



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 September 2024

by Lewis Condé BSc, MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/W/24/3344532

6-8 Monmouth Road, City of Westminster, London, W2 5SB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Paul Morrissey & Anna Cecelia Schroeder, and Maria Zemtsov against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/08556/FULL.
 - The development proposed is Construction of a mansard roof extension across both Nos. 6 and 8 Monmouth Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for "Construction of a mansard roof extension across both Nos. 6 and 8 Monmouth Road" at 6-8 Monmouth Road, City of Westminster, London, W2 5SB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 23/08556/FULL and subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. As part of the appeal, additional amended plans have been submitted by the appellant that involve further alterations to the façade of the appeal properties. The Procedural Guide to Planning Appeals in England sets out that the appeal process should not be used to evolve a scheme. It further highlights that it is important that what is considered by the Inspector at appeal is essentially the same scheme that was considered by the LPA and by interested parties at the application stage. The changes proposed to the appeal scheme also do not appear to have been made to directly address concerns of the Council, while no exceptional reasons why they should be considered have been presented.
3. It would therefore instead be appropriate for these additional works to be considered under a separate application for planning permission. Accordingly, I have therefore determined this appeal against the plans/drawings on which the Council made its decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host buildings and the wider Westbourne Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site consists of a pair of semi-detached residential dwellings nos. 6 – 8 Monmouth Road. The appeal site lies within the Westbourne Conservation

Area (WCA), accordingly, I have had regard to the duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the WCA.

6. From my observations on site and the information before me¹, the significance of the WCA is largely derived from its strong consistency of building styles and form, including its layout of development in clear grid patterns, that stems from its rapid development over a short period of time during the mid-19th Century. Buildings are predominantly in the form of terrace properties, as well as semi-detached villas. In addition, significance is also drawn from many of these buildings having intricate and ornamental architectural detailing providing a rich townscape.
7. The appeal properties are an example of one such pair of semi-detached villas, dating from circa 1840. The appeal properties have been subject to various extensions and alterations, that have altered the scale and sense of balance between the pair. Still, the properties frontages are Stucco faced and retain many original architectural details which are a characterisation of the WCA. Despite some unsympathetic alterations, I therefore find that the properties positively contribute to the character and appearance of the WCA.
8. The appeal properties also have low pitched hipped roofs, with overhanging eaves which the Audit identifies as being an important characteristic of the semi-detached villas within the WCA. Notably, however, alterations have been made to the appeal properties' roof profiles through the addition of dormer windows. Two such dormers, of different sizes, are clearly visible from public vantage points, being located on both side elevations of the roof. Consequently, the buildings' roof form has already notably been significantly compromised.
9. Furthermore, although other examples of semi-detached villas can be found nearby, the appeal site does not fall within the distinctive part of the WCA where Victorian villas are commonplace. Instead, the appeal site is located within a varied streetscene, whereby surrounding properties differ in scale, height and design including their roofscapes, albeit retain a rich quality of architectural detailing. As such, the appeal site does not form part of a collection of buildings with a high-degree of uniformity, nor do I find the building's roof to appreciably or positively contribute to the character or appearance of the WCA.
10. Still the rooflines of streets are a significant design component that the Council is seeking to protect, particularly in the WCA. This is emphasised through its design guidance in respect to roof alterations, as well as the Audit which essentially promotes the blanket ban of roof extensions through identifying them as being unacceptable to almost all buildings within the WCA (see Figure 4 of the Audit). Nonetheless, this is guidance only and it remains necessary that the proposal is considered on its own merits, having regard to its specific context.
11. Irrespective of whether or not the appeal site is to be deemed a non-designated heritage asset, its current roof form has been significantly altered through unsympathetic additions. Nor are unbroken rooflines a noteworthy or

¹ Including the Westbourne Conservation Area Audit (adopted 2002) (the Audit) and the appellant's Heritage Statement (dated May 2024) prepared by GJHP.

particularly positive aspect of the part of the WCA that the site sits within. The proposed mansard roof design is simple and includes appropriate materials for its location, while it would provide a sense of balance to the appeal properties. It would also largely follow the design of the Mansard roof to the adjacent nos. 2 – 4 Monmouth Road (nos. 2 – 4), thereby providing some visual continuity both in terms of roofscape and the buildings' proportions. Whilst the Mansard roof to nos. 2 – 4 may not be original or an exemplary designed roof, I find it remains a neutral element within the WCA. Additionally, Mansard roofs are a common feature and characteristic of this part of the WCA, such that the proposal would not appear out of place, or stand out, in the wider streetscene.

12. Accordingly, I find that the proposed development would not cause harm to the character or appearance of the host building and would preserve the character and appearance of the WCA. The proposal would therefore adhere to the design and heritage protection aims of Policies 38, 39 and 40 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (adopted 2021).
13. Insofar as they seek to promote development of an appropriate design that would preserve or enhance the character and significance of heritage assets, the proposal would also conform with the aims of the Council's WCA Audit (2002), along with its supplementary planning guidance documents on the Development and Demolition in Conservation Areas (adopted 1994); and Roofs: A Guide to Extension and Alterations on Domestic Properties (adopted 1995).

Conditions

14. I have assessed the conditions suggested by the Council against the tests outlined at paragraph 56 of the Framework and within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). These state that they should only be imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. Where necessary, I have made minor amendments to ensure conditions comply with these tests.
15. In addition to the standard time limit for commencement of development, a condition specifying the approved plans/drawings has been attached for clarity and certainty. In the interests of the character and appearance of the host dwellings and the wider area, I have attached a condition specifying that materials to be used in the development are to match the existing dwellings, other than where details in the approved plans indicate otherwise.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, having regard to the development plan as a whole and all other relevant considerations, the appeal is allowed.

Lewis Condé

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Location Plan – Dwg No. 510-EX-1_001;
 - Site Plan – Dwg No. 510-EX-1_002;
 - Roof Demolition – Dwg No. 510-D-1-01;
 - Third Floor Demolition – Dwg No. 510-D-1-02;
 - Proposed Third Floor – Dwg No. 510-GA-1_02;
 - Proposed Roof – Dwg No. 510-GA-1_01;
 - Proposed Front Elevation – Dwg No. 510-GA-2_01;
 - Proposed Rear Elevation – Dwg No. 510-GA-2_02;
 - Proposed Elevations Side Elevation of 8 Monmouth Rd – Dwg No. 510-GA-2_03;
 - Proposed Elevations Side Elevation of 6 Monmouth Rd – Dwg No. 510-GA-2_04;
 - Proposed Section AA Proposed Side thru. 8 Monmouth Rd – Dwg No. 510-GA-3_01; and
 - Proposed Section BB Proposed Side thru. 6 Monmouth Rd – Dwg No. 510-GA-3_02.
- 3) The external materials of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building/dwellings, other than whereby details in the approved plans indicate otherwise.