



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 May 2025

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/D/25/3363984

3 Montrose Place, City of Westminster, London SW1X 7DU

- 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 Shiheng Jing against the decision of Westminster City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00202/FULL.
 - The development proposed is the enlargement of two windows to allow for two double glazed French windows, with the creation of a Juliette balcony at the first-floor level to the front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the enlargement of two windows to allow for two double glazed French windows, with the creation of a Juliette balcony at the first-floor level to the front elevation at 3 Montrose Place, City of Westminster, London SW1X 7DU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/00202/FULL, subject to the following 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 approved plans: Drg Nos MPL001-REN-A-DR-001 '*Location Plan and Block Plans*', revised MPL001-REN-010 '*Front Elevations_Existing & Proposed*', revised MPL001-REN-011 '*Existing and Proposed Floor Plans*', revised MPL001-REN-012 '*Section AA_Existing & Proposed*' and Drg No MPL001-REN-013 '*French Flush Window Typical Details*'.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant has put forward an additional plan, Drg No MPL001-REN-013 entitled '*French Flush Window Typical Details*', as an amendment to the original Drg No MPL001-REN-012. This shows the French windows as painted solid hardwood 14mm slimline heritage double glazed units with external horizontal glazing bars. This is an amendment to the 28mm sealed units that were originally proposed. In addition, original Drg Nos MPL001-REN-010 and MPL001-REN-011 have been revised to include the same details as well as an amendment to the depth of the proposed Juliette balcony, which would project 200mm from the front face of the building and stand over 3016mm above the pavement. An alternative

Drg No MPL001-REN-012 entitled '*Section AA_Existing & Proposed*' has also been submitted with the appeal. This too is annotated with the revised information.

3. I have considered the revised plans with regard to the judgement of *Holborn Studios Ltd v The Council of the London Borough of Hackney [2017] EWHC 2823 (Admin)*. In terms of the substantive test, I find that the proposed amendments would not amount to a substantial change to the proposal. I am therefore satisfied that the amendments can be considered as part of the appeal. In terms of the procedural test, given the absence of any responses from any interested parties and consultees when the application was considered, and the minor changes that are proposed, I am satisfied that interested parties and consultees would not be prejudiced if I determined the appeal on the basis of the amended plans and details.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the appeal property and the Belgravia Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal relates to a three-storey terraced property with a mansard roof located on the north-east side of Montrose Place, a narrow mews within the wider Belgravia Conservation Area (CA). The Council's *Conservation Area Audit for Belgravia, Consultation Draft 2013* (CAA) assists in setting out the significance of the CA and describes its character being derived from, amongst many other things, the intimate mews properties that are hidden behind the larger properties of the main squares, and the clear hierarchy of streets and mews. No 3 is identified within the draft CAA as an attractive building of its type. The proposal would alter the two existing first-floor sash windows by dropping the existing cill levels of the vertically proportioned openings by 450mm and installing two inward opening double-glazed timber French windows to each, and the installation of a painted steel Juliette balcony with a railing height of 1100mm and a projection of 200mm.
6. The Council had no concerns over the installation of French windows. I concur given they are common features of many period properties in the area.
7. The Council was firstly concerned that the original application drawings did not show enough detailed design and depth of projection for the balcony to enable how it would affect the building and CA. The original plans which showed the building's front elevation clearly showed the simple form, position, height, and materials proposed for the Juliette balconies. Their projections were annotated at 300mm. This has since been reduced to 200mm upon the revised plans. I saw that such features at first-floor level are commonplace within the immediate locality, including next door at 2 Montrose Place. Railing styles vary from the very ornate to those with simple vertical bars. The Juliette balconies proposed would not be alien within their setting and would be simple, modest additions that would complement the style and proportions of the dwelling.
8. The amended plans include a full height section of the window details showing a 14mm slimline double-glazed unit with a 90mm reveal, as existing, and 24mm wide external horizontal glazing bars. The choice of materials and slender proportions of the frames and glazing bars appear well-considered and respectful of the dwelling's original windows.

9. When closed, the French doors would fail to mimic the six-over-six glazing pattern of the building's upper floor sash windows. However, I observed that where existing houses within the locality have French doors opening onto balconies, as is commonplace amongst the grander properties nearby along Chapel Street just a short distance to the east of the appeal property, the design and glazing bar detailing of these varies, not only between the window patterns across the frontages of individual properties, but also from neighbouring property to property in some cases. This is recognised within the CAA where it discusses the architectural detail of windows, doors and porticos within the CA. Whilst No 3 may not reflect the status of these nearby examples, the change to the fenestration pattern at first-floor level to No 3 would be neither unique nor out of keeping with the established pattern of architectural detail within the immediate area.
10. Overall, I am satisfied that the proposal would appear as a sympathetic alteration that would protect the character and appearance of the appeal property and the Belgravia Conservation Area. The area's significance as a designated heritage asset would therefore be unharmed. As such, there would be no conflict with Policies 38, 39 or 40 of the Council's City Plan 2019-2040 (April 2021) as far as between them they seek, amongst other things, to ensure development, including alterations and extensions to buildings, is of high quality design that contributes positively to local character and either preserves or enhances the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Other matters

11. The officer's report refers to the setting of nearby listed buildings at 28-32 Chapel Street. These are a group of Grade II listed terraced properties fronting Chapel Street which runs perpendicular to Montrose Place with No 28 occupying the corner plot, roughly 25m away from the appeal property. Montrose Place is a narrow mews where No 3 is out of sight within any visual context of the nearby listed properties. Given this, and my findings with regard to the visual impact of the proposal, there would be no harm to the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Conditions

12. In addition to the standard time limit and plans conditions, I have imposed a condition requiring external materials used to match the existing. This would include the finishes that would affect the building's elevation where the existing window openings would be dropped and is necessary in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the building and wider area.
13. The Council has suggested further conditions that would require more detailed drawings of the balconies and windows. The plans which accompanied the appeal give sufficient detail, including confirming that the windows would be painted timber with 14mm slimline glazed sections and concealed trickle vents. No further details are therefore necessary.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR