

Planning Statement

10th March 2020

The applicants intention for no 84 Cleveland Street is about gaining a balance between security and preservation. The purpose of the railings is to protect the largely unaltered historic architecture of the pub elevation from harm.

The applicant's requirement for railings around the external area of the building comes as the result of the recently approved residential use. The proposal balances the needs for providing greater security and safety for the residents of the ground floor and to ensure fuller protection of this interesting example of a Victorian public house.

The tiles and chamfer window of the ground floor are examples of architecture that add to the quality of the Conservation area. So, it is important for the current open and unobstructed access to the Cleveland Street elevation to be controlled. Currently, the building is subject to loitering and some unsociable activity, leading to a risk of vandalism and harmful activity to the façade.

Of course, this is at odds with the residential needs for privacy and security. The security of the building and its tenants is a very important point. The planning permission to convert the property into residential apartments including the ground floor did not pay attention for the safety of the building, its characteristics and its tenants.

It is correct to connect the needs of residents with their security. It is right to expect the external areas of the ground floor to respect the new use.

The only way to protect it is to put the railing around it at a minimum of one meter away. Also, the tiles which are exposed are 3 meters higher from the pavement and they are visible anyway. All the other tiles are fully protected on Grafton way.

We have reviewed the neighbourhood and its characteristics, so that we can properly understand the context and the opportunity to preserve a building and therefore garner improvements to the setting of the Conservation Area.

Rounded railings at the corner is a theme shown on the other buildings at the other end of Grafton Way. The logic for realising the arc on the pavement as it follows the corner of building is that it connects the two elevations that form the entirety of the elevation of no 84.

Currently, the building appears disjointed externally and it is at odds with all the other corner residential buildings which have corner railings in the area

So it is beneficial that the proposal makes the whole building more harmonious and pleasant to the eye with railings which have a natural beginning and a natural end. In this way it works within the unified character of the Conservation Area and therefore preserves the significance of Grafton Square.

From the public realm, the scheme provides space on the pavement for pedestrians or visitors to embrace and view the unobstructed Victorian pub frontage while at the same time protecting it.

Low height green plants will be maintained to make the new and the existing railings and building views/facade more attractive and more sophisticated. This is in keeping with the location of a domestic residence near to Grafton Square and its green environment. It also raises the notion of domestication within.

Whilst this will provide a means for protecting the tainted glass from vandalism and breakage, it will protect the house and provide security to the tenants and the building. The railings ring about the creation of a small distance between pedestrians/ bystanders and the house, therefore increasing the level of privacy and protection. and feeling that it is not easy for someone to approach the windows and stick his face on them and or damage them.

The scheme provides due care and attention to the needs both of the building and the tenants. As a residential building there is a duty to protect the occupants and ensure they are not subject to intimidation by being so close to the pavement.

It would be unsympathetic to the building to propose raising the windows so as to reduce direct impacts from the street. Railings are far more effective means of allaying misplaced public interest in the elevations of the building and the residents within.

When it was formerly used as a pub, the pavement was a typical location for visitors to meet, talk and drink. At this time, there were no occupants on the ground or lower ground floor and so the social impacts on use were quite different.

It is noted finally that whilst other developments, such as 101 Cleveland, are completely changing the character of the area, the proposal here will maintain and enhance it.

