



## Bath Heritage Watchdog

contact@bathheritagewatchdog.org

APPLICATION NUMBER: 18/01023/REG13

ADDRESS: 36 Milsom Street

PROPOSAL: Change of use from A1 (shops) to A3 (cafe/restaurant) repair works to the exterior of the building and minor internal alterations to the existing building

CASE OFFICER: Laura Batham

DATE: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2018

COMMENT: OBJECTION

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Bath Heritage Watchdog objects to this application.

There are two aspects to this application – the change of use and the alterations/repairs.

### CHANGE OF USE

It is the proposed change of use to café/restaurant which fundamentally leads to our objection.

Milsom Street was built as one of Bath's grand setpieces. It has always been one of the busiest and most popular and prestigious shopping streets in the city. Mentioned by literary greats, it has always been 'the' quality shopping destination in Bath.

Over recent years an erosion of this has been creeping in, not least the loss of the former NatWest Bank to a restaurant just a couple of doors away from the application site. It will not take much more for the reputation of a shopping destination to disappear, something that will be long regretted.

No evidence has been provided with the application to demonstrate an inability to let the building as retail. It has a shopfront and therefore does not have the issue that some adjacent buildings have had. Although the application form states that the building is vacant, it gives no date for when the most recent use ended.

It is also clear that there is a shift in the A3 sector emerging. There have been some high profile closures recently, not least Jamie's Italian, and other cafes in the city have also shut their doors. Such saturation is something we have been warning about for some time.

### ALTERATIONS/REPAIRS

Most of the proposed alterations are to modern aspects of the building and are therefore uncontroversial.

The Targeted Building Assessment has raised some queries with regard to older fabric and the desirability for some further opening up/investigation work to be carried out. This we would support and are content to leave to the specialist conservation officer.

### SUMMARY

The works, by virtue to the undesirable change of use to A3 is considered to be detrimental to the special and historic character and interest of Milsom Street 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 and D2, of the Core Strategy and Placemaking Plan and should be refused.