



Asher Planning Ltd

# **Planning Application for a Detached Garden Room**

## **Garden Flat, 14 Belsize Park, London NW3 4ES**



**Planning & Heritage Statement**

**March 2020**

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This statement is to support the planning application for a single storey detached garden room at the Garden Flat, 14 Belsize Park, London.
- 1.2 In this statement we discuss the site, surroundings and planning history. We then provide details of the proposal, set out compliance with the relevant national and local planning policies and assess heritage impact.

## **2.0 Site and surroundings**

- 2.1 The site is located on the eastern side of Belsize Park. It comprises a semi-detached period property with three floors. The flat which is the subject of this application is on the ground floor and includes the rear garden.
- 2.2 In the garden is an existing hot tub, large stepped/raised decking area and canopy, and two small olive trees. The decked area was built, and trees planted in 2013 by a previous owner; the original plans are included at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 There are similar properties adjacent on each side and opposite. To the rear are the rear gardens of the properties on Belsize Park Gardens and Belsize Square.
- 2.4 The site is within the Belsize Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings on-site or nearby. The site is not within any flood risk area.

## **3.0 Planning History**

- 3.1 The site has the following planning history:
- 2013/6557/P – Creation of a steel pergola structure to rear garden at ground floor level (Class A3 [retrospective]. Granted November 2013.

## **4.0 Proposal**

- 4.1 The new owner proposes to remove the existing hot tub, large stepped/raised decking area and canopy, and two small olive trees, and replace them with a single-storey detached garden room that is more in keeping with the surroundings.
- 4.2 The garden room will be a home office. It will be located at the end of the rear garden.
- 4.3 The garden room will measure 5 by 6.5 metres, yielding a total footprint of 32.5 square metres. It will have a height of 2.5 metres.

4.4 The building will have cedar cladding to two sides and grey particle board to two sides. It will have a flat roof with a dark grey EDPM covering. The windows and doors will have dark grey aluminium frames.

## **5.0 National planning policy**

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) is a material consideration in any development proposals. The principle thread running through the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Para. 11 states that proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved.

5.2 Para. 127. states that planning decisions should ensure that developments meet certain requirements, including that they:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

5.3 The proposal meets these requirements because it will function well, providing extra space for the occupier of the flat. It has been well designed and will be visually attractive, using natural materials in accordance with the garden location.

5.4 Para. 127 goes on to state that developments should provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The proposal will improve amenity at the flat by providing additional space. There will not be any adverse impact on the amenity of neighbours, due to the appropriate scale of the proposed building. There will be no windows to the rear or to the northern side, so there will be no overlooking of the gardens of No. 15 Belsize Park or the rear gardens of Belsize Park Gardens or Belsize Square. There are two small narrow windows proposed to the southern side but this side of the building will be located well away from the garden boundary.

5.5 Para. 132 states the following:

“When considering the impact of a proposed development 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.”

5.6 There will be no adverse impact on the conservation area, due to the scale, siting and sensitive design of the proposed building.

## **6.0 Local planning policy**

6.1 The Camden Local Plan (2017) states at Policy A1 Managing the impact of development that the Council will seek to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours.

6.2 Policy D1 Design states that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. The Council will require that development respects local context and character, is of sustainable and durable construction and comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character.

6.3 Policy D2 Heritage states that development within conservation areas should preserve or where possible enhance the character or appearance of the area.

6.4 The proposal accords with these policies. It has been well designed and will be visually attractive, using natural materials in accordance with the garden location. There will not be any adverse impact on the amenity of neighbours, due to the appropriate scale and siting of the proposed building. The scale and appearance of the building will ensure that the character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved.

6.5 The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Altering and extending your home (2019) states at para. 5.23 that development in rear gardens should:

- ensure the siting, location, scale and design of the proposed development has a minimal visual impact on, and is visually subordinate within, the host garden.
- not detract from the open character and garden amenity of neighbouring gardens and the wider surrounding area
- ensure building heights will retain visibility over garden walls and fences
- ensure the size of the outbuilding will not result in excessive loss of garden amenity space
- ensure the siting of the outbuilding will not harm existing trees of high amenity value
- use materials which complement the host property and the overall character of the surrounding area.

6.6 The proposed building will be single-storey and have a flat roof so it will be visually subordinate within the garden. Natural materials are proposed to ensure that the

building blends into the garden, and the proposed height is modest at 2.5 metres. Plenty of garden space will remain and no trees of high amenity value will be harmed (the two olive trees which will be removed were only planted in 2013). The proposal therefore accords with these requirements.

- 6.7 The Belsize Conservation Area Statement (undated) states at Policy BE19 that all development should respect existing features. No existing features will be removed and the proposal will complement the existing building.

## **7.0 Heritage Assessment**

- 7.1 The property is located within the Belsize Conservation Area.

- 7.2 In accordance with para. 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019) we are required to describe the significance of the heritage assets.

- 7.3 The Belsize Conservation Area was designated in 1973. The Conservation Area Statement says that:

“Belsize Park is 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.”

- 7.4 It states that Belsize Park itself is part of the core area of the Belsize Park development. In this area:

“...the predominant type is the paired villa. The villas are symmetrical about their slab chimney stacks, have hipped, slate roofs with overhanging eaves which are supported on brackets, the elevations have large rusticated quoins, recessed sash windows diminishing in size on successive upper floors with classically detailed surrounds, canted three-light bays on the ground floor and steps up to porticoes...

The closely spaced villas maintain a continuous building line and their repeated forms with narrow gaps between give a uniform rhythm to the streets and provide important, glimpsed views.”

- 7.5 It therefore appears that the significance of the conservation area lies in its planned design and layout, and the architecture of the villas.

- 7.6 The NPPF states the following (para. 132):

“When considering the impact of a proposed development 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.”

- 7.7 The proposed garden room will cause no harm to the significance of the conservation area. It will not be visible from the streetscene. It will be small-scale, and will be subservient to and complement the main building.

## 7.0 Comparable development

- 7.1 The table below details some applications for residential garden rooms which the Council have permitted in recent years. This demonstrates that the Council generally takes a favourable view towards this type of application.

**Table 1 - Residential garden rooms approved**

<b>App Number</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Date approved</b>
2019/4963/P	Flat 2, 113 Fortress Road	Erection of single storey timber garden room for hobby room and artist studio.	Nov 2019
2019/2220/P	Flat A, 162 Goldhurst Terrace	Erection of timber framed garden room to rear.	Jun 2019
2019/1667/P	29 Sarre Road	Erection of garden room to rear of the existing single family dwelling.	Apr 2019
2019/1113/P	7 Rosecroft Avenue	Replacement of existing garden outbuilding with new pavilion for office, garden room and storage.	Mar 2019
2019/0510/P	35 Leighton Road	Erection of rear garden room to rear of dwelling house (class C3).	Mar 2019

## 8.0 Summary

- 8.1 The site is located on Belsize Park within the Belsize Conservation Area.
- 8.2 The proposal is to remove the existing hot tub, large stepped/raised decking area and canopy, and two small olive trees, and replace them with a single-storey detached garden room to be used as a home office.
- 8.3 The building will be single-storey and will be built using natural materials, in keeping with its garden location.

- 8.4 The scale and design of the building will ensure that there will be no adverse impact on neighbouring amenity or the conservation area.
- 8.5 The application complies with national and local planning policy and comprises sustainable development.

# Appendix 1 – Plan of current garden area

