

Design and access statement

Date: 13th October 2022
Project: Flat 7 Bramshill Mansions, 85 Dartmouth Park Hill, London, NW5 1JG

Planning application for rear roof terrace

1. Bramshill Mansions on Dartmouth Park Hill is in Dartmouth Park Conservation Area, sub area 3 Dartmouth East, designated in 1992. The mansion building is identified as making a positive contribution in the Townscape Appraisal (p46).
2. Bramshill Mansions are not specifically described in the Conservation Area statement other than referred to in the Bramshill Gardens description as developed by E H Blunt in the 1880/90's. Bramshill Mansions is on the 1894 map.

Conservation Area Appraisal

3. The Dartmouth East sub area appraisal identifies a number of negative features, among which are the 'unsympathetic replacement of windows' and 'unsympathetic dormers and roof features' (p29).
4. Bramshill Mansions is in the highest part of the conservation area, there are views from the rear upper windows, conversely its roofscape is visible from the rear windows of surrounding properties and from the street in one location. The Conservation Area Appraisal states, 'highly important are the roofscapes, to which the original roofing materials make a significant contribution, and sightings of significant buildings' (p6).
5. Appendix 5 identifies issues affecting the whole Conservation Area, in greater detail (p46):
 - *Alterations to roofscape – re-roofing in unsympathetic materials or additions such as rooflights on prominent slopes where there is pressure to extend a property. Due to the topography of the area the rear slopes are often as important as the front slopes as views are available from neighbouring streets and buildings.*
 - *Inappropriate roof terraces and fencing.*
6. There is more general text on roof alterations on page 55 (with bold highlights):

*'The conservation area retains its **clear historic rooflines**, which it is important to preserve. Additional storeys, fundamental changes to the roofline, insensitive alterations, poor materials, intrusive dormers or inappropriate windows can harm the historic character of the roofscape and will be resisted.'*

*Roof alterations or additions are likely to be unacceptable where a building forms part of a **complete terrace** or group of buildings which have a roof line that is largely unimpaired by alterations or extensions, or where its architectural style would be undermined by any addition. The rear roof is in some cases as important as the front where these are **visible in views from other streets**.'*

Relevant Planning history

7. 2021/3951/P Granted 2/12/2021: application for 6 Bramshill Mansions to add a sunken terrace and dormer.

Extracts from Planning Officer's informatives:

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The proposed dormer is small in scale and is considered to represent a subordinate addition within the existing roof. Because the terrace is sunken into the closet wing roof, the appearance of the roof will change only slightly which is helped by the fact that the railings are also largely concealed ... the introduction of a small dormer ... is not considered to adversely impact the character of the site or the surrounding conservation area.

012/3551/P Refused 12/09/2012: revised application 7 Bramshill Mansions to erect dormer roof extension.

In correspondence (letter dated 4th May 2012) the planning officer described where the rear roofs are visible from.

"Due to the location of Bramshill Mansions at a high point on Dartmouth Park Hill, alterations at roof level may be visible from the upper floors of 83 Dartmouth Park Hill. There would also be oblique views from properties on Chester Road, but due to the hill there would be no views from the south. The proposal would also be seen from the public realm, where it would be partially visible from the car park of the Towers, and it would also be visible from the street in Bramshill Gardens, where due to the angle of view the other roof alterations are not as visible from this viewpoint."

In the Officer Delegated Report, there is a longer description of the reasons for refusal, including a presumption against building on the rear closet wing extension.

"Assessment: A similar scheme was refused at this site on 15/12/2011 (see planning history) by virtue of its bulk, location and detailed design having a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the host building and Dartmouth Park Conservation Area. This current proposal is for an additional storey which has been reduced in size. It would measure approximately 3.4m in depth x 2.4m in height x 1.2m in height. It would be clad in slate tiles and have a flat roof. Although reduced in size, it is still considered that the proposal would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the host building and wider conservation area. **The extension would be built on the pitched roof of the rear closet wing extension.** The rear extension forms a relatively unaltered pair with the neighbouring property at 85 Bramshill Garden. **The extension would rise above the central boundary ridge** and would read as an incongruous feature on the rear of the property. Given its location it would be visible from the upper floors of 83 Dartmouth Park Hill which is 23m away and it would also be visible from the street in Bramshill Gardens, where due to the angle of view the other roof alterations are not as visible. It is noted that there are a range of roof extensions on properties in this part of the conservation area, however they are **generally contained within the roof slopes and do not rise above ridges or project out onto the closet wings.** Given its location on a rear closet wing extension it is not considered that the scheme would harm the amenity of adjoining neighbours with regard to light or privacy. It is considered that the proposal fails to preserve and enhance the conservation area in accordance with Local Development Framework Policy DP25 and it has a negative impact on the character and appearance of the host building."

8. 2011/5154/P Refused 15/12/2011: application 7 Bramshill Mansions to erect dormer roof extension.

Slightly larger version of the later 2012 application.

9. 2010/0529/P Granted 06/04/2010: application 1 and 2 Bramshill Mansions to create inset roof terrace.

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Extracts from the Planning Officer's report:

2.4 "A roof terrace is also proposed to be included **within the hipped roof** at second floor level, **accessed by a new door in the rear elevation**. Revisions have been received showing the roof terrace reduced in size and now situated behind the hip line of the roof. The proposed roof terrace is to be 3.7m x 2.5m in size. 1.1m high railings are proposed to surround two sides of the terrace facing the west and south elevations. The proposed roof terrace would be visible from the rear elevations of surrounding properties. To the northern side of the proposed roof terrace, there is an existing party wall ranging in 1-2m height separating this roof from the neighbouring property's existing roof terrace.

2.5 It is considered that the detailed design, including the size as well as the materials of the proposed roof terrace, would preserve the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. The **proposal would not appear dominant or obtrusive** when viewed in relation to the original building due to the reduction in size as well as the overall bulk of the host building. **A similar roof terrace**, with balustrade, exists on the adjoining property at 3 Bramshill Mansions.

2.9 The Dartmouth Park Conservation Area Appraisal states that unsympathetic rear and side extensions (including inappropriate roof terraces) and sometimes these can alter the harmony and balance of a property or group of buildings. However, it is considered that the detailed **design of the application would not unbalance the group of the buildings** when read as a whole. There are **examples of rear extensions and roof terraces within the group of buildings**, and therefore, due to the detailed design of the proposals, they are not considered to have a detrimental impact on the host building or the terrace when read as a whole."

10. 8501371 Granted 15/01/1986: application 2 Bramshill Mansions to create rear roof terrace. No drawings or officer's report found.
11. 8501668 Granted 18/12/1985: 3 & 7 Bramshill Mansions: Construction of a rear roof terrace to number 3 and a rear balcony in the roof of number 7. No drawings or officer's report found.

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Aerial view of roof terraces at rear of Bramshill Mansions

Balcony granted 1985
(prior to CA)

Dormer extension
refused 2011/2012

Dormer and terrace
granted 2021

Terrace granted 1985
(prior to CA)

Terrace granted 2010
(after designation
of CA)

Dormer
provides
access to
terrace



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Views from surrounding streets of roof terraces at rear of Bramshill Mansions



Photo 1 view from Bramshill Gardens towards rear roof slope with existing dormer and french doors to flat 7



Photo 2 view from Bramshill Gardens towards rear roof slope of flats 7 and 6



Photo 3 at top of Chester Road view towards side elevation of flat 7 terrace with existing balustrade (just) visible against the sky



Photo 4 existing (original) zinc clad dormer and french doors from bedroom onto existing balcony in rear slate roof slope of flat 7

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Impact on character of conservation area

12. A new roof terrace consistent with the Bramshill Mansions group of buildings will not significantly change the roofscape. Two of the three other top floor flats already have roof terraces in this location, and the third, flat 6 was granted permission for a similar roof terrace in 2021, but as yet not built.
13. The proposed terrace to flat 7 would follow the same design as no. 1/2 and flat 6. The terrace would be set within the hipped slate roof of the closet wing, directly accessible from the internal stair of the flat, from a proposed dormer in the main rear roof slope. This dormer is similar to that at no. 1/2, and the permitted dormer to flat 6. It does not intrude onto the closet wing and is no higher than the existing bedroom dormer and so does not unbalance the group of buildings as a whole.
14. Flat 7 is the only one of the four top floor flats to have a narrow balcony, granted permission in 1985, prior to the designation of the conservation area in 1992. The balcony is accessed from a dormer with french doors from the bedroom. The new terrace is at a lower level than the balcony and would connect externally up two steps.

Flat 7 balcony granted 1985 (prior to CA)



Flat 6 bedroom dormer (permitted terrace not constructed)



Flat 1/2 dormer
beyond
Flat 3 dormer

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15. The impact on views towards the roofscape would be minimal. The only place the new terrace and dormer would be visible from the street would be from the gap between buildings in Bramshill Gardens, this is a very long view, and no. 7's balcony is already visible. The new dormer would match the materials of the existing zinc dormers in the group of buildings, to reduce its impact. There would be no view of the new terrace or dormer from the ground at the top of Chester Road. Nor would they be visible from Tower Gardens car park.
16. There would be views of the new terrace from the rear windows of houses on Bramshill Gardens, and from the Studio, 23 Dartmouth Park Hill, but this would be little changed from the current condition where there are already views towards the existing terraces.

Impact on amenity of neighbours

17. A terrace at no. 7 would have no impact on the neighbours' amenity, since its outlook would be similar to the existing balcony. In fact the level of the new terrace area is lower and would be tucked into the existing closet wing roof slopes. Flat 6's terrace if it is built would be on the other side of the tall party parapet wall and not visible from the new terrace.

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18. The terrace is set within the slopes of the closet wing hipped roof to match the terrace at no.1/2, and the balustrade around the terrace is simple metal railings. This limits the size of the terrace to approximately 2.5m x 3.3m.
19. Access onto the terrace is from the landing of the staircase in the flat via a glazed door in the proposed zinc dormer. The dormer does not extend onto the rear closet wing of the building, it is in line with the rear wall of the main building. It is also set away from the party parapet wall to allow this to continue to read as a strong line in the composition of the rear façade as it slopes up above the dormer. The dormer is slightly taller than the party parapet wall at its front edge to allow head room to step out onto the terrace. The proposed dormer is lower than both the existing bedroom dormer and the ridge of the main roof.
20. The design is very simple and matches the architectural language and detailing of the zinc dormers that already exist in the roofscape of Bramshill Mansions.