



Bath Heritage Watchdog

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APPLICATION NUMBER: 17/03803/LBA

ADDRESS: 27 Walcot Buildings, Bath

PROPOSAL: External alterations to repaint the shop front white with a blue boarder (Regularisation)

CASE OFFICER: Caroline Waldron

DATE: 16 September 2017

COMMENT: OBJECTION

Bath Heritage Watchdog objects to this application.

We first have to address the issue of the retrospective 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 listed is revealed in conveyance searches and the Historic England Register is freely available online. Advice on the Local Authority website is also easily accessible, as is the 'Shopfronts Guide' which we refer to.

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 forever. 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.

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.

The works carried out to repaint the frontage and add new signage is not the worst we have recently seen. However, we do not consider the addition of the blue is appropriate, especially given the bright hue used. It gives the frontage a disjointed appearance. We would suggest that the frontage is kept to one colour. If a blue colour is to be permitted then it would need to be toned down considerably.

It is noted that the fascia signage has not been included in this application which means that it will remain unauthorised. Again it is not the worst we have seen, however traditionally signwritten fascias are the recommended route for listed buildings.

We note the 4 examples of other shopfronts which are stated to have consent. We have checked each example against the planning website.

Imperial Tattoo Company	consent was for a grey frontage with signwritten fascia
Pizza GoGo	submitted an application which was subsequently withdrawn,
Yummy House Takeway	has no application
Ashman Jones Vets	was given consent in 2010 for a grey, but it would appear that the frontage is not according to plans

Therefore all examples given are also unauthorised and need to be investigated by the Enforcement Team.

The works, by virtue of the disjointed use of colours, inappropriate use of a bright colour and no details regarding the signage 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 and HE1 of the Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan and should be revised or refused in its current format.