

22 Avenue Road, St. John's Wood, London NW8 6BU

Planning Statement

2022 August 31st

291-453

Introduction.

This planning application includes for improvements for accessibility to the building and for replacing the existing timber windows with aluminium. There are three primary planning issues relating to the proposed alterations to the windows:

1. The use of materials for doors and windows within a Conservation Area: should this be traditional timber / steel or Aluminium?
2. Embodied Carbon / energy content and potential for re-use and recycling in window types.
3. Risk of Fire / safety.

The existing building was constructed in approximately 1986 and is therefore 36 years old. The existing windows are in poor condition but are not beyond repair: it is accepted that these could be repaired but the applicant seeks to replace them to improve the building.

Summary.

1. This building is identified as being detrimental to the character of the area. Its isolated position, atypical detailing and large size means that it is a special and unusual case when compared to the majority of buildings in this Conservation Area.
2. The Conservation Area is the heritage asset that is to be protected: not this building per se.
3. The council's design guidance for timber windows relates to buildings typical of the area. This building is not typical but excessively large. The use of these timber windows on such a large building results in a post-modern pastiche that does not benefit the conservation area: the existing timber windows have no inherent planning quality and therefore should not be protected.
4. There are examples of other buildings in the Conservation Area having metal windows: granting permission for this building would not be setting a precedent.
5. The planning benefits replacing the existing timber windows with metal would include:
 - a. Aesthetic cohesion with the adjacent large building at 24-26 that has metal windows.
 - b. Improved performance and protection of life in the event of fire.
 - c. Improved thermal performance.
6. The change to metal windows should be supported in this application.

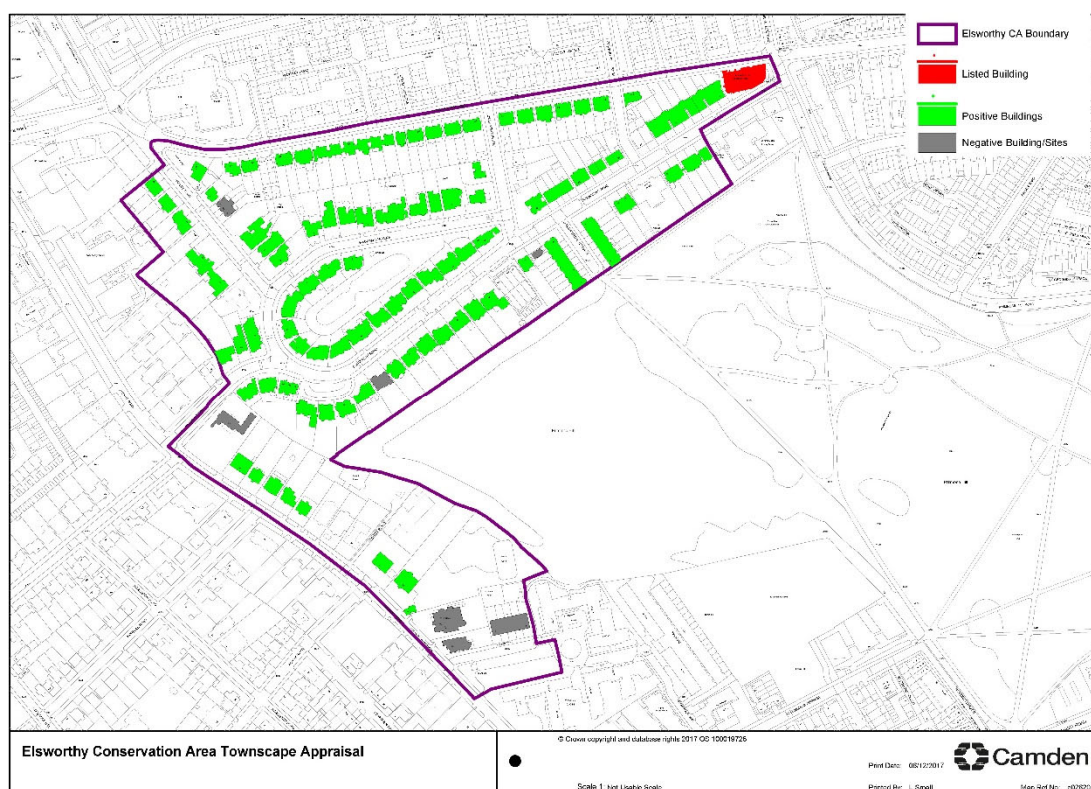
Background.

The Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy states in paragraph 6.18. *“The southern end of the Conservation Area on Avenue Road has also suffered considerable losses. None of the original buildings survive: these have been replaced with buildings that are substantially out of scale with the Conservation Area, notably nos 22, 24 & 26 Avenue Road and Nos 1-5 Rudgwick Terrace....22 Avenue Road is identified as a Negative building detracting from the conservation area”.*

6.52. *The style is broken at the southern end of the Conservation Area where Nos 22 and Nos 24-26, “The Pavillions” are taller at six and four storeys respectively. While these buildings employ similar materials to the surrounding area, any positive effect is lost as the buildings detract from the group because of their added height, bulk and mass.*

7.2. *Detractors are elements of the townscape that are considered to be so significantly out of scale or character with their surroundings that their replacement, with something of a more appropriate scale and massing or detailed architectural treatment, would benefit the character and appearance of the area.*

7.8. *Where buildings currently detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area sensitive redevelopment may provide an opportunity for the enhancement ... the following buildings are sites that have been identified: Nos 22-26 (even) Avenue Road.*



Map of Elsworth Conservation Area.

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Elsworthy Conservation Area, Camden, is a wealthy residential suburb mainly populated with large detached houses set within leafy surroundings and one of London's royal parks, Primrose Hill. There are notable views and landmarks, as set out in the 'Elsworthy Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy', none of which include the property 22 Avenue Road. The property cannot be seen from Primrose Hill park due to a large number of trees in the park. According to the 'Elsworthy Conservation Area Townscape Appraisal' 22 Avenue Road is a 'negative building' and is not a heritage asset to the area. The site is situated at the very edge of the boundary located between two other 'negative buildings' including 24-26 Avenue Road. The property does not share the common architectural language of the conservation area and therefore does not add to the overall 'group value' of the Conservation Area. As the building is of negative value and distinct and separate from buildings of value in the conservation area it should therefore be appraised on a different basis to other buildings that are typical of the area as there is no heritage value: this is obvious as the Conservation Area Appraisal even notes that it would welcome its replacement. The immediate neighbour to the north has Aluminium framed windows.

Fire Protection for residential blocks.

This building is noted for its size and bulk and its height poses an increased fire risk to residents. Buildings constructed today of this size or taller would generally not be permitted to be built with combustible materials such as timber windows. The neighbour to the north does not have timber windows. It is argued that a change to non-combustible metal windows is therefore a planning gain and benefit in terms of fire integrity. This is supported with the letter from Building

Energy, re-use and re-cycling.

The current windows have timber frames and the applicant seeks to replace with double glazed aluminium windows as the proposed windows. Timber windows are difficult to re-use or recycle and are typically disposed of rather than recycled. By choosing aluminium they have a better end of life recycling option and last longer than timber windows, reducing the number of times that the windows will need replacing, therefore reducing the embodied carbon over the lifetime of the building. New Aluminium windows would have an enhanced thermal insulation and a U-Value of at least 1.3, helping to reduce energy loss and better internal temperature control, again contributing to a reduced environmental impact. The proposed windows will be a colour to match the existing but will require less maintenance as they will not need to be repainted. Aluminium windows would be recycled, provide better insulation and arguably lower overall energy before being sent to land fill than timber.

Precedents.

The property next to 22 Avenue Road, 24-26 Avenue Road has large format aluminium windows. The simplified window design is cleaner, more attractive and allows more daylight into the internal spaces. We have chosen to simplify their form to be more in keeping with its neighbouring building whilst keeping aspects of the character of the existing post-modern windows. Within Elsworth Conservation Area there are a number of more modern buildings which have simplified large format metal windows. The proposed design would be more in keeping with these rather than mimic copies of the historic windows. Please see the attached photographs of existing buildings within the Elsworth Conservation Area. The proposed design for 22 Avenue Road is more in keeping with these.

24-26 Avenue Road – modern large format aluminium windows (neighbouring building)



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36 Avenue Road – large format metal windows



3, 3A, 5 Harley Road – large format plastic windows



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27, 27A, 27B, 27C Elsworthy Road – large format plastic windows



43 Elsworthy Road – modern large format metal windows



END

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