

# DESIGN & HERITAGE STATEMENT

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This design and heritage statement has been written with reference to a planning application for the conversion of a former bank building, to form a new commercial unit with 4 flats above.

The site address is 1-3 High St, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol BS9 3BY.

Prior approval has been granted for the change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E), to a mixed use development including two flats at first floor level (Use Class C3) (see planning app reference 24/04389/CU).

The current application to which this statement relates proposes an additional storey on top of the existing building to provide a total of 4 flats (with commercial use retained at ground floor level).

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the application form and the full set of planning drawings that have been prepared by 3bd Architects.

## 2. EXISTING SITE PHOTOGRAPH



Image of the existing former bank building viewed from the road

# DESIGN & HERITAGE STATEMENT

## 3. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL

Please see the proposed planning drawings (submitted as part of the planning application) in the first instance for all information relating to the proposal.

The existing building is proposed to be retained and upgraded to provide a high quality development. Many of the existing heritage features such as the first floor stone window surrounds will also be retained and maintained.

Historic photographs indicate that the ground floor of the building originally hosted commercial units (potentially shops). The proposal looks to reinstate a commercial unit at ground floor with active frontage and details that reference the building's historic use.

A new second floor level is proposed, tucked behind the existing parapet within a mansard style roof. The roof is proposed to be clad in slate tiles and the proposed dormers have been designed to line through with the existing sash windows below.

The 3 storey massing and scale of the proposal is in keeping with the surrounding context and there are many other examples of 3 storey buildings within this zone of the conservation area. Traditional details and features have also been proposed that are appropriate for use in this context and within the conservation area.

The proposal provides 4 new 1 bedroom flats (2 at first floor level and two at second floor level). Refuse, recycling and cycle storage has also been provided at ground floor level as per planning policy requirements.



*3D view of the proposed development when viewed from the road*

# DESIGN & HERITAGE STATEMENT

## DESCRIPTION OF CONSERVATION AREA

The site lies within the Westbury-on-Trym conservation area.

The existing building on the site is not listed nor are the neighbouring properties. The nearest listed structure is the grade II listed war memorial that is located on the roundabout opposite the site.

The site lies within the “commercial core” character area of the conservation area. The appraisal document notes the following with reference to this area:

*“One of Westbury-on-Trym’s defining features is its traditional high street offer of the Commercial Core. The commercial character is defined by the buildings that directly address the pavement edge, with ground floor shopfronts containing a mix of independent provision. There is overall a strong townscape, with a number of listed buildings and key unlisted buildings of merit.*

### **Positive characteristics**

- *Most buildings directly address the pavement edge. Where properties are set back, the building line tends to be continued with front boundary treatments. This creates a strong and distinctive edge throughout the character area*
- *The townscape is generally consistent with grouped buildings of merit and many traditional shopfronts adding to the of the character of the street scene*
- *Stucco render with limestone dressings*

### **Predominant scale and massing**

- *2-3 storeys terraced with retail ground floor frontage and residential above*
- *Continual parapets with roof set behind for grouped terraces.*

### **Enhancement opportunities**

- *There is a high number of quality traditional shopfronts in the area. Poor quality shopfronts and signage have a particularly detrimental impact on the overall quality of the street scene.”*

The existing vacant building (to which this application relates) in its current form, does not provide a positive contribution to the conservation area.

# DESIGN & HERITAGE STATEMENT

## 4. HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPH



*Historic photograph of Westbury-on-Trym War Memorial, c. 1930. (Vaughan postcard)*

## 5. THE PROPOSAL / IMPACT ON THE CONSERVATION AREA

- i. The proposals have been carefully considered with the aim of retaining and enhancing the character of the conservation area.
- ii. The existing vacant building in its current state, does not provide a positive contribution to the conservation area.
- iii. The proposal is of a scale and style that fits in with the neighbouring buildings and the conservation area.
- iv. The proposed materials: Rendered walls, stone surrounds and slate tiles for the roof are in keeping with the local material palette.
- v. The proposed windows are traditionally proportioned to sit comfortably above the existing sash windows and those in the local context.
- vi. 2-3 storey buildings with a retail ground floor frontage and residential above are noted as providing a positive contribution to the area in the conservation area appraisal. Based on this, the proposal could be considered to enhance the conservation area.
- vii. Continual parapets with a roof set behind are also noted as providing a positive contribution. The parapet line is retained on the proposed development with the new roof set back. This point again evidences how the proposal could be seen to sit well and indeed provide a positive contribution to the area.
- viii. Traditional shopfronts are considered an enhancement opportunity. The proposal reinstates a commercial unit at ground floor with active frontage and details that reference the building's historic use. This could again be considered to enhance the conservation area.

# DESIGN & HERITAGE STATEMENT

- ix. Based on this analysis, it is considered that the proposals will enhance the Conservation Area and will not cause any harm to the character or the locally listed buildings.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This design and heritage statement has been written with reference to a planning application for the conversion of a former bank building in Westbury-on-Trym, to form a new commercial unit with 4 flats above.

The proposal has been carefully designed to provide a high quality development, whilst ensuring that the character of the conservation area is retained.

The proposal has been designed in response to the surrounding properties to ensure no harmful impact on their amenity, daylight and privacy.

Appropriate form, height and materials have been selected in relation to the immediate physical context.

It is considered that the proposals will enhance the conservation area and will not cause any harm to the character of the area or the locally listed buildings.

If the case officer has any queries or would like to visit the site then please contact 3bd Architects who will be happy to assist. Thanks



*Proposed front elevation*