

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	
		N/A	Consultation Expiry Date:	11/11/2018
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Josh Lawlor			2018/4378/P	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
11 Elizabeth Mews London NW3 4TL			See draft Decision Notice	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
Installation of rendered boards fixed to front and side elevations and alterations to windows and doors.				
Recommendation(s):		Refuse Planning Permission		
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission		

Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:	Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:						
Consultations						
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>A site notices were displayed from the 18/10/2018 to the 10/11/2018 The application was also publicised in the Ham & High from the 17/10/2018 to the 10/11/2018.</p> <p>The following objection was received from the Belsize CAAC:</p> <p><i>Object to the loss of front door on Mews Façade</i> <i>Object to the rendering of all facades, in particular the loss of brickwork on Mews Façade</i> <i>Object to design of proposed windows and doors which are out of scale with the cottage.</i></p> <p>Officer response: See the design and heritage section of this report</p>					

Site Description

The application site comprises a three-storey single dwelling that occupies a corner site adjacent a small courtyard on the north west side of Elizabeth Mews. The dwelling is the sole original building within the terrace, the mews building to the south west being brick-built post-war replacements.

The Site is located within the Belsize Park Conservation Area and since 2010 has been subject of an Article 4 Direction, which removed most permitted development rights. The controls seek to preserve the historic character, detail and appearance of the Conservation Area. This includes painting or rendering over previously unpainted brickwork.

Relevant History

2017/0757/P - Alterations to ground floor windows and doors and installation of new rooflight, green roof and solar panels. **Granted** at members briefing - 08/05/2017.

2018/0760/P - Application of render to front and side elevations and alterations to windows and doors – **Refused** - 11/06/2018

Relevant policies

The National Planning Policy Framework 2018

London Plan 2016, consolidated with alterations since 2011

Camden local Plan 2017

Policy D1 Design

Policy D2 Heritage

Policy A1 Managing the impact of development

Camden Planning Guidance

Camden Planning Guidance 1 Design (CPG1 Design)

Belsize Conservation Area Statement 2003

Article 4 Direction 2010

Belsize Conservation Area Fact Sheet

Belsize Conservation Area Design Guide

Assessment

1. Proposed Development

- 1.1 The application seeks to apply render to fixed cement boards attached to the front and side elevations of the building. The application also incorporates alterations to the windows and doors that have previously been approved under application 2017/0757/P.
- 1.2 Render was proposed as part of the original plans submitted under application 2017/0757/P, but this element of the proposal was removed following objections from the Council and the Conservation Area Advisory Committee. Following this, the application 2018/0760/P to render to the front and side elevations was refused.
- 1.3 12.5mm Cement insulated boards will be fixed to the elevations, using plugs anchored into the mortar joints. The proposed boards measure 2500mm x 600mm, with fixings at every 300mm using mortar joints. A coat of render is then applied to the boards.

2. Assessment

- 2.1 The material consideration in the determination of this application relates to the impact of the proposed render and fenestration alterations on the character and appearance of the host building, the surrounding Mews and the wider Belsize Conservation Area.

Render applied to fixed boards

- 2.2 Elizabeth Mews forms part of the Belsize Conservation area and is an important feature of the area's development and history. The mews was associated with the shops in Elizabeth Terrace and provided stabling and accommodation for carriage drivers. The mews is characterised by two storey buildings in London Stock brick, which contributes to its warm and informal appearance.
- 2.3 The Belsize Conservation Area Statement states: 'the north-eastern terrace has been rebuilt but is of appropriate scale and materials and retains the height of the original buildings. The terrace to the south-west retains more of its original character'
- 2.4 It is proposed to apply render to fixed boards attached to the front and side elevations of no. 11 facing the mews to rationalise the exterior of the building and to be in keeping with the proposed modern windows and doors. The render is also proposed in order to ensure water penetration is prevented. It is accepted that there are examples of less sensitive developments within the mews, and the council therefore wishes to protect and enhance the historic elements that survive.
- 2.5 Number 11 Elizabeth Mews is an historic building on the mews that has undergone insensitive development over recent decades. The style and position of the windows and doors have been substantially altered and this gives the building a slightly incoherent appearance. However, the historic brickwork survives and within the brickwork are brick arches indicating the original position of the windows. The brickwork is traditional London stock constructed in Flemish bond. These elements reinforce and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 2.6 The Belsize Conservation Area guidelines clearly state that unpainted brickwork should be neither painted nor rendered. The Design Guide covering Elizabeth Mews states the following:

'Belsize has many attractive properties fronted in red or yellow London stock bricks, which given a warm and cheerful character to individual streets...

Unpainted brickwork should never be painted over. The painting over of unpainted brickwork now needs planning permission and will be resisted.'

- 2.7 The colour and texture of London stock bricks underpin the appearance of large parts of the Belsize conservation area, and along with the patina of age, establish its character and sense of place. While the original bricks feature rich colour variation and texture, render is a surface that is flat with little depth and character. Render would not have been the traditional surface material for the utilitarian buildings within the Elizabeth Mews. The Design Guide notes that there are examples of stucco-fronted properties in Belsize, but this material was used in the 1850s to mimic dressed stone and provide a grand appearance to the buildings.
- 2.8 There is one example of a rendered building within the Mews, no. 11b which is separated from the application property by a courtyard. The building is a new-build replacement dating to the 1960s, and there is no planning history for the addition of render. Its exterior appearance demonstrates a contrast with the brick buildings in the mews, as the material is notably poorer in terms of depth, variation and weathering properties.
- 2.9 While 11b is visually and physically separate from the rest of the terrace, the application of render to no. 11 would disrupt the visual continuity of the North West terrace by introducing a highly contrasting material. The sharp vertical line created by the render against the bricks would further emphasize this contrast, and the newly rendered building would not have a clear relationship with 11b in terms of design, which is clearly separate from the principle terrace.
- 2.10 It is acknowledged that the use of rendered fixed boards represents an improvement on the previous proposal to render to brickwork (2018/0760/P). This is because the proposal could theoretically be reversed at a later date, however this is not desired and would not overcome the previous reasons for refusal. It is also acknowledged that the appearance of 11 Elizabeth Mews could be improved, however applying render and masking the brickwork would not enhance the surviving historic elements of the building and as a result the works would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The existing brickwork contributes to the area's sense of place and is capable of sensitive repair and restoration that would preserve and enhance the mews character.
- 2.11 The proposal is considered to cause harm to the character and appearance of the host building, the Mews within which it sits and the wider Belsize Conservation Area. Paragraph 132 of the NPPF 2012 states that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.'
- 2.12 In this instance, the development is considered to cause less than substantial harm, and therefore, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use, as required by paragraph 134. However, no evidence has been presented to suggest that the property is currently unsuitable for family or other forms of residential accommodation or that it is likely to fall into disuse should the alterations not be carried out. Therefore, whilst the harm to the conservation area may be less than substantial, there are no public benefits, which would outweigh the identified harm.
- 2.13 The council is obliged to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, under s.72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013. The proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Belsize Conservation Area, contrary to Policies D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017, the London Plan 2016, and the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

Alterations to windows and doors

2.14 The application also includes alterations to the building's fenestration, which are identical to those considered and granted permission under application reference 2017/0757/P. The decision making process had due regard to the emerging Local Plan, and was assessed under policies and guidance that were not materially different to current policies A1, D1 and D2 of the Camden Local Plan 2017, the London Plan 2016, and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Refuse planning permission