



## DESIGN STATEMENT

77B BELSIZE LANE, LONDON, NW3 5AU

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**SQUARE FEET ARCHITECTS**

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## INTRODUCTION

This terrace of three two-storey houses in the Belsize Conservation Area was built in 1985. Each house has an integral garage with a recessed entrance off the street that also provides protection to the entrance door. There are small gardens to the rear accessed from a narrow conservatory with sliding doors and basic single glazing to the roof.



## PROPOSAL

This application covers alterations and extension to the central house in the terrace including conversion of the garage into habitable accommodation and increasing the size of the conservatory to the rear. It is also proposed to change the windows to both front and rear from upvc framed to matching versions in aluminium framing.



front elevation



entrance and garage doors



elevation detail showing upvc oriel window



rear elevation



conservatory into garden



rear garden boundary fence

## HISTORY

These three houses were built in 1985 under planning permission reference PL/8500618/R1. This consent included a condition removing any permitted development rights covered by Classes I and II of Schedule 1 of the General Development Order 1977. We assume that this restriction will be deemed to remain in force and that the allowances set out in the current General Permitted Development Order 2015 will therefore not apply. It should be noted however that, were it not for the planning condition, increasing the size of the rear conservatory would fall well within these allowances.

The Article 4 (1) Direction introduced in the Belsize Conservation Area in 2010 requires planning permission for alterations to windows or features to the fronts of houses. The conversion of the garage into habitable space involves replacing the existing garage door with a solid wall construction of matching appearance together with reconfigured glazing above, incorporating opening lights to provide ventilation to the new kitchen and utility room behind.

There is precedent within this Conservation Area for the conversion of garages into habitable spaces, including the following;

2013/6892/P	61b Belsize Lane	approved 14.4.14
2014/3186/P	89 Fellows Road	approved 14.7.14
2015/1973/P	97 Belsize Lane	approved 4.9.15

## DESIGN

### Garage conversion

The existing kitchen is rather compact for a house of this size. The garage is similarly compact and too small for a modern car, as a result it is not used for parking but as overspill storage. It therefore makes sense to reconfigure the layout to create an appropriately sized kitchen leading through to the living spaces at the rear together with a dedicated utility space.

The garage door will be replaced with a solid wall finished externally in stained timber boarding, laid in a diagonal pattern to match the existing appearance. There is currently a large panel of single glazing over the doors, this will be replaced with double glazing in three panels incorporating a central opening light to provide natural ventilation to the utility and kitchen.

Since there is no external store waste and recycling bins are presently kept in the garage to be placed outside on collection days. The proposals include a bin enclosure to provide protection and security, finished in timber boarding to match the adjacent wall.

### Windows

The existing, original, windows to the house are in brown upvc framing with a wood grain effect. The front window to the current kitchen is configured as an oriel, projecting out to take advantage of the first floor overhang above. Rather than increasing the impression of space within the room this brings the interior uncomfortably close to the pavement and reduces the feeling of privacy. In addition this creates an overly deep sill making the window more difficult to open. The upvc has degraded in places causing the surface to discolour and peel. A number of the mitred corner joints have opened up, one window frame has a large crack. The proposals include replacing all the windows, (front & rear), with matching versions in powder coated

aluminium frames. Whilst this material may not be the preferred option in the conservation area it is likely to age better than upvc and is appropriate for a building of this era. The oriel window is replaced with one in the plane of the wall in order to provide more of a buffer to the public pavement. Although each of the three houses has this feature, the adjacent property has an angled supporting structure below the sill giving a different appearance such that the change to 77B would not appear incongruous.

It is also proposed to remove the planting boxes fixed below the first floor front windows. Although potentially a nice feature the owners have had no success in growing anything and have found these frustrating and detrimental to the appearance of the house.

#### Rear conservatory

The existing conservatory is too narrow to provide adequate sitting space and the connection between house and garden is limited. The single glazed roof is very basic, offering little insulation and leaving the rear living space cold and uncomfortable. The garden is small, but could accommodate a slight increase in the depth of the conservatory whilst widening the structure would allow the space to flow better from inside to outside. The new construction would be framed in aluminium to match the other new windows and include more efficient double glazed panels to the roof.

## CONCLUSION

Incorporating the garage into the house allows a more generous open plan arrangement of ground floor spaces flowing through from the kitchen to a living space linking directly to the garden. Limited adjustments are required to the front elevation. The garage is not used for parking and the owners have two residents permits allowing parking on the street. The alterations would not therefore add to the demand for parking spaces in the area.

Construction of a dedicated bin store provides a secure and contained location, accessible for collection but protected from ill-use by passers-by or nocturnal animals.

The existing windows are approaching the end of life and need replacing. Aluminium provides a long term maintenance-free solution that will have little effect on the overall appearance of the house.

A slightly larger conservatory reduces the garden area but allows the indoor living room to expand outwards to gain maximum benefit from the outdoor space. The changes have no impact on the adjacent houses and are not visible from beyond the site.