



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2025

by K Dryden BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/W/25/3370621

65 Cranworth Gardens, London SW9 0NR

- 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 Mr Ben Smith against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application ref is 25/00847/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the replacement of the existing timber sash windows with UPVC timber effect sash windows.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description of development in the banner heading above is taken from the application form. However, the Council has described the proposed development as 'replacement of the existing windows/ side balcony door with UPVC windows/ door, second floor'. As this is a more accurate description, I have determined the appeal on the basis of it.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the host property and the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. Number 65 Cranworth Gardens is a mid-terraced period property located within a residential area. The street is characterised by three storey mansion block properties with characterful red brick facades, detailed white stone dressings and bay windows which creates a consistent and attractive context.
5. The appeal property relates to a second floor flat within the host property 61-66 Cranworth Gardens (the mansion block). The flat has windows overlooking the street to the front elevation, in addition to side and rear elevations facing an internal courtyard. A small rear terrace area is provided at no 65 which is accessed through a single door.
6. At my site visit it was evident that the existing fenestration at the mansion block is of similar architectural detailing with consistency in the use of timber frames. This was also my observation within the wider street context at Cranworth Gardens.

7. Although the plans do not show a noticeable difference in size between the elements of the existing windows and the proposed replacements, there would be a discernible difference between the two owing to the appearance and material finish of the windows and door at no 65. I therefore concur that UPVC would appear as an artificial material which would not be in keeping with the architectural integrity of the property or the mansion block as a whole.
8. Whilst no 65 is positioned at the top floor of the mansion block, the proposed fenestration to the front elevation would clearly be visible from a range of viewpoints along Cranworth Gardens. Additionally, the replacement fenestration to the side and rear would be viewed from a number of neighbouring flats within the mansion block. As such, the use of UPVC windows would appear at odds with the clear consistency of timber fenestration within the mansion block and the wider street context at Cranworth Gardens.
9. The edge of Stockwell Park Conservation Area (CA) is located approximately two streets away from Cranworth Gardens. The heritage significance of the CA is derived from its architecture. The mansion block does not contribute to the significance of the CA and it is set sufficiently far away from its edge for the setting and significance of the CA not to be adversely affected by the proposal.
10. Both parties have referred to the Council's Design Guide Part 4, Building Alterations, Extensions and Retrofit (2023) (DGP4 BAER), which seeks to amplify the development plan policies. Whilst the appeal site is not located within a designated heritage asset where paragraph 4.17 specifically requires the same material as the original windows to be used, it is noted in paragraph 4.16 that the building forms part of a terrace or group which share common window detailing. Furthermore, the DGP4 BAER sets out that in order to protect the character of the building, to give unity of design, replacement windows should be in keeping with the appearance, detailing and opening type of the originals. For the reasons outlined above, I find that the development does not accord with the DGP4 BAER general principles, where the material finish and appearance of the fenestration would not be in keeping with the original timber windows and door at no 65, the mansion block and the wider street context at Cranworth Gardens.
11. There has been disagreement amongst the parties regarding whether the windows opening style would be of a sash mechanism, in addition to glazing bar details. The appellant has suggested that the detailing could be provided via planning condition and had I been minded to grant the appeal, I agree that this matter could have been dealt with this way. However, this finding is insufficient to overcome the adverse effect that the proposed replacement windows and door would have on the quality of the host building and the local built environment.
12. I therefore conclude that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property (the mansion block) and the surrounding area. This would be contrary to Policies Q2, Q5 and Q11 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2020-2035 (2021) (LLP). Collectively, these policies seek to ensure that new development does not compromise visual amenity from the public realm and should provide quality development with regard to architectural detailing (including fenestration and articulation). Furthermore, proposals should have a design which positively responds to the original architecture, detailing and fenestration (including design, materials and means of opening) of the host building and other locally distinct forms (such as group characteristics).

13. The Council's reason for refusal includes Policy Q22 of the LLP which relates to the setting of designated heritage assets. Given the reasons outlined above, this policy is not determinative in relation to this proposal. Additionally, Policy Q8 of the LLP which relates to poorly detailed and undeliverable built forms is not relevant to this decision where further details relating to glazing bar detail and opening mechanism could be dealt with via condition.

Other Matters

14. The appellant has drawn my attention to two addresses where UPVC windows have been granted planning permission. In relation to the first, it should be noted that unlike at the appeal property, the replacement scheme at no 57 Cranworth Gardens relates to rear and side windows which are not highly visible in the street scene and do not relate to the mansion block subject to this appeal. In any event, each scheme must be considered and determined on its individual merits. In relation to the second at 30C Hackford Road, the address is sited some distance from the appeal property and does not have the same site context where UPVC windows have been identified within the existing street scene at Hackford Road. Accordingly, these examples are materially different to the scheme before me and so are of limited weight in support of the appeal.
15. I acknowledge that the proposed development would provide enhanced benefits for the occupants of the property through improved thermal performance, improved noise reduction and reduced maintenance costs, however, these considerations do not outweigh the harm I have identified.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, I find that the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. Accordingly, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

K Dryden

INSPECTOR