

## **29b Doynton Street, N19 5BX**

Reinstatement of historic roofscape features

Retention of revised roof terrace

### **Design and Access Statement**

#### **Background**

1. This application follows a previous refusal dated 20th December 2022 of the planning application Ref: 2022/4331/P and subsequent appeal Ref: APP/X5210/W/23/3323789 dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate on 29th February 2024.
2. The current planning application widens the context of the redesigned roof terrace to include the surrounding roofscape and seeks, in the first place, to reverse the significant damage inflicted on the character of the building and on the group value of the Doynton Street terrace under new ownership in the 1970s. Inappropriate alterations, insensitivity to the value of essential historic details, poorly considered reduction in the height of the chimney stacks, with loss of traditional brick detailing and the removal of chimney pots, were all subsequently acknowledged as fundamental conservation errors, prohibited under the terms of heritage protection legislation.
3. Furthermore, this application addresses in detail the grounds for refusal of the previous planning application and appeal, and proposes a significant reduction in the size of the existing roof terrace, reinstatement of large areas of the existing slated roof and simplified details, thus reducing significantly street visibility.
4. This application will demonstrate that current proposals strike a positive balance between the reinstatement and conservation of high value, high visual impact historic roofscape features, and the retention of the minor, revised roof terrace addition.

#### **Brief history of Doynton Street**

5. Doynton Street was developed in the late 1860s as working class housing, to a well-established pattern-book typology, which served well the functional needs of its intended users, while meeting the accepted technical and aesthetic standards of the day.
6. In the 1970s Camden Council, having acquired many of the houses which are part of the terrace along the south side of the street, subdivided them into flats.
7. Upper flats were excluded from access to individual back gardens, which were, previously, shared outdoor spaces.
8. The character of the terrace was severely damaged by the destruction of historically significant elements, particularly at the rear of the terrace, where chimney pots were removed, chimney stack heights reduced and flues capped off with overhanging precast concrete slabs, undermining the original architectural style and offering a stunted view of what was previously a typical Victorian terrace, complete in all its details, contrary to the Planning Inspector's stated view that the "roofscapes of this block are largely unaltered".

#### **Reinstatement of chimney stack and chimney pots**

9. This proposal includes the reinstatement of the existing rear chimney stack shared by Nos. 29 and 27 Doynton Street, to its traditional full height, complete with traditional corbelled brick course in materials matching existing, flaunching and reclaimed matching chimney pots.

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10. The above will be supplemented with matching, vented clayware caps, maintaining the current flues functionality as ventilation shafts.
11. The overhanging concrete slab topping the stack will be removed and replaced with a corbelled brick course, as will be all modern airbricks, replaced with matching brickwork.
12. This approach will not only preserve but also enhance the character of the building and the appearance of the Conservation Area.

#### **Restatement of the applicant's personal needs**

13. The applicant has specific needs for a secluded outdoor space as part of her dwelling, in which she will be able to lie down and rest without being overlooked or feeling confined or claustrophobic.
14. The above needs, acknowledged by the Planning Inspector as identifying the applicant as a "person who has protected characteristics due to their disability", were documented in ample medical detail in documents submitted to and rated by the Planning Inspector as "compelling evidence" and copied to the Camden Council Planning Department. The Planning Inspector also acknowledged the applicant's stated need for a "private external area in which to sit and lie".
15. The only existing outdoor space prior to the construction of the roof terrace was the half-landing flat roof/terrace over neighbours' ground floor premises. This 1.7m wide area is restricted by a full-size outward-opening door and is too small for a piece of outdoor furniture on which to lie down. Any form of vertical screening above the existing brick parapet would turn it into a claustrophobic space, while continuing to leave the whole area exposed and directly overlooked from above by neighbours in adjoining buildings. This assessment fulfils the Planning Inspector's requirement for the applicant to demonstrate "that adjustments to this [space] could not achieve a similar level of advantages", i.e., similar to the advantages offered by the roof terrace.

#### **Retention of roof terrace reduced in size, simplified details**

16. This application shows the area of the existing roof terrace reduced by 0.8m in depth, thus allowing the reinstatement of seven rows of slates above the line of the eaves gutter, running continuously across the full width of the roof.
17. The width of the existing roof terrace was also reduced by 0.8m, with similarly increased area of slating reinstated continuously from ridge to eaves, adjacent the party wall parapet shared by Nos. 29 and 27 Doynton Street.
18. Correspondingly, the area of vertical glazing has been reduced by 1/3<sup>rd</sup>, from 3 to 2 panes.
19. Similarly, the total width of the rooflights has been reduced by 1/3<sup>rd</sup>, from 3 to 2 panes.
20. The length of the remaining two rooflight panes, currently reaching the roof apex, has also been reduced so as to allow the reinstatement of three rows of slates below the line of the ridge tiles, to run continuously across the full width of the roof.
21. The caps to the metal profiles framing the glazing, currently finished in powder-coated aluminium, will be replaced with traditional lead roll-detailed flashings.

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22. The terrace balustrading, set back by 1.3m from the eaves line and thus reduced in its visible height, has been simplified down to slender steel rails, with no glazed panels.
23. Period details have been respected and reinstated roof areas will use second-hand slates matching original adjacent slates, and matching lead trims. High quality matching or complementary materials have been used/specified appropriately and relate to their context.

### **Conclusion**

24. Reinstating chimney stacks and chimney pots is essential to the character of the Doynton Street Victorian buildings, already regarded as an important asset of the Dartmouth Park Conservation Area, defined on Dartmouth Park CA maps as “positive buildings”, supportive of the character of the conservation area. Reinstatement of these historic details is vital for the preservation of the architectural integrity, historical significance and aesthetic qualities of the buildings, and will represent a welcome reversal of insensitive and damaging alterations, after some sixty years of unchallenged and tacitly accepted neglect.
25. Respect for the original skyline, for the architectural harmony of the building and for its historical authenticity, currently disrupted and diluted, will achieve a return to the original design intent.
26. This application is intended as a first step in returning the whole of the Doynton Street buildings to their original intricate rooflines, with chimney stacks and pots playing a key role in the terrace’s visual diversity and distinctive character, in preference to the mediocre, monotonous and less than engaging streetscape resulting from the loss of these features.
27. This approach is consistent with the goals of heritage preservation and protection of the historical and architectural character of the place. It demonstrates commitment to maintaining the attributes, significance, authenticity, cultural and educational value as well as identity of the conservation area.
28. This form of reinstatement is more than just restoration of architectural details. It is a crucial step in honouring the integrity, craftsmanship and design principles of the past and in enhancing the value and beauty of the built environment as well as in maintaining the unique character of this conservation area for future generations.
29. The much reduced and re-detailed roof terrace will retain its benefits for the applicant as a valuable private outdoor space, having already enhanced her health and quality of life, in a location where gardens and backyards are at a premium.
30. As redesigned, the revised roof terrace will have a negligible visual impact on the conservation area's overall visual quality, as evidenced by the images on the next page, showing both the current street view, and the same view allowing for proposed alterations.
31. The public benefit of the reinstatement of the original high value, high visual impact roofline becomes thus the dominant feature of this application, significantly mitigating and outweighing the less than substantial harm attributable to the retention of the much reduced, re-detailed roof terrace, serving sustainably and unobtrusively a contemporary need.

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*Existing Proposed*

*Views of the rear of Doynton Street from the children's playground at the end of the street.*