



Bath Heritage Watchdog

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APPLICATION NUMBER: 17/00898/FUL

ADDRESS: Villa Magdala, Henrietta Road, Bath

PROPOSAL: Erection of three storey bedroom extension, basement health suit extension, single storey bedroom building following demolition of existing garages and garden room and associated alterations

CASE OFFICER: Christine Moorfield

DATE: 29 March 2017

COMMENT: OBJECTION

Bath Heritage Watchdog objects to this application in its current format.

The building in question is without doubt an imposing and unique design and an undesignated heritage asset set within the Bath Conservation Area. The architects Wilson & Wilcox are renowned and the building has traces of the Grand Pump Room Hotel by the same architects.

Although the proposed extension is considered just about acceptable in terms of height, scale and mass, the design is extremely poor and is considered to be harmful to both the host building, the conservation area and nearby listed buildings. It sits awkwardly against the host building and would have an adverse impact on the character of the building. We also wonder if guests would consider such an extension appropriate for a building so much more impressive at the front.

Whilst appreciating that the applicants may desire a contemporary design, we consider that a much better design is possible and required. It should have a roof of some form as opposed to a flat/butterfly one which will no doubt leak far earlier than a pitched roof would, and the elevations are bland and weak with large areas of blank stonework. It needs some form of horizontal detail, even though it is accepted that the rear of the host building lacks detailing. We also do not consider the use of render acceptable and the windows should be of timber and not aluminium.

We object to the addition of a verandah and steps to the front elevation. It would harm the symmetry of the front elevation and such an addition is not a feature of buildings in Bath, nor to this area to this extent. Although it is noted that the proposal includes disabled access by way of a scissor lift, we consider that any such addition should be included as part of the new extension. We also question whether disabled visitors would want to enter the building in this way.

There are concerns that the enlargement of the host building combined with the proposed garden rooms and requisite parking will create an overdeveloped commercial premises in what is a predominantly residential area.