



Bath Heritage Watchdog

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APPLICATION NUMBER: 17/04721/LBA

ADDRESS: 1 Milk Street, Bath

PROPOSAL: External alterations for the display of 1no. non-illuminated sign

CASE OFFICER: Samantha Mason

DATE: 6 October 2017

COMMENT: OBJECTION

Bath Heritage Watchdog strongly objects to this application.

The original building was the last remaining wartime 'make do and mend' repaired building in Bath, and although other bomb damaged buildings are preserved elsewhere in a derelict state it is believed that this was the last wartime repaired survivor in the whole of the country that was still fit for use in its wartime repaired state, and the Genesis Trust would have been happy to continue using it. The war-scarred building stood as a reminder of the tragic events in the Bath Blitz and as a memorial to those who lost their lives. It was treated locally as an unofficial war memorial.

Sadly, consent was granted for the demolition of the majority of the building leaving just the façade. As a consequence any proposals for the remaining façade have to be very carefully considered and thought out in order not to cause physical harm and public offence.

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.

This application proposes the addition of signage for the student accommodation constructed above the listed former labour exchange. The façade is a unique structure for which it will be difficult, if not impossible, to find any signage that will not cause harm. It is unfortunate that consideration for such signage was not given at the time of the original application.

We have undertaken a site visit to carefully assess this proposal and have come to the conclusion that neither of the signs proposed are acceptable. We therefore have an ‘in principle’ objection to such signage.

No large scale drawings of each sign have been provided nor details regarding the methods of fixing.

The applicants mention a ‘similar lettered sign’ on the Milk Street elevation of the Bath College. The one main difference being that that particular building is not listed.

A ‘bus stop’ projecting sign is not appropriate on a listed building, especially not when constructed of an inferior material such as aluminium. If a projecting sign is to be considered it would need to be a traditionally signwritten timber hanging sign. In this particular case the size, combined with being situated away from the main street junction, is considered to render the sign to be ineffectual in attracting attention.



With respect to the offset lettering (and the bracket for the projecting sign, we have concerns at the damage that will be caused to the stonework. As the picture to the left illustrates, cracks are appearing in the stonework where the signage is proposed, which is of concern. We therefore do not consider it wise to drill into the stonework in case this causes further damage. We also note that other cracks are also appearing in the façade of the listed building.

As an alternative we would suggest that lettering is fixed to the stonework of the actual new build above. In that respect slightly larger lettering could be acceptable and would be of more use in attracting attention. In addition an appropriate graphic could be added to the actual access door if required.

SUMMARY

The works, by virtue of the use of inferior and inappropriate materials, the addition of a projecting sign and the potential damage that would be caused to the listed building are considered to be extremely detrimental to the special architectural and historic character and interest of the listed building 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.