



Belsize Conservation Area

## What the new planning measures mean for you

### Advice on alterations and repair following the introduction of an Article 4(1) Direction

1 September 2010, amended June 2026

New planning controls, known as Article 4(1) Directions, have been introduced in the Belsize Conservation Area. This means that some types of work which previously did not need planning permission now do.

The new controls seek to preserve the historic character, detail and appearance of the Belsize Conservation Area to ensure that it remains an attractive and desirable place to live into the future.

Even minor changes to the appearance of residential properties can significantly detract from the character and appearance of the area, and potentially lower the value of that property, so the basic principle underlying all this advice is to:

- keep your historic property in good repair
- retain and repair historic features rather than replace them.

Minor changes which do not detract from the character or appearance of your building such as painting your doors or windows and other periodic repairs such as the installation of a single light to the porch, or a burglar alarm box *do not need planning permission.*

#### Unsure if you need planning permission?

This guide only covers those works which now need planning permission due to the introduction of Article 4(1). To check for other works which might require planning permission such as rear extensions, lightwells, dormer windows and garden sheds please check the Camden website: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/planning-applications>

If your property is a **listed building** you may require listed building consent for undertaking certain works to your property. If in doubt check the Camden website: [www.camden.gov.uk/conservation-and-listed-buildings](http://www.camden.gov.uk/conservation-and-listed-buildings)

**There is currently no fee for applications made as a result of the Article 4(1) Direction.**

What needs planning permission? Type of work	Requires Planning Permission?		Restrictions / comments (NB There are no changes in existing planning controls for the rear elevations of properties.)
	House	Flat	
<b>Windows and doors</b>			
1. Like -for-like replacement of windows or doors on the <u>front</u> * of your property (or the side if this faces the road**)	✘	✘	<p>As long as the new window or door matches all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in materials</li> <li>• in the size, design and profile including window glazing bars/ frame</li> <li>• in the glazing bar / frame / window cill dimensions and opens in the same way (for example vertically sliding sash windows or side- or top-hinged casements).</li> </ul> <p>Any original details should be replicated and original catches, handles, pulleys, etc, should where possible be transferred to the new window or door.</p>
2. Replacement of windows or doors with matching double-glazed windows or doors on the <u>front</u> of your property (or the side if this faces the road)	✓	✓	This is to ensure that historic windows and doors are retained where possible, rather than replaced.
3. Replacing windows or doors on the <u>front</u> of your property (or the side if this faces the road) with new ones of different material or design	✓	✓	If existing windows or doors are original or characteristic of the period this is unlikely to be granted permission; we advise like-for-like replacement (see [1] above).
4. Replacing windows or doors on the <u>rear</u> of your property with new ones of different material or design	✘	✓	Replacement windows or doors of a different material or design anywhere on a flat continue to require planning permission. Replication of original designs and materials (as [1]) is always encouraged.
<b>Walls, porches and decorative features</b>			
5. Any works to enlarge, alter or improve the front of your property (or the side if this faces the road) including changing / removing traditional or historic decorative features. e.g. new	✓	✓	Works which are considered to detract from the traditional / historic character and appearance of the property are unlikely to be granted permission. Like-for-like reinstatement of historic features and

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	House	Flat	
window openings, enclosure of / removal of porches, alteration or removal of decorative features (brick, terracotta, plasterwork, stone or other materials).			removal of unsightly modern interventions is welcomed.
6. Painting the front of a property (or the side if this faces the road) if it will differ from the traditional surface treatment. This includes painting or rendering over previously unpainted brickwork.	✓	✓	You do not need to apply for planning permission to repaint your property if it is already painted or covered in 'stucco' or a traditional render finish. In this case, paint colours should match the other buildings in the block and should conform to a traditional palette.
7. The installation of a flue forming part of a biomass heating system heat and power system or a combined heat and power system on the front wall of the property (or the side wall if this faces the road).	✓	✓	Applicants should demonstrate they have prioritised passive energy saving measures over the installation of new microgeneration equipment, and should ensure the new equipment is sensitively sited so as not to detract from the design and historic appearance of the property.
<b>Roofs and Chimneys</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Flat</b>	
8. Repairing / re-roofing with matching materials and design.	✗	✗	Permitted as long as the new roof materials match in colour, size and design and are laid to match the traditional / historic pattern of roofing materials. Any leadwork flashings should also be replicated like-for-like.
9. Repairing or re-roofing the front of your roof (or the side of the roof if this faces the road) in a material which differs from the existing traditional / historic material.	✓	✓	Applications to change the traditional / historic roofing material on the front of the roof (or the side of the roof if this faces the road) are unlikely to be granted permission. See (8) above for advice.
10. Removal without re-instatement of any decorative details such as decorative ridge or hip tiles on the front of your roof (or the side of the roof if this faces the road).	✓	✓	Applications to remove traditional / historic decorative roof features are unlikely to be granted permission. Like-for-like replacement does not require planning permission; reinstatement of original features is welcomed.

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11. Installation of a roof-light on the front of your roof (or the side of the roof if this faces the road).	✓	✓	Applications to install rooflights on the front of your roof (or the side of the roof if this faces the road) are unlikely to be granted permission. See (7) above for advice.
12. Installation of a roof-light on the rear of your roof.	✗	✓	New rooflights on any part of the roof of a flat including the rear continue to require planning permission.
13. The installation, alteration (e.g. partial demolition, reduction in height, painting over etc), replacement or demolition of a chimney, flue or soil and vent pipe which would be visible from the road.	✓	✓	New services should be sited so they are not visible from the road. Applications to alter, reduce or remove your existing chimney if it is original or characteristic of the period are unlikely to be granted permission. Like-for-like repair and reinstatement, and the removal of existing unsightly services is welcomed.
<b>Front gardens and front boundaries</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Flat</b>	
14. Changing (making, enlarging, improving or altering) a hard surface at the front of a house or flat. This means paving over your front garden (or garden at the side of the property where this faces the road) where it is not already paved, or changing the size or material of the paved area. It includes paving for patios and hardstandings for cars, as well as making a dropped curb for parking.	✓	✓	Applications to make or enlarge a hard surface in your front garden are unlikely to be granted permission. Soft landscaping (flowers, grass, shrubs and small trees) in front gardens should be retained and replanted where lost. Original tiled paths and landscaping materials such as York stone should be retained and repaired; their reinstatement is encouraged.
15. Repairing a gate, wall, fence or railings at the front of a property (or at the side of the property where this faces the road). This includes repainting where the existing gate, wall, fence or railings are painted or weather treated.	✗	✗	As long as the repaired gate, wall, fence or railing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is the same size and height</li> <li>• matches in materials</li> <li>• has the same design, brick or stone-work pattern and profile, including how the mortar is bedded</li> </ul> as the traditional / historic boundary treatment. Any details such as stone copings, decorative brickwork, stucco

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	House	Flat	
			balusters and iron railings should repaired or where repair is not possible accurately replicated and original fixtures should where possible be transferred to the new gate, wall or fence.
16. Erecting, constructing, altering or demolishing a gate, wall, fence or railings at the front of a house or flat. This includes painting or rendering over unpainted brick walls.	✓	✓	Applications are unlikely to be granted permission where the size / design / material / finish of the new boundary is not in keeping with the traditional / historic boundary treatment of conservation area. (See [15] above for advice on appropriate work.) Hedges should be retained and replanted where they are a feature of the streetscape.
<p><b>Notes</b></p> <p>* The “front” means the principal elevation of a property which faces a public highway, private street or other publically accessible space, and which usually contains the front door. A property can have only one ‘front’. If in doubt check with Planning Enquiry team by email: <a href="mailto:ppp@camden.gov.uk">ppp@camden.gov.uk</a> or telephone: 020 7974 5613.</p> <p>** “Road” means public highway or private street or other publically accessible space.</p>			