



Design & Access Statement

Flat 4, 7 Crossfield Road, London, NW3 4NT

This Statement supports a planning application for the erection of 2 dormers on rear elevation above windows on principal elevation below and the alteration of existing front dormer to create a door with access onto a small balcony.

The application is supported by the following documentation: -

- Existing Floor plans, elevations and sections
- Proposed Floor plans, elevations and sections
- OS Plan
- Planning application form
- CIL application form
- BACs Payment to Camden Council

Site: The property is located on the west side of Crossfield Road, at its northern end. It forms part of a wider balcony of broadly identical properties, most of which have been converted into flats. The application property occupies the 2nd and 3rd floors of the former dwelling-house, which is 3 storeys high, above an exposed basement level, 2 bays wide and is characterised by a full height canted bay which rises from basement level. The entrance within the left-hand bay is accessed via a short flight of steps. The building is constructed of gault brick, which has been painted white, and has a slated roof. The front roofslope is pierced by a dormer and a small rooflight. At the rear, the roofline is pierced by 1 dormer and a conservation rooflight.

The property is located within the Belsize Park Conservation Area, which was first designated in 1973 and extended many times, to include the application site in 1991. The Council's Conservation Area Appraisal describes the areas character as "a distinct and substantial area of mid 19th century villa development that has strong consistency in the heights of its buildings, which are mostly three storeys with lower ground and sometimes an attic level, their relationship to the streets with front gardens set behind boundary walls, and their Italianate styling. It notes that Crossfield Road/ Adamson Road formed part of the Eton College estate and were developed speculatively by a number of different developers in the 1870's and 1880's. It notes the yellow brick balconys provide a degree of enclosure to the street and echo the full height bays.

It is clearly apparent from street level that front roof balconys exist within the balcony on both sides of the street. Plates 1-5 in Appendices 1 and 2 clearly demonstrate that front balconies are both an historic and existing characteristic of these properties and the area. Thus, front balconies clearly form part of the established character of the conservation area in this location.

Proposal: On the front elevation of the property, the proposals comprise the dropping of the sill of the existing dormer window to create a door and the erection of 1.7m high simple metal railings around the existing flat roof of the canted bay to create a very small balcony to provide the flat

with some amenity space. The door would be constructed of timber and the additional element of the dormer would be clad in lead to match the existing. There would be no other changes to the front roof-slope. At the rear, it is proposed to erect 2no. dormers. The size of the dormers and number of windows would reflect the principal elevation below i.e. that above the paired sashes would comprise 2 windows and that above the single sash would be narrower and comprise one sash window. The slim dormer cheeks would be lead clad. The proposed sash windows and door would be double glazed and constructed of timber to match the host dwelling.

Relevant Planning Policies:

- London Plan (2016)
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012)
- LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies
 - Core Strategy
 - CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development)
 - CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage)
 - Development Policies
 - DP24 (Securing high quality design)
 - DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage)
 - DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours)
 - Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs)
 - CPG1 (Design) 2015
 - CPG6 (Amenity) 2011
 - Belsize Conservation Area Statement 2002
- Draft Camden Local Plan

The Camden Local Plan was formally submitted to the government for public examination in summer 2016. Following the public hearings, the Council is consulting on Main Modifications to the Local Plan. Following the Inspector's report into the examination, which is expected in early-mid April 2017, policies in the Local Plan should be given substantial weight. Adoption of the Local Plan by the Council is anticipated in June or July. At that point the Local Plan will become a formal part of Camden's development plan, fully superseding the Core Strategy and Development Policies, and having full weight in planning decisions. The following policies are relevant:

 - G1 Delivery and location of growth
 - A1 Managing the impact of development
 - D1 Design
 - D2 Heritage

Planning Considerations:

The main considerations material to the assessment of this application have been summarised as follows:

- Principle
- Design
- Amenity Impact

Principle

As noted above, the conservation area is characterised by front balconies surrounded by metal railings. These are clearly illustrated by Plates 2-5 in Appendix 2. These front balconies form part of the *established* character of the conservation area. An historic photograph of the properties dating from 1957 shows railings on the roofs of the 2no. of the canted bays (Plate 1, Appendix 1), demonstrating that balconies and railings clearly formed part of the character of the conservation area in 1991, when it was designated. Thus, the proposals respect the historic character of the street. It is also interesting to note that a recent proposal for a front balcony at roof level, at No.15, was not objected to by the Conservation Area Committee.

The principle of 2no. dormers which reflect the width and number of windows on the elevation below is encouraged by the Council's SPD and was recently accepted at No.15 Crossfield Road. Many of the adjacent properties have rear dormers, which now form part of the established character of the conservation area. Thus, the proposals would not appear out of context but, instead, would reflect the local character.

Design

In response to the Council's SPD, at paragraph 5.8, which states that a roof alteration or addition is likely to be unacceptable in certain circumstances, the following can be concluded in relation to the application site:

- The roofline of the balcony does not display an unbroken run of valley roofs. The roofs are hipped and many have been altered by one large, one small or two dormers;
- The balcony does not have a roof line that is largely unimpaired by alterations or extensions as described above;
- Neither the application building nor the balcony has an additional storey or mansard;
- The building is the same height as all the surrounding properties and the proposed dormer window would not add significantly to the bulk or unbalance the architectural composition of the building or wider balcony;
- Neither the building nor the balcony has a roof line that is exposed to important London-wide and local views from public spaces. These properties have shallow roofs which are not as prominent as the principal elevations;
- The roof construction and form of these properties are clearly suitable for roof additions as other rear dormers exist within the balcony;

- The building was originally designed as a wider composition. However, the architectural style of the wider balcony would not be undermined by an addition at roof level as the roofline of the wider terrace has already been altered through the addition of front balconies and rear dormers;
- The property forms part of a group of buildings of the same height. The roof extension would respect and reflect other dormer windows within the terrace, thereby reinstating the harmony to a greater degree, as well as the architectural design and proportions of the property;
- The scale and proportions of the building would not be overwhelmed by the proposed dormers, which would be set in from the sides of the roof, up from the eaves and down from the ridge; thereby ensuring the historic roof would remain clearly apparent. The dormers would be of a modest scale *within* the existing roof-slope and would not overshadow the 4-storey dwelling.

In response to the Councils SPD, at paragraph 5.11, which states that alterations to, or the addition of, roof dormers should be sensitive changes which maintain the overall structure of the existing roof form will be generally considered acceptable, providing that certain circumstances are met. These circumstances are considered below in relation to the proposals: -

- a) The pitch of the existing roof is sufficient to allow adequate habitable space without the creation of disproportionately large dormers or raising the roof ridge, as demonstrated by the fact that dormers of the same width exist within the wider terrace and have just been approved at No.15;
- b) The rear dormers would not cut through the roof ridge and would be sufficiently below the ridge of the roof to avoid projecting into the roofline when viewed from a distance.
- c) The rear dormers would not interrupt an unbroken roofscape as dormers already exist within the terrace;
- d) The dormers and windows would relate to the façade below in relation to the scale, number and pane size. They would appear as a separate projection on the roof surface. The windows would be aligned with windows on the lower floors and be of a size that would be clearly subordinate to the windows below. The dormer cheeks would be no wider than the structure requires;
- e) The property does not have a parapet, so the dormers would be set up from the eaves within the roof-slope;

In accordance with BE26 of the Conservation Area Appraisal, the following conclusions can be drawn;

- Neither the rear dormers nor the front balcony and railings would be detrimental to the form and character of the existing building, or the wider streetscape. The 4-storey building would remain dominant and the original roof-slopes would remain clearly apparent.
- The property forms part of a terrace and wider group but neither are unimpaired and both rear dormers and front balconies and simple railings form an integral part of the *established* character;
- The property forms part of a composition but the original architectural balance has already been disturbed by historic alterations;
- The roofs are not prominent as they are shallow. The rear roof-slope is only visible from surrounding properties, not from the public realm.



Amenity

Policy CS5 seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered. Furthermore, Policy DP26 seeks to ensure that development protects the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents. This includes privacy, outlook, and implications on daylight and sunlight.

In terms of privacy, the proposed rear dormers would allow for some overlooking of the rear gardens of adjoining properties, but this would not be in any way worsen the existing situation as there are currently views from existing windows on the rear elevation of the property. This is also true of the front balcony alterations.

The rear dormers would not result in a material loss of daylight/sunlight to the existing or neighbouring dwellings. The rear dormers would not result in a significant increase in the sense of enclosure or overlooking, or cause unacceptable overshadowing, to any greater degree than the existing situation.

None of the other works at the front of the property would result in any significant harm in terms of daylight/sunlight or overlooking. A front balcony already exists at 6no. properties within the street and the very small size of the balcony would not result in large groups or gatherings and thereby noise to be generated. The front balcony would provide the occupiers with outdoor amenity space which is currently lacking.

Access: There would be no change to existing pedestrian or vehicular access to and from the property.



APPENDIX 1
Historic photograph showing front railings



Plate 1. Photograph dating from 1957 showing railings at roof level above 2no. of the canted bays.

(source: <http://www.reelstreets.com/films/account-rendered/>)



Plate 2. Properties on the west side of Crossfield Road showing the 3no. existing front balconies.

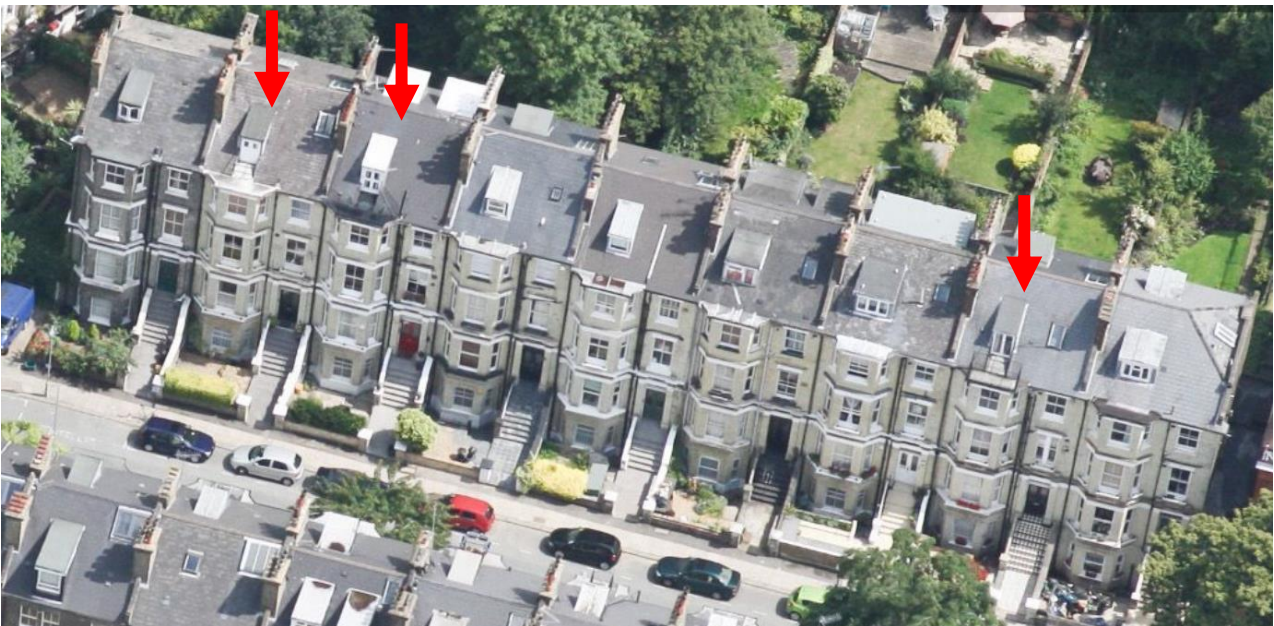


Plate 3. Properties on the east side of Crossfield Road showing the 3no. existing front balconies.



Plate 4. View from street level showing the 3no. existing front balconies and associated railings within the wider street (demarcated by red arrows). The appeal site is demarcated by a blue arrow.



Plate 5. Nos.17-37 Crossfield Street, on the same side as the application site, most of which have front balconies at roof level.