance of the CA or the integrity of the built form as viewed from any public vantage point and relies on using traditional materials. The proposal is well designed and would not harm the significance of the conservation area, in full compliance with the requirements of the NPPF.
- 5.2 In addition to the above, the proposal would optimise the use and function of the property without compromising the ability of future generations to come. The proposal therefore comprises sustainable development, consistent with the NPPF and for which there is a presumption in favour.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 5.3 Consideration has been given to the prevailing development plan policies. Every effort has been made to ensure the proposals, whilst meeting the expectations of modern day living, do not harm the architectural quality and integrity of the existing building and also ensure that the significance of the conservation area is not compromised. To that end, the proposed development would be executed to a very high standard as part of a comprehensive programme of works to upgrade the function of the property, respecting townscape character and local distinctiveness, in accordance with policies Core Strategy and Development Policies, the Council's Planning Guidance and the objectives of the CA Appraisal and Management Strategy.

DESIGN/CPG1 – ROOF EXTENSIONS

- 5.4 Policy CPG1 deals with matters of design and Section 5 relates to roof extensions in particular. Paragraph 5.7 is permissive of additional storeys and roof alterations subject to compliance with a number of criteria, each of which is addressed in turn below.

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Mansard Roof Extension

- The property is linked to Burdett Mews to the east which extends up to 4 storeys and has a mansard roof over the arch. The property is also attached to the adjacent terrace of 4 storey residential properties (5-19 Belsize Crescent), which have a variety of roof extensions and alterations. The application site is therefore bounded by properties on either side with roof extensions and alterations. The proposal would not therefore represent an interruption to the existing pattern of development and would not disrupt the appearance of the property or the local roof-scape in this regard. The proposal would reunite the building with the form of those adjacent as well as mirror the roof form of no.4 opposite which is of the same design/relationship with the road (please refer to photographs appended hereto).
- The mansard roof is a traditional flat top design, reflecting the design and proportions of that located on the neighbouring property and no.4 opposite. The mansard extends from behind the existing raised parapet walls and provides an internal ceiling height of 2.3m. The raised height of the party wall would not project above those either side of the property and in this regard would respect the existing pattern of development. The proposal is therefore architecturally sympathetic to the age and character of the building, respects and reflects its immediate context and is in compliance with the specific design guidance offered in figure 4 of CPG1.
- As noted above, there are similar mansard roof extensions on the southern and northern side of Belsize Crescent and the proposal therefore reinforces the established pattern and form of development at roof level and would not cause harm.

5.5 Paragraph 5.8 of CPG1 goes on to provide a number of circumstances where there is likely to be an adverse effect on the sky, the appearance of the building or surrounding street scene which in turn would render a mansard extension unacceptable. These circumstances are addressed below.

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- The property is attached to a terrace of dwellings to the west (5-19) and Burdett Mews to the east, neither of which has an unimpaired roof. Accordingly, the proposal would not introduce a roof level extension to a terrace/group of buildings whose roof line is largely unimpaired.
- The application property does not already have an additional storey or mansard.
- The change in topography along Belsize Crescent results in a roof line that is stepped to reflect the existing change in ground levels along the road in an easterly direction. The proposed mansard roof would sit comfortably below the ridge height of no.5 and would be marginally higher than Burdett Mews which is entirely appropriate and responds to the natural change in ground levels. The raised party wall would respect the height of those either side and would not interrupt the skyline in this respect.
- The roof line is not exposed to important London-wide views or local views from public spaces – the property is not unduly prominent in the local street scape and the mansard would not interrupt or harm important or identified views. The mansard roof would reflect the design of no.4 opposite, a building of identical design and with the same relationship to the road/adjacent dwellings, creating symmetry in views east along the Crescent (please refer to the photographs).
- The building is suitable for a mansard extension, with existing raised parapets behind which the new roof would sit.
- The addition is well-designed and it would not undermine the composition of the building. It would be a subordinate addition that would not detract from the visual dominance of the lower floors.

5.6 For the reasons set out above, it is held that the proposal fully accords with the design advice and requirements set out in CPG1.

Dormer Roof Extensions

5.7 The proposal falls to be assessed against the design guidance offered for mansard roof extensions but for the sake of completeness the design of the associated dormer windows will be assessed against CPG1.

- There are existing and numerous dormer window extensions along both the front and rear elevations of Belsize Crescent including both

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neighbouring properties. The principle of dormer windows at roof level is therefore clearly established.

- The dormer windows on the front elevation are architecturally sympathetic to the age and character of the building. They are modest in their proportions (discussed below) and respect traditional window hierarchy being more modest in scale than those on lower levels. They are sensitively aligned to address the window arrangement on lower floors and would not dominate the mansard roof. Those to the rear are similarly well proportioned.

- 5.8 Overall, the design of the proposal accords with Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy, Policy DP24 of the Development Policies and the advice of CPG1. Accordingly, it would not undermine policy intended to protect the character or appearance of properties or detrimentally impact on the local environs.

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.9 Section 4 of this statement provides a heritage appraisal and identifies the significance of the CA.
- 5.10 In summary, whilst no.3 Belsize Crescent is noted of making a positive contribution to the character of the CA, the significance of this part of the CA lies with the scale and relationship of buildings to each other and to the road and the consistency in their appearance, as recognised within the CA Statement.

Impact on the Conservation Area

- 5.11 The continuity of appearance of properties within Belsize Crescent is recognised as a positive contributor and of significance to the CA. The proposal seeks to unify the roof form of the application property with those immediately adjacent (Burdett Mews and no.5) and thus reinforce the sense pattern and continuity within this part of the CA. In this regard, the proposal would not appear out of keeping, incongruous or detract from the design continuity that exists.

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- 5.12 Opposite the side lies no.4, a building of the same design and, importantly, with the same relationship to the back edge of the pavement and alignment with neighbouring dwellings. The application property and no.4 opposite, by virtue of their siting, provide symmetry to the streetscape and in particular in views looking east towards their partially exposed flank walls.
- 5.13 The proposal introduces a mansard roof extension that reflects the design of that at no.4 and others in the area. It would be set behind the raised parapet and would include a partial hipped roof on the flank elevation (similar to no.4), helping to ensure the proposal does not appear a blunt or visually dominant in views. The proposal restores balance to views east towards the application site.
- 5.14 The proposal would not detract from the visual dominance of the original property and would not undermine its integrity and the manner in which it positively contributes to the character of the CA. The proposal is sensitively designed, respects the existing window hierarchy, is influenced by the numerous similar roof level extensions along the Crescent and would not appear visually discordant. The raised party wall would not appear incongruous and the rooflights would not be visible from street level. The proposal would retain and protect the matters of significance identified within the CA.
- 5.15 For the reasons provided above, the proposal would not cause harm to the significance of the CA, in compliance with the NPPF and Core Strategy policies designed to protect the character and appearance of it.

HOUSING

- 5.16 One bedroom units are 'low' priority in terms of housing need within the Borough. The proposal would facilitate the delivery of a 3 bedroom market property which is defined as being of 'medium' priority under Policy DP5. The extension of the existing property herein proposed thus contributes towards meeting a housing requirement within the Borough, in accordance with both Policy DP5 and the NPPF. The internal size of the property is commensurate with the scale of properties in the area.

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Amenity Standards for future occupants

- 5.17 The proposed 3 bedroom duplex would extend to 91.8sqm (GIA) and each habitable room would exceed prescribed space standards. The proposal duly accords with Policy DP5 of the Core Strategy, the Council's space standards and the more recently published Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (March 2015).
- 5.18 An internal ceiling height of 2.3m is proposed within the mansard roof addition with more than 75% of the internal floor area benefitting from this internal height. This complies with the Technical Housing Standards.
- 5.19 Appropriate levels of natural light and ventilation are provided to each habitable room.
- 5.20 The existing unit does not benefit from external amenity space and none is proposed. The occupants of the property would continue to rely on recreational areas within the vicinity.

IMPACT ON RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES

- 5.21 The mansard roof is sensibly proportioned, with the side roof slope angle to slope away from the boundary with no.5. The roof would not be visually prominent or dominant as viewed from the upper floors of no.5. Notwithstanding this, it is noted that an identical relationship between no.4 and no.6, located directly opposite the application site, was deemed permissible by the Council.
- 5.22 The proposed dormer windows on the rear elevation would look over the roofs of the properties in Bartlett Mews, as do the dormers in the mansard roof over the arch to the mews. The additional window at 2nd floor level would serve a bathroom and would, in any event, be obscure glazed. There would be no material or detrimental loss of privacy for neighbouring occupiers.
- 5.23 The proposal would not cause visual intrusion, overshadowing, loss of daylight or sunlight, loss of privacy or cause any other harm to the amenities of existing neighbouring occupants, in compliance with Policy DP26.

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HIGHWAYS AND PARKING

- 5.24 The residential use of the 2nd floor would remain and the proposal would not lead to a change in parking demand.

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6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The proposed development would meet the needs of the occupiers without compromising future generation to meet their own needs. It would extend the property from a 1 bed unit to a 3 bedroom dwelling, meeting a housing need in the Borough. The proposal embodies principles of good design and reinforces local distinctiveness (that being the scale of properties and their relationship to each other and the road and visual continuity). The proposal thus comprises sustainable development consistent with the NPPF and for which there is a presumption in favour.
- 6.2 The mansard roof has been informed by existing and similar roof level extensions along Belsize Crescent and in particular those located on the attached properties at Burdett Mews and No.5. It unifies the roof form and mirrors the built form/mass/design of that located directly opposite at no.4, providing visual cohesion in views along the street scene.
- 6.2 The proposal fully complies with the requirements of CPG1 and ensures no harm to the identified significance of the CA, or views to and from it.
- 6.3 No detrimental impact upon existing residential amenity would result from the proposal and future occupants would benefit from a good standard of amenity, in compliance with the Technical Housing Standards (March 2015).
- 6.4 The proposal complies with all relevant development plan policies and with central government advice in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. In our judgment no other material considerations weigh against it.
- 6.5 Accordingly we trust the Council will determine that the application for planning permission can be approved.

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