
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2025

by Colin Cresswell BSc (Hons), MA, MBA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/25/3366438

135 St James's Drive, Wandsworth, London, SW17 7RP

- 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 Camilla Drewienkiewicz against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2024/4227.
 - The development proposed is described as "Top floor renovation with front and side mansard roof extension to match both 137 and 135. Installation of solar panels on flat roof".
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This decision is issued in accordance with section 56 (2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended and supersedes that issued on 12 August 2025.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the heading above is taken from the original Application Form. While this differs from the description provided on the Council's Decision Notice, both refer to the same proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. This part of St James's Drive contains a mixture of architectural styles, including detached, semi-detached and terraced housing. Yet despite this diversity, there is a high degree of visual consistency amongst individual groups of buildings. This includes the appeal property, which is architecturally similar to the adjoining property at No 133 St James's Drive. Even though the two properties are not identical, they nonetheless display a good deal of uniformity.
5. The appeal property forms part of the Wandsworth Common Conservation Area, the significance of which mainly lies in the architectural merit of the older buildings it contains. This particular part of the Conservation Area is especially prominent as the properties here face Wandsworth Common.
6. Although the proposed roof extension would be larger than the existing extension, it would not be very conspicuous when standing immediately outside the property

due to its height and positioning behind the parapet wall. However, the extension would be more noticeable from vantage points within Wandsworth Common, where it would be seen at distance next to neighbouring extensions.

7. The appellant says that the proposed extension would mirror the approved extension to No 133, as shown in the Design and Heritage Statement. However, the Council casts doubt on the accuracy of the plans and claim the proposed extension would differ in height and roof pitch. Having reviewed the available evidence these matters, I am unable to reach a firm conclusion. I have not been provided with plans of the neighbouring extension and it is not fully depicted on the submitted drawings. As such, it not possible to determine whether the two extensions would closely match each other as suggested.
8. I am mindful that the appeal property already has a roof extension which differs from the approved extension to No 133. However, the proposed extension would be larger than the existing extension and therefore more noticeable. Without further clarification as to whether the proposal would improve visual consistency between the pair of semi-detached dwellings, I consider that it would harm the appearance of the Conservation Area. Uniformity between groups of building is a distinctive feature along this part of St James's Road and the proposal would potentially disrupt this. While the proposed extension would represent a small element of the overall street scene, incremental changes such as this can contribute to a gradual erosion of the heritage asset.
9. Nonetheless, the harm I have identified would be less than substantial and the Framework¹ says that it should be weighed against any public benefits associated with the development. In this case, the proposal would improve energy efficiency and would also increase the ability of the property to accommodate a larger family. While these benefits would align with planning objectives, they would be relatively small in magnitude and so would be insufficient to outweigh the heritage harm, which carries considerable weight.
10. I am conscious that the appellant wishes to improve their home and it is not my intention to unnecessarily delay this process. However, for the reasons given above, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There would be conflict with Policies LP1, LP3 and LP5 of the Wandsworth Local Plan². In different ways, these policies advocate appropriate standards of design within Conservation Areas.
11. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

C Cresswell

INSPECTOR

¹ National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024

² Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038