

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

NatWest LEEK. 24 Derby Street, Leek, ST13 5AF

LA Ref: PP-04634135
Full Planning and Listed Building Consent

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1. Introduction

In order to comply with Paragraph 128 of Section 12 Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment of the National Planning Policy Framework, we are providing a description of the significance of the heritage asset and its setting, presented in the form of a Design and Access Statement.

2. Planning Context

Local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-taking.

Relevant Planning Policy.

National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 132

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

National Planning Policy Framework Paragraph 137

Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

There are two different Planning Authorities within the Staffordshire Moorlands area; Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) .

The Peak District National Park Local Development Plan, Landscapes and Conservation Section 9.38, states that planning authorities should designate and review Conservation Areas, and should have special regard for the preservation of listed buildings and scheduled monuments.

Section 9.44 states that Development that affects the particular merits of Listed Buildings and other buildings, assets and areas of historic or vernacular merit or their settings, must sustain or enhance the assets or their significance to be acceptable.

In September 1998, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council adopted PDNPA's Local Plan which outlines the planning policy guidelines for listed buildings and conservation areas. The Local Heritage Register SPD Staffordshire Moorlands LDF February 2008 also provides policy guidance.

3. Statement of Significance

Name: NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK

List entry Number: 1268590

Location: NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK, DERBY STREET

County: Staffordshire

District: Staffordshire Moorlands

District Type: District Authority

Parish: Leek

National Park: Peak District National Park

Grade: II

Date first listed: 07-Jun-1972

Date of most recent amendment: 14-Oct-1996

UID: 461635

SJ9856SE DERBY STREET 611-1/7/58 (South side) 07/06/72 National Westminster Bank (Formerly Listed as: DERBY STREET District Bank)

National Grid Reference: SJ 98517 56487

Dated 1882. By William Larnar Sugden. Brick with stone dressings, pargeting and plain-tiled roof. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys, 4-window range. Ornate advanced gable over principal banking hall to right, with entrance in single-storeyed porch alongside. Rusticated piers to broken pedimented entrance, with lunette over the pediment, and cartouche inscribed 'Manchester and Liverpool District Banking Co. Ltd'. Enriched pilasters support segmental pediment above. Main gable has shallow segmental bow window to ground floor, the jettied upper storey having paired segmental oriels connected by balustraded balconette. Shaw-style windows with leaded glazing.

Pargeting below and between the windows. Moulded bressumer to projecting gable apex, also enriched with pargeting incorporating painted shield of arms. 2-window range beyond, with lesser left-hand gable, articulated by moulded pilasters at jettied first storey. Mullioned windows of 3 and 4 lights to ground floor, mullioned and transomed windows with leaded upper panes above. Pargeting in apex of gable in right-hand return incorporating the date.

Left-hand return has parallel wing forming 2 gables, each with pargeting in the apex. A third advanced gabled range beyond. Side entrance, possibly originally giving access to manager's accommodation. Massive end wall stacks, and a third in the angle of the advanced wing. Shallow segmental arch with tiled roof over giving access to rear, to left. INTERIOR: has marble and scagliola wall panelling to main banking hall, and much of the original enriched woodwork also survives. Frieze of William de Morgan tiles in porch.

4. Location

The property lies within the Leek Conservation Area which is a historic market town located to the south of the Peak District National Park. *Leek is a planned settlement dating to the early 13th century that grew up beside an earlier church and road. The town retains its medieval street pattern and market place, and a wide range of historic buildings dating from the 16th century onwards. The surrounding mills and terraces mark the emergence of a fully-fledged silk industry in the 19th century. In the town centre the modest scale of the early housing contrasts with the more dramatic designs of the late 19th century buildings.*

The core of the Conservation Area is the medieval market town with its church, market place and medieval street pattern formed by Church Street, St. Edward's Street, Derby Street and Stockwell Street. By the 16th century the market place had been reduced to its present size and Sheep Market and Costard Street¹¹ had been created. Church Lane was in existence by the 17th century, and Overton Bank and Clerk Bank had become separate entities by the late 18th century when the toll road was created. Later roads include Russell Street and High Street. As a result each street has its own distinctive character and quality, depending on its date of development, proximity to the town centre, and desirability as place of residence. (Conservation Area Appraisal - Leek)

Leek is a market town in Staffordshire sat on the River Churnet, located very close to Stoke-on-Trent. The town's motto is 'Our skill assisting us, we have no cause for despair' and its Coat of Arms with this motto on it was granted 7th May 1956.

The town's main economic power was from cattle farming until the industrial revolution when it became a major producer of textiles, mainly silk, though this has ceased to continue.

The mills which produced these textiles are now houses or apartments giving a new life to the town's industrial architecture. There are two major headquarters/attractions in the area which are the Britannia building society headquarters and Alton Towers theme park, which employ many local people. Geographically Leek is sat on a hill and at the foot of the Peak District National Park and is often referred to as the gateway to them.

Due to its importance during the industrial revolution there are stunning examples of Victorian architecture especially those designed by the Sugden family, an example of this is the Congregational Church and spire in gothic revival style and the Leonard Street Police Station. Examples of contemporary architecture includes the Horton Street Leek college building.

5. Proposal

Alterations to the two existing ATM apertures to accommodate the installation of two new ATMs.

6. Impact Assessment of the Proposed Development

The following section assesses the impact of the proposed development upon the building and wider conservation area. Visual impact, scale, design, materials, possible harm and risk to the building.

The premises are currently used as a NatWest branch, offering a range of personal and commercial financial and banking services (A2- Use class order). The proposals do not alter the existing use. The overall scale of the building will remain unchanged by the proposals. The property sits in between two modern facades occupied by Subway and Ponden Mill on the retail dominated Derby Street. The street has a mixture of historic and modern architectural styles.

The distinctive style of 24 Derby Street contributes positively to the street scene and the conservation area. It is an important building, that contributes to the quality of the street scape and reflects the towns economic heritage.

The proposed development has minimal impact on the character and appearance of the Leek conservation area. The main aspects of the building that will be impacted are the two existing ATM apertures which house two existing ATMs.

The proposed impact on the front elevation is caused by the proposed alterations to two existing ATM apertures, to ensure the future provision of two external upgraded ATM's at the branch. The proposals impact on the appearance of the buildings front elevation will have a very minor impact and does not materially alter the size and scale of the building, including its footprint and would not alter the description of the development or the red edge area of the application.

The proposed development has responded to the need to preserve the character and setting of the building and the wider conservation area.

7. Policy Response

The proposals are necessary to support the installation of two upgraded ATM machines that will provide the latest secure ATM service to the people of Leek 24 hours a day. NatWest Bank have responded to points raised NPPF page 30 Chapter 12 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' by thoroughly considering the historic setting and the features of the bank in its proposal and has formulated a proposal which meets the requirements to not distract pedestrians from the historical features of the surrounding area.

The impact on the front elevation will be minimal as the proposal will replace the existing machines with slighter larger machines that will provide enhanced security features along with being accessible to all degrees of mobility within society. This balances the need to preserve and enhance the special features of the listed building as stated in Structure Plan policy C9 Listed Buildings along side meeting the accessibility requirements for all members of society.

8. Need and benefit of the proposal

The NatWest banking group officially known as The National Westminster Bank Plc is the largest retail and commercial bank in the UK. The group was established by the merger of The National Provincial Bank and The Westminster Bank. In Ireland The NatWest operates as The Ulster Bank. To this date the banking group has a tremendous retail and townscape presence in the UK with a network of approximately 1600 plus branches and 3400 cash machines (some in locations other than branches). The group also offers their customers a 24hr action line telephone service alongside 24hr online banking facilities.

The NatWest Bank are undertaking an extensive branch rebranding programme and stand alone ATM vending network overhaul. This is to improve and reinforce their presence on the high street, providing a quality aesthetic to the town and cityscapes in which they are based, to improve customer banking experience. With regards to Leek, their intention is to replace both obsolete ATMs with new machines that are accessible to all.

The proposals for the Natwest Leek would deliver and two new ATM machines on the front elevation of the building.

9. Community Safety

The proposed layout is in - keeping with the surrounding area. The area which, NatWest Leek resides in, is off the main town high street of Derby Street, and is bordered both sides by other retail and office units which carry on down the street many of listed building credentials.

10. Conclusion

This proposal provides upgraded financial services to the immediate and wider community. The provision of financial services uses in that location is in alignment to policy in the Local Plan.

The proposed development will not affect the features of public amenity and public safety and will therefore not result in significant harm or impact. As a result, the proposed development aligns to policy requirements and guidance relating to the local area. Therefore, it is considered that there are no policy grounds or material considerations which should prevent planning permission and listed building consent from being granted for the proposed development and the proposal is recommended to the Council for approval.

Appendices. See planning application supporting documents.

End