



Bath Heritage Watchdog

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APPLICATION NUMBER: 18/00378/AR

ADDRESS: Northgate House, Upper Borough Walls

PROPOSAL: Display of 1. non-illuminated letters sign above the entrance to Northgate House, 1no. non-illuminated letters sign on external wall between the first and second floors of Northgate House and 1no. non-illuminated projecting sign above current TK max sign (Resubmission)

CASE OFFICER: Dominic Battrick

DATE: 13 February 2018

COMMENT: OBJECTION

Bath Heritage Watchdog objects to this application.

Although Northgate House is not listed, it is located in the Bath Conservation Area and is in the setting of listed buildings, not least the Grade I listed Guildhall.

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.

We first have to address the issue of the unauthorised works. The applicants/agent would already be aware of the inappropriate and unsympathetic nature of the proposals from the previously submitted application and the objections therein. It is therefore extremely disappointing to find that despite this the signage has already been installed.

The application is not marked as retrospective though it should be. Using retrospective applications shows disdain for the democratic process and shows a lack of respect for the very special circumstances that exist in Bath. We therefore expect strong enforcement action to be taken against the applicants.

Turning to the application in hand, we first have to comment on the fact that, as with the previous application, there are no scale drawings of the proposed signage. Whilst photomontages give a good indication, they are no substitute for accurately scaled drawings. We do not consider this application should have been validated without such drawings.



However, as shown above the signs have already been installed and therefore their unsuitability is there for all to see.

SIGN 1

The use of stainless steel is more appropriate. However we do not support the use of black due to its starkness. A natural brushed silver surface would be more acceptable.

As shown above the illumination has been installed and should be removed.

SIGN 2

We remain opposed to signage on this elevation. It is well above ground level and does nothing to explain what or where it relates to. It would also cause further harm to the setting of the listed buildings surrounding it.

SIGN 3

This sign is undesirable and again not considered necessary. The sign is to be located above the existing TK Maxx projecting sign. As previously stated we have searched the portal but have been unable to find consent for this sign, nor any of the TK Maxx signage. It therefore cannot be taken as a precedent and indeed the matter should be referred to Enforcement to deal with this matter.

SUMMARY

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 refused.