

---

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 April 2025

**by S. Ashworth BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 30 May 2025**

---

**Appeal Ref: APP/K5600/Y/24/3355492**  
**45, Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD**

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
  - The appeal is made by Argyll Management Ltd against the decision of The Council of The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.
  - The application is Ref LB/24/05282
  - The works proposed are partial removal of internal wall in basement.
- 

## Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for the partial removal of internal wall in basement at 45 Pont Street, London SW1X 0BD in accordance with the terms of application ref: LB/24/05282 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
  1. The works hereby authorised shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this permission.
  2. All new works and works of making good the retained fabric shall be finished to match the adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to colour, material texture and profile.

## Preliminary Matter

2. There is some dispute between the parties as to whether information contained in the appellant's appeal statement pertaining to a Listed Building Consent for works to the building in 2012<sup>1</sup> should be taken into account in my consideration of the appeal. That permission is a matter of public record and could have formed part of the Council's assessment of the application, whether or not it was referred to by the appellant in its original submissions. Moreover, the Council has had an opportunity to respond to the appellant's reference to it during the appeal process. On that basis I am satisfied that neither party would be prejudiced by my consideration of it.

## Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is whether the works preserve the listed building or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

---

<sup>1</sup> Application Ref: LB/12/01565

## Reasons

4. No 45 Pont Street is a grade II listed building dating from 1888, situated in a prominent position at the corner of Pont Street and Cadogan Square. The property, a grand red brick building designed by renowned architect Charles Stephens, was built in a classical Queen Anne style as a single dwelling house. The property lies within the Hans Town Conservation Area.
5. Internally a significant amount of the plan form and interior detailing has survived, despite the conversion of the building to offices in the 1970s and later works. The principal rooms occupy the ground, first and second floors of the building with what would have been servant's rooms on the third floor and the kitchen, servant's parlour and other service rooms in the basement. The ceiling heights and elaborate decoration of the upper floors contrast with that of the basement which has a much simpler decorative style. The plan form of the basement, which comprises a series of small rooms running alongside a long central corridor, is clearly apparent. The hierarchy of spaces and fittings within the building, as the list description sets out, reflect the building's historic use, character and status. These matters make an important contribution to the special architectural and historic interest of the building as a heritage asset.
6. The proposal seeks to create an opening between two of the basement rooms to form a larger room to be used as a visitor lounge with access to a tea making facility. The larger of those rooms, noted in the documents as B11, is currently a lounge, which is used in connection with the offices. The smaller room, B10, is currently used for storage purposes. The existing doorway between room B10 and the central corridor would be blocked up.
7. The parties agree that the wall between B10 and B11 is not composed of original material. Accordingly, there would be no loss of original fabric. Nor is the wall itself of any particular architectural interest. Unlike the opposite walls in both of the rooms it does not contain a chimney breast or any other feature of note. Nevertheless, plans of the basement floor at different points in time have been submitted with the appeal and I note there has always been wall between the two rooms. Given the cellular plan form of the basement the presence of a wall in this position is a positive feature of the building.
8. The proposed opening would be considerably wider than that of a normal doorway, similar to the width of double doors. Notwithstanding that, more than half of the existing wall between the two rooms would be retained. In addition, service boxing would be reinstated at ceiling level which would in effect lower the height of the opening. On that basis it seems to me that it would be apparent that the works were an intentional modern intervention and as such the cellular plan form of this part of the basement would remain legible.
9. I note the Council's concern that the opening would not be finished with appropriate detailing. Indeed, the opening would be plain and simple. However, it is not intended that the doors would be fitted and it seems to me that a more elaborate surround to this particular opening would confuse the hierarchy of the space given that the detailing in the basement is limited.
10. From all I have seen and read, doorways have been formed and/or closed off at various times as the needs of the occupiers of the building evolved. The existing doorway to room B10 was formed as part of more recent works and is not in its original position. The door itself is modern. Moreover, the 2011 plan

indicates that at that time there was no doorway to B10 from the corridor but rather the room was accessed via neighbouring room B9. Whilst most rooms were and are still served directly off the corridor that has clearly not always been the case. Some rooms are accessed off other rooms now. Such instances do not distract from the ability to understand the importance of the spine corridor or how the basement was originally set out. Likewise, I am satisfied that the removal of the doorway to B10 would not have a material effect on the significance of the listed building.

11. The proposal would provide a benefit for current users of the building in terms of a more accessible and functional lounge space. Nevertheless, I also recognise the need to consider not only the current needs of the occupants of the building but also future ones. In that regard there is nothing before me to suggest that the proposed works would not be reversible.
12. On that basis I am satisfied that the proposal would not harm the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building and as such it would meet the weighty statutory requirements of s.16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
13. Although not determinative it would also be consistent with Policy CD5 of the Kensington and Chelsea Local Plan 2024 which requires any works for alterations to listed buildings to preserve the significance of the building or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses, and preserve historic fabric and original and later features of interest both internal and external.
14. Bearing in mind the internal location and scale of the proposed works I consider it would not affect the character or appearance of the conservation area, which would therefore be preserved.
15. The Council has suggested conditions in the event of the appeal being allowed which I have taken into consideration. Given that I have found the proposed works acceptable, conditions requiring further details of the wall to be removed, and a requirement for the door to be fixed shut would be unreasonable and unnecessary. Similarly, a condition requiring the retention of plasterwork is not necessary. Nevertheless, in order to preserve the special interest of the listed building it is necessary to require all new works to be finished to match the adjacent works.
16. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

*S Ashworth*

INSPECTOR