



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 28 April 2026

by **S Lo LLB M.SRA**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 May 2026

Appeal A Ref: APP/N5660/C/24/3352771

Appeal B Ref: APP/N5660/C/24/3352772

44 Amesbury Avenue, London SW2 3AA

- The appeals are made under section 174 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
 - The appeals are made by Mr Callum Hall (Appeal A) and Mrs Veronica Rossi (Appeal B) against an enforcement notice issued by the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The notice was issued on 22 August 2024.
 - The breach of planning control as alleged in the notice is: Without planning permission, the removal of the original wooden front door and frame from the premises and replacement with a UPVC front door and frame ("the unauthorised uPVC front door and frame").
 - The requirements of the notice are to:
 1. Remove the unauthorised uPVC door and frame from the premises and reinstate EITHER the original front door and frame as existed prior to the breach of planning control OR a replica wooden door and frame identical to the original wooden door and frame that existed prior to the breach of planning control; and,
 2. Remove all associated waste and debris resulting from compliance with the above step, from the premises.
 - The period for compliance with the requirements is 3 months.
 - Appeal A is proceeding on the grounds set out in section 174(2)(a) and (f) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Since an appeal has been brought on ground (a), an application for planning permission is deemed to have been made under section 177(5) of the Act.
 - Appeal B is proceeding on the grounds set out in section 174(2)(f) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
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Decision

1. It is directed that the enforcement notice be corrected and varied by the deletion of the phrase "uPVC front door and frame" wherever it appears in the notice, and the substitution of the phrase "timber composite front door and uPVC frame".
2. The appeals are dismissed, and the enforcement notice is upheld.

Appeal A on ground (a) and the deemed planning application

Preliminary Matters

3. The enforcement notice refers to a "uPVC front door and frame". However, based on the evidence before me, including my observations during the site visit, I am satisfied that whilst the frame appears to be uPVC, the door itself is of timber composite construction.
4. In order to ensure the notice accurately describes the breach of planning control, I shall correct and vary the notice accordingly. I am satisfied that this correction would not result in any prejudice to either party, as it does not alter the substance of the breach or the requirements of the notice.

5. As the proposal is located within a conservation area, I have had regard to section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 'Act'). Accordingly, I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Leigham Court Estate Conservation Area (the 'CA').
6. An Article 4 Direction was made in October 1996 which removed the permitted development right for the enlargement, improvement or other alteration of a dwelling house being development comprised within Class A of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the said Order and not being development comprised within any other Class. The appeal site is located within the area covered by this direction.

Main Issue

7. The main planning issue is whether the development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the CA.

Reasons

8. The Council's Leigham Court Estate Conservation Guidelines sets out that the CA is centred upon the development of long terraces laid out in a grid-iron street pattern. The architecture of the estate combines classical and gothic decoration. The pattern was created in repeating styles in groups or terraces of eight or fewer houses, resulting in a varied yet cohesive character. Although there is architectural diversity across the area, this is unified through the limited palette of materials, including red, yellow and glazed brick, clay tiles and terracotta features. The significance of the CA derives largely from the strong sense of uniformity and visual coherence created through this controlled architectural variety and the use of grouped designs. From my observations, I found these guidelines to be accurate when describing the CA.
9. The consistency of door design across the CA contributes to a regular design pattern across the street scene. Typically, the original door design features two lower panels, a large central glazed panel, and a pair of small, square glazed panels above. A fanlight incorporating the house number is often positioned above the door. The appellant has drawn attention to a number of examples within the CA where replacement doors do not reflect this traditional design, referring in particular to over 60 properties within Amesbury Avenue alone. However, notwithstanding these departures, I was able to see from my site visit that this original door design remains a strong and readily identifiable architectural feature of the area.
10. The appeal site is a two storey mid-terraced residential property located on Amesbury Avenue. The front elevation retains many of the architectural treatments, detailing, proportions and materials that contribute to the significance of the CA, including the unpainted red and glazed brick façade and original timber sash windows. Owing to its position within the terrace, the property presents a prominent and legible example of the original architectural composition of the CA. As a result, I find that the appeal property makes a substantial positive contribution to the significance of the CA.
11. While the two lower door panels broadly reflect the original design, the replacement front door does not incorporate a large central glazed panel. Additionally, the upper panels are rectangular rather than square. Although this

change in shape may appear relatively minor, it nonetheless represents a notable departure from the established proportions of the original door design. As I set out earlier, the door is of timber composite construction. Although similar, the exterior surface does not have the same appearance as a painted timber door. Additionally, the door frame does appear to be constructed from a white form of uPVC plastic. In any event, the development does not appear to match the materials or the design of the original timber front doors.

12. With regard to the specific group of houses around the appeal site, the material and design used in the current door and frame appears at odds with the original doors which are found within this specific cluster of houses immediately around the appeal site. Specifically, the adjoining properties within the immediate group at 42, 46 and 48 Amesbury Avenue, have retained the original door designs.
13. As a consequence, the development appears at odds with both the design and materials of the original door and frame type found throughout the CA, within this particular cluster of doorways, and formerly present at the appeal site. The replacement door and frame lacks the consistency and quality of detailing associated with the original timber doors, which made a positive contribution to the architectural composition and significance of the property.
14. In reaching this view, I have considered that there are examples of replacement doors elsewhere within the CA which do not reflect the original design, and that there is a wide degree of non-conformity. I recognise that the appellant has followed one of the non-original design patterns which can be found in the houses directly opposite the appeal site. The appellant also notes that several of these non-original doors are located within Council-owned properties.
15. However, the existence of these examples does not justify any further deviation from the established character and appearance of the CA. Rather, they serve to demonstrate how incremental and uncoordinated alterations can cumulatively erode the significance of the heritage asset. To permit the development would reinforce this pattern of erosion. While I recognise the presence of a range of non-compliant designs, I am not persuaded that their number is so substantial as to undermine the contribution that original door designs continue to make to the significance of the CA. Accordingly, the presence of similar non-compliant features does not outweigh the identified harm arising from the proposal.
16. Given such, the proposal fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA. The level of harm is less than substantial. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Harm should have a clear and convincing justification.
17. Under such circumstances, the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. I acknowledge that the replacement door and frame may offer improved thermal efficiency and enhanced security. However, I find that these benefits are primarily private in nature and do not amount to public benefits, whether considered individually or cumulatively. In any event, they carry limited weight and do not outweigh the great weight I afford to the harm to the designated heritage asset.

18. Drawing my findings together, I conclude that the development fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. It therefore fails to satisfy the statutory duty under the Act and the relevant provisions of the Framework.
19. Notwithstanding the Council's reference to a Supplementary Planning Document, I have assessed the development against the relevant development plan policies. The development would result in harm to the visual amenity of the public realm, would fail to achieve a visually attractive form of development, and would not respond positively to local character or distinctiveness. As such, it would conflict with Policies Q2, Q5 and Q8 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2021 (LP) and Policy D4 of the London Plan 2021. Furthermore, it would not authentically reproduce features on heritage assets or preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, contrary to Policy Q11 and Q22 of the LP.
20. The Council also refer to the Lambeth Building alterations, extensions and retrofit Supplementary Planning Document (2023). However, my attention has not been drawn to any words in it that are relevant to this issue.

Other Matters

21. I have sympathy for the appellant's financial situation and recognise that replacing the door and frame may represent a significant financial burden. However, limited evidence has been provided regarding the appellant's financial position. Furthermore, the question of whether the Council has financial responsibility for the door and frame is not a matter for me to determine in this appeal. In any event, the appellant's personal circumstances do not amount to material considerations sufficient to justify a decision otherwise than in accordance with the development plan, even on a temporary or personal basis.

Conclusion on ground (a) and the Deemed Planning Application

22. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed. I shall uphold the enforcement notice and refuse to grant planning permission on the application deemed to have been made under section 177(5) of the 1990 Act as amended.

Appeals A and B on Ground (f)

23. An appeal on ground (f) is made on the basis that the requirements of the notice exceed what is necessary. Section 173(4) of the 1990 Act sets out the purposes which an enforcement notice may seek to achieve. They are either (a) remedying the breach of planning control or (b) remedying any injury to amenity which has been caused by the breach.
24. The notice does not state which of the two purposes it seeks to achieve. Nevertheless, the requirements are to remove the unauthorised front door and frame from the premises and reinstate the original front door and frame or a replica wooden front door and frame. On that basis, it seems to me that the purpose of the notice is to remedy the breach of planning control by restoring the land to its condition before the breach took place. The purpose of the notice therefore falls under section 173(4)(a) of the 1990 Act.
25. I am satisfied that the notice does not require the appellant to undertake works which would result in an improvement to the previous condition of the property. On that basis I consider that the requirement to reinstate the original door and frame

design does not exceed what is necessary to remedy the breach of planning control.

26. The appellant refers to retaining the door and frame or just the frame alone. However, this design would not reflect the original door form, which is a defining feature of the CA. As set out in my findings in the appeal on ground (a), I have found that these examples of non-compliance results in the harmful impacts I have identified above. Retaining any part of the development would not fully remedy the breach of planning control.
27. The appeals on ground (f) therefore fail.

Conclusion

28. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeals should not succeed. I shall uphold the enforcement notice.

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INSPECTOR