



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 November 2025

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/D/25/3372986

33 Denmark Road, Wimbledon, Merton SW19 4PQ

- 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 Ms Meghan Chambers against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref is 25/P1558.
 - The proposed development is described as a mansard extension to the rear at second floor level and all associated works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background and Procedural Matter

2. A previous planning application on the site for a rear and side extension at ground floor and a rear extension at first and second floor was refused and the subsequent appeal dismissed¹ ('the dismissed appeal'). I have had regard to the dismissed appeal, and the differences between it and the proposal before me, in my decision.
3. I have taken the description in my banner from the application form, although I note that the submitted drawings also depict ground and first floor extensions. That said, since the dismissed appeal decision, planning permission has been granted for a ground floor rear and side extension and a rear first floor extension ('the approved scheme')². As the approved scheme is similar to those elements in this proposal, my decision focusses on the proposed second floor level extension, whilst also having regard to cumulative impacts.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wimbledon West Conservation Area, including its effect on the host as a locally listed building.

Reasons

5. In making my decision, I am mindful of the legislative requirement, as set out at Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

¹ APP/T5720/D/25/3364315.

² Ref: 25/P0552

6. I have also had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework ('Framework'), which sets out that great weight shall be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, such as conservation areas, and that harm to their significance requires clear and convincing justification. It continues at paragraph 216 that the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should also be taken into account, and that a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss, and the significance of the asset.
7. The significance of the Wimbledon West Conservation Area ('the WWCA') derives in large part from its cohesive, well-proportioned architecture, and its historic interest as an early nineteenth century and later residential suburb, with a generally spacious and verdant character. This part of it typically comprises traditional Victorian dwellings, finished in London stock brick or render, which are arranged in terraces or pairs, often as part of a similarly styled group, on either side of the road.
8. The host and No 34 form a semi-detached, principally hipped-roofed two storey pair, which is broadly similar to the neighbouring pairs to the north-west. It is included on the Council's local list. This states that the building dates from around 1860, and describes its interest as comprising its style and materials, and its architectural detailing, which includes arched porches, round-headed windows with keystones, square front-facing bay windows, fine timber detailing, and sash windows with margined glazing bars. Given its age, character and style, I agree that it is a non-designated heritage asset.
9. The proposed second floor extension would extend from the host's ridgeline over its original roof, before stepping down slightly over the roof of the proposed replacement two storey gabled outrigger. Given its height, design and considerable depth, it would have a domineering rectilinear bulk, and it would give the resultant property a top-heavy and awkward appearance, which would jar markedly with the original building's far simpler and much more modest form and scale.
10. Consequently, whilst the second floor extension would be narrower and more articulated compared to the dismissed appeal, and notwithstanding the use of matching materials and the replacement of uPVC windows with more appropriate timber, the proposal would compromise the legibility of the original building, and it would disrupt the cohesion and well-balanced proportions of this characteristic semi-detached pair.
11. The appellant states that other properties in the area are larger and, refers to the area's evolving context by reference to extensions that have been granted planning permission, some of which she includes as appendices to her statement. However, they are predominantly towards the other end of Denmark Road, where none of the buildings are locally listed.
12. Having regard to cumulative impacts, I did not observe any nearby properties on this part of the road which have such a complex form compared to the resultant building here, nor similar style buildings with a comparable mansard extension. Given its scale, form and design, the proposal would be at odds with the locally distinctive cottage-style architecture which is so characteristic of the host, this pair, and the locality.
13. Thus, whilst the host sits on a relatively large triangular plot, and views of the second floor extension would be largely private, considered cumulatively, rather than presenting a unified composition as claimed, the scheme would unduly harm

the character and appearance of the host dwelling, including its contribution to the area as a non-designated heritage asset, and it would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the WWCA.

14. The scheme would thereby conflict with London Plan 2021 Policy HC1, and Merton Local Plan 2024 - 2037/38 Policies D12.3, D12.4 and D12.5. Amongst other things, and in general terms, these require development to respond positively to a site's context and character, to enhance local distinctiveness, to respect the form, scale, bulk and proportions of the original building, and to conserve the significance of heritage assets.
15. It would also conflict with the stance at paragraphs 130 and 135 of the Framework for high quality design, which is sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment. In accordance with the Framework, the harm to the significance of the WWCA is a matter to which I attribute great weight. However, given the limited scale of the proposal in the context of the WWCA as a whole, the harm caused to it would be 'less than substantial' and, in accordance with its paragraph 215, I will therefore weigh it against the public benefits.

Other considerations

16. In its favour, the scheme would involve the renovation of a derelict property to provide additional living space, and improvements to the property's energy efficiency. However, this scheme is not the only way in which those modest public benefits could be achieved, and I therefore attach limited weight to them in my overall planning balance.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

17. The Framework does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. I have found that the proposal would significantly harm the character and appearance of the host property, including the building's significance as a non-designated heritage asset, and that it would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the WWCA. It would thereby conflict with the development plan.
18. Although I have identified modest public benefits, they would not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the WWCA.
19. Having regard to the statutory test, the scheme would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the WWCA. It would conflict with the development plan when considered as a whole, and material considerations, including the Framework, do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
20. For these reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, including representations by interested parties, the appeal is dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR