

NatWest Leek branch
24 Derby Street, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 5AF
Design and Access Statement–28.08.14
PP-03628987 and 03628974

Introduction:

NatWest banking group officially known as National Westminster Bank Plc is the largest retail and commercial bank in the UK. The group as it is known today was established by the merger of National Provincial Bank and Westminster Bank. In Ireland NatWest operates as 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 offer their customers 24hr Actionline telephone service alongside 24hr online banking facilities.

Presently NatWest Bank are undertaking an extensive rebranding programme throughout their entire branch and stand alone ATM vending networks. This is to improve and reinforce their presence on the high street, providing a quality aesthetic to the town and city scapes in which they are based, reassuring the customer that they care about their overall banking experience. NatWest Bank's intention is to renovate the existing tired shopfronts, replacing the external shopfront signage and replacing some ATM modules so they are accessible for all.

At the NatWest Leek branch, the banking group wish to remove the existing external shopfront signage and replace it with new shopfront signage in the same locations as an effort to better the branch appearance from Derby Street which is tired and requiring maintenance. The proposal has been developed in accordance with Leek conservation area features, the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Adopted Core Strategy (March 2014) and to respect its heritage features which make it a Grade 2 listed building.

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.

Existing External:

The existing external signage comprises of the following components;
1no. 500mm high internally illuminated aluminium NatWest fascia sign
1no. 400mm high non illuminated aluminum projecting sign
1no. nameplate

Existing Internal:

Existing NatWest banking branch.

Proposal External:

The proposed external signage to comprise of the following components;

- 1no. 700mm high x 4025mm wide NatWest non illuminated fascia sign to the front elevation with 490mm high NatWest internally illuminated lettering and red chevron on a high gloss NatWest purple background. This is made up from an aluminium panel fascia painted with high gloss purple. Built up letters and chevron with purple returns with opal acrylic translucent faces. Lower red detail strip consisting of red acrylic.(for more details see associated drawing pack).
- 1no.600mm high x 803mm wide NatWest internally illuminated projecting sign to the front elevation. This is made up from an aluminium frame and finished in NatWest high gloss purple. This has a 6mm ion toughened glass face having the NatWest colours and chevron screen printed to the rear. There is a red border around to the centre of the edge of the sign constructed from red acrylic. (for more details see drawing pack)
- 1no. 250mm high x 1040mm wide NatWest internally illuminated ATM tablet applied to be positioned above 1no.ATM (for more details see drawing pack)
- 1no. NatWest non illuminated aluminium name plate/opening hours sign to front elevation

Proposal internal:

No works internally to branch

Heritage Statement

Listed Building Description taken from English Heritage online

Name: NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK

List entry Number: 1268590

Location

NATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK, DERBY STREET

County	District	District Type	Parish
Staffordshire	Staffordshire Moorlands	District Authority	Leek

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 07-Jun-1972

Date of most recent amendment: 14-Oct-1996

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

LEEK

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

GV II

Bank. Dated 1882. By William Larnier 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.

Listing NGR: SJ9851756487

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: SJ 98517 56487

NatWest Bank PLC response in its proposed changes to this Listed Building and to its Conservation Area context

NatWest PLC have responded to the points raised in these policies by replacing the existing signage for new located in the same position as in situ so as to maintain the front facades visual equilibrium. The fact the proposal uses identical materials as existing and is consistent in maintaining subtle internal illumination to its signage, demonstrates that NatWest wish to respect the value that this piece of architectural heritage has on its own merit and on the surrounding area. This will have the least impact on its current image and maintains the local areas distinctiveness, meanwhile introducing the new branding scheme for NatWest. The size and scale of the signage used is more or less the same as existing and respond to the signage of its neighbours, and does not in any way does it detract from the buildings architectural merit. The fascia signage to the front elevation maintains the buildings Sugden architectural style of disjointed and asymmetrical characteristic and makes it easier to locate and identify the branch. At present the navy and white fascia is difficult to read even for those without visual impairment due to the size and font of the text and this doesn't improve during night periods, whereas the new NatWest purple background with white text and red logo is smart and aids in framing the architectural ornamentation of the building such as the Shaw style windows and moulded pilasters. The projecting sign is remote to the fascia and is in the same position as in-situ which responds to supplementary documentation on shopfront signage available on Staffordshire Morrlands council website, which states that they should be positioned to the side of the shopfront and in level with the fascia, which this design satisfies. The materials chosen as explained above are sustainable and will require less maintenance than timber which is often used in heritage areas like this. The branch already has a modern ground floor shopfront in some respects including the 2no. external ATM's to the left hand side and centre of the façade, so the changes proposed are not deemed to be drastic and have no impact on the access arrangements to the branch. The addition of 1no. new internally illuminated ATM tablet to the elevation is to make the 24hr drawing out services more striking on the shopfront. Overall we believe that what has been proposed is in keeping with the traditional shopfronts in the area and the maintenance which will be undertaken helps promote NatWest as a professional high street business who invests in its branch stock for the continuing prosperity of the location each branch is situated in. Also for instance similar illuminated signage has been approved at the adjacent Subway sandwich shop.

Applicable National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework, Page 30, Chapter 12, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment': *NatWest Bank have responded to the points raised in this chapter 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.*

Location

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.

Community Safety

There will be no change to the existing access or surveillance arrangements to the branch and it will continue to promote safety via public surveillance through the windows, which may lead to deterring anti social behaviour.

We will endeavour to implement a site waste management system to effectively recycle and minimise waste.

Concluding statement

It is evident Leek is a town of tradition and good values regarding heritage and development but embraces change for the future success of the area, as seen with the new developments in retail and improved infrastructure.

The proposed installations do not contravene any planning policies and are deemed appropriate for the area, which is occupied by other commerce.

In our view the proposed works will have a very limited impact on the already varied street scene.

Please see planning application supporting documents for drawings and photographs.



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