



Heritage Statement

McGlynn's Public House, 1-5 Whidborne Street, Camden, WC1H 8ET

Listed Building Consent to fit window awnings to north and west frontages

Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by 4D Planning Consultants LTD on behalf of Mr Gerry Dolan. This document accompanies the retrospective application for listed building consent to erect awnings to the ground floor windows on the north and west elevations of McGlynn's public house, at no 1-5 Whidborne Street, Bloomsbury, Camden, WC1H 8ET.

The purpose of this statement is to demonstrate that the proposed alterations protect the character of the Grade-II listed building and that of the surrounding conservation area, and that the proposal is therefore appropriate and should be granted listed building consent.

Existing Site

The proposal site is a three storey public house with basements, occupying a corner site at the point where the north end of Whidborne Street curves to the east where it meets Argyle Street, with west and north facing frontages, with customer entrances on both. The building is mainly of buff brick construction. At the ground floor the frontages are rendered, painted cream, with wooden architectural elements, painted black with gold highlights. Signage and fascia boards are black with gold and red lettering. Wooden benches are set out on the pavement at both frontages for customer seating. These are also painted black.

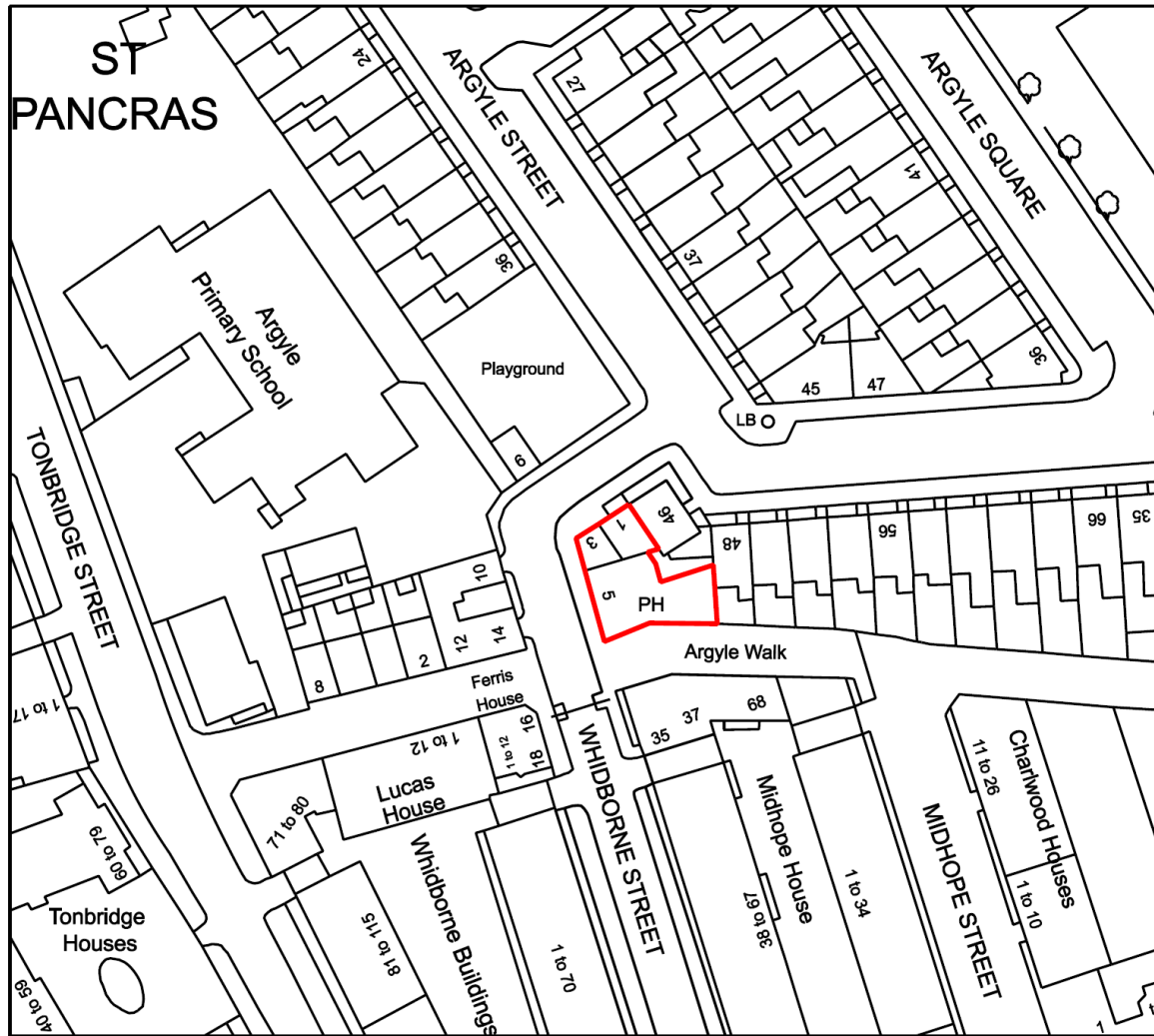
The building dates from the early 19th Century, and was granted listed status in 1974. The building is shown as a public house on historic maps as early as 1874. The pub was previously known as The Duke of Wellington. It is understood that part of the building was previously used as a barber shop. The exterior globe lights on the north and west frontages were added after listed building consent was granted in 1986.

The site is part of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, in the Cartwright Gardens / Argyle Square sub-area. The immediate surroundings are largely residential in character, mostly comprising parks, gardens and three and four storey homes dating from the 19th and 20th century. Argyle Primary School is located just to the north-west. Further to the north are the St Pancras International complex and Kings Cross station.

Proposal

A total of three awnings have been erected above the ground-floor windows and main entrance, to provide shelter above pavement seating at the north and west sides of the pub. The awnings are of a simple design of black canvas, with gold braiding, over a low-profile metal framework. The construction of the awnings is temporary and easily demountable, and does not cause any significant damage to the fabric of the façade.

Site Location



Site Context

Aerial view of the
property and
surroundings from the
west



Aerial view of the
property and
surroundings from the
north



Photos



Window awnings as erected. It is proposed to remove the side panels from the awnings to comply with guidance for the appearance of shop awnings in Camden's Planning Guidance 1: Design.

Local Planning Policies

Camden Core Strategy (2010) states, in **policy CS14 – Promoting High Quality places and Conserving Our Heritage** that *“The Council will ensure that Camden’s places and buildings are attractive, safe and easy to use by: a) requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character; b) preserving and enhancing Camden’s rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings...”* The proposed awnings preserve the character of the listed building and the conservation area by using a low impact design with an appearance sympathetic to the existing building.

Development Policy DP24 Securing high quality design advises that *“The Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design...”* The proposed awnings are considered to support the requirements for high quality design, being a low-impact design mainly employing a colour sympathetic to the neutral tones of the existing building and surrounding development. The use of canvas in the design will ensure the awning is durable and has an attractive appearance.

Development Policy DP25 Conserving Camden’s heritage notes that *“the Council will: a) take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications within conservation areas; b) only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area...”*, and that *“the Council will: ... f) only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building; and g) not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building.”*

Camden Planning Guidance 1 – Design (2013) provides the following guidance relating to shopfronts and awnings above shopfronts. They are considered to be relevant to equivalent public house frontages:

- *“Any alterations (or replacement) of shopfronts that form part of a listed building will require Listed Building Consent and will need to be consistent with the age and style of the building.”* As noted below, the design guide considers awning to be characteristic of historic shopfronts.
- *“Shopfront alterations should respect the detailed design, materials, colour and architectural features of the shopfront and building itself... Materials should be chosen for their durability and appropriateness to their location.”* The awnings reflect design elements of the existing frontage, using black and gold colours and canvas, representing a traditional material.

- *“Blinds can add colour and interest to the street scene. However, it is important to ensure that they do not dominate a shopfront or shop parade.”*
The awnings are small relative to the scale of the main building and the surroundings and so do not dominate the scene.

- *“Shopfront canopies and blinds are only likely to be acceptable where they are:*

- *retractable;*
- *traditional canvas;*
- *blind box integrated with the overall design;*
- *attached between the fascia and shopfront; and*
- *be flush with the fascia level.”*

The awnings are not retractable, and therefore do not require a blind box, but are attached between the fascia and the frontage, and are flush with the fascia level.

- *“Canvas blinds are often characteristic features of historic shopfronts...”*
- *“In general all blinds should be designed and installed to:*
 - *ensure public safety;*
 - *incorporate a minimum of 2.3 metres between the bottom of the blind and the pavement; and*
 - *incorporate a minimum of 1 metre between the blind and the kerb edge.”*

The awnings comply with the minimum distances.

As currently installed, the awnings include side panels, considered to be inappropriate by the guidance. The existing panels will be removed from the installed awnings as part of the proposal.

Conservation Area

The site is within the **Bloomsbury Conservation Area**, in sub area 13, **Cartwright Gardens/Argyle Square**. The appraisal notes of the sub area that:

“The interest of this sub area derives from the formal early 19th century street pattern and layout of open spaces, and the relatively intact surviving terraces of houses. Developed mainly by James Burton, it was one of the later areas of Bloomsbury to be completed, and in its early 19th century parts retains a remarkably uniform streetscape.”

The character of the specific location of the proposal site is simply described as follows:

“At the northern end of Whidborne Street and on the north side of the western stretch of the pedestrianised Argyle Walk, is a small group of mid-18th century and early 19th century domestic and workshop buildings, which are remnants of earlier development, and provide a mixed-use feel to the sub area”. Argyle Walk, to the south of the building, is described as “atmospheric... a pedestrianised, cobbled backwater, with a dramatic stepped change of level at its eastern end.”

The pub building is noted as a positive contributor to the sub area, and as possessing a shopfront of merit. The proposal preserves character of the building and of the shopfront, and so preserves the character of the conservation area.

Listed Building

The pub is a Grade-II listed building, first listed in 1974. The English Heritage list entry (no. 1379188) provides the following details:

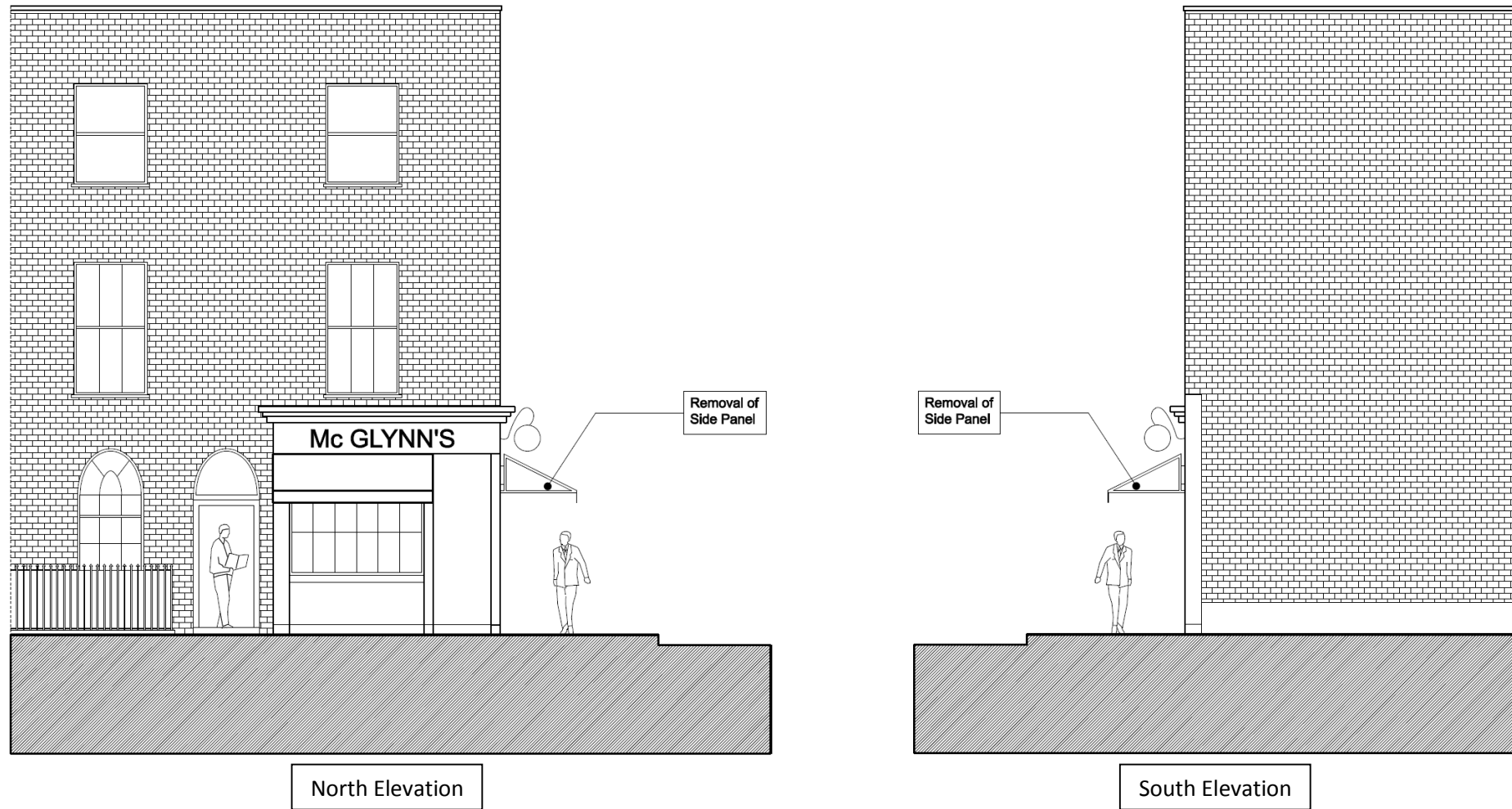
“Public house on a corner site with the main frontage to Argyle Walk. Early C19. Yellow stock brick. 3 storeys and basements. Main frontage 4 windows and 1-window return . Later C19 wooden public house frontage with splayed corner. Pilasters carry an entablature with projecting cornice; panelled dado, windows altered. Entrances with part glazed panelled doors. Whidbourne Street facade has a round-arched house doorway with fanlight and panelled door. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sashes. Parapets. INTERIOR: not inspected.”

The proposed awnings do not cause any significant or permanent change to any of the above characteristic elements of the listed building. The awnings preserve views of the distinctive architectural elements noted by the entry.

Design Visualisations



The proposed awnings do not dominate the existing building or the street scene. The awnings are width matched to the frontage.



All side panels of the awnings will be removed, ensuring that the characteristic architectural elements, including the cornices will be visible, and complying with the guidance on awnings.

Conclusion

The proposed awnings have been shown to be an appropriate addition to the listed building, employing a design that is sympathetic in scale and detail to the existing frontages. This statement has demonstrated that the proposal supports the aims of local policy to preserve Camden's heritage, and broadly complies with the guidance for alterations to shopfronts including awnings. The request for listed building consent should therefore be approved.