

Address:	Belsize Fire Station 36 Lancaster Grove London NW3 4PB		2
Application Number:	2016/0745/P	Officer: Ian Gracie	
Ward:	Belsize		
Date Received:	09/02/2016		
Proposal: Part change of use of former fire station (Sui Generis) to provide 11 self-contained residential units (Class C3) including replacement single storey side extension to east elevation and erection of two single storey side extensions to west elevation and insertion of roof dormers, with associated external alterations, landscaping and parking.			
Background Papers, Supporting Documents and Drawing Numbers:			
001; 002H; 003D; 004J; 005H; 006E; 007A; 008B; 051E; 052F; 053D; 054C; 055; 056 C; 057D; 060B; 061A; 062; 063C; 064B; 065; 066C; 067C; 068B; 069B; 070; 070A; 071; 072; 080A; 081B; 082A; 083A; 084; 100; 101; 102; 104; 104; 105; 106A; 107; 108; 109; 110; 111; 112A; 113A; 201; 202A; 203; 204; 205; 206; 207; 208; 209; 210; 211; 212; 213; 214; 215; SK01-B; SK02-B; SK03-B; SK04-B; SK05-B; SK06-B.			
Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Arboricultural Method Statement prepared by Challice Consulting dated 31 st January 2016; Energy Statement prepared by XCO2 Energy dated May 2016; Sustainability Statement prepared by XCO2 Energy dated February 2016; Design & Access Statement prepared by Shaun Knight Architecture dated January 2016; Fire Strategy prepared by BB7 dated 2 nd February 2016; Draft Construction Management Plan; Letter from Building Control Surveyor dated 29 January 2016; Heritage Statement prepared by DLG Architects dated January 2016; Planning Statement prepared by NTA Planning dated February 2016; Structural Assessment prepared by Hockley & Dawson Consulting Engineers; Surface Water Drainage Statement prepared by Dr Paul Garrad dated February 2016; Daylight and Sunlight and Overshadowing Statement prepared by Brooke Vincent + Partners dated February 2016; Daylight & Sunlight Addendum prepared by Brooke Vincent + Partners dated 28 th July 2016; Daylight & Sunlight Addendum prepared by Brooke Vincent + Partners dated 12 th August 2016.			
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant conditional planning permission subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement			
Date of application:	09/02/2016		
Application Number:	2016/1128/L	3	
Proposal: Demolition of existing side extension and replacement with single storey side extension to east elevation and erection of two single storey side extensions to west elevation and insertion of roof dormers, with associated external alterations, landscaping and parking associated with planning application for the part change of use of former fire station (Sui Generis) to provide 11 self-contained residential units (Class C3) (Ref no. 2016/0745/P).			
Background Papers, Supporting Documents and Drawing Numbers (as above)			
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Grant conditional Listed Building Consent			

OFFICERS' REPORT

Reason for Referral to Committee: Terms of reference 3(I) - Major development for 10 or more new dwellings

1. SITE

- 1.1 The application site comprises a Grade II* listed former fire station, which became vacant as part of the Fifth London Safety Plan cuts in January 2014. The building has an 'L' shape and is situated within a triangular site area of approximately 0.44 acres on the corner of Lancaster Grove and Eton Avenue, and located approximately 0.5km due south of Belsize Park London Underground Station. The building is significantly set back from the street (approximately 10m) with a large paved area to the north and east, soft landscaping comprising lawn and shrubs to the south facing Eton Avenue, and an access path to the west.
- 1.2 The application site is also situated within the Belsize Park Conservation Area. The statutory list description for the Grade II* status summarises the following important features:
- *"It is one of the most distinctive and original of a remarkable series of fire stations built by the LCC between 1896-1914, each executed to a bespoke design, which are widely admired as being among the most accomplished examples of LCC civic architecture of this rich and prolific period;*
 - *High architectural quality - as manifest in design, detail, materials and sensitivity to context;*
 - *It is also one of the most intact as originally built retaining its original timber appliance bay doors, plan form and numerous other features;*
 - *In the wider context of Edwardian architecture, this station is an exemplar of the use of a domestic idiom, the Arts and Crafts style, in a municipal building;*
 - *The building groups well with its neighbours in this area noted for its concentration of distinctive Arts and Crafts houses, including the many listed houses on Eton Avenue."*
- 1.3 The surrounding area is of a predominantly residential character that features detached and semi-detached properties of three stories. Directly to the south of the site on the opposite side of Eton Avenue is the independent preparatory Sarum Hall School.

2. THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Permission is sought for the part change of use of the former fire station (Sui Generis) to provide 11 self-contained residential units (Class C3) including replacement single storey side extension on the eastern elevation and erection of two single storey side extensions to west elevation and insertion of roof dormers, with associated external and internal alterations, landscaping and parking. Part of the site, where the existing vacant Firemen's Quarters are located, is to be untouched as part of this application because at the time the application was made

it was still occupied, and one unit is still in. Permission for a change of use of this part of the site will be required should the applicant wish to secure the remaining 420sqm as C3 residential floorspace on site in the future, including affordable housing provision and this is to be secured by a S106 agreement.

- 2.2 The proposed mix of units comprises 7 x 1-bed units and 4 x 2-bed units from lower ground to second floor level. A schedule of the proposed sizes of each unit is set out in paragraph 7.26 below. The various alterations will now be set out by floor level.

Lower Ground Floor

- Introduction of three new lightwells to the southern elevation to provide light into units 2, 3 and 4 (2m x 2.5m);
- Alteration to windows along southern elevation to provide access into units 2, 3 and 4 via the proposed lightwell;
- Alteration to doors and fenestration on northern elevation;
- Removal of internal walls to provide living space for units 2, 3 and 4.

Ground Floor

- Use of the Appliance Bay as a 2-bed unit and various internal alterations within this area;
- Internal alterations to southern part of the building to provide living space for unit 5;
- Construction of two ground floor extensions along western elevation. The northern-most extension will measure 2.3m (h) x 8.4m (w) x 2.7m (d). The southern-most elevation will measure 2.3m (h) x 7.1m (w) x 2.6m (d).
- Replacement of existing side extension along eastern elevation with an enlarged side extension to provide habitable accommodation for unit 1 with associated fenestration alterations. This will increase the size of the existing side extension by 0.5 in length and 3.2m in width. The height of the extension will also increase by 1.2m to a height of 5.4m;
- Installation of one-person circular lift adjacent to hose drain to provide access to upper floors.
- Installation of bike store

First Floor

- Internal alterations to northern section of the building to provide living accommodation for units 7 and 8;
- Introduction of mezzanine within unit 8 to provide a bedroom area;
- Use of the open courtyard as a communal terrace;
- Retention of firemen's' poles;
- Removal of skylight from courtyard area.

Second Floor

- Conversion of the roof space to provide habitable accommodation for units 9, 10, and 11.

Roof level

- Installation of 13 dormer windows comprising 5 on the southern elevation, 5 on the opposite side of the roof ridge, 2 on the eastern elevation and 1 on the opposite side of the roof ridge.

Revisions

2.3 Throughout the course of the application a number of revisions were made to the application.

- The residential unit was removed from the tower as this was considered to provide sub-standard living accommodation;
- Alterations to the internal arrangement of the Appliance Bay were made to minimise the impact on the historic fabric of the building;
- The depth of the lightwells on the southern elevation enlarged to provide more light into units 2, 3 and 4.

3. RELEVANT HISTORY

Pre-application

3.1 The applicant has been in discussions with the Council through the pre-application process. The original proposal comprised the redevelopment of the site to provide a total of 19 self-contained residential units. The main points raised by officers were as follows:

- The appliance bay is the most significant part of the building. As stated by Historic England, its subdivision will not be entertained.
- It remains almost impossible to envisage a realistic use for the tower.
- The addition of more than a dozen new dormers is extremely unlikely to be considered acceptable, with the southern elevation being particularly sensitive.
- There are concerns about the levels of daylight and sunlight that would reach the proposed basement units, the units at second floor level and the tower which have limited windows.

Summary History

2005/2114/L – Internal alterations to first floor flat at Belsize Fire Station. – **Granted 6th September 2005.**

2010/2709/L – Replacement of existing heating system, including boiler and associated controls and pipework, installation of new heater to appliance bay, and upgrading of electrical systems. – **Granted 13th July 2010.**

2011/0160/L – Creation of doorway in existing partition and erection of new partition to divide existing shower at first floor level. – **Granted 17th March 2011.**

4. CONSULTATIONS

6. STATUTORY PROVISIONS

- 6.1 The statutory provisions principally relevant to the determination of these applications are:
- 6.2 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (“the Listed Buildings Act”).
- 6.3 Section 72(1) requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area when considering applications relating to land or buildings within that Area.
- 6.4 Section 66 (1) and (2) of the act states:

“In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

- 6.5 The effect of these sections of the Listed Buildings Act is that there is a statutory presumption in favour of the preservation of the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and the preservation of Listed Buildings and their settings. Considerable importance and weight should be attached to their preservation. A proposal which would cause harm should only be permitted where there are strong countervailing planning considerations which are sufficiently powerful to outweigh the presumption. The NPPF provides guidance on the weight that should be accorded to such harm and in what circumstances such harm might be justified.

7. ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The principal consideration material to the determination of this application are summarised as follows:

- Land use;
- Conservation and design;
- Quality and mix of proposed accommodation;
- Affordable housing;
- Neighbour amenity;
- Access;
- Transport;
- Sustainability;
- Trees and landscaping;
- Contaminated land; and
- Planning obligations.

LAND USE

Loss of Existing Use

- 7.2 Policy CS10 states that the Council will work with its partners to ensure that community facilities and services are provided for Camden’s communities and people who work in and visit the borough. Further to this, paragraph 10.17 notes

that the London Fire Brigade (LFB) is reviewing the current fire service provision in the borough and may seek to redevelop stations in the future as necessary. This application is therefore a result of that process following its closure and sale in 2014.

- 7.3 Linked to the above is policy DP15 which states that the Council will protect existing community facilities by resisting their loss unless the specific community facility is no longer required in its current use. Where this is the case, evidence will be required to show that the loss would not create, or add to, a shortfall in provision for the specific community use and demonstrate that there is no demand for any other suitable community use on site. It is noted that, whilst the fire station provides an emergency service that serves the community (as noted in policy CS10), it is also considered to be a community facility in line with policy DP15. As such, the policy tests as set out above will apply.
- 7.4 As noted above, the Belsize Fire Station became vacant in January 2014 as part of the Fifth London Safety Plan, which caused the closure of 10 fire stations throughout London as part of the government's national framework for the fire and rescue services. It is not therefore considered that loss of this specific fire station will create, or add to, a shortfall of such facilities in the local area as it has been determined by the government that the existing facility has become surplus to requirements. Following this, the property was put up for sale by the London Fire Service on the open market and acquired by the applicant. Evidence of that marketing process has been provided by the applicant in their planning statement. The applicant has not therefore provided marketing evidence that the site was offered at a reasonable charge to community groups or voluntary organisations over a 12-month period. Given the unique situation of this site involving the sale of a fire station from the London Fire Brigade (LFB), there is no possibility of the existing specific community use (fire station) continuing on this site.
- 7.5 Given also the Grade II* listed status of the application site, considerable weight is afforded to the physical alterations that would be required in order to convert the existing property to another community facility which meets modern building requirements. In light of this, and the evidence provided above, it is considered that the loss of the existing use could be considered acceptable subject to an appropriate alternative use for the site which would be of public benefit.

Proposed Use

- 7.6 Housing is regarded as the priority land-use of the Local Development Framework, and the Council will make housing its top priority when considering the future of unused and underused land and buildings. The proposal would provide 11 additional units on site in a mix of 1-bed and 2-bed units. As such the provision of new residential accommodation is compliant with policies CS6 and DP2 as long as it meets the Council's residential development standards and does not harm the amenity of existing and future occupiers.
- 7.7 This is also subject to appropriate physical alterations being made to the Grade II* listed building to accommodate residential use.

Density