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10 April 2023

Dear Penny,

Re: White Horse Hotel

I have no doubt that the White Horse hotel has been discussed at the council on numerous occasions, at a variety of levels and at great length. The council may or may not be aware that in London there are some houses with false fronts in Leinster Gardens in Bayswater. Behind them runs the London Underground which at that point is near the surface and therefore unable to have houses built above. So as not to disrupt the elegant façade of Leinster Gardens the false fronted buildings were put in the middle even though there is nothing behind them. They are maintained by Transport for London. I have attached an extract from 'Wikipedia'.

I was wondering if this sort of thing could be done with the White Horse hotel just to improve its frontage with a complete re-decoration. There are websites which sell 'breweriana' beer signs and these could be added to create an impression of a functioning hotel. Possibly there could be a couple of hanging baskets or window boxes? We could even pay some people to hang around outside smoking! (joke!)

You and the councillors will be far more aware than me of possible funding sources from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, county council or national lottery.

Having moved to the town nearly four years ago, my wife and I really like Wem but the White Horse is a real eyesore. As I said at the beginning, I am sure much time has been spent talking about this building and I have no doubt that councillors find it equally ugly. I also appreciate that there are complications with ownership but could this be a halfway solution? I would be more than willing to help if we were able to get any restoration programme underway.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

The following information can be obtained by going on to 'Wikipedia' and typing in Leinster Gardens. There are also some photographs there to show how it works.

Leinster Gardens

Leinster Gardens is a street in [Bayswater](#), [London](#). It is lined with tall, ornate, [mid-Victorian](#) terraced houses, many of which are [listed buildings](#).^[1]

False houses^[edit]

The street's [listed building](#) middle section has two false houses. These are [façades](#) built to match their neighbours: front walls, lightly projecting [ionic column](#)-sided porches topped by balustraded balconies,^[10] upper-storey [sash windows](#), windows flanked by fluted, half-diameter (semi-circular profile) [Corinthian columns](#) and pedimented, higher windows, corniced (white-ledged) with individual balustraded balconies. They are maintained by [Transport for London](#). The false houses — numbers 23 and 24 — have no rooms behind. Their building accompanied the 1860s building of what was a [steam engine](#)-hauled underground line, the [Metropolitan Railway](#). The false houses hide a short area of uncovered tracks.^{[10][11][12]} The result is the illusion of an unbroken terraced row of houses between nos. 22 and 25.

Before electrification the [locomotives](#) serving the London Tube were fitted with [condensers](#) to reduce the furnaces' carboniferous smoke. Drivers vented off accumulated smoke and condensation in open-air sections.^[13] In this [upmarket](#) area, the railway company hid this from residents using the [frontages](#) incorporated into the prestigious [terrace](#).^[14] The façade is 5 feet (1.5 m) thick,^[15] behind which is a ground-level opening of the rail line. The façade includes 18 dark-grey windows and front doors with no letter boxes.^{[13][16]}

The façade of 23 and 24 played a part in the [BBC](#) TV series [Sherlock](#), being used in the episode "[His Last Vow](#)".^[17]