

**Jason Cooke
Flat 1 102 FELLOWS ROAD
NW3 3JH**

Proposed single storey lower ground floor extension

PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the planning and heritage statement that accompanies a planning application for a single storey lower ground floor extension at the above property.

Application Plans

'Existing' Plan Nos (068)	'Proposed' Plan Nos (068)	Title
LP01		Location
S01	AP01	Block
S02	AP02	Site Plan
S03	AP03	LGF Plan
S04	AP04	Street elevation
S05	AP05	Front elevation
S06	AP06	West elevation
S07	AP07	Rear elevation
S08	AP08	East elevation
S09	AP09	Section

The application will be submitted through the Planning Portal.

2.0 CONTEXT

General Location

1. The application property is on the edge of the Belsize Conservation Area, about 300m east of Finchley Road/Swiss Cottage Shopping Centre. Its position (yellow triangle) is shown on the extract from the Council's Policies Map below.



2. The brown wash shows the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Statement notes *'Whilst the groups of Victorian houses along the north side (of Fellows Road) have a character relating to the wider Conservation Area, the character of the street as a whole is altered by the 1960s housing estate to the south'* (Page 23).
3. The 1960s estate is the Chalcots Estate, with the 22-storey Burnham Tower immediately opposite the site being an overwhelmingly dominant feature.

The Application Property

4. This is part of the front and side garden of the corner property No 102 Fellows Road, a large Victorian house that was subdivided into flats many years ago. Flat 1 is the lower ground floor flat.
5. The plan below shows the extent of the ownership of Flat 1 and its relationship to Kings College Road to the west and its neighbours to the east.



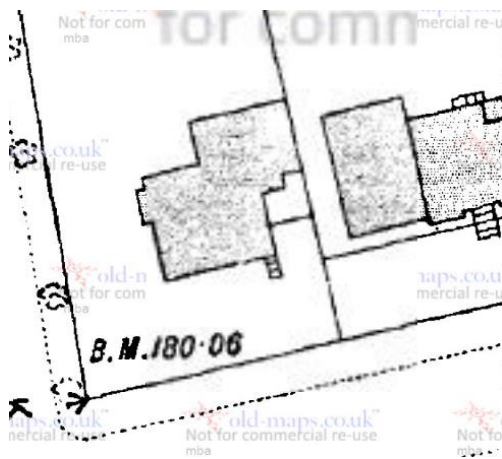
6. Flat 1 is accessed from Kings College Road through the rear garden. The flat also owns the extensive side and front garden, as the plan shows. The front garden is actually larger than the rear garden.
7. No 102 is built of pale Gault bricks. Its elevation to Kings College Road looks like this:



8. It is not listed or locally listed but is identified as a positive contributor in the Conservation Area Statement, which says: *Nos. 86 -100 are a group of Victorian dwellings of an eclectic style showing slight Arts and Crafts style mixed with Italianate influence consistent in their frontage walling and the use of red brick. These are seen together with the corner detached house No. 102 which faces Kings College Road (page 23).*

9. The Conservation Area Statement notes that in the Eaton Avenue character area *there is ...consistency of materials generally, red brick with red clay tiled roofs being a recurrent theme (page 20).* Plainly No 102's Gault brick, slate ridge parallel to the road style differs materially to the red brick, ridge perpendicular to the road style of the group to the east.

10. The map history shows the house was built between the 1871 and the 1895 1:1056 OS maps (probably prior to 1886 on the basis of Bacon's Street Map in the CAS). It was built without its large, projecting side/rear extension visible in the photo, which does not appear until the 1915 1:1056 OS map.



1895



1915

11. Note from the photograph above the original wall at pavement level that forms the south and west boundary of the site. The wall is about 1.5m -2.0m above pavement level with higher piers. In views from the road, its top aligns with the red brick string course that divides No 102's upper and lower ground floor levels.
12. The photo below shows that the ground level within the boundary wall has been excavated to lower ground floor level, which is about 2.5- 3.0m below the height of the top of the walls. The street walls and the excavated area have been in place for many years and are well-established root barriers to the street and site trees.



13. The excavated area is unused and unattractive. It occupies the notch between No102's side extension and side/rear extension and can be seen in the aerial photo below.

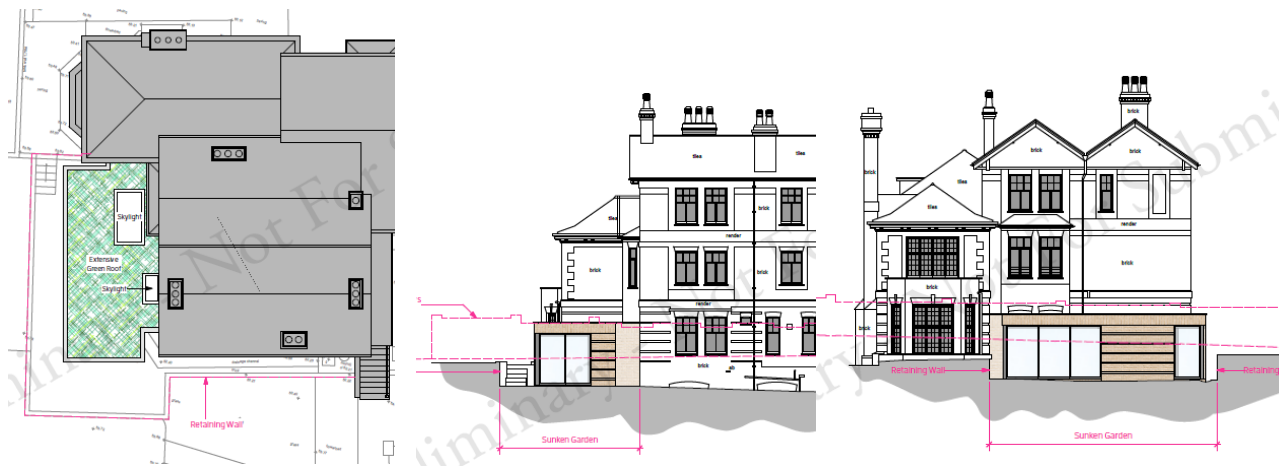


14. The streetview photo below (taken from Google's standard elevation of 2.5m and so from a viewpoint well above the standard the general public's eye level of 1.5m) shows that there are no features of importance on the banded red brick lower ground floor flank elevation.

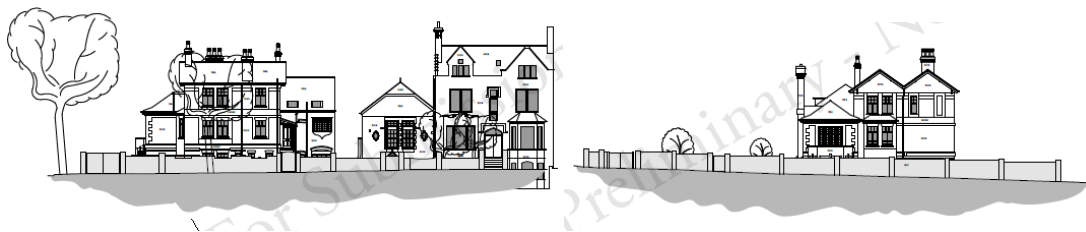


2.0 THE PROPOSAL

15. The purpose of this application is to make effective use of the excavated area, which is close to the road and in shadow and overlooked by the massive Burnham Tower and so no use for sitting out. It involves the construction of a single-storey flat-roofed extension in the notch lower ground floor level between the side elevation and the later side/rear extension linked to Flat 1 through the windows in the red brick bay and the blank side wall to the later extension visible above.



16. The extension is in the same banded red brick as the existing lower ground floor and has a green roof that would be the only feature visible from upper ground floor level and Burnham Tower.
17. One metre recesses separate the proposed work visually from the earlier building and ensure that it appears distinct from it in private viewpoints in the garden.
18. Only about 1.5m of the proposal projects above garden level and as the Fellows Road and Kings College Road street elevations below show, it is always below boundary wall level.



3.0 HERITAGE IMPACT

19. The Belsize Conservation Area is the only relevant designated heritage asset. The Conservation Area Statement identifies Nos 86-100 to the east as positive contributors to the Conservation Area, but they are visually separated from the proposal by the bulk of No102 and the proposal does not affect their setting.
33. The statutory test requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. This has been in place for 50 years – the words appear in the founding 1967 Civic Amenities Act. Developers are entitled to expect certainty and consistency in the way the Council applies the special judgement required by the statutory test.
34. Twenty years ago, the statutory test was clarified by the 1992 judgement of the House of Lords in South Lakeland that said *where a particular development will not have any adverse effect on the character or appearance of the area and is otherwise unobjectionable on planning grounds, one may ask rhetorically what possible planning reason there can be for refusing to allow it.* The statutory test is thus a 'no harm' test.

20. The CAS describes the character of this part of the Conservation Area as follows: *Although there are a variety of building types the blocks are generally taller: three storeys with a basement or four storeys. In addition, there are generally consistent themes such as the use of London stock and yellow brick and the predominantly Italianate styling of the buildings, which pick up on themes within the Belsize Park area that was developed over a similar period.*

Fellows Road marks the southern edge of the Conservation Area...On the north side, there are a number of different building types and styles, reflecting the different periods of development. In terms of materials, themes include yellow brick with red brick detailing, red brick with red clay tiled roofs and a pale London stock brick with stucco/painted stone detailing. Stylistically, themes include three storey paired villas, some with porticoes and three storey bays, some with more of a 'Queen Anne' influence in the Dutch gables at roof level. The trees within the street and the front gardens of the properties make a significant contribution to the character of the road as do the hedgerows to the frontages of Nos. 26-72. These properties form a consistent frontage of paired and detached three storey villas with overhanging eaves, three storey bays, porticoes with Corinthian capitals and sash windows at the eastern end of the road.

21. Since the CAS was published, the present character of the immediate area has been re-set by the dark, flat roofed modern houses permitted by the Council in 2012 and on appeal in 2015 in Kings College Road at the rear of the site. These are shown below:



22. No102 does not fit conveniently into any of the CAS categories and the proposal will not harm the overall character of this part of the Conservation Area because of its inconspicuous position below the parapet level of the boundary walls, the lack of detail on the two walls it adjoins, the unattractive, unused excavated area where it will be built and its careful modern design, which reflects, without being a pastiche, awareness of the historic built context and its modern flat-roofed neighbours.
23. Unlike the recently permitted buildings at the rear of the site, the proposal will not be visible from the road and particularly in their context will have a neutral effect on the Conservation Area. It is consistent with South Lakeland and the statutory test.

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