

**Bath Preservation Trust – General Statement to B&NES Planning Committee,
6th May 2020**

Good afternoon, *my name is/this is a statement from* Caroline Kay, Chief Executive of the Bath Preservation Trust.

Bath Preservation Trust has been part of Bath's civic planning conversation since before the second world war. Little did we all realise at the turn of 2020 that we would be living and working under current conditions; but here we are at the first ever virtual meeting of B&NES' Planning Committee.

I wanted to make a general statement at the beginning of the meeting partly to mark that historic moment; and partly to say to the Committee that however difficult it is to interact directly with your community, your constituents and your consultees, we are still here.

Bath Preservation Trust has lost 90% of its income through the current closure of our 4 museums and with staff either furloughed or working from home. But we will continue to participate, digitally, virtually, online, however works best, to make sure that the public benefit we provide continues and that the challenges we all face are not used as excuse for poor planning, hasty decision making or inadequate placemaking. We will continue to work with householders, planners, developers and neighbours, with the benefit of our independent expertise, to bring out the best for new developments, to respond positively to the current challenges, and call to account when necessary.

We look forward to these committee meetings developing so that preferably, public involvement can become more participatory.

We hope most of all to work with all to ensure that when we look back at this moment of history, it will be seen as the time at which we worked together as a community for a better, less polluted, more sustainable and even more beautiful city, for the benefit of all.

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BATH PRESERVATION TRUST STATEMENT TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

OBJECT

A succession of unauthorised and inappropriate works have been undertaken in a manner which has resulted in harm to rural character and the setting of a listed building. This committee has the opportunity through the refusal of this application to reverse that harm.

Specifically, the introduction of dressed ashlar coping and quoins, which gives the new wall a much more formal appearance, is completely out of place in this rural landscape and consequently has a negative impact on the setting of the listed building, which is notable in part for its strong rural character.

We agree with the recommendations by your officers; that the development as installed, and amendments as proposed, are of a design, form, detail and materials that are inappropriate and unsympathetic towards the rural surroundings and appear as incongruous, alien and urbanising features that are harmful towards the significance of the designated heritage asset and the special interest of the listed building and its setting. Public benefit would be required to offset this harm and there are no public benefits to the development sufficient to outweigh the identified harm to the setting of the listed building.

Following refusal of this application we would advise the reinstatement of the cock-and-hen stone capping to prevent the further deterioration of the rural, vernacular character of the conservation area, the setting of a Grade II agricultural building, and the built qualities of the AONB and Green Belt. We advise the reinstatement of the demolished wall in reclaimed rubble stone wall to re-establish the locally distinctive character that would complement, rather than harm the setting of the listed building.