



## Bath Heritage Watchdog

contact@bathheritagewatchdog.org

APPLICATION NUMBER: 17/04500/LBA

ADDRESS: 21-22 Union Street, Bath

PROPOSAL: Internal and external alterations for the refresh of existing shop fronts with minor reinforcement of existing ground floor structure

CASE OFFICER: Laura Batham

DATE: 2 November 2017

COMMENT: OBJECTION

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

Nos 21-22 Union Street are shops with accommodation over dating from c1806 with 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations. Building probably supervised by City Architect John Palmer, but to earlier (c1791) elevations by Thomas Baldwin. The buildings are listed Grade II and are 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.*

## UNION STREET ELEVATION

Although the shopfronts date from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, they are not unattractive and therefore proposals need to respect this.

We have considerable concerns regarding the installation of an ATM to the front window, and would prefer that this aspect of the application is removed from proposals.

However, presuming that the applicants are likely to say that the ATM is a necessity, we would suggest that it is moved to the southernmost window of no22. This would leave a balanced 3 window formation to both no21 and 22. Unless there is a good reason not to, we would also suggest that the ATM is centred within that window with the letter box below if necessary. The ATM surround is quite large and we would encourage a reduction in size and the removal of any unnecessary (ie non-operational) illumination.

We also have concerns at the vinyl blind window adjacent to the ATM. Whilst appreciating the reasoning behind this, the proposed grey colour with text is austere. We would encourage the applicants to investigate some form of vinyl frosting to achieve the same degree of security but without such harm to the listed building.

We would suggest that the statutory signage is moved to one of the doors.

We strongly oppose the proposed fascia signage. Illumination is unnecessary and acrylic is an inferior material. Neither is acceptable on a listed building. The signage should be traditionally signwritten to the existing timber fascia. We are surprised and concerned (if true) at the statement that the applicants were advised that there was no restriction on signage illumination in this area.

## UNION PASSAGE

Our comments relating to the front elevation fascia signage also apply to this elevation.

We consider the use of the dark grey colour for the entire elevation and vinyls to the window to be harsh. In such a narrow passageway we would suggest that some elements of the elevation are in a much lighter colour to provide some relief. Again we would also suggest a frosted vinyl to the blind window and not the proposed grey with text.

## SUMMARY

Whilst we recognise that companies wish to apply their corporate image and colours, they must be prepared to tailor their proposals to recognise the very special circumstances that exist in Bath.

The works as proposed are considered to be detrimental to the special architectural and historic character and interest of the listed building, 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 DW1, CP6, D1, D2, D3, D8, D9, D10, and HE1 of the Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan and should be revised or refused in its current format.