



Bath Heritage Watchdog

contact@bathheritagewatchdog.org

APPLICATION NUMBER: 17/02155/FUL

ADDRESS: 30-31 Stall Street

PROPOSAL: Conversion of upper floors to 4 residential units (2x1 bed, 1x2 bed and 1x3 bed flats) including minor reconfiguration of the retail use at ground floor together with associated internal and external alterations

CASE OFFICER: Martin Almond

DATE: 21 May 2017

COMMENT: OBJECTION

Bath Heritage Watchdog objects to this application.

Although there is no 'in principle' objection to the change of use to residential, there are aspects of the proposed work which are considered unacceptable and therefore lead to our objection.

It is recognised that the interior is generally devoid of all historic fabric and detailing, thus the internal alterations to form the flats are not considered to be controversial. However the lack of such historic fabric internally means that any historic fabric remaining gains a higher importance.

First and foremost it is the proposed roof terrace which gives a concern. In the absence of a detailed historic appraisal stating otherwise (the documentation skirts around the issue), it has to be presumed that the roof retains most, if not all, of its original form and fabric. The loss of such fabric has to be weighed against any public benefit. In this case there is no public benefit and we therefore do not consider the case proven. Although it is asserted that the roof terrace will not be seen from the public realm, it will be seen from the Thermae Spa and is adjacent to the St Catherine's Almshouses. There would be concern as to the possible noise and overlooking issues. This aspect of the application alone is sufficient to warrant a refusal. We would urge the removal of the roof terrace from proposals.

We also have concerns at the proposed alteration to the roofline which is incongruous. The rooflights proposed to the main roof look rather cumbersome and we would urge the use of conservation rooflights if they are considered essential.

It is proposed to externally insulate the Beau Street elevation of the building. This will entail applying rigid insulation to the walls and rendering using a POLYMERIC render. Whilst wishing to improve the thermal efficiency of the building is understood, this particularly method is not considered either appropriate or acceptable. Polymeric render is a cement based system with additional silicone water repellents. There is concern at how this will affect the underlying stonework preventing it from breathing and causing damp issues and degradation in the future. In addition it will stand proud of the current façade, at odds with adjacent buildings, and will obscure, or partially obscure the detailing to what was the front elevation of the former Horse & Jockey public house. We would urge that any upgrade in thermal efficiency should occur internally and that this aspect of proposals is removed from the application.

From the historic photo provided within the documentation it is evident that the half moon windows still in existence to the Beau Street elevation were originally longer. We would urge a return to this configuration. This would enhance the building returning some of the original detailing, increase the light internally even if obscured glass was used.

It is proposed to 'square up' the toothed abutments. Unless there is a structural reason for this to be carried out we would urge retention as this feature forms part of the history of the building.

The works, by virtue of the proposed roof terrace, the external wall render and alterations to the roofline are considered to be detrimental to the special architectural and historic interest and character of the listed building, adjacent listed buildings and 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, Core Strategy Policies B1, B2, B4 and CP6 and Saved Policies (Local Plan 2007) BH2 and BH6 and should be refused in its current format.