
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 3 February 2026

by **L J O'Brien BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 May 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/V5570/W/25/3376405

21 Remington Street, LONDON, N1 8DH

- 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 Miss Francesca White against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref is P2025/1997/FUL.
 - The development proposed is Works to existing basement level to create downstairs shower room, remove existing stud wall and replace modern door and window with timber sash style units and associated works.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/V5570/Y/25/3376407

21 Remington Street, LONDON, N1 8DH

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Miss Francesca White against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref is P2025/1998/LBC.
 - The works proposed are Works to existing basement level to create downstairs shower room, remove existing stud wall and replace modern door and window with timber sash style units and associated works.
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Appeal A Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. Both appeals relate to 21 Remington Street which forms part of a Grade II listed building, Number 18 to 21 (consecutive) and attached railings¹, situated within the Duncan Terrace/Colebrooke Row Conservation Area (CA). The descriptions of development/works are the same for both proposals and the issues within the appeals are similar. As such I have dealt with them within the same Decision Letter. I have, however, set out two separate formal Decisions in the interests of clarity.
4. As required by sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), I have had special regard to the

¹ National Heritage List for England Number: 1293176

desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses; and paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in these appeals is whether the proposals would preserve the listed building or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses and, linked to that, whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Reasons

Special interest and significance

6. The appeal property retains its original use as a single dwelling and comprises a three storey over basement end of terrace property located on a corner plot at the junction of Remington Street and Coombs Street. The accommodation within the property is set across four floors; bedrooms and a bathroom occupy the two upper floors, reception rooms are located at ground floor level and a further bathroom and kitchen are sited on the lower ground floor.
7. Dating from around 1846 – 1847 the listed terrace is constructed of yellow brick with a stuccoed basement level and architecturally is considered to exemplify the restrained elegance of mid-nineteenth century domestic design. The properties are set back from the pavement behind cast iron railings with a lightwell in between. The appeal property is typical of this, though the front door serving 21 Remington Street is located on the Coombs Street elevation.
8. The property's basement has been retained, though some features such as the external stairwell have been lost. A covered arched canopy provides relief over the basement doorway itself and behind this sits a pair of vaults which were likely designed to function as utility space for keeping coal or other supplies that had been left and awaited entering the house.
9. The rear elevation of the property is constructed of render to the lower level with brick above and leads into a sunken garden with a brick boundary wall. The rear elevation contains a single doorway and window which are said to be of modern construction.
10. The adjacent terraced listed buildings of 1-16 and 22-27 Remington Street also contribute to the overall appreciation and share their setting with the listed building of which 21 Remington Street is part.
11. The significance of the building as a heritage asset insofar as it relates to these appeals derives, in part, from the architectural and historic interest of the building as an attractive dwelling which retains a number of historic features and its historic use.
12. The site is located within the Duncan Terrace/Colebrooke Row Conservation Area (CA). The Duncan Terrace/Colebrooke Row Conservation Area Design Guidelines, January 2002 (CADG) states that the Conservation Area is predominantly residential and largely made up of late Georgian and early Victorian terraces and, overall, considers that the area has a remarkable architectural

consistency, homogeneity and historic interest. The CADG also sets out that most of the properties in the CA have front basement areas, protected by cast iron railings, which are important to the character of the area. As a property which exhibits many of these qualities, the appeal property contributes positively to the significance of the CA.

Effects of the proposals

13. The proposals before me relate to the lower ground floor and amongst other elements, to which I will return later, include the installation of a new staircase from the front hallway of the property down to the proposed new shower room. The shower room would be accessed through the vaults and would partially infill the front lightwell. The evidence before me also indicates that the lightwell would be excavated to increase the head height within the proposed shower room. The historic covered canopy across the lightwell would be extended and a half-glazed door would be inserted to facilitate access to the remaining portion of the lightwell. The canopy, as extended, would be set back from the lower ground floor front sash window and, in this regard, would have a neutral effect on this particular feature.
14. Notwithstanding the effect on the existing sash window, the lightwell would be partially “filled in” with a wall separating the enclosed section from the open section and would appear as an extension of the dwelling and not as an external feature of the building. The CADG is clear that the Council will not normally permit the filling in or covering over of front basement areas. Lightwells such as this are an important feature of properties within the area and, as well as visual value, have historic significance in the story of the building. The loss of this attribute would have a negative effect on the property.
15. I note that an existing canopy is present, that the majority of the lightwell would remain open and that views of the enclosure would be limited by the intervening railings and the location at ground level. However, in my view, the infilling of this key feature which is characteristic of properties of this type would be detrimental to the significance of the appeal property and the listed building as a whole.
16. Moreover, the proposals also include the creation of an opening between the two vaults. The removal of the intervening wall would result in the loss of historic fabric. Furthermore, vaults such as these were historically external storage spaces secondary to the principal dwelling to which they were associated. The proposals would alter the historic use pattern and plan form of the vaults, and by extension the dwelling and the listed building as a whole, by amalgamating them within the structure and function of the main dwelling itself and raising the status of the vaults within the hierarchy of spaces within the property.
17. Whilst the proposals have been sensitively designed with the aim of representing a modest and largely reversible intervention, I consider, given the extent of the other works proposed, it highly unlikely that such a reversal would occur. As such, in my view, there is little doubt that the proposed alterations would be permanent, harmful, changes to the listed building.
18. Additionally, it is imperative that proposals are accompanied by accurate and unambiguous drawings and specifications of sufficient detail to illustrate and/or describe the proposed works in order to avoid any uncertainty over the extent of what is proposed, and to allow a robust assessment of any consequent effects. In

this instance, though the appellant has submitted additional information at appeal stage, the evidence before me does not clearly define the detailed specifications for some, fundamental, elements of the proposals. As such, doubt is cast over the individual designs, future consequences and works involved in their construction. Setting aside any views I may have on the planning and conservation merits of the proposals, the specific details before me are not sufficient to enable a robust judgement to be reached regarding the potential effect of the proposals on the heritage asset and, consequently, I cannot be certain that they would preserve the listed building and not cause harm to its significance. This is highly undesirable in general terms but especially given that the property is a Grade II listed building located in a Conservation Area, where great weight is given to the conservation of these designated heritage assets.

19. I note that the appellant has suggested that conditions could be attached requiring further details to be approved. However, such details go to the heart of the proposal and I cannot be certain that conditions would be an effective mechanism for making the proposal acceptable and ensuring that it would not cause harm. Without evidence to the contrary, I must take a precautionary approach in the interests of preserving the listed building and ensuring that any conditions imposed would meet the tests set out by the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework). Consequently, such conditions would not be suitable.
20. In addition to the aforementioned elements of the proposals a number of other developments/works are proposed. A modern stud wall between the kitchen and bathroom on the lower ground floor would be removed to create a larger space on this level. The existing rear window would be infilled and the existing rear door would remain alongside a new second wider opening with doors onto the garden. The fenestration would be replaced with more sensitive sash style timber doors with glazing bars. The Council consider this to be a benefit of the scheme and have not raised concerns around these specific elements of the proposals. I have not been provided with any compelling evidence to lead me to conclude otherwise and I am satisfied that these elements of the developments/works would not harm the significance of the listed building considered as a whole. Indeed, they would represent a positive enhancement.
21. Nevertheless, the alterations to the rear fenestration require the reconfiguration of the rear rainwater goods. There is some dispute between the parties as to the historic configuration of these goods. In the absence of compelling evidence by way of historic drawings or fabric analysis provided to confirm original downpipe positions or sufficient information to confirm that amending the existing arrangement would not introduce water management risks and subsequent unintended effects on the historic fabric of the building and its longevity I cannot be satisfied that this element of the proposal would not cause harm to the listed building.
22. I accept that the property has been altered over time, including the removal of the previous external staircase and lightwell access, and that these further changes could be considered as part of the building's evolution. I also acknowledge that there can be a place for well managed changes to be made to historic buildings. However, in this instance, the proposals would be such that they would cause undue harm to the host building and the listed building as a whole.

23. Moreover, to my mind, the previous changes to the designated heritage asset further cement the vital importance of any remaining historic fabric. Considered cumulatively the previous alterations increase the sensitivity of the building to further change. Were these proposals to go ahead, the changes to the building would be such that the historic significance of the asset would be substantially weakened.
24. Consequently, for the reasons set out above I consider that the proposals would unacceptably diminish the architectural and historic interest of the listed building thereby undermining the significance of the designated heritage asset. The proposal would therefore fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building.
25. Though the proposals would, overall, be of a modest scale in terms of their visual impact on the CA, they would, nevertheless, have an adverse impact on a key feature of the properties within the area. The proposals would cause harm to an asset which adds positively to the significance of the CA. It follows that the scheme before me would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA as a whole and would harm its significance.
26. In finding harm to the significance of designated heritage assets The Framework requires the category of harm to be identified. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) expands upon this by requiring the extent of harm within that category to be clearly articulated. In this instance, given the limited extent and nature of the proposed development and works, the harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets would be at the lower end of less than substantial. Notwithstanding this, the identified harm is of considerable importance and weight.
27. The approach set out in the Framework is that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, as in this case, that harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Public benefits and heritage balance

28. It is not unreasonable to conclude that the proposals would lead to economic, social and environmental benefits. Amongst other things, these would stem from engaging local professionals, trades and suppliers. The proposals would further enhance the property in terms of its function as a home. Notwithstanding this, there is no substantive evidence before me which demonstrates that the proposed development and works are necessary to secure the ongoing use of the heritage asset in this way.
29. I accept that the scheme has a number of other potential benefits; particularly with regard to elements of the building which would be enhanced to better reveal their significance. The enhancements are broadly set out in the preceding paragraphs regarding the effects of the proposals but include repair works, fenestration improvements and the removal of unsympathetic modern additions. However, in my view, such improvements could be made through alternative schemes which would not cause the degree of harm I have outlined above.
30. Whilst a number of the benefits outlined above would be private, they would also be such that they could be considered to be of broader benefit to the public. Overall,

the associated benefits are limited by the small scale of the proposals and must be considered in that context.

31. Conversely, on the other side of the balance, I have found that the proposals would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. The Framework indicates that great weight should be given to the conservation of such heritage assets. Consequently, the public benefits of the scheme do not outweigh the harm identified.
32. The proposals would, therefore, conflict with the statutory presumptions of s.16(2), s.66(1) and s.72(1) of the Act. The proposal would also fail to accord with Policies DH1, DH2 and PLAN1 of the Islington Local Plan Strategic and Development Management Policies, September 2023 (LP). Taken together and amongst other things these policies require all forms of development to be of a high quality and make a positive contribution to local character, legibility and distinctiveness and state that proposals that harm the significance of a listed building (through inappropriate repair, alteration, extension, demolition and/or development within its setting) or harm the significance of a conservation area must provide clear and convincing justification for the harm. In this instance no such justification is present.
33. There would also be conflict with Policy HC1 of the London Plan, March 2021 which states that development proposals affecting heritage assets should conserve their significance
34. The proposals would also be at odds with guidance contained within the CADG which sets out the importance of features such as lightwells and states that the Council will not normally permit the filling in or covering over of front basement areas.
35. Though the proposals are for the further excavation of an existing lightwell and not the creation of a new one, the proposals would also fail to meet the broad thrust of the expectations within Islington's Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, January 2017 (UDG) which states that excavation to form lightwells should respect the architectural character of the host building and new structures such as lightwells should not create visual clutter or interrupt the prevailing rhythm of the street and should respect the special architectural or historic interest of heritage assets.
36. Furthermore, the proposals would fail to conform with the Framework's requirement that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets which are considered an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Conclusion

37. For the reasons set out above the appeals are dismissed.

L J O'Brien

INSPECTOR