

**Application Number: 11/04201/AR**

**Address:**

Manvers Street Baptist Church  
Manvers Street  
Bath BA1 1JW

**Proposal:**

Display of new signage

**Comments: submitted at 31/10/2011 16:17:05**

Bath Heritage Watchdog objects to this application.

When determining all applications for new shop fronts 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 shop fronts.

Design, materials and workmanship should be of the highest quality.

Any proposed or altered shop front 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.

(Bath City Council. Bath Shop Fronts, Guidelines for Design and Conservation 1993)

'The use of a standardised national fascia sign may not always be acceptable, and national chains must recognise that the imposition of house styles will not always be possible, especially on listed buildings or within a Conservation Area'

(Advertisements & Illuminations, BANES)

'The special visual qualities of the World Heritage Site, listed buildings and Conservation Areas need to be protected against the adverse effects of indiscriminate advertisements. Where permitted they should be of modest size and their design and materials complement the character of the building and the area. In particular, designers should be prepared to compromise on matters of 'corporate' design where necessary in the sensitive or historic areas'

(Local Plan C3.77).

These comments relate purely to the number of signs proposed, their location and materials. There is no objection (in principle) to the replacement of the existing signage.

Manvers Street Baptist Church is a visually distinctive building with its small corner tower (based on early French models) a prominent feature. In the gothic revival style by Wilson and Wilcox. 1871-2. The build line of the street allows the north elevation to be seen in its entirety. Its raised entrances above steps means the west front is also well viewed. With an open area to the north and a modern office block adjoining to the south it is not going to be missed. Signage in this location is going to need to be sensitively chosen and located. It should also respect and compliment the architectural style.

It is felt the current proposals do not achieve this.

## NORTH ELEVATION.

Whilst there no major objection to the two small directional signs given the distance involved surely one more centrally placed sign should suffice. The information sign no 15 is more contentious. The existing sign is of poor quality and although the proposed is of smaller scale it is the location that is at fault in conflict with the window. Could not a post mounted sign centrally placed under the window of something that fits over the railings not be considered. We would also prefer to see a traditional timber construction as opposed to metal trays.

## THE WEST ELEVATION

The number of signs proposed here is excessive including A boards, window graphics and clip signs; most of the signs are considered duplication, the usage of particular sections of the building being rather self evident. Signs 001, 002 and 009 could be deleted along with 010. The accessible route directions could be incorporated into a small sign mounted on the railings. There is a lot of unused space on some of the signs. There is no objection to signs 004 and 005 but the three panels although replacing existing are considered unnecessary and could be incorporated in the doors as graphics freeing up the windows. The A board is off pavement so raises no particular objection. As above we would prefer to see traditional methods used in construction and materials. Alternatives that do not involve direct fixings to the walls such as post mounted signs could be considered.

## THE SOUTH ELEVATION

Info sign 013 is again insensitively placed seemingly at ground level. Again we would question its necessity in this location.

We believe some dozen plus signs plus an aboard is excessive and could constitute over-advertising and we would ask for the scheme to be rationalised and the number of signs reduced. The signage will had a detrimental cumulative impact on the listed structure. Given this impact and the number of fixings involved there should be a parallel listed building application. There is some correspondence on the file which gives the impression consent has been granted but we are aware of no application that relates to what is proposed.

The signage by virtue of its numbers, location and materials with have a detrimental impact of the setting and character of the listed building and will harm the visual amenity of the Conservation Area and wider World Heritage Site and is thus contrary to policies BH1, BH2, BH6, BH17, D2 & D4 of the Local Plan, the Planning(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) and guidance contained in PPS5 and should therefore be refused.