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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 April 2021

**by G Rollings BA (Hons) MAUD MRTPI**

**An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/W/20/3256887**

**2 Pensbury Street, London, SW8 4TJ**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
  - The appeal is made by Meshlyn Trust against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
  - The application Ref 19/03953/FUL, dated 23 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 February 2020.
  - The development proposed is the refurbishment of an existing office space with the addition of a first floor over the service block.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matters

2. Since the application was determined, the previous London Plan has been superseded by *The London Plan* (2021). I have referred only to this current version in my decision.
3. I have used the appellant's name as set out on the application form, rather than the slightly different spelling of the appeal form version.

### Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the setting and significance of the grade-II listed buildings at 374 and 376 Wandsworth Road.

### Reasons

5. The appeal site accommodates an industrial building which has the external appearance of a single-storey building with in-roof accommodation. The proposed extension would lengthen the building at the same overall height, to subsume an existing single-storey, flat-roofed element which abuts the rear boundary of No. 374.
6. The listed buildings are three-storey (and basement) villas fronting Wandsworth Road, which is raised slightly above the ground level of the appeal site behind. Together with 372 Wandsworth Road, and to a lesser extent, the narrow dividing building at 374a Wandsworth Road, they form a coherent building group with a similar appearance and height. Their heritage significance derives from this group value, together with their age and the specific workmanship and detailing of their front facades. The setting of the

buildings includes their visible surroundings, and locations from where views of the buildings are possible, such as the appeal site.

7. Two large metal staircases are affixed to the rear elevation of No. 374. These have a modern appearance and detract from the appearance of the building but are not integral to its structure; for example, external openings do not appear to have been altered to accommodate access to the staircases. They do not have the appearance of temporary structures; however, they also do not have the permanence of a building extension similar to that proposed in this appeal. Although I have not been presented with any plans for the staircases that would suggest their future removal, it is possible that they could be taken away without major effects to the listed building or its heritage significance. Conversely, the solidity of the proposed extension, together with the other proposed works, suggest that any effects would have greater permanence.
8. I acknowledge that the features of heritage significance identified in the statutory listings for Nos. 374 and 376 are generally limited to the street-facing facades of the buildings. However, the extension would be close to the boundary of Nos. 374 and 376, and the staircases on the former, leaving a very short distance between the extension and No. 374 in particular. This would narrow the space to the rear of the listed buildings, thereby reducing the opportunities for their appreciation in views from the surrounding sites. This would result in minor harm to the buildings' setting.
9. Paragraph 196 of *The National Planning Policy Framework* (2019) (the Framework) requires the decision-maker to undertake a balancing exercise between any less than substantial harm to a heritage asset, and any public benefits resulting from development. In this instance, the public benefits are limited to the improvement of the appearance of the appeal building, the views of which would be mostly limited to private land. I recognise that there could be other benefits that would be derived from the occupancy of the development but these have not been defined as public. In this instance, the harm, although minor, is not outweighed by the limited public benefits that would result from development.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the setting and fail to conserve the particular significance of the designated heritage assets of the grade-II listed buildings at 374 and 376 Wandsworth Road. It would conflict with *Lambeth Local Plan* (2015) Policy Q20 and London Plan Policy HC1, which together require development affecting listed buildings to conserve and not harm their significance and setting, amongst other considerations. These policies are consistent with the Framework. There are no other material considerations to indicate that I should determine the appeal other than in accordance with the Development Plan for the area.

## **Conclusion**

11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*G Rollings*

INSPECTOR