



## Bath Heritage Watchdog

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APPLICATION NUMBER: 17/02246/LBA

ADDRESS: Brigits Bakery, 17 Argyle Street

PROPOSAL: External alterations to include the display of 2 no. fascia signs,  
1 no. hanging sign and a removable door sign

CASE OFFICER: Caroline Power

DATE: 2 August 2017

COMMENT: STRONG OBJECTION

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Bath Heritage Watchdog strongly objects to this application.

No 17 Argyle Street dates from c1789 by Thomas Baldwin. Originally Argyle Buildings, it was the extension of the line of Adam's Pulteney Bridge into Pulteney's Bathwick estate. This terrace commands an imposing position adjoining Pulteney Bridge and overlooking the weir. The contrast between the street and river levels is dramatic.

The listing text includes the following '*The rear elevation of No 17 is particularly important and has been restored to something like its original appearance as shown in Thomas Hearne's watercolour 'Bath from Spring Gardens' of 1790*'.

The terrace is listed Grade II\* and is located in the Bath Conservation Area and World Heritage Site.

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.*



A site visit has revealed the fact that all the signage in this application has already been erected, including umbrellas, which aren't mentioned in the application.

Unauthorised works to a listed building are a criminal offence and cannot be condoned. Ignorance of listing is not a defence where work is undertaken without the necessary consent. The listing is revealed in conveyance searches and the Historic England Register is freely available online.

We are concerned and disappointed by the increasing trend not to enforce unauthorised and inappropriate works, especially in listed buildings where heritage assets once lost are lost for ever. Such inaction appears to serve as an encouragement to others to similarly break the law. Using retrospective applications shows disdain for the democratic planning processes. We also believe it is important that tenants, especially new tenants, of listed buildings, have their responsibilities fully explained to them in this respect.

The importance of this particular building cannot be overemphasised. Not only is it listed Grade II\* in its own right (not Grade II as stated in the Design & Access Statement), it is immediately adjacent to one of the most iconic and photographed buildings in the world and one which is at the heart of the World Heritage City – Pulteney Bridge. Therefore any alterations or signage have to be of a very high quality and of a type which has no impact on Pulteney Bridge.

This application, and indeed the installed signage, fall well below the standards expected.

Dibond is not a material considered acceptable on a listed building, but especially not Grade II\* and in the setting of a Grade I listed structure. All signage should be timber and traditionally signwritten.

The drawings provided are poor and no information on the method of fixings has been provided.



With regards to the front fascia and side wall signs, the use of a vivid pink is strongly opposed. It is harmful to the host building and the overall historic environment. Whilst appreciating a sign over the door is desirable, we do not believe that a sign on the side wall is required or desirable.

The 'replacement security door' is also strongly opposed. In place it is harmful, when removed and placed adjacent to the door, it is a pedestrian hazard. If means of security is required then it should not display any signage.



The design of both the 'security door' and the hanging sign is in the least questionable. It does not represent a bakery, or a café. It looks like a poor caricature more likely to be found on a clothes boutique. The design is both poor and inappropriate for this location.

Although not part of this application, we have to mention the vivid pink umbrellas installed on the riverside gallery. These should be removed completely. It is impossible to take a photo of Pulteney Bridge without them intruding. Photos of this vista are taken by the majority of our visitors and shown around the world. The current situation is totally unacceptable.

In summary the signage by virtue of the use of inferior materials, poor design and strident colours are considered to be detrimental to the special architectural and historic character and interest of 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 Policies CP6, D1, D2, D9, HE1 and ST7 of the Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan and should be refused.

Due to the sensitive position the signage should be removed forthwith.