

**Top floor flat
23 Belsize Square
LONDON
NW3 4HU**



Planning & Heritage Statement

Replacement dormer windows and formation of a roof terrace

Produced by PB PLANNING CONSULTANCY LTD

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.0 The application relates to a top floor duplex flat that benefits from an existing front and rear dormer window. It is proposed to make the following alterations to the property at roof level:

- Replace the existing front and rear dormers with larger additions.
- Form a decking area around the rear dormer in order to provide access to the flat roof over the rear bay element to form a roof terrace.
- To enclose the new decking and roof terrace with black metal railings.

1.1 This Planning & Heritage Statement demonstrates how the proposed development is in keeping with existing development in the vicinity of the application site and also considers the proposal in relation to heritage and the conservation area designation.

2. THE SITE

2.0 The site comprises a 3-storey building in use as self-contained flats with basement level and accommodation in the roof space (See Fig.1 below).

Fig.1 – Streetview image of the small terrace with the application site on the right hand side of the group.



2.1 This planning application relates specifically to the upper floor maisonette which already benefits from front and rear dormers.

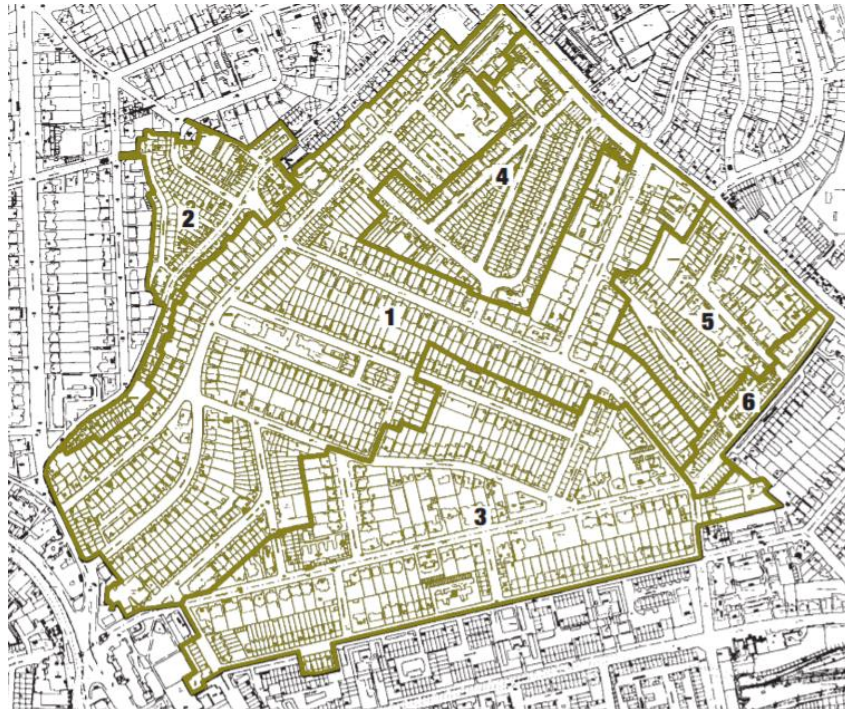
Fig.2– Existing dormers on the host building



2.2 It is evident from Figs 1 & 2 above that there are many existing dormers and similar roof terraces to that proposed under this application in the area around the site and these are discussed in detail in Section 4 of this report.

2.3 The site is within the Belsize Conservation Area. The Belsize Square Conservation Appraisal was adopted in 2003. The map of the Belsize Square conservation area is shown in Fig.3 below; Belsize Square belongs to a sub-district of the conservation area: 'Belsize Park' and this is labelled '1' on the map image below.

Fig.3– Conservation area map



3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.0 It is proposed to replace the existing flat-roof front dormers on the front and rear roof slopes of the building with slightly larger structures (see Figs.4-6 below).

Fig.4– Existing and proposed front elevations



Fig.5– Existing and proposed rear elevations



Fig.6 – Existing and proposed side elevations



Front dormer

- 3.1 The front dormer window will be doubled in size but will still be well contained within the existing roof slope as the replacement dormer is a modestly-sized structure that is set well down from the ridgeline of the property and well up from the eaves; it is also set in from the parapet wall and the sloping hip line of the roof.

Rear dormer

- 3.2 The proposed works to the rear roof slope are more substantial (but are in accordance with similar development in the immediate vicinity of the application site – as discussed in the following section of this report) and comprise a new, wider flat roof dormer and a cutaway area to provide access to the flat roof atop the curved bay element of the rear elevation; it is also proposed to install decking and black metal railings around the walking area and flat roof area (see Figs 7 & 8 below).

Fig.7 – Artist impression of proposed works to the rear roof slope.

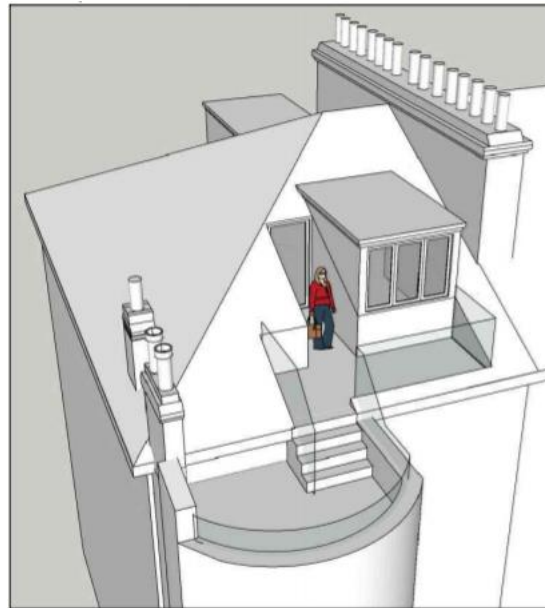
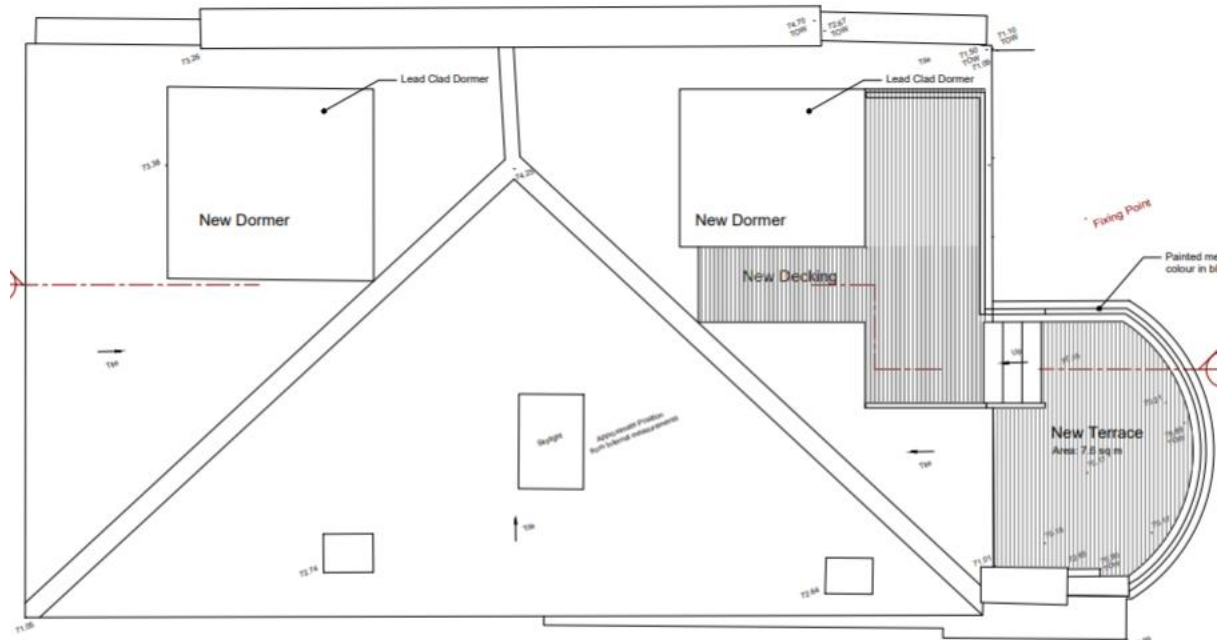


Fig.8 – Proposed roof plan.



3.3 The flat roof area which it is proposed to enclose with railings and use as an amenity area is shown in Fig.9 below.

Fig.9 – Existing flat roof area.



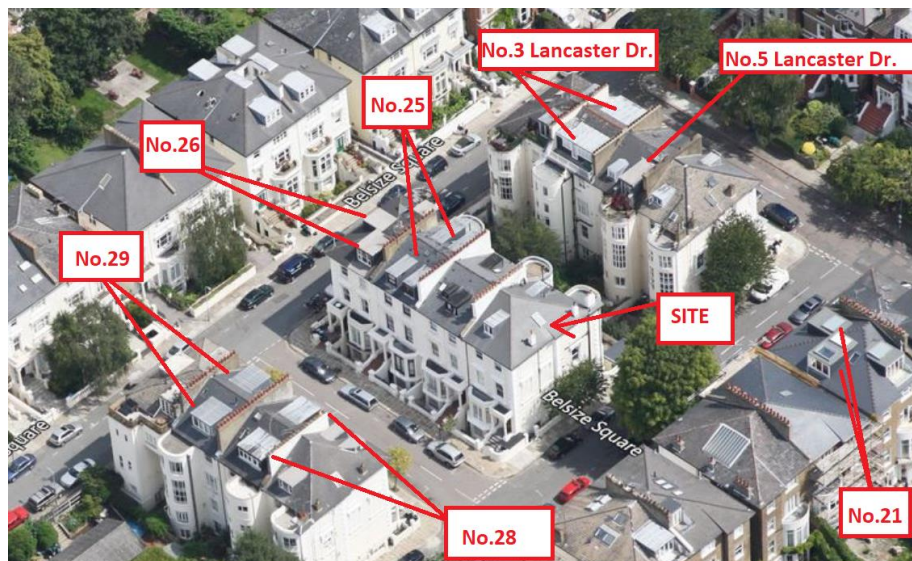
3.4 The merits of the proposed development are discussed in the following section of this report: Section 4. 'Heritage Appraisal'.

4. HERITAGE APPRAISAL

4.0 The application site is located within the Belsize Square conservation area. The Council's 'Conservation Area Appraisal lists 'negative features' in the area and amongst them describes: "*large dormer extensions on the north-east side of the square*". It is clear from the images in the remainder of this report that these existing dormers are a prominent feature in this part of the conservation area and comprise the immediate context of the application site.

4.1 The proliferation of roof extensions and large dormers in and around the application site are shown in Fig.10 below.

Fig.10 – Existing roof extensions in the vicinity of the application site.



The host terrace

4.2 In terms of immediate context, the site belongs to a small group of four properties (23-26 Belsize Square) and two properties in this group (no.25 & 26) both have large dormer extensions. No.25 has four dormers (two on the front and two on the rear roof slope) and no.26 has three dormers: one of each of the front, site and rear roof slopes (see Fig.11 below).

Fig.11 – Image showing the presence of dormer extensions in the terrace containing the application site.



4.3 Most significantly, no.26 has also converted its flat roof over the curved bay into an amenity area and enclosed it with railings (see Fig.12 below).

Fig.12 – Image showing the presence of dormer extensions in the terrace containing the application site.



4.4 In summary, the other properties in the host terrace have large dormer window extensions and the property at the opposite end of this short terrace of four properties, no.26, has converted its third floor flat roof area to a roof terrace and enclosed it with railings. As such, the immediate context of the application site is one of large dormer extensions and a precedent for enclosing the flat roof area at third floor level with railings to form a roof terrace.

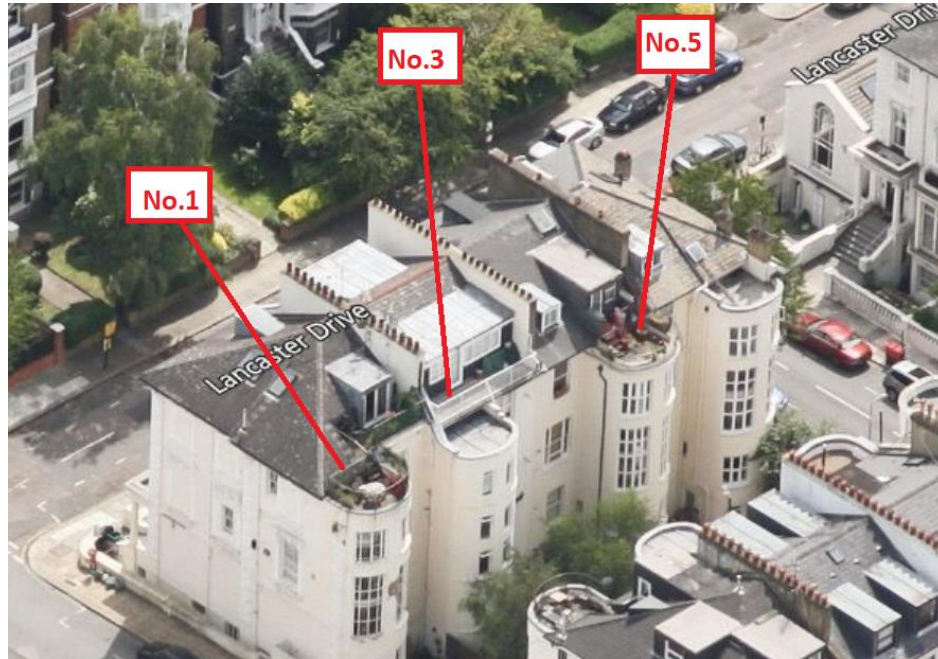
4.5 For the reasons outlined above, in terms of the proposed development's impact on the host property and the Belsize Square conservation area, the proposed development would be in keeping with the established form of development in the host terrace and also this part of the Belsize Square conservation area. Therefore, the proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

1-7 Lancaster Drive

4.6 No.26 Belsize Square is not the only property in the immediate vicinity of the application site to have converted the flat-roof area of the curved bay element into an amenity space and enclosed it with metal railings. The group of properties to the east of the application site, 1-7 Lancaster Drive (shown in Fig.13 below) contains two properties (no.1 & no.5) where the flat roof area of the curved bay is an enclosed roof terrace/amenity space.

4.7 Of the utmost relevance to the proposed development is the fact that planning permission was granted for the erection of a dormer, railings and use of the flat roof area as a roof terrace for the top floor flat at no.1 Lancaster Drive under planning ref: PWX0002594/R1 on 9th October 2000. This is an almost identical development to that proposed under this application and sets a precedent as the proposed development would be in keeping with an established form of development.

Fig.13 – Image showing the presence of converted flat roof bays and large dormers at 1-7 Lancaster Drive.



4.8 No.3 Lancaster Drive has a very large (full width) flat roof dormer window with railings running across the entire width of the roof slope. It also has a large flat-roof dormer on its front roof slope. This development also forms a significant part of the context of the roof level development around the application site.

4.9 No.5 Lancaster Drive has two flat-roof dormers on its rear roof slope (facing the application site) but most significantly, it the third floor flat roof area has been converted to a roof terrace in a similar manner to that proposed under this planning application.

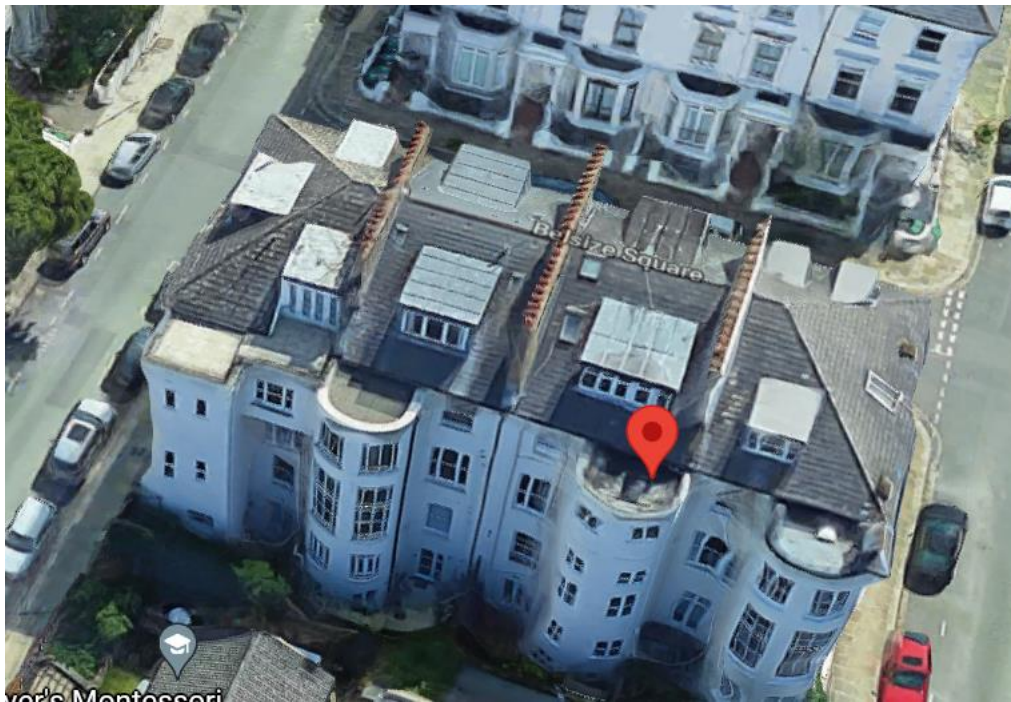
4.10 In summary, there are three adjoining properties (1, 3 & 5 Lancaster Drive) in the adjacent terrace to the application site that have large dormer extensions and railings at third floor/roof level and, two of these properties have the same converted flat roof areas as proposed under this application. For this reason, the proposed development would be in keeping with the prevailing

pattern of development in this part of the Belsize Square conservation area and would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

27-30 Belsize Square

- 4.11 In the four-property adjoining terrace to the west, comprising 27-30 Belsize Square (see Fig.14 below), there are also many large flat roof dormers (every property has front and rear dormers) and, there is a large roof terrace at no.30.

Fig.14 – Image showing the presence of converted flat roof bays and large dormers at 27-30 Belsize Square.



4.12 The use of railings to enclose the roof terrace at No.30 Belsize Square is evident from the street (see Fig.15 below). This property also has three large flat roof dormers: one of each of the rear, side and front elevations (see Fig.14 above).

Fig.15 – Images showing the presence of the converted flat roof bay at 30 Belsize Square.



4.13 No.'s 28 & 29 Belsize Square both have large flat-roof dormers to their front and rear elevations and no.27 Belsize Square has two smaller flat-roof dormers to its front elevation and a modest flat-roof dormer to its rear elevation.

4.14 In summary, this particular terrace, is dominated by large flat-roof dormers and the prominent end of terrace property (no.30) also has a roof terrace area enclosed by railings. These properties form a key part of the immediate context around the application site. For this reason, the proposed development would be in keeping with the prevailing pattern of development in this part of the Belsize Square conservation area and would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Policy Assessment

Home Improvements SPD (2021)

- 4.15 Section 2.2 of the Camden 'Home Improvements' SPD, relates to roof extensions and highlights the significance of the difference between broken and unbroken rooflines:

"For buildings in Conservation Areas, the Conservation Area Appraisals identify if certain terraces or groups of buildings are significant due to their unbroken roofline, which means they hold heritage value. If subsequent development since the Conservation Area Appraisal has been issued, has altered the unbroken roofline, weight shall be given to the existing extensions, in the assessment of a new roof extension."

- 4.16 In this context, the significant factors to take into consideration are: (i.) the fact that the property already has dormer window extension (front and rear); (ii.) that all of the properties in the host terrace have dormer window extensions and the terrace does not have an unbroken roofline; (iii.) that two properties in the host terrace (no.'s 25 & 26) have very large flat-roof dormer extensions and; (iv.) that no.26 also has a flat roof terrace enclosed by railings.

- 4.17 Section 2.2.1 of the Camden 'Home Improvements' SPD also describes how *'roof dormers should sit within the roof slope and appear as an extension to the existing roof whilst the existing roof form is maintained.'* As the dormers are set within the roof (well down from the ridgeline, well up from the eaves and, away from the parapet with no.24), the proposed dormers comply with this particular requirement.

- 4.18 Furthermore, the dormers also comply with the requirement in Section 2.2.1 of the Camden 'Home Improvements' SPD for *'the proportion of glazing should be greater than the solid areas and dormer cheeks...'*.

Camden Local Plan (2017)

- 4.19 With regard to the Camden Local Plan, the proposal complies with the provisions of Policy D1 'Design' in that the proposed development respects local context and character. The proposed dormers compare favourably to the existing dormers in the vicinity of the application site as these are generally much larger than the dormers proposed under this application. Also, many of the neighbouring properties have two dormers on each roof slope and as the proposed development is limited to one dormer on each of the front and rear roofslopes, it can be said that the proposal respects local context and character.
- 4.20 With regard to the Camden Local Plan (2017), the proposal complies with the provisions of Policy D2 'Heritage' in that the proposed development is in keeping with the established form of development (a proliferation of dormer windows and enclosed roof terraces in the vicinity of the application site) and therefore preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area.