

Applicants' Statement to LB Camden in support of planning application: 4C Fellows Road, London NW3 3LL

1.0 Proposal – brief description and purpose

4C Fellows Road is a converted flat on the first floor of a four storey, formerly end of terrace Victorian building (remainder of terrace demolished) containing a total of four flats. This is an application for planning permission to (a) use the existing portico and bay roofs at the front of the building as balconies for greening purposes and make the necessary additional sash window access arrangements and (b) to create two new balconies to the rear of the property.

The front balconies are typical of uses common in the neighbourhood. The proposed rear balconies are small in scale and not visible to the public road. They overlook mature trees providing a restful and relaxing natural environment in a dense urban area. The smaller of the balconies is two storeys above the rear garden level and because of limited size and height has limited impact at ground level or on window directly below. Apartment buildings on either side of 4 Fellows Road have rear balconies or walkways overlooking rear gardens.

The proposal arises from plans to upgrade our flat to meet LB Camden's current standards for fire safety, sound insulation, thermal insulation and energy efficiency. It also facilitates long-term occupation as we retire and become less mobile.

Our experience with Covid 19 emphasised the importance of dwellings having direct access to outside space. This was reinforced during the recent extreme heat in Summer 2022; conditions forecast to recur.

We are both approaching retirement and conscious of the health and well-being aspects of appropriate accommodation emphasised in Camden's local plan. Our re-modelling is being carried out reflecting the need to occupy our flat as long as possible without recourse to residential care. This is in line with LB Camden's Planning Guidance on health and wellbeing advocating well-designed homes and environments to enable people to "live independently" ... which "means that costly care home admissions can be delayed or avoided" (Para 1.31). The guidance also refers to the London Plan policy of "promoting lifetime neighbourhoods" which our proposal fulfils (Para 1.17).

2.0 Local design context

4 Fellows Road has a two storey extension to the side and is located in part of the street largely re-built after World War II. Adjoining buildings are from the 1950's (Hancock Nunn House) and 1980s (Waverley Court). A modern building opposite (Duncan House) dates from the 1970s. A nineteenth century pair of semi-detached buildings (Palm Court) on the opposite side of the road was converted to flats, extended to the rear and had a mansard storey added in the past. Along this stretch of Fellows Road is the 6 storey modern Britannia Hotel building and further along the 20 storey buildings of the Chalcot Estate which have had their external cladding removed for five years. Referring to LB Camden's SPD on Home Improvement (2.1.1) neither the

immediate neighbourhood nor the front or rear elevations would be considered to be architecturally distinguished.



Waverley Court, Fellows Road



Hancock Nunn House, Fellows Road



Duncan House & Palm Court, Fellows Rd



Britannia Hotel, Fellows Road

3.0 Planning policy/status

LB Camden's Local Plan specifically relating to design and amenity space states as follows at paragraph 7.23:

“Private outdoor amenity space including gardens, balconies and roof terraces, can add significantly to resident’s quality of life and applicants are therefore encouraged to explore all options for the provision of new private outdoor space.”

LB Camden's SPD on Home Improvements reinforces this stating that “Balconies can provide valuable amenity space, especially for flats that would otherwise have little or no private immediate exterior space. (Para 2.2.3)

Our flat has no immediate exterior space and our proposal seeks to fulfil this objective.

More generally what we propose through out upgrading and retro-fitting fully complies with the local plans D1 Design Policy in particular:

“ c. is sustainable in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management and climate change mitigation and adaptation;

d. is of sustainable and durable construction and adaptable to different activities and land uses;

e. comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character;

h. promotes health;

j. responds to natural features and preserves gardens and other open space;

l. incorporates outdoor amenity space;

n. for housing, provides a high standard of accommodation; and

o. carefully integrates building services equipment.”

Following pre-application comments from LB Camden planners we have modified our proposal to align with Para 2.2.3, Home Improvements SPD.

3.1 Conservation status

Number 4 Fellows Road is not a listed building. The area is not designated a conservation area (Camden Conservation Area map below) reflecting the post-war reconstruction of the area and the mixed, fragmented and generally unremarkable quality of the buildings described above.



LB Camden – Conservation Area Map (excerpt)

Current government guidance under the National Planning Policy Framework encourages dwelling extensions where possible to existing dwellings. One

such policy allowing upward extensions of existing dwellings has been extensively approved by LB Camden for dwellings on Fellows Road.

Overall current planning policy in LB Camden encourages this type of modest proposal which can bring significant benefits. More prominent proposals have been permitted in Belsize Conservation Area where 'permitted development rights' have been withdrawn. National government policy also supports sustainable adaptation and retrofitting of dwellings for health and wellbeing.

4.0 Planning and design precedents

LB Camden has approved larger and more prominent balconies/roof terraces within Belsize Park (1 Fellows Road, NW3; 36 Belsize Lane, NW3) Both of these have used barely visible glazed balustrades. We recognise at para 2.2.3 of Home Improvements SPD the planning authorities preference for metal railings. Notwithstanding the above precedents, if the planning authority would prefer more traditional metal railings on our proposal this may be addressed through appropriate conditions.



1 Fellows Road, NW3

36 Belsize Lane, NW3 (Conservation area)

King's College Court (within a minutes walk) a former 9 storey apartment block on Primrose Hill Road has been increased by two storeys and has had glazed balconies retro-fitted to all apartments



Kings College Court, Primrose Hill Road, NW3

Also prominently facing onto Primrose Hill Road (within Belsize Conservation Area) are the roof terraces at the rears of 26 Fellows Road and 1 Eton Avenue.



26 Fellows Road, NW3 (Conservation Area) 1 Eton Avenue, NW3 (Conservation Area)

Belsize Park Gardens within Belsize Conservation Area has numerous examples of purposely designed front balconies in current use. These have extra height lower sashes to provide access.



Belsize Park Gardens, London NW3 (Belsize Conservation Area)

Overall LB Camden has approved similar and much more substantial proposals to our modest proposal within close proximity of our flat. Some of these are in conservation areas where much more restrictive policies apply.

5.0 Pre-Application consultation LB Camden

The current application addresses pre-application comments received from the LB Camden planning officer particularly relating to ‘subsidiarity’ of balconies to the main building and proximity to existing windows. Daylight modelling has been provided demonstrating the minimal impact of the proposed new balconies to the rear (north facing).

It is important to note that the larger of the rear balconies has minimal impact. The closest windows serve only non-habitable spaces. These windows are glazed with occluded glass i.e lower ground floor (hallway), upper ground floor (under-stairs cupboard) and first floor (bathroom).

6.0 Consultation with building residents

We consulted with the residents of the other three flats in the building on the current proposal. There were no objections from residents and the only requirement expressed was to ensure that bay roofs were provided with a suitable wearing surface. The work will be carried out in accordance with the building regulations where these construction matters will be addressed.

7.0 Conclusion

From the above it will be seen that this is a very modest proposal with negligible impact on the existing building, neighbours and the surrounding area. In the context of the existing location with its diversity of building types, the ample space at the rear of the building, we consider the proposal positively meets the requirements of the planning authority.

Additionally, the building is neither listed nor within a conservation area and is not subject to additional restrictions in terms of such a modest proposal.

What we are proposing is fully in line with LB Camden planning policy 7.23 relating to the provision of balconies and related SPDs on Home Improvement and Health and Wellbeing. We also consider it follows national planning policy to enable residents to upgrade and retrofit their dwellings in accordance with ever increasing environmental standards and to improve the health and wellbeing of the occupants so as to avoid imposing future avoidable care home burdens on the local authority.



Rear view from proposed rear balconies

September 2022