

Henry Pankhurst,
Harrogate Civic Society,
38, St. Clements Road,
Harrogate,
North Yorks. HG2 8LX

28th January 2018

Planning & Development,
For the attention of Naomi Waddington,
Harrogate Borough Council,
P.O. Box 787,
Harrogate.

Dear Madam,

Planning Application 17/05610/LB 6.79.6863.AR.LB
Planning Application 17/05609/RG3 6.79.6863.FUL
The Turkish Baths, Parliament St., Harrogate

Thank you for your consultation on the above application for internal alterations and a replacement canopy. We were also pleased to have been contacted by the architects last November.

INTERNAL ALTERATIONS

We are content with the internal alterations that open up spaces near the entrance and expose original tiling, ceilings & windows. This work will be very beneficial in terms of restoring parts of the building that have suffered unfortunate 'improvements', obviously for practical reasons. Significant benefit will also be derived from improving the initial impression on entering the building. At present on entering, the visual impression is of a very plain and utilitarian interior – far removed aesthetically from the baths not yet reached! Even though it is proposed to install a mezzanine floor to one of the voids, the improvements in treatment of the building will be clear.

Repairs to roof-lights are not a cause for concern but it may be difficult to decide exactly how to manage this due to uncertainty regarding what was original construction in some cases.

CANOPY & SIGNAGE

The other part of the proposed work – the replacement canopy and signage – is, as most would agree, far more contentious. But the existing canopy probably has few friends nowadays. The current entrance was, of course, never meant to be the main access point. It is evident that whatever marks this entrance in terms of a canopy or signage needs to cause as little interference to the original fabric as possible.

Regarding what is proposed, we are sceptical about the protection from the elements aspect. The canopy, being so high above the steps and ramped entrance, would not seem to provide much protection. Precipitation needs to be only a slight angle inwards from the front edge or the ends of the canopy to allow people to still get wet! Where will water that

lands on the canopy drain to or will it simply drip off the edges? This would not improve intended protection. A method of drainage was not evident from the drawings. In any event it should not be obtrusive.

Taking into account the practicality of the canopy in respect of weather protection, which does not seem very great, is there really a need for a three stage construction? The left hand element with the signage over the doorway would be the important part. This could be mounted lower (its height reduces weather protection greatly). We acknowledge and appreciate that the design and construction of the canopy has been kept as lightweight as possible. The signage is also modest and sensitive. The three parts of the canopy follow the gradient of the street, which is a better arrangement than one long level, even though the elements of this part of the Royal Baths building are not staggered vertically but horizontally aligned. We fear that the supporting stays may look unduly prominent, but this is probably the most efficient way of fixing the canopy. The attachment points look very near the edges of the stonework in the drawings.

CONCLUSIONS

We applaud the interior work that reveals original fabric and of course the repairs to roof-lights. The removal of the existing canopy will be no loss. A three stage canopy is unnecessary. It is unlikely to provide any substantial protection from the elements and obscures more of the building than desirable for the purpose of marking the entrance to the Turkish Baths. The left hand section with signage and mounted lower, possibly at window lintel height is all that is needed.

Thank you again for your attention.

Yours faithfully,

Henry Pankhurst,
Chairman,
Harrogate Civic Society