



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 November 2025

by Simon Hand MA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/F/23/3331837

Sion Cottage, Sion Road, TWICKENHAM, TW1 3DR

- The appeal is made under section 39 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Gerald Gillespie against a listed building enforcement notice issued by the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames.
 - The enforcement notice was issued on 13 September 2023.
 - The contravention of listed building control alleged in the notice is: without listed building consent (i) the removal of a Regency style timber porch and canopy located at first floor level on the Sion Road elevation and its replacement with a metal framed porch and canopy of a materially different design; (ii) the removal of Greek key pattern style timber balcony located at first floor level on the Riverside elevation and its replacement with a metal framed balcony and canopy of a materially different design.
 - The requirements of the notice are: (i) Remove the metal framed porch and canopy over the first floor entrance fronting Sion Road and reinstate in this location a decorative timber porch in the Regency style with a lead flashing canopy to match in facsimile that which existed previously; (ii) Remove the metal framed balcony and canopy located at first floor level fronting Riverside and reinstate a timber balcony in a Greek key pattern style with a lead flashing canopy that matches in facsimile that which existed previously; (iii) Make good any damage caused to the Property caused by complying with steps (i) and (ii).
 - The period for compliance with the requirements is 4 months.
 - The appeal is made on the ground set out in section 39(1) (i) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and the listed building enforcement notice is quashed. Listed building consent is granted for (i) the removal of a Regency style timber porch and canopy located at first floor level on the Sion Road elevation and its replacement with a metal framed porch and canopy and; (ii) the removal of Greek key pattern style timber balcony located at first floor level on the Riverside elevation and its replacement with a metal framed balcony and canopy with Greek key patterned style detailing at Sion Cottage, Sion Road, Twickenham, TW1 3DR.

The Appeal on Ground (i)

2. This ground is that the steps required by the notice would not restore the character of the building to its former state. Sion Cottage is a corner building and joined to terraces of houses on both sides. The terrace along Sion Road is of a different style of building altogether, being taller and red brick. Sion Cottage matches in style the terrace along Riverside which is white painted with a profusion of bay windows, doors, railed balconies, balustrades and so on. The main entrances are all up steps and Sion Cottage is no exception.

3. The Riverside balcony was originally a timber railing within a metal frame, the sides and roof of which had a Greek key pattern frieze attached. This was replaced by a metal framed balcony with metal railings. Since the notice was issued the appellant has re-instated the Greek key pattern frieze. At first glance, other than a change of colour the porch looks very much the same. In fact the metal railings are slightly taller and wider spaced.
4. The Sion Road porch sits on top of a flight of steps leading up to a door into the property. This has undergone rather more substantial change. It originally comprised on the road front, a wooden diamond pattern trellis filling the gap between the hand railings and the ogee roof. To the rear was a gothic style window opening and the side facing the steps had a wooden trellis section across the roof. This has been replaced with a metal frame beneath a similar ogee roof, open to the side and rear.
5. Both porch and balcony, were, as described by the Council prominent and distinctive features. The balcony is specifically mentioned in the listing as a “wooden trellis balcony adorned with Greek key pattern” and the porch is mentioned as “central entrance door with trellis porch approached by flight of steps”. There is no doubt both elements were present when the building was listed and were significant enough to be included in what are usually rather short descriptions. Of course both still remain, but in a somewhat altered form. The key issue is therefore whether returning them to exact facsimiles of the originals would restore the character of the building.
6. In my view it would not. Of particular importance is the fact that the character of the building has been irrevocably changed by removing the pebbledash finish and reinstating (I presume) the original white painted stone that matches the rest of the Riverside houses. This received listed building consent and to my mind has hugely improved the look of the building. Both the balcony, but in particular the porch looked from the photographs provided to be somewhat the worse for wear. The porch seems to have been rather crudely cobbled together from disparate materials and rather awkwardly fastened to the metal railings of the steps. The current structure is rather elegant and very much suits the look of the house now it has been renovated. The roof and railings are either the same or very similar as before and it would be fairly easy to add to the structure new wooden trellises to replicate the original. However, the result would still be distinctive, but not in a good way.
7. A local historian has written in with various photographs that show the trellised porch was in place in 1901. He believes that was when it was installed as it is not visible in an older photograph believed to date from 1900. Whatever the date, it cannot be original to the building which was constructed in the early 18th Century, long before photography was invented.
8. The porch may well, therefore, have been a distinctive and quirky addition to the house for many years but that does not mean it should be protected at all costs. It is not original early Georgian, and its reinstatement would positively detract from the house as it now is. The new porch is elegant and harmonious and unusually I consider the loss of an older style structure to be acceptable. The railings, porches and balconies on the adjacent houses along Riverside also all appear to be metal framed and the new porch on Sion Cottage fits in with the prevailing character of the area much better than the original. I do not think that the

character of the listed building can be restored as that character has, lawfully, been changed significantly and the new porch is suitable to the new character.

9. As far as the balcony is concerned, the restoration of the Greek key pattern is important and has already been undertaken. Otherwise the changes are so minimal as to be unimportant. The wooden railings do not contribute to the character of the listed building and, as in the case of the porch, the same argument as to character prevails.

Conclusion

10. In the particular circumstances of this appeal I do not think there has been any harm to the significance of the listed building by either porch or balcony, so the less than substantial harm test from the NPPF is not engaged. There clearly has been an affect on the character of Sion Cottage as a building of special architectural or historic interest, but that is a positive affect. The simplest solution is therefore to quash the notice and grant listed building consent for the porch and balcony as they exist today.

Simon Hand

INSPECTOR