



Bath Heritage Watchdog

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APPLICATION NUMBER: 16/05423/AR

ADDRESS: 57-59 Walcot Street, Bath

PROPOSAL: Identification of business operation and building number, hand painted on principal elevation. (Resubmission)

CASE OFFICER: Nicola Little

DATE: 10 November 2016

COMMENT: OBJECTION

Bath Heritage Watchdog objects to this application.

Although this building is not listed, it is surrounded by listed buildings and is in the Bath Conservation Area. Therefore to effect on such has to be a strong material consideration. This application is as a result of the refusal of a previous retrospective application.

When determining all applications for new shopfronts and signage we ask that the following guidelines are observed.

The context, or general setting, of Bath should be understood, respected and reflected in any proposed work to shopfronts.

Design, materials and workmanship should be of the highest quality.

Any proposed or altered shopfront should be historically credible.

House styles which do not meet the requirements of style, lettering, materials and signs are not acceptable. Multiples should be required to adapt their proposals to the special conditions of the city.

Standard designs of any sort are not acceptable. They should be specifically designed for their context.

(Bath City Council: Bath Shopfronts, Guidelines for Design & Conservation 1993).

The only fundamental difference between these proposals and those previously refused is effectively the size of the lettering. It does not address the painting of the frontage which has caused the building to be overly dominant in the streetscene, stark and austere and really has a minimal improvement on the current situation.

Although the building was already painted, adding another layer of paint, especially one so dark, is likely to have an adverse impact on the underlying stonework. Bath Stone needs to breathe to be able to perform technically and applying layers of paint can encourage damp and underlying stone degradation. We would recommend that the paint is removed altogether with a limewash applied if required.

Turning to the signage itself, whilst appreciating that businesses wish to maintain a corporate image, we consider that this signage remains inappropriate. We continue to have concerns over the style of the signage, which is a 'childlike' design not appropriate for external signage/

We would suggest that the 'No's 57-59' sign is removed completely as there is absolutely no need for such a large sign and traditionally door numbers are just that, above or next to the door itself. This part of the signage looks particularly poorly executed.

We would suggest that as each building has its own traditional fascia that 'Melanie Giles' and 'Hair & Beauty' are applied to these fascias and removed from the stone façade of the building completely.

The works, by virtue of an unacceptable paint colour applied to the façade, excessive, unnecessary and oversized signage are considered to be detrimental to the special architectural and historic interest of the adjacent listed buildings and the conservation area contrary to S16 and S72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 12 'Conserving & Enhancing the Historic Environment of the NPPF and Local Plan Policies B1, B2 and CP6 of the BANES Core Strategy and saved policies BH1, BH2, BH6 and BH17 of the BANES local plan and should be refused.

The case should then be referred back to the Enforcement Team to ensure that the inappropriate signage is removed within a short space of time