

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2020/0305/P	Covent Garden Community Association (Elizabeth Bax, Chair of Planning Subcommittee)	29/03/2020 23:09:13	OBJNOT	<p>Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA) objects to the proposed modification of the shopfront windows at 63 Neal Street and asks that the council:</p> <p>a) Enforce against the applicant's unconsented changes;</p> <p>b) Require the applicant either to return the window to its previous state (as seen on the applicant's drawing labelled 'Pre-existing front elevation') or to install a shopfront of a design more in keeping with the rest of the building. We would very much support the latter, in accordance with the Seven Dials Renaissance Study planning document.</p> <p>The applicant and the current operator of the premises, a Tapas bar called Pix Pintxos, has unfortunately not been a good neighbour to the many residents of Neal Street. We wrote to them as long ago as 2010 and met with them to ask them to modify their behaviour as a result of local complaints, sadly to little effect. Problems have continued on and off ever since.</p> <p>Altering the shopfront without consent was part of this pattern. It is important that unconsented works do not go unchallenged in the conservation area.</p> <p>These works were particularly out of keeping, including attaching shelf tables and seating to the shopfront, and blocking off the bottom half of the wide shopfront window. The operators installed a tiled panel instead of half the glazing in a style entirely unrelated to the 19th century building and sash windows above. The plan under this current application suggests replacing the unconsented solid horizontal panel with glass, but this would still look out of keeping.</p> <p>The entry for this building in the Seven Dials Renaissance Study planning document states: "A 19th century reconstruction in stock brick of the original property but retaining the 17th century scale. Comprising three storeys with a mansard storey at third floor level. Two sash-windows on each floor – undivided at first floor level, 2-over-2 at second floor level. Altered, traditional shopfront with modern retractable canopy. An externally-illuminated projecting sign on the right hand side at first floor level, with an additional neon sign directly below. Externally illuminated applied lettering on the fascia. The projecting internally-illuminated box sign between the first floor windows and the neon sign are unauthorised intrusions which detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area..."</p> <p>Since the applicant wishes to regulate the situation we ask that you encourage him to take a holistic view while doing so. Rather than simply patching up a messy situation we ask that the applicant provide an elegant, wood-framed solution that enhances the building. A single large shopfront window, or a window split into vertical panels using slender glazing bars, would be appropriate. Likewise a panelled stall riser.</p>