



Bath Heritage Watchdog

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APPLICATION NUMBER: 17/04734/LBA

ADDRESS: 4 George Street, Bath

PROPOSAL: External alterations for the installation of a retractable awning

CASE OFFICER: Caroline Power

DATE: 8 October 2017

COMMENT: OBJECTION

Bath Heritage Watchdog objects to this application.

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.

Applicants for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals. They need to show why works which would affect the character of a listed building are desirable or necessary.

No justification has been given for the installation of the awning. Generally this is for protection of foodstuffs etc which would be affected by the sun. We have also briefly searched for historic photos showing an awning but have been unable to find one. We note the photos provided with the documentation but they are not entirely clear. We therefore do not believe that justification has been given for this alteration.

If consent is to be given for an awning then we would seek to ensure that it does not have any advertising on it.

We note the documents submitted do not show the hanging sign and presume that this is to be removed if the awning is permitted. Clarification is required.

UNAUTHORISED WORKS



Whilst researching this application we noticed that the current frontage is unauthorised. The last relevant applications that we can find for the property are 12/05417/LBA and 12/05420/AR which do not match the current frontage. The photo on the left dates from June 2016 and shows the consented frontage from the quoted applications, therefore alterations and repainting have been carried out in the past 12 months without consent.

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 English Heritage Register is freely available online. Advice on the Local Authority website is also easily accessible as is the 'Shopfronts Guide' which we refer to.

The current frontage is not considered acceptable. The dark grey colour is suitable but the vivid blue colour is not. Likewise the actual signage is poor and appears to be vinyl lettering. We would suggest that the signage is returned to that previously consented and be traditionally signwritten.

SUMMARY

The works, by virtue of the lack of justification and unauthorised works are considered to be detrimental to the special architectural and historic character and interest of the listed building and especially the most important aspect of the listed building (ie the bomb damage) 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.

The case should be referred to the Enforcement Team for the appropriate action to be taken.