



Bath Heritage Watchdog

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APPLICATION NUMBER: 18/03777/AR

ADDRESS: 3 Northumberland Buildings

PROPOSAL: Erection of 1no. wooden hanging sign and 1no. brushed steel wall mounted fascia sign

CASE OFFICER: Helen Ellison

DATE: 15th September 2018

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.

There are two aspects to this application – hanging sign and ‘fascia’ sign.

We do not have an 'in principle' objection to the addition of a hanging sign. The traditionally signwritten approach is fully supported. However, the sign is considered to be too large and should be reduced to the generally acceptable 400 x 500mm. We also consider the proposed bracket to be too basic and would encourage something a little more decorative. The positioning of the bracket and sign also serves to exacerbate the harm caused by the yellow alarm box. We would encourage the removal of this box.

Turning to the proposed 'fascia' sign, we have an 'in principle' objection to this part of the application. This is an important Grade II* listed terrace which is underappreciated. It already suffers from a surfeit of signage (most of which is unauthorised). The addition of suitable hanging signs and traditional brass nameplates is acceptable but the addition of signage to the front façade is not. Although the proposal is small in size it would still cause harm. The use of an adhesive is also opposed. Although it may be considered less damaging than drilling into the stonework, there is no guarantee that long term damage will not be caused. This aspect of the application should be omitted.

It is noted that the signage to the adjacent buildings is mentioned as justification. The history to No 2 reveals a previous application for front elevation signage (albeit larger in scale) was refused, the decision being upheld at appeal. We have also not been able to find an application or consent for the current signage which would therefore appear to be unauthorised. Likewise we have been unable to find an application or consent for the signage to No 4 which would also appear to be unauthorised. Finally, an application for front elevation signage to Nos 5-6 Northumberland Buildings in 2016 was refused and we are disappointed to see that despite this the signage has been installed. All these cases need to be referred to Enforcement for the appropriate action and cannot be taken as justification for this application. It should also be noted that English Heritage did not support such signage.

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 in its current format.