

Aerial: Belsize Lane looking north-west. No. 87 highlighted in red.



87 Belsize Lane
London NW3 5AU
Planning Application
April 2017



SQUARE FEET ARCHITECTS

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Introduction

Square Feet Architects have been appointed by the building owners to submit a Planning Application for:

- to reconfigure the front garden of the property, including the replacement of an existing multistem palm tree with a new mature specimen and the provision of cycle storage at the Lower Ground Floor entrance level.

Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to detail the extent of the proposal that planning submission is being sought for, and to demonstrate our understanding and fulfilment of the Council's planning policies in relation to this proposal.

Drawings

All drawings reproduced in this report are Not To Scale. For scaled drawings please see Planning Application set.

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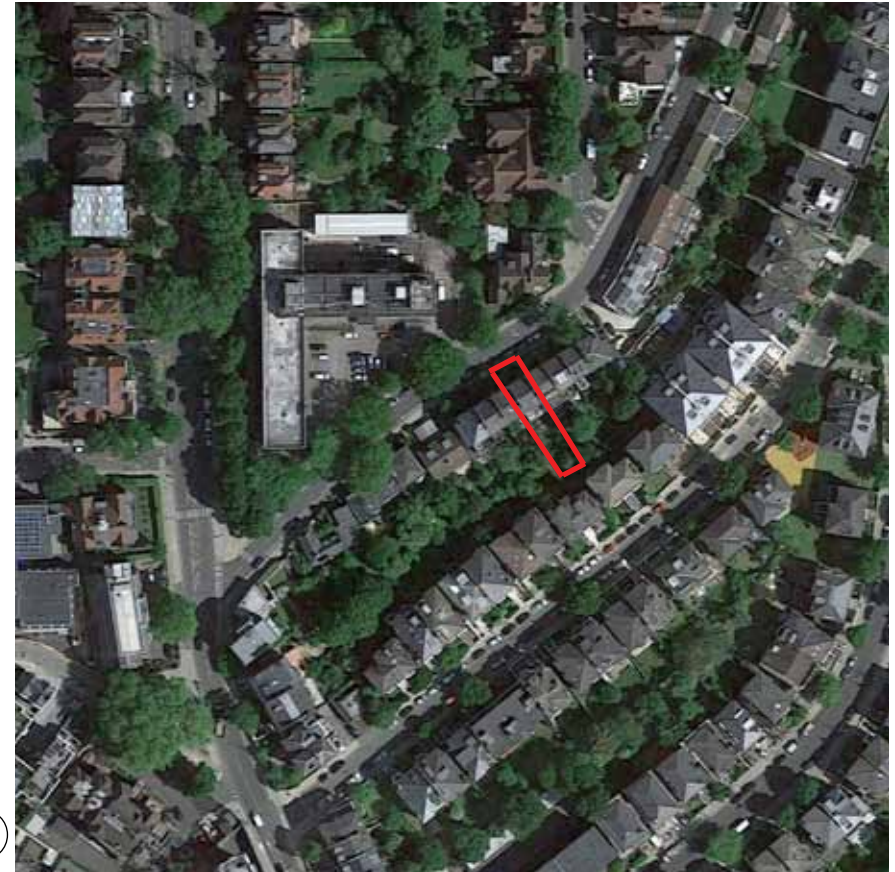
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Aerial Photo. No.87 highlighted in red. NTS

1.0 Context

1.1 Existing Site

The application site is located on the south side of Belsize Lane close to the junction with Fitzjohn's Avenue. It comprises a three storey plus semi-basement terrace building.

The house forms part of a Grade II listed terrace of eight mid 19th century houses (nos. 79 to 93) in stucco, slated roofs with projecting bracketed eaves and brick slab chimney-stacks to party walls. The site is within Belsize Park Conservation Area and it was built in 1856 as part of the new 'Belsize Terrace'.

The property was completely refurbished in 2007, including internal alterations and the removal of earlier rear extensions. 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'.

There is an existing single storey modern (2007) rear infill conservatory which is not visible from the public street and which was proposed to be replaced with a single storey glazed infill extension; this gained permission in previous planning application (2016/2089/P).

Many of the other houses in the Listed terrace have similar rear extensions and loft conversions with rear facing dormers.

In support of the previous planning application 2016/2089/P, a detailed Heritage Statement and impact Assessment with regards to the proposals was prepared by James Edgar and it is also attached to the current pre-application submission.

1.2 Recent Planning History

Case No: 2005/0670/P Registered: 18/03/2005 Status: Approved

Conversion of 2 residential units into a single family dwelling including the demolition of the rear extension, addition of new basement conservatory to rear and external metal staircase to rear garden.

Case No: 2005/4904/L Registered: 02/12/2005 Status: Approved

Amendments to previous listed building consent (2005/0674/L dated 28/04/05, for internal and external works, the demolition of the rear extension, addition of new basement conservatory to rear and external metal staircase to rear garden) in respect of internal alterations to approved basement floor layout.

Case No: 2016/2089/P Registered: 19/04/2016 Status: Approved

Replacement of rear conservatory with new rear infill extension, replacement of rear rooflights with single new rear dormer and re-roofing of rear roof slopes, reinstatement of original store under front entrance steps and reinstatement of cast iron flower balcony to the ground floor front window.

Neighbouring relevant precedents:

No. 83 Belsize Lane

Case No: 2005/4470/P Registered: 16/02/2006 Status: Approved

Change of use of the basement flat and upper maisonette into a single dwelling house and external alterations to the rear elevation.



Aerial view of rear of the houses

1.3 Planning Policy

Camden's various planning policies wish to promote respect for local character in the design of all buildings and ensure that they are in harmony with their settings - aiming to help improve the local area through good design. This property has scope to be improved and in turn to enhance the conservation area.

The following policies are felt to be relevant to the proposal:

- CS6 Providing quality homes
- CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage
- DP24 Securing high quality design
- DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage
- DP26 Managing the impact of development on neighbours
- CPG1 Design
- CPG2 Housing

1.4 Existing Accommodation

The property is a single family dwelling and its use is not going to be changed.

The domestic scale of the existing building is maintained with the previously proposed extensions, which were designed to be subservient to the existing house and have minimal impact of the character and appearance of the listed terrace and conservation area.

The site is approx. 175 sqm. The existing house has approx. 259 sqm of Gross Internal Area with an additional 31 sqm of unconverted loft storage space in the eaves of the existing roof.

Front Garden

The front garden gives direct access to the Lower Ground and the Upper Ground Floors.

The lightwell immediately adjacent to the building is narrow and not very usable.

The upper part of the garden has a paved pathway linking the public pavement to the steps leading up and down and a graveled area, enclosed by a continuous low hedge. In this area a multistem palm tree was planted recently although this is felt to clash with the historical appearance of this listed property.

The level of the front garden is not straight as it slopes down gradually from the external railing towards the house.

Rear Garden

As mentioned, in the rear garden there currently is a recent single storey conservatory which, as detailed in the previous planning application (2016/2089/P), will be removed and replaced with a new extension to the rear of the house with a new terrace above. The stair going to the Upper Ground Floor level rear door is in cast iron and its landing platform is held up by a cast iron square post placed under the outer corner.

Windows

All the windows have slim sashes and are single glazed. The small window on the front at the Lower Ground level is the only fixed window at the house, nevertheless its frame is staggered to mimic the shape of a sash one.



Front Garden from Belsize Lane

2.0 Proposal

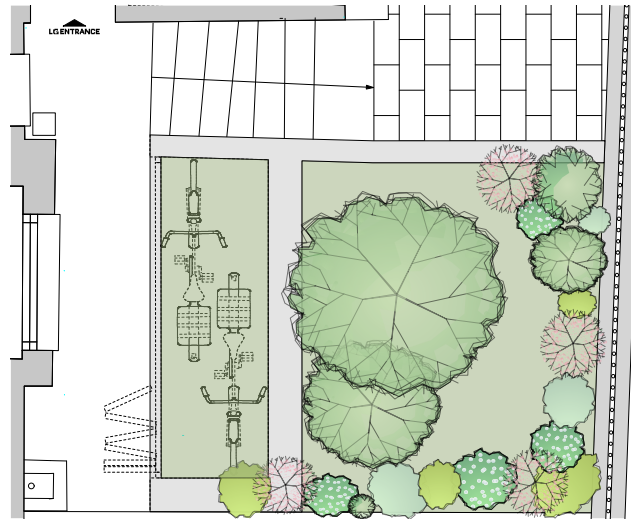
Front garden

The building owners wish to have a cycle store at the property, which can be obtained by marginally raising and levelling the front garden ground to create a new cycle store underneath that. A new green roof to the cycle store, enclosed in York Stone to match the existing steps and pathway, will completely hide the bikes and so help to maintain the townscape contribution of the garden. In order to close and lock the cycle store and not obstruct the access to the Lower Ground Floor entrance, a six-panel timber slatted sliding folding door arrangement will be installed.

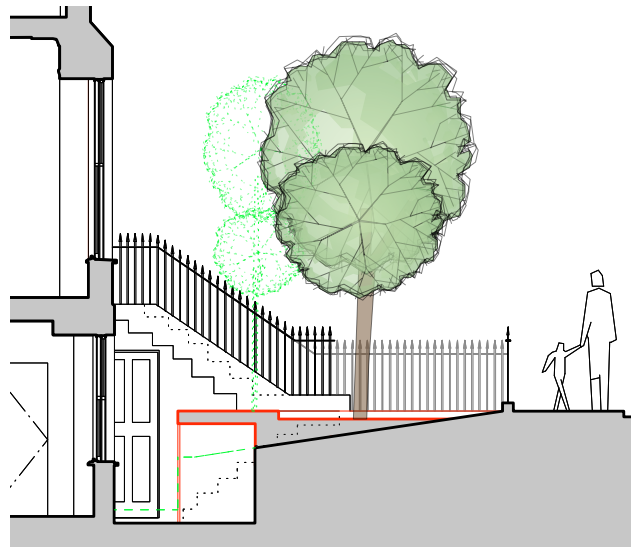
In order to raise the garden level and to insert the cycle store underneath, the existing multistem palm tree needs to be removed. As it currently does not match the historical appearance of the property, we feel it should be replaced with a new more sympathetic native tree.

A new mature multistem specimen tree of 10-15 cm girth are to be provided in a new location, set back from the new York stone paving line (species as per the arboriculturalist's recommendations). Further, new planting will replace the hedging enclosure all around the graveled area and will so give an easier access to it.

Conditions may be applied to a planning approval requiring further details of the cycle store and landscaping.



Front garden - Proposed layout



Front garden - Proposed section showing cycle store

3.0 Existing Photographs

Front Garden



View of the front garden from Belsize lane, showing the clash between the existing palm tree and the historic asset of the house.



View from main entrance of the front garden, showing the sloping graveled area surrounded by the hedging and the narrow lowered area.



View of the adjacent house garden, showing the lowered area enlarged.

4.0 Sustainability

Wherever possible, all building materials to be used will be either reclaimed, or environmentally friendly products accredited by the Environmental Statement/ISO 14001.

All new hard landscaping will be provided with a sustainable urban drainage system, either through being inherently permeable, or by draining to a purpose made soakaway on site. In accordance with the Council's policies the intention is to ensure as far as possible that there would be a reduction in the discharging of surface water to the adopted sewers from the existing situation.

The elements of new construction will be constructed to the stringent thermal insulation standards of the Building Regulations Part L1B.

5.0 Access

The existing building is a historic Victorian terraced property. The apartment entrance door at Upper Ground Floor level is accessed by an ascending flight of seven steps from pavement level, with a further step on the door line.

The apartment entrance door at Lower Ground Floor level is accessed from the front garden by a descending flight of eight steps from pavement level.

Within the context of the proposals and the topography of the site, it is not reasonably possible to improve its access. However, in providing dedicated space for cycles at Lower Ground level, the existing situation is being improved as far as possible.

The site has a PTAL rating of 6a.

6.0 Conclusion

This proposal is considered to be in keeping with the scale and proportion of the host building and the character of the conservation area and the neighbouring properties.

The removal of the existing unsympathetic palm tree and their replacement with a new appropriately sited mature native multistem specimen will contribute positively to the conservation area.

The design of the front garden works will also maintain and enhance the character of the streetscape, while improving accessibility and amenity for the house owners.

We trust therefore the pre application will be supported with a positive recommendation.

If any further information is required, please contact Anna Saldi at Square Feet Architects.