

27 Belsize Park, London, NW3 4ES

Planning, Design and Heritage Assessment

Firstplan Ref: 19330

Date: October 2019

Contents

Section 1	Introduction	4
Section 2	Site Background.	5
Section 3	Application Proposals.	10
Section 4	Relevant Planning Policy.	11
Section 5	Heritage Assessment.	14
Section 6	Planning Assessment.	16
Section 7	Conclusions.	19

Section 1 Introduction

1.1 This Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Firstplan on behalf of our client, Messrs Kulick, Nouril, Ferera, in support of a planning application at 27 Belsize Park, London, NW3 2XS, for the following development:

“Removal of existing dormers and erection of new front, side and rear dormers to enlarge existing 5th floor flat.”

1.2 The proposal seeks to redevelop the loft space by upgrading and enlarging the existing roof storey in order to enhance the quality of accommodation provided by this currently run-down and poorly laid-out flat, creating a much improved and spacious 2-bedroom dwelling with access to a private terrace.

1.3 This statement should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement and the architectural drawings prepared by Lipton Plant Architects.

1.4 This statement is set out as follows:

- **Section 2** provides a description of the relevant background information, including a description of the site and surrounding area, and details of relevant planning history;
- **Section 3** details the application proposals;
- **Section 4** considers the relevant national, regional and local planning policies;
- **Section 5** assesses the proposals against the relevant heritage assets;
- **Section 6** outlines the relevant planning considerations; and
- **Section 7** draws conclusions.

Section 2 Background Information

a) Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The application site is a large semi-detached villa located on the western side of Belsize Park, which has been subdivided into 11 flats. The property is not a listed building; however, it lies within the Belsize Park Conservation Area and is identified as making a positive contribution to the conservation area.
- 2.2 The villa is formed of four main floors converted into residential flats, with an additional dwelling – to which this application relates – located within the roof space. It was built in the same style as the neighbouring properties along Belsize Park, which feature consistency in the heights of the buildings, their relationship to the streets with front gardens set behind boundary walls, and their Italianate detailing.
- 2.3 At roof level, the villa features a hipped slate roof with overhanging eaves that are supported on brackets. The front, side and rear roof slopes each feature small dormers and windows that sit incoherently on the building with no form or rhythm, resulting in a loft space with cramped living conditions and limited access to natural light. It is proposed to upgrade the dilapidated dormers and windows as part of this application, to form a more coherent loft space in line with what the neighbouring properties have done.



Image 1: Existing roof highlighted in yellow, and various roof extensions on neighbouring properties.

2.4 The majority of buildings along the street have been subject to various substantial dormers and other roof alteration, in an incoherent and piecemeal fashion. A dormer study has been provided within the Design and Access Statement that highlights the various roof extensions, dormers and roof lights in the surrounding area.

2.5 St Peter's Church is located on the opposite side of Belsize Park Road, providing a landmark for the area, and Belsize Park and Swiss Cottage underground stations are located within walking distance to the north and south respectively.

a) Relevant Planning History

i. Planning Applications

2.6 The planning history for the site primarily relates to the flats on the lower floors. The most recent applications are detailed below:

- In August 2010, permission was granted for the change of use of the lower ground floors flats to form a single residential unit (Class C3) – REF: 2010/3841/P
- In August 2011, permission was granted for the erection of a single storey rear extension at lower ground floor level and associated alterations to south west elevation including new door and windows at lower ground floor level to residential flat (Class C3). – REF: 2011/2684/P
- In January 2012, permission was granted for minor amendments to the rear extension approved under application 2011/2684/P – REF: 2011/6234/P

2.7 Prior to this, the planning history for the site is limited. The only application of note dates back 1984, when permission was granted at appeal to redevelop the roof space by enlarging the front, rear and side dormers (Ref: PL/0037262/R1). The approved layout can be seen below at image 2.

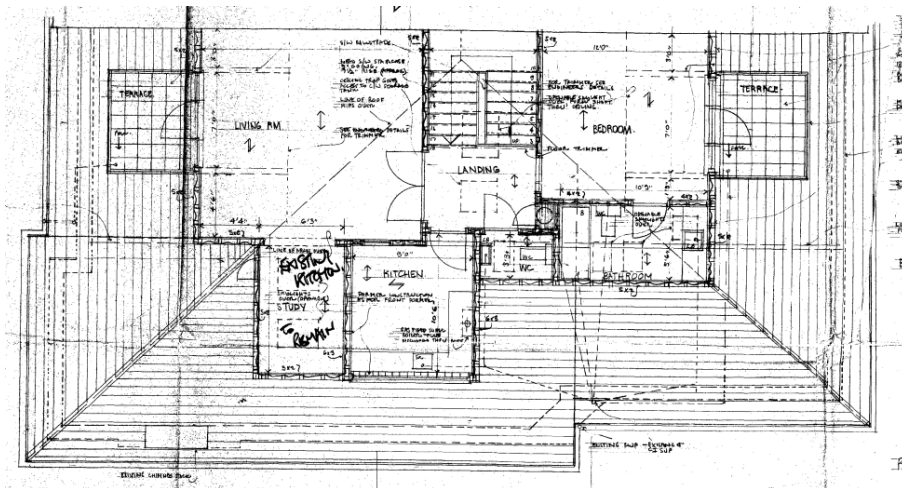


Image 2: Approved layout with enlarged dormers and front and rear external terraces.

2.8 The council did not have any concerns with the physical aspects of the proposal, and indeed the design, which included an external terrace to both the front and rear elevations and larger dormers (similar to those proposed within this application), was considered acceptable by both the council and the inspectorate. The appeal decision states the following:

“I note, and having seen the property, agree with the council’s view that there is no cause for objection to the form or appearance of the alterations involved in the development, including enlargement of the dormer windows”

2.10 The scheme was never implemented; however, the approval is significant as it establishes the principle of a similar roof extension with enlarged dormers at the site as acceptable in planning and heritage terms.

ii. Surrounding Area

2.11 The surrounding area is residential in nature, consisting of large semi-detached villas of a similar architectural style to the application site. Amongst these neighbouring properties, there have been numerous similar applications for dormer roof extensions, further establishing the principle of this form of development within the surrounding area. A few relevant examples are listed below.

29 Belsize Park

2.12 In 1996, permission was granted for an extension to the side and rear dormer windows, and the replacement of concrete tiles on the roof with artificial slates (ref: 9502153R1). There are no plans

available online for this application, however this is assumed to relate to the large dormers that can be seen within the submitted dormer study, prepared by Lipton Plant.

24 Belsize Park

2.13 In 1985, permission was granted for the formation of dormer windows on the front back and side elevations of the building (ref: 8500935). Again, there are no plans available online for this application, but is believed to relate to the large bulky dormer windows that can be seen within the submitted dormer study.

18 Wedderburn Road

2.14 This site is located approximately 200m north of the site on Weddeburn Road. The property is slightly further afield than the other examples on Belsize Park, however it is also a large villa within a conservation area, so the issues for consideration are similar to the application site. In March 2019, permission was granted to convert the existing loft into a 3-bedroom self-contained flat, including the installation of 3 no. dormers to the rear and side roof slope, 2 no. roof lights, and a rear terrace and roof terrace (ref: 2018/5110/P).

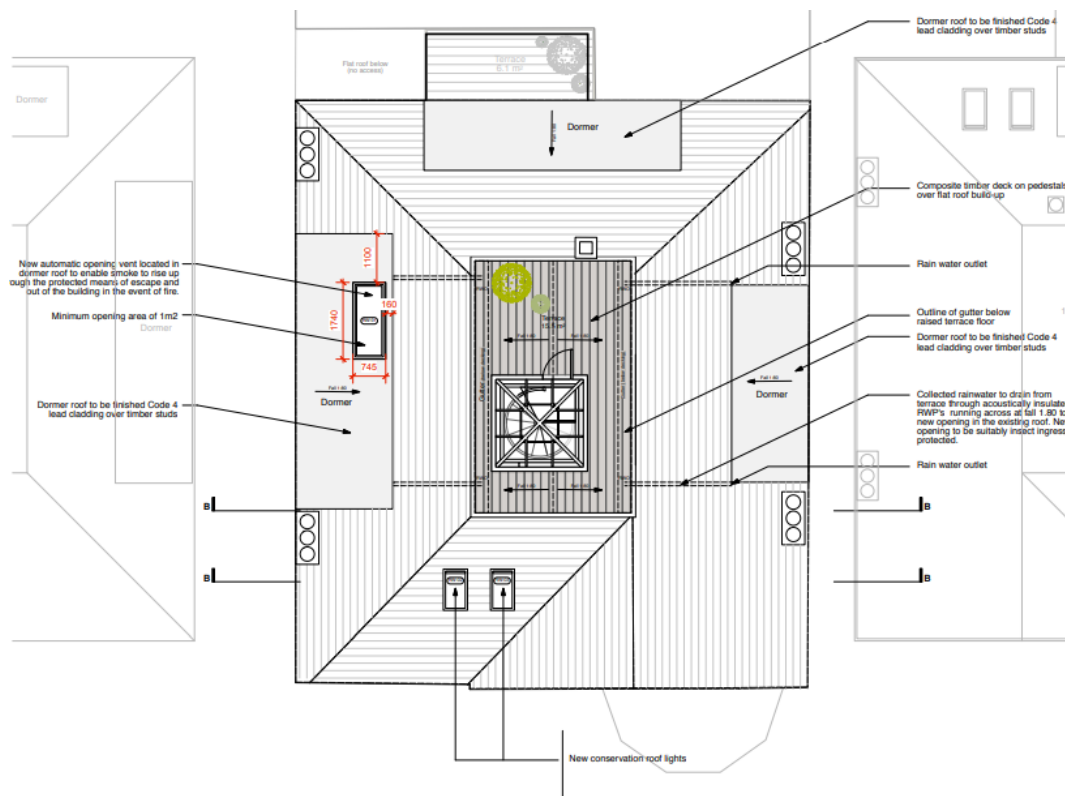


Image 3: Approved roof top alterations at 18 Weddeburn Road

2.15 The approval demonstrates that the council have recently, within the past year, given consent for similar dormer extensions within the surrounding area.

Section 3 Applciation Proposals

- 3.1 The existing flat within the loft of the building features two bedrooms, a living area and two bathrooms, however the space is disjointed, with large areas unusable due to the pitch of the roof. The building features three small dormers across the front, side and rear elevations, which only allow a small amount of light to enter the property, and do little to enhance the amount of usable floorspace within the loft. As such, it is proposed to upgrade and enlarge the existing dormers and roof lights, in line with what the neighbouring properties have done, in order to provide a functional and attractive 2-bedroom dwelling within the roof of the building. The proposals would also allow for the creation of a private outdoor terrace to serve the property.
- 3.2 The enlarged dormers will all be of the same size and style, ensuring a matching set of dormers and creating a more uniform, considered and coherent appearance for the building's roof.
- 3.3 The rear dormer will feature a small external terrace, providing the dwelling with much needed amenity space. This terrace will be entirely hidden from view at street level however, ensuring the building remains in keeping with the surrounding buildings.
- 3.4 It is proposed to replace the three roof lights on the side roof slope with one central roof light, of similar proportions to the neighbouring roof lights. This will not result in any shortfall of daylight entering the property; indeed, the enlarged dormers combined with the new rooflight will significantly improve both the daylighting and outlook of the dwelling.
- 3.5 The proposals relate solely to the refurbishment of the existing loft dwelling, which will continue to be accessed via the communal stairwell.

Section 4 Relevant Planning Policy

4.1 The statutory Camden development plan consists of the London Plan (2019), the Camden Local Plan (2017), the Proposals Map (2017) and the Camden Planning Guidance. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) is also a material consideration.

4.2 The Proposals Map (2017) designates the site as within the Belsize Park Conservation Area. Accordingly, the Belsize Park Conservation Area Statement (2003) forms the relevant heritage guidance for consideration in this application.

a) Camden Local Plan (2017)

4.3 **Policy G1** outlines that the Council will support development that makes best use of its site, taking into account quality of design, its surroundings, sustainability, amenity, heritage, transport accessibility and any other considerations relevant to the site.

4.4 **Policy D1** confirms the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. Specifically, it is required that development (inter alia):

- is sustainable in design and construction;
- respects local context and character;
- preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets;
- uses details and materials that complement the local character;
- integrates well with the surrounding streets, and contributes positively to the street frontage;
- preserves strategic and local views;
- provides a high standard of accommodation for housing.

4.5. **Policy D2** seeks to protect and, where appropriate, enhance the character and appearance within conservation areas.

4.6. **Policy A1** states that the quality of life for both occupiers and neighbours will be protected. When assessing new applications, the Council will consider:

- Visual privacy and outlook.
- Sunlight, Daylight and Overshadowing.

- Artificial lighting levels.
- Impacts of the construction phase.
- Noise and vibration levels.

b) Camden Planning Guidance

i. Camden Planning Guidance 1: Design (2015)

4.7 The guidance requires that alterations to existing buildings take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings.

4.8 Extensions and alterations to existing buildings should consider the character and design of the site and its surroundings. Additionally, windows, doors and all proposed materials should preserve the character of the property in terms of amount, appearance, type and proportions. Extensions should be subordinate to the original building in terms of scale. The document requires roof alterations to be appropriately designed to ensure no harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties.

4.9 Specifically regarding heritage assets, the document requires development to enhance and preserve an area of special architectural or historic interest, character or appearance.

ii. Camden Planning Guidance 6: Amenity (2011)

4.10 The guidance requires that all developments should seek to protect amenity and ensure adequate receipt of sunlight and daylight without adversely affecting surrounding buildings.

4.11 New development should ensure:

- good outlook by occupants when looking out of their windows or from their garden;
- ensure that outlook is reduced to an acceptable level; and
- maximise the amount of sunlight into rooms without overheating the space and to minimise overshadowing.

c) Belsize Park Conservation Area Statement (2003)

4.12 The Conservation Area Appraisal highlights the special interest in the conservation area is from the distinct character areas. The application site lies within character area 1 'Belsize Park', which is formed of Belsize Park, Belsize Park Gardens, Buckland Gardens and Belsize Square. This part of the conservation area represents the core area of the Belsize Park development undertaken by developer

Daniel Tidey on the site of Belsize House in the mid-1850's. The streets are predominantly residential, characterised by the repeated forms of the stucco villas, whose design gives a strong identity and unity of appearance to the area.

Section 5 Heritage Assessment

- 5.1 The application site lies within the Belsize Park Conservation Area, which sits on the rising land between Chalk Farm at the bottom of Haverstock Hill and Hampstead at the top, and extends westwards to Swiss Cottage.
- 5.2 The building itself is not listed and none of the neighbouring villas in this part of the road are listed, however the property is located within the core centre of *'Belsize Park'* character area 1, and is considered to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. As the Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset it is necessary to consider its significance and to assess the impact that the proposed alterations may have on this significance.
- 5.3 The appraisal recognises that the predominant housing type along Belsize Park (where the site is located), is paired Italianate villas. The villas feature symmetrical chimney stacks, as well as hipped, slate roofs with overhanging eaves that are supported on the brackets. Almost all the properties within this part of the Conservation Area have roof top dormer windows of varying shapes and sizes.
- 5.4 The grade II listed St Peter's Church is located on the opposite side of Belsize Park Road, and provides a landmark for the character area.
- 5.5 With regard to the history of the development of the area the Conservation Area statement notes:

“Development of the Belsize area as a residential suburb began in the middle of the 19th century and it is the Italianate villas dating from this period that are most commonly associated with it. In 1853, Christopher Palmer, leasehold owner of Belsize Park, demolished Belsize House and developed his land as an exclusive estate with its own square and church.

Daniel Tidey was the principal developer in the area during this period and as a consequence of its consistency in appearance, the area became known as Tidey Town. The large villas built by Tidey with attic and basement space for servants were aimed at wealthy professionals, the intention being to attract the 'carriage classes' to the north of London rather than areas such as Bayswater and Kensington, which were being developed concurrently to the west”

- 5.6 With regard to roof extensions, and specifically new dormers, the Conservation Area guidance states that dormers to the front, side and prominent rear elevations will not be allowed where a cluster of roofs remain largely, but not necessarily completely, unimpaired. In this instance, the surrounding roofscapes are not unimpaired, they are in fact entirely characterised by dormer extensions of this nature, so the proposed alterations would not be detrimental to the form and character of the existing building.
- 5.7 No works are proposed to the lower floors of the building as part of this application. The proposals relate solely to the refurbishment of the loft space, where it is proposed to replace and upgrade the existing dormers and roof lights.
- 5.8 The alterations will not alter the overall scale of the building or adversely affect the significance of the site as a paired Italianate villa within the Belsize Park character area. The replacement of the existing, disjointed, dormers with new dormers of the same size and style will improve the overall proportions of the roof, and ensure there is no adverse impact on significance, in accordance with national guidance and policy D2 of the Local Plan.

Section 6 Planning Assessment

6.1 This section of the statement demonstrates the proposals acceptability and consideration to the relevant matters, as follows:

- a) Principle of the development
- b) Design considerations
- c) Quality of residential accommodation
- d) Protection of residential amenity

6.2 Each matter is addressed in turn below.

a) Principle of the development

6.3 The application relates to a poor-quality residential dwelling within the loft of 27 Belsize Park, which currently features a disjointed layout and poor access to natural light. It is proposed to upgrade and enlarge the dilapidated roof dormers and windows, in order to provide a cohesive 2-bedroom dwelling with an improved internal layout (in line with what the neighbouring properties have done). This will ensure efficient use of the space is achieved in line with policy G1 of Camden's Local Plan, which seeks to encourage development that makes best use of its site, taking into account quality of design, its surroundings, sustainability, amenity and heritage.

6.4 The proposed alterations will not affect the bulk or scale of the building, nor will they have any impact on the wider Conservation Area. They will however provide a high-quality, functional, dwelling within an accessible location, and should therefore be considered acceptable in principle.

6.5 The council have allowed numerous similar dormer extensions in the surrounding area, and permission has previously been granted at the site for an almost identical scheme to enlarge the front, rear and side dormers (ref: PL/0037262/R1). On this basis, the principle of development should again be considered acceptable.

b) Design Considerations

- 6.6 The alterations will offer significant improvement to the existing appearance of the building, providing a high-quality design that responds to the surrounding area. The existing, dilapidated dormers are to be replaced by new, enlarged dormers which aim to increase natural daylight and improve the spatial configuration of the dwelling. The enlarged dormers will all be of the same size and style, ensuring a matching set of dormers rather than individual dormers that sit incoherently on the building. They will also be of a similar height to the dormers on the neighbouring properties and will be constructed with lead flashings to replicate those of the adjacent properties, ensuring a consistent appearance to the roof line within this part of Belsize Park.
- 6.7 The dormers will be set back from the eaves of the roof and the principle Italianate elevation, so that they remain largely hidden, and do not appear over dominant on the building or wider conservation area. The principle of this approach, with three enlarged dormers and an external terrace was considered acceptable when assessing previous application at the site (ref: PL/0037262/R1), with the appeal decision noting “there is *no cause for objection to the form and appearance of the alterations involved in the development, including enlargement of the dormer windows*”. The council have also allowed several very similar schemes for enlarged dormers in the immediate surrounding area, including those at 24, 25 and 29 Belsize Park.
- 6.8 In summary, it is considered that there will be no harm to the character and appearance of the building. The proposed design responds well to the existing context and will enhance the appearance of the building and wider street scene. It is considered that the proposals are compliant with policies D1, D2 and Planning Guidance Note 1, and should therefore be supported.

c) Quality of residential accommodation

- 6.9 The proposals have been designed to ensure that the development will be in keeping with the neighbouring properties whilst providing satisfactory living standards for the future occupiers. The proposed dwelling comprises of 1 master bedroom with en suite, 1 large double bedroom, a study room, and a large living/dining area with access to an external terrace. The enlarged dormers will increase the amount of usable floorspace within the loft, and provide a dwelling with a clear and practical internal layout.

6.10 The submitted drawings prepared by Lipton Plant demonstrate that a full height ceiling line will be provided throughout the dwelling. The residential accommodation will exceed both national space standards, and the standards within the London Plan, and therefore should be considered acceptable.

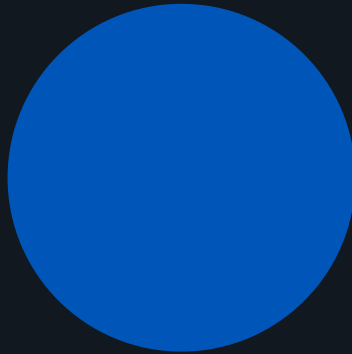
d) Protection of residential amenity

6.11 It is considered that the proposed alterations at roof level will have no adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties. The dormers will be slightly enlarged; however, there will be no additional dormers, and the general scale of the roof will remain the same. This will ensure there is no adverse impact in terms of daylight/sunlight to the neighbouring properties.

6.12 In terms of privacy/overlooking, the dwelling is located in the roof of the building where it is tucked away and hidden from view. The 3 existing roof lights on the side elevation are to be replaced by 1 rooflight, and the 3 dormers are to be replaced by 3 new dormers. A small external terrace is proposed within the rear dormer; however, this will be set back from the eaves of the roof, ensuring there will be no impact on privacy or overlooking to/from the proposed development in accordance with Camden Planning Guidance 6.

Section 7 Conclusions

- 7.1 This Planning, Heritage and Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the removal of existing dormers and the erection of a new front, side and rear dormers to enlarge existing 5th floor flat at 27 Belsize Park, London, NW3 4ES.
- 7.2 This statement has demonstrated that:
- there will be no harm to the significance of the conservation area or the positive contribution the property makes to the Conservation Area;
 - the principle of development of this nature has previously been established at the site and amongst the neighbouring properties within the Conservation Area;
 - the roof level alterations are in keeping with the style of the surrounding properties;
 - the proposed works will have no adverse impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties and will ensure a high quality of accommodation for the occupant;
 - the application proposals are entirely consistent with the relevant local planning policies
- 7.3 The proposals should therefore be considered acceptable, and we would respectfully request that planning permission is granted.



Firstplan Ltd
Bramah House
65-71 Bermondsey Street
London SE1 3XF

T: 020 3096 7000
www.firstplan.co.uk