



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2025

by **A U Ghafoor BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI FCMI fCMgr**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/F/23/3325346

11 Sekforde Street, London, EC1R 0HD

- The appeal is made under section 39 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 ("the Act").
- The appeal is made by Mrs Veronica Steer against a listed building enforcement notice issued by the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
- The listed building enforcement notice was issued on 24 May 2023.
- The contravention of listed building control alleged in the notice is the erection of additional railings, with a metal security gate and supporting posts inserted into and affixed to the traditional front iron railings, together with a carriage lamp, decorative metal bracket and supports over the main entrance.
- The requirements of the notice are to: (1) remove the additional railings and metal security gate, including its supporting posts and fixings from the entrance of the property and make good the front railing thereafter to match the position, materials, design and colour of the adjacent original railing, and (2) remove the carriage lamp, including its decorative metal brackets, supports and fixings, from the front elevation of the property's entrance and make good the resulting existing retained fabric of the frontage in matching materials, texture, profile and colour to the parent building.
- The period for compliance with the requirements is 2 months.
- The appeal is proceeding on grounds (c), (e) and (h) within section 39(1) of the Act.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted insofar as it relates to the erection of additional railings, with a metal security gate and supporting posts inserted into and affixed to the traditional front iron railings. The appeal is dismissed, and the listed building enforcement notice is upheld, insofar as it relates to allegation relating to the carriage lamp, decorative metal bracket and supports over the main entrance at 11 Sekforde Street London EC1R 0HD.

Reasons - ground (c)

2. No. 11 is a grade II listed building. In pursuing an appeal on ground (c), the principal consideration is that the alleged works do not constitute a contravention of listed building controls. This usually involves the question of whether the alleged works affect the character of the building as one of special architectural or historic interest, irrespective of whether the works are harmful to the building. The question is whether those works have been authorised.
3. Firstly, the listing description does not state that the carriage lamp or metal gate are existing features at no. 11. They would have been clearly identified at the time of listing had they existed, because the description clearly refers to a carriage entrance to no. 13 and cast-iron railings to area of nos. 8-10. The appeal parties refer to evidence obtained from the archives roughly covering the period 1968 - 1982. None of this information shows, conclusively, the existence of the features addressed by the notice.
4. Secondly, given the nature of the alterations made to the listed building's fabric and external elevation, the alleged work affects the character of the listed building as one of special architectural and historic interest. To my mind, the matters alleged in the notice require listed building consent. The nub of the appellant's argument, however, is the works were granted listed building consent by the local planning authority in 1982 and carried out in accordance with the conditions attached to that consent. I disagree with that proposition.

5. Taking the listed building consent at face value, it is limited to the external and internal alterations to enable rehabilitation for use as five houses, the formation of residential garden area at rear of 11 and 13 Woodbridge Street, and use of entire rear building adjoining Sans Walk as offices. The description of the alterations did not include installation of a carriage lamp or metal gate. The Council's documentary records are inconclusive but there is nothing before me to strongly suggest the alleged works have already been granted consent in 1982.
6. Consequently, as a matter of fact and degree, I consider that the works enforced against have affected the character of the building as one of special or architectural interest. These works have not been authorised, and a contravention of section 9(1) of the Act has thus occurred. The appeal on ground (c) therefore must fail.

Ground (e)

7. The notice refers to local planning policies which reflect the statutory duties in seeking to safeguard listed buildings and the character or appearance of CAs. Based on my observations and the evidence before me, the **main issue** is whether the unauthorised works preserve the special architectural or historic interest or setting of the listed building, whether they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA and whether the significance of the heritage assets is harmed.
8. The building's significance as a heritage asset is derived from its architectural interest as part of a Georgian terrace with traditional features such as stucco, Roman Doric columns, cornice and fanlight, panelled doors and round arched entrances. The listed building is located within a block of similarly designed buildings the group value of which makes a positive contribution to the urban character of the Clerkenwell Green Conservation Area (CA). The latter is characterised by similarly designed terraces dating back to the period between 1835 and 1840.
9. Clearly, the additional railings, with a metal security gate and supporting posts inserted into and affixed to the traditional front iron railings, are modern additions. In contrast, cast iron railings are a significant contributor to the external appearance of the listed building and character of the wider CA, but I give little credence to the argument that consent should be withheld just because no. 11 happens to be the only house in the terrace to have metal security gates. In my assessment, the metal gate and additional railings visually integrate with the cast-iron railings. In any event, their location does not undermine the appearance of the listed building or terrace.
10. The gate's design, colour and construction are similar in appearance to iron railings in the street scene. The additional railings, by virtue of their architectural style, do not represent a poor contextual response to the prevailing design of the listed building or terrace as they appear as a subordinate addition and insertion. When considered in the context of the street scene, the additional railings and gate do not, individually or cumulatively, form discordant features or additions to the listed building. I do not consider these alterations detract from the uniformity of the terrace and the significance of the wider CA.
11. The carriage lamp is fixed by mounting points in front of the ornate fanlight. Contrary to the appellant's argument regarding side lanterns, I take the view that the carriage lamp appears as an unusually large and dominant feature on the front elevation detracting from the fine Georgian architecture of the façade. Given its elevated positioning, projection and design, it has an over-dominant visual effect and harms the uniformity of the building and terrace. Its location is visually out-of-keeping with the architectural and historic interest, due to its incongruent design. In turn, this element of the alterations undermines the uniformity and consistency of the terrace's special interest because the disproportionate and overly ornate design of the carriage lamp is at odds with the prevailing character and appearance of residential buildings in the wider CA.
12. There is a similar lamp fixed to the public house opposite the appeal site. However, the Council say the 2017 applications for consent that added the lamp at included photographic evidence dating from 1902. This evidence clearly demonstrated the property had a large and ornate lamp and the like-for-like replacement was deemed acceptable in this part of the heritage asset. I do not consider

the existence of the lamp at the public house is a strong precedent and, in any event, each application should be determined on its individual merits.

Conclusions on ground (e)

13. The alleged works comprising the erection of a carriage lamp, decorative metal bracket and supports over the main entrance fails to preserve the evidential and aesthetic value of the listed building and terrace. The alleged work fails to preserve the special architectural or historic interest or setting of the listed building and terrace which, in turn, fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of CA and harms the significance of the heritage assets.
14. The harm, although serious, is less than substantial in terms of paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In this regard, as confirmed by the appellant, the property is in use as a dwellinghouse and is currently occupied, hence its optimum viable use is already established. Furthermore, the harms I have described, individually and cumulatively, are not outweighed by the very limited public benefits suggested by the appellant and interested parties.
15. On the other hand, contrary to the Council's assessment, I find that the erection of additional railings, with a metal security gate and supporting posts inserted into and affixed to the traditional front iron railings, preserve the special architectural or historic interest or setting of the listed building and terrace and the character or appearance of CA. The architectural features of no. 11 remain intact, and these works do not harm the significance of the heritage assets. Insofar relevant to the determination of this appeal, this element of the works meets with the main aims of policy HC1(C) of the London Plan 2021, policy DH1 and DH2 of the Local Plan (2023), and granting consent also meets with guidance contained in the CA's Design Guidelines (2002) and Urban Design Guide (2017).
16. The Council does not consider conditions are necessary and I concur. Therefore, as the two elements of the alleged works are clearly separate, I have granted consent only for the gate and additional railings as set out above.

Ground (h)

17. The period specified in the notice for compliance with all the requirements is 2 months. The appellant seeks a period of 6 months because suitably qualified contractors would need to be found and appointed to execute the work. Be that as it may, only the carriage lamp with its associated fittings and fixtures need removing and nothing before me suggests the nature and extent of the work requires an extended period of compliance.

Overall conclusions

18. Having regard to all other matters raised, for the reasons given above, ground (c) fails. The appeal on ground (e) succeeds in part and listed building consent is granted for an element of the alleged works. Ground (j) fails because the period of compliance specified in the notice does not fall short of what should reasonably be allowed. Insofar as there is any inconsistency between the upheld notice and consent, I rely upon section 44 of the Act.

A U Ghafoor

INSPECTOR