



Subject:

2022/4417/P 84 Marchmont Street WC1N 1AG



Dear Charlotte

This application was discussed at the last meeting of the Advisory Committee and we object to the proposal to create a new front lightwell, enclosed by railings. This is intended to facilitate a retail unit and ground floor level and an office at basement level, but the alterations are not appropriate within the context of the host building.

The shop (previously Unwins) is located on the ground floor of a symmetrical four storey red brick block, built in the early 20th century. Residential accommodation is provided on the upper floors, and shop units on the ground floor, five in total, with the corner shop (Moreish) having an aspect on to both Upper Marchmont Street and Tavistock Place.

The proposal at no 84 is for a lightwell and railings and specifically refers to the "adjoining railings" of No. 96 Marchmont Street. But this is NOT the context of number 84, as 96 references the Georgian properties within the local area and 84 is part of a specific mansion block, considered a positive contributor to the conservation area (76-92). This purpose-built block does not have cast iron front boundary railings on the ground floor. The addition of this feature is therefore inappropriate in context.

The pavement is reasonably wide at this north end of east Marchmont Street, and the addition of a lightwell into this location will also impede the free flow of pedestrians - especially the students who walk in large numbers towards UCL from the Garden Halls, Cartwright Gardens. This is also a popular route for tourists accessing the cafes, restaurants, pubs and shops situated along Marchmont Street, an attractive and well-supported neighbourhood shopping hub.

There are many shopfronts of merit identified in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal document, but in this stretch of Marchmont Street only no 72 has been mentioned.

We consider there is a lost opportunity to make something better of the shop front itself, within its heritage context, in preference to altering the streetscape by opening up the pavement for the purpose of creating a lightwell to facilitate an office at basement level.

Best wishes

Debbie Radcliffe
on behalf of:
Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee (BCAAC)
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