

The officer's email of 17 October 2016 refers to assessment of the proposals in line with policy and guidance.

There is no policy dealing specifically with roof lights as this would be inappropriate.

The issue comes under Policy **DP24 Securing High Quality Design**.

The applicant's sole aim in the refurbishment of the flat is to achieve high quality design. This should be apparent from the proposed internal alterations.

The architect's sole aim is equally to achieve high quality design in all aspects including external appearance, with due attention to the relevant guidance.

The relevant guidance is stated in the officer's email to be **CPG1 Design** (paragraphs 5.21 & 5.22 on page 45). Considering this in detail –

5.21 Roof lights can have an adverse impact upon the appearance of buildings and streetscapes.

That may be true but, in the majority of cases, roof lights have no adverse impact.

The guidance therefore provides more detailed considerations ...

This occurs when they are raised above the roof slope rather than being flush with the roof profile

The proposed roof lights are flush with the roof profile.

... or where they are an incompatible introduction into an otherwise uncluttered roofscape,

The roofscape comprises six individual pitches. One has an existing roof light. Roof lights are to be added to three further pitches. There will be no more than a single roof light on any one pitch.

No part of the proposed roofscape could be described as cluttered.

... or where they conflict with other architectural elements, e.g. gables and turrets.

There are no such elements and no conflicts with any other element.

5.22 Roof lights should be proportioned to be significantly subordinate in size and number

There are six pitches and four proposed roof lights, as above.

The largest roof light has an area of about 10% of the pitch in which it is installed; the next largest is about 7% of its pitch, and the other two much smaller.

This complies with any reasonable interpretation of **significantly subordinate**.

and should be fitted flush with the roof surface.

They are, as above.

Some properties, particularly listed buildings and those within conservation areas with prominent roof slopes may be so sensitive to changes that roof lights may not be acceptable.

The host building is not listed.

Within a conservation area, the guidance specifically refers to properties with **prominent roof slopes**.

The roof slopes on the host property are anything but **prominent**.

The front roof slope is not visible from the street, as illustrated on pages 1 and 3 of the design statement.

The only proposed roof light which may be visible from a street is on the side (South) pitch. This is fleetingly visible from Goldhurst Terrace, at a distance of 75m, over the roof of a house of contemporary character :



There is an existing blocked roof light on this pitch. The proposed roof light is lower on the pitch, flush and therefore less visible.

In summary, the proposals comply with the guidance in **CPG1 Design** and this guidance does not support the officer's conclusion.

However ...

Policy DP25 Conserving Camden's Heritage is clearly a prime consideration, with detailed guidance given in the **South Hampstead Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy** of February 2011.

Paragraph 13.41 states that **roof lights may be considered acceptable if fitted flush with the roof and located on the rear roofslope**. This is in line with the officer's recommendations and applies to proposed roof lights 3 and 4.

The obvious implication is that roof lights on other than the rear roof slope would not be considered acceptable, which clearly supports the officer's recommendations.

The basis of this guidance is given elsewhere in the **Character Appraisal**:

A survey in 2008/9 identified a number of issues considered to be eroding the character and appearance of the area. These included new roof lights detracting from the balance and design of the roofscape (12.3).

This trend had become apparent since the 1995 guidance (9.6), though it should be noted that the many roof lights which are clearly visible in the area fail to comply with the requirement to be flush with the roof surface contained in that guidance.

Notwithstanding that fact, the appraisal further states (7.16 and 12.20) that **rooflights inserted insensitively in the front or visible side roofslope, even when they are flush fitting, also erode character and upset the careful balance of solid to void on the principal elevation**.

Photographs are appended showing rooflights near the site and visible from the street (A) or rear (B). This is a small selection of the many visible in the area (eg Canfield Gardens). The concern may be understandable but the revised guidance may also be a case of shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted.

On the general principle that each proposal should be considered on its merits, it is not considered that the roof lights 1 and 2 in the front and side (South) pitches are inserted insensitively, or that they detract from the balance and design of the roofscape.

That debate is rendered academic by the fact that neither roof light is visible from Priory Road and cannot possibly be considered to upset any careful balance of solid to void on the principal elevation.

The fleeting view from Goldhurst Terrace of the proposed rooflight 2 on the side (South) roof pitch is an improvement on the view of the existing blocked rooflight, as above.

In this instance therefore, the proposals overall achieve the statutory requirement of enhancing or preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Consequently, a recommendation in favour of approval would be appropriate.









