

87 BELSIZE LANE, LONDON, NW3
LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN
HERITAGE STATEMENT



March 2016

James Edgar

Historic Buildings Consultant

James Edgar
The Old Rectory
8 Water Lane
Stathern
Leicestershire
LE14 4HX

Tel: 01949 869197

Email: james.edgar@historicbuildingsconsultants.co.uk

87 BELSIZE LANE, LONDON, NW3 LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Anat Talmor Design, Architects, acting on behalf of Harriet Nowell-Smith and Oliver Burgel, have commissioned James Edgar, Historic Buildings Consultant, to prepare a 'Heritage Statement' for the statutorily listed No. 87 Belsize Lane, Camden, NW3. The house is listed in grade II, and located at National Grid Reference TQ 26688 84653. The local planning authority is the London Borough Camden.

1.2 As required by the National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") published in March 2012, applications concerning proposals affecting a designated heritage asset must be accompanied by a statement that describes;

'the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary' (para. 128).

1.3 This report, which is based on a site inspection and primary research, has been prepared by James Edgar and provides the information required to inform the repair and proposed alteration of the house. The work has included using online sources, as well as reading of secondary sources. The site was visited on 4 February 2015 and an appraisal of the building undertaken.

1.4 The principle of a heritage statement is that a thorough understanding of the areas to be altered should be prepared enabling a rigorous assessment of the significance of the parts (and the whole) of the heritage assets and guiding proposals for change. An impact assessment is presented to ascertain whether the proposed alterations would preserve the significance of the heritage asset.

1.5 The proposed works are described in the application drawings to be prepared by Anat Talmor, architect. It is proposed to:

- Demolish the existing conservatory at the rear;
- Undertake minor alterations to the interior;
- Reinststate the cast iron flower balcony to the ground floor, front window;
- Construct a replacement, single-story rear extension.

The drawings are numbered: 32 BL 07 001 P2, 002 P2, 003 P2, 004 P2, 008 P2, 010 P2, 011 P2, 012 P2 and 013 P2.

1.6 I would like to acknowledge Harriet Nowell-Smith, Oliver Burgel and Anat Talmor for the assistance with research and analysis.

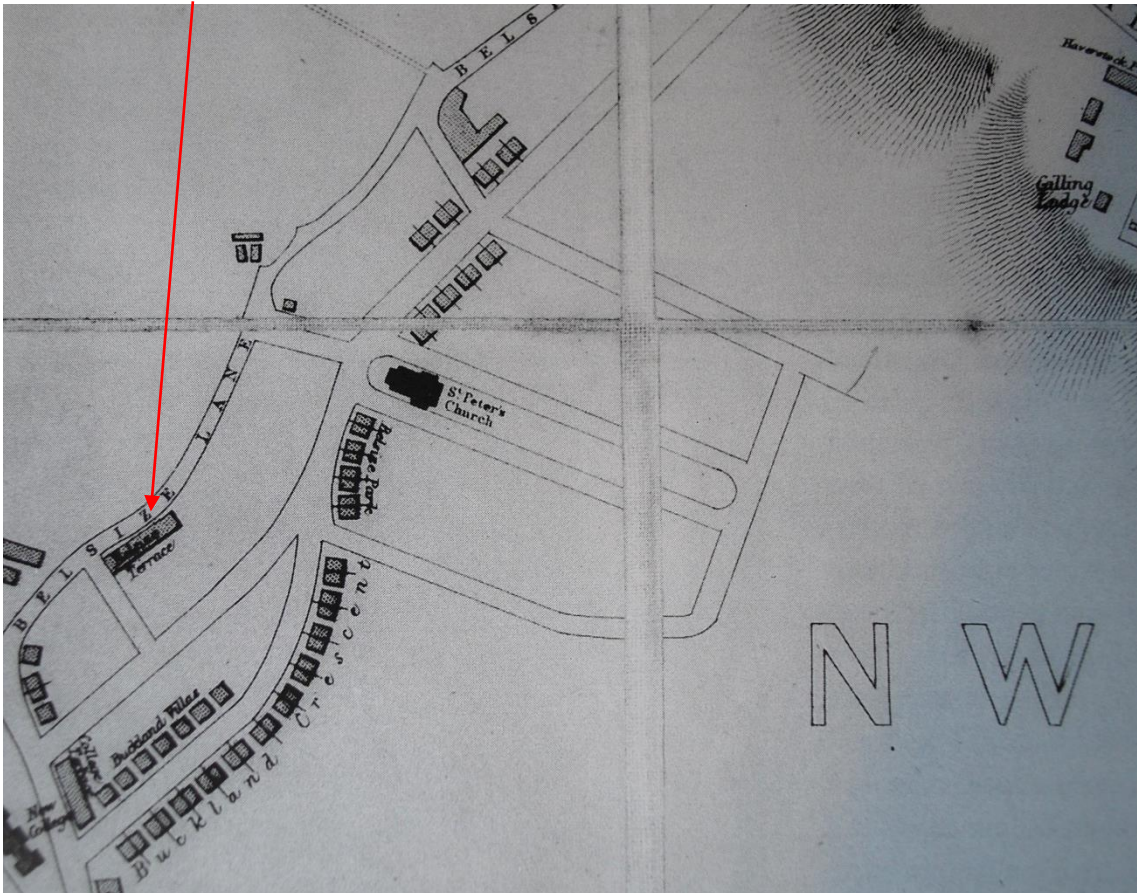
2 DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

2.1 The Camden History Society notes that Nos. 79-93 Belsize Lane were recorded noted as 'new houses' in the parish vestry minutes of 1856 (*Streets of Belsize*, 2009, p 63). The eight houses were named 'Belsize Terrace'. The general history of development of the Belsize estate is set out in the *Streets of Belsize* and *Belsize 2000: A living suburb* (Belsize Conservation Area Advisory Committee, 2000). A more detailed account can be found in T F T Baker, Diane K Bolton and Patricia E C Croot, 'Hampstead: Belsize', in C R Elrington (ed.) *A History of the County of Middlesex: Hampstead, Paddington*, (London, 1989), volume 9, pp. 51-60. Below are copies of historic maps that summarise the changes:



1848, Wyld

Belsize Terrace



1862, Weller



1871, Ordnance Survey

2.2 The principal builder in the area was Daniel Tidey, who lived in one of his own houses in Belsize Park. He started work, erecting large stuccoed town houses, in 1855 from the western end, fronting the existing Belsize Lane, followed by Belsize Park and Buckland Crescent. These houses were built for the wealthy professional and commercial class rather than for aristocratic occupation. In 1858 only 50 houses had been built; by 1864 there were more than 100 families on the estate. It is not known, however, if Belsize Terrace was part of Tidey's development.

2.3 In 1861 the census returns recorded the heads of the households in the terrace were recorded as follows:

1. No head recorded. A Hemming son and daughter are recorded, with a visitor and two servants (it appears to be the same family as that at no. 8);
2. Vacant;
3. John Davies, a dissenting minister, with his wife, ten children and two servants;

4. Two households: Elizabeth (?) Tedu, a governess, with two pupils, a niece, a visitor and a servant; Charles Motherville, a retired Royal Navy officer, his wife and a servant;
5. Anna Newton, a fundholding widow, with her cousin and two servants (This appears to be no 87 Belsize Lane.);
6. Mary Ann Roberts, a widow, with three children and a servant;
7. Sarah Snowdon, an unmarried schoolmistress with three pupils and two servants;
8. Samuel Hemming, an iron building manufacturer, with his wife, two children, a boarder and two servants.

2.4 A large rear extension had been added by 1934 (after 1919) and by 1976 the front garden had been removed to provide access to a garage at basement level.



1934-6, OS



Historic rear extension.



Rear extension across the full width of the 'well'.



1976. London Metropolitan Archives.

3 DESCRIPTION

3.1 The building is a three storey and basement terrace house, two bays in width. It is completely covered in stucco with a slate (? artificial) roof which has dormer windows to the rear; the rear elevation is stock brick. The stucco was formerly lined-out and the whole elevation is enriched: console brackets under the eaves; architraves with classical mouldings to the upper and first floor; segmental pediments, with foliated tympani, on bracketed entablature to principal floor, linked by continuous cast-iron balconies; ground floor window and doorway have rosette-patterned architraves. The double-hung, glazing bar sash windows are replacements.

3.2 An important feature missing is the cast-iron decorative 'flower balcony' that sat on the ground floor cill and that can be seen at many of the neighbouring houses.



Front elevation showing windows & balconies.



Rear elevation.



Context in terrace.



Missing cast-iron, flower balcony.

3.3 The plan form is entirely typical of the age: two rooms to each floor, with a staircase to one side. The historic uses of the rooms varied but the principal room was the drawing room at the first floor level looking out onto the street. The primacy of this room is emphasised by the external treatment. The interior is devoid of historic details as these were all removed before 2007; some of the reinstated details, such as the doors and fire surrounds, are not 'authentic'. The rear 'conservatory' was erected in 2007-8; it is of a standard, mass-produced design.

3.4 Many of the other houses in the terrace have later, rear extensions.



View of rear extensions to west.



View of rear extensions to east.

4 SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Introduction

The National Planning Policy Framework defines significance as ‘the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.’ (NPPF, Annex 2, Glossary, 56) Understanding the interests or heritage values that contribute to an asset’s significance, and how they relate to the fabric of the place, is vital to understanding the best means of conservation of the heritage asset.

4.1.1 Architectural and artistic interests

These are interests that stem from the design and general aesthetic values of a place. They can arise from conscious design, or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest lies in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest derives from other human creative skills, like sculpture.

4.1.2 Historic interest

An interest derived from past lives and events (including pre-historic), with which heritage assets can be associated, or which they illustrate. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation’s history, but also can provide an emotional meaning for communities arising from their collective experience or memory of a place: they can also symbolise wider values, such as faith and cultural identity.

4.1.3 Archaeological interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

4.2 Grading significance

4.2.1 The following grading system has been adopted to enable the relative weight of the interests or values contributing to the significance of the place and its setting to be compared:

A: *Exceptional significance*

Elements whose values are both unique to the place and relevant to our perception and understanding of architectural and social history in a national and international context. These are the qualities that, for buildings, warrant listing in grade I and II*.

B: *Considerable significance*

Elements whose values contribute to the heritage asset's status as a nationally important place. These are the qualities that justify statutory protection at national level.

C: *Some significance*

Elements whose values make a positive contribution to the way the place is understood and perceived, primarily in a local context.

D: *Little significance*

Elements whose values contribute to the way the place is perceived in a very limited, but positive, way.

N: *Neutral significance*

Elements which neither add to, nor detract from, the significance of the place.

INT: *Intrusive*

Elements of no historic interest, or aesthetic or architectural merit, that detract from the appearance of the place, or mask the understanding of significant elements.

4.3 Statutory designations

Listed buildings

4.3.1 No. 87 Belsize Lane, as part of the terrace of eight houses, 79-93, was added to the Secretary of State's list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest on 14th May 1974 at grade II. Such structures are defined as being of *special* architectural or historic interest. All listed buildings account for about 2% of the total stock of buildings in England. In March 2010, there were approximately 374,000 list entries, of which 92% were grade II, 5.5% were grade II*, and 2.5% were grade I.

4.3.2 The list description is as follows:

Terrace of 8 houses. Mid C19. Stucco. Slated roofs with projecting bracketed eaves and brick slab chimney-stacks to party walls. 3 storeys and basements. 2 windows each. Round-arched recessed entrances with rosette patterned architraves; doorways with pilaster-jambs carrying cornice heads, overlights and part glazed panelled doors approached by steps with cast-iron railings. Architraved sashes, most upper floors with margin glazing. Ground floor sashes have rosette-patterned architraves, console-bracketed cornices and cast-iron window guards; 1st floor, architraved sashes with console bracketed segmental pediments, having foliated tympani, and linked by continuous cast-iron balconies; 2nd floor, architraved sashes with lugged sills and flanked by enriched eaves brackets. INTERIORS: not inspected.

Conservation area

4.3.3 The whole area is included in the Belsize Conservation Area – defined as an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance - as designated by the London Borough of Camden in 1973. In the *Conservation Area Statement* (2003), the local authority describes the general character of the area as 'largely derived from mid-19th century Italianate villas. Within the Conservation Area there are, however, a number of distinct areas of varying character and appearance. These differences are caused by a combination of the following: land use, the density of development, the scale and style of buildings, their construction materials, the period of development, local topography and the predominance of gardens and trees.'

4.3.4 The conservation area is divided into six sub areas. For sub area the description is as follows:

This is an area of principally terraced development, built on a south-facing slope and dating largely from the 1850s to the 1880s. There is a variety of residential and commercial uses within the area. The principal shopping area focuses on the triangular space at the junction of Belsize Lane and Belsize Terrace. Some of the mews retain a variety of small scale business uses mixed with residential. The area has a tight urban grain and views within the area are contained either as a result of the short lengths of the mews and streets and the shallow bends in their alignment which reflect earlier routes and field

boundaries. There is general consistency in the use of London stock brick with stucco moulding. Belsize Village sub area has two distinct character areas, which closely interrelate:

- The mews area/western end of Belsize Lane and terraces bounding the triangular space
- Belsize Village centring on the junction of Belsize Lane/ Belsize Terrace and including Belsize Crescent.

The south-western end of Belsize Lane has a more open character, more vegetation and greater variety in the ages, materials and elevational treatment of the buildings and their relationship to the street. There is, however, some similarity because the buildings along its southern side are generally of similar height and scale to the mews areas.

Of particular note and prominent in views along Belsize Lane from the east, is the three storey, listed (Grade II), stucco terrace at Nos. 73- 93 with classical detailing and decorative first floor balconies. No. 101 is an L-shaped, red brick coach house with cupola and weathervane and semi-circular windows. The open space to the rear of Nos. 43 & 44 Belsize Park was converted into a car park but was historically an area that was never built on. It is a significant detractor as it terminates the vista into the Conservation Area from Daleham Gardens. The garages between Nos. 71 & 73 detract from the Belsize Lane frontage but are screened to some degree by the mature tree on the frontage, which is an important element in this part of the street.

4.4 Architectural and artistic interest

4.4.1 No. 87 Belsize Lane, as part of the historic Belsize Terrace, is of *considerable* (B) architectural and artistic significance as an example of an early Victorian terraced house, of pleasing proportions and with decorative detailing. It is a good example of the speculative development of the mid 19th century aimed to attract the middle classes.

4.4.2 In the *Guidance Notes For Listing* (Inspectorate of Ancient Monuments and Historic Buildings in the Dept of AM & HB, 1982), it was stated that 'the Listing Committee of the Historic Buildings Council in March 1970 advised that buildings of

special architectural or historic interest fall into the following categories and should be listed:-

- i. Buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition (contain a significant proportion of their original fabric);
- ii. Most buildings of 1700 to 1840 though selection is necessary;

Particular attention paid to:-

- v. Buildings of special value within certain types, either for architectural or planning reasons or as illustration social and economic history;
- viii. Buildings with group value; especially as examples of town planning (for instance, squares, terraces).'

Additional advice with regard to terrace houses stated that:

As far as ordinary town houses are concerned, there is a rather distinct dividing line, very roughly in about 1770. Up to this point interiors were generally panelled and stairs had turned balusters. After this point panelling practically ceased and stairs were denuded of almost any form of moulding. There was a parallel but less abrupt, transition to greater plainness in the exteriors. The design of town houses before this divide had not substantially changed since about the 1670s; indeed it is not always easy to distinguish a modest late C17 house from a mid C18 one if, as often happens, a few indicative features are missing.

According to the criteria the pre-1770 town houses will nearly always be listable [i.e. be of special interest], unless denuded of their interior features and drastically altered. The post-1770 town houses will often be listable. Since, however, the interiors are usually very plain compared to with the earlier houses, it is permissible to list only those which either have exteriors with several surviving features of value (such as moulded doorcase, windows, decorative fan, carved or moulded decoration, or decorative ironwork), or where the façade (by itself or as part of a terrace) is architecturally articulated – and not merely a flat surface. In either case the qualities of brickwork and workmanship will be a factor; and such merits as there are will be enhanced by group value or the prominence of siting as well as by any historical associations.

4.4.3 It is apparent from the above advice that the principal reason for listing late-Georgian, or in the case of the historic Belsize Terrace early Victorian, terrace houses,

is as examples of architectural town planning (for instance, squares, terraces); they illustrate architectural, social and economic history. In the case of Belsize Terrace there are also 'surviving features of value (such as moulded doorcase, windows, decorative fan, carved or moulded decoration, or decorative ironwork), or where the façade (by itself or as part of a terrace) is architecturally articulated – and not merely a flat surface.'

4.4.4 The overall level of architectural significance is assessed as *considerable* (B), that is, as an asset whose values are both unique to the place and relevant to our perception and understanding of architectural and social history in a national and international context. Some parts of the building, however, do not warrant such a high grading. The interior is at best of *little* significance as the only surviving historic fabric is the structure – partitions and floor. The rear elevation is of *some* significance, particularly in terms of the upper levels, but it has been altered; arguably, the conservatory is at best of *neutral* significance.

4.5 Historic interest

4.5.1 The historic interest of the house derives from it being part of the development of the Belsize estate in the mid the 19th century, and as a part of a relatively intact example of a terrace. Some of the historic residents may have been of significance – Hemming the maker of pre-fabricated cast iron buildings exported all over the world, and Davies the dissenting minister – but they were leaseholders or tenants and not associated with the construction of the development. The houses as a whole therefore may be categorised as of *some* (C) historic interest but some parts are of no historic interest.

4.6 Archaeological Interest

4.6.1 The house has *little* (D) archaeological significance as the nature and details of the historic building and the development of the site are readily understood from the documentary evidence and by comparison with other buildings in the square.

4.7 Contribution to group value

4.7.1 The group of historic buildings constitute a relatively well-preserved example of London development and the townscape value of the group is high. The overall

level of group significance is assessed as *considerable*, that is, it has elements whose values contribute to the heritage asset's status as a nationally important place. These are the qualities that justify statutory protection at national level.

4.8 Summary of overall significance

4.8.1 The fact that the house is a good example of a late Georgian terrace house set in a street of pleasing proportions and design justifies its grading as *considerable* significance. Later additions and alterations, however, are mostly *intrusive*.

Archaeological significance	<i>Little (D)</i>
Architectural/artistic significance	<i>Considerable (B)</i>
Historic significance	<i>Some (C)</i>
Area/group significance	<i>Considerable (B)</i>
OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	CONSIDERABLE (B)

5 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 The status of no. 87 Belsize Terrace as a building of special architectural or historic interest imposes constraints. Best preservation of the character of the building is achieved by its continuing use as a family home, with the significant elements carefully conserved and reinstated where missing, or enhanced. There is scope for significant enhancement at the front of the building; the reinstatement of the cast iron flower balcony to the original design would not only enhance the listed building but also the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and this part of the conservation area.

5.2 The overall approach to the proposed development is to retain and repair elements of high or special significance and to replace the rear extension to a more attractive and functional design. The proposed works are described in the application drawings to be prepared by Anat Talmor Design, Architects. In brief the main elements of the proposed works are as follows:

- Demolish the existing conservatory at the rear;
- Undertake minor alterations to the interior;
- Reinststate the cast iron flower balcony to the ground floor, front window;
- Remove unsightly fittings from the front elevation;

- The addition of a dormer window to the rear roof slope;
- Construct a new, single-storey rear extension.

The relevant drawings are numbered: 32 BL 07 001 P2, 002 P2, 003 P2, 004 P2, 008 P2, 010 P2, 011 P2, 012 P2 and 013 P2.

Legislative and planning policy context for historic buildings

5.3 Relevant legislation

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

5.3.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (hereafter the 1990 Act) is the primary legislation providing for the protection of historic buildings. Section 16(2) of the 1990 Act places a duty on local planning authorities and the Secretary of State 'to have special regard to the desirability of preserving [a listed building] or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses'.

5.3.2 With regard to conservation areas the 1990 Act [section 72 (1)] states that 'In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of conservation preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

5.3.3 In considering change to listed buildings and in conservation areas, the 1990 Act demands *special* attention and *special* regard, underling the importance of conservation to the nation.

National planning policy

5.3.4 National planning policy, for plan- and decision-making affecting designated heritage assets and their settings (as well as undesignated heritage assets) is set out in the NPPF, published in March 2012. The Government's over-arching aim, as set out in the NPPF, is that there should be 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development' (paragraph 14). One of the three dimensions of sustainable development is environmental and this includes 'protecting and enhancing ... the built and historic environment' (paragraph 7).

5.3.5 Included in the NPPF's core planning principles is the statement that planning should 'conserve heritage assets¹ in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations' (paragraph 17). In order to achieve this, their *significance*, or heritage interest, must be understood at the outset. This clearly requires expert assessment of significance, proportionate to the interest of the asset and the extent of the intervention proposed, which this heritage impact assessment seeks to provide.

Applications affecting heritage assets

5.3.6 The NPPF advises local planning authorities that they should require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected; 'The level of detail [required in describing the significance of a heritage asset affected by development] should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance' (paragraph 128). Authorities are advised to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise and to seek to avoid or minimise conflict between a heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal (paragraph 129).

5.3.7 The NPPF also states that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.'

5.3.8 As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that any substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, authorities are advised to weigh this harm against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the heritage asset's optimum viable use. (My underlining.)

¹ NPPF Annex 2: Glossary defines a heritage asset as: 'A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions' because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).'

5.3.9 The *Planning Practice Guidance* (DCLG, 2014) defines public benefits as follows:

Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits. Public benefits may include heritage benefits, such as:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting
- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation.

Assessment

5.3.10 By retaining the property as a single house, brought up-to-date and altered to suit the requirements of 21st century living, the proposed works would sustain the significance of the heritage asset.

5.3.11 The proposals to re-instate the cast-iron, flower balcony to the front window at ground floor level, and to remove unsightly fixtures, are major public benefits. They would restore one of the most distinctive and decorative features of the front elevation of the listed building, enhance the setting of the other listed houses in the terrace and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. In this respect the proposed design would better reveal the significance of the heritage asset and therefore enhance enjoyment of it and the sense of place.

5.3.12 The works to the interior would not cause any harm as the interior has been radically altered and all historic details and finishes have been replaced. There would be some removal of historic fabric at basement level on the rear elevations but any perceived harm would be limited and more than outweighed by the proposed enhancement works to the front elevation.

5.3.13 The addition of a dormer is an entirely traditional way of improving the amenity of the upper floor and the proposed design is similar to that approved this year at No 91 Belsize Lane. What remains to be considered is the design of the proposed, replacement 'conservatory' in the rear 'well'. In terms of style, the simple

glazed structure is a well-designed, 'honest' addition in a contemporary style that would allow the historic rear elevation to be seen. In these respects the proposed design is appropriate for its context and would make a positive contribution to the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. Most importantly, however,

6.3 Conclusion

6.3.1 The proposed design, prepared by Anat Talmor Design, Architects, is appropriate for its context. By replacing the present, uninspiring, rear extension with a carefully thought-out and simply detailed new structure, and by undertaking significant works of enhancement to the front elevation, the proposed alterations would make a positive contribution to the appearance, character, quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment.

6.3.2 In terms of weighing any harm against the public benefits of the proposal, this proposal can be recommended for approval.

James Edgar, BA, MSc, MA, Dip Archaeol, IHBC, MRTPI

30 March 2016