



NATWEST RETAIL CLOSURES – NEATH SA11 1DB -REV C

NRC24/LET0002 - HERITAGE STATEMENT



1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement accompanies a planning and listed building consent application for minor external alterations to the former NatWest Bank, a Grade II listed building in Neath. This building is located within Neath town center conservation area as noted within the ‘Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan 2019’.

The proposals relate specifically to the removal of banking infrastructure—namely, the external ATM, night safe, and external signage. Internal works also include sealing existing letter box , and removal of internal counters and all furniture.

The following statement explains the design principles and concepts along within the required aspects of ‘Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales’ guidance along with the required aspects of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 and also the guidance in ‘The Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (Procedure and Interest Rate) (Wales) Regulations 2024’ .

Figure 4.6 Neath Town Centre



2. Use & Layout

The building is currently a Natwest banking premises. The construction of the building is of solid masonry with stone features to all elevations. The building is currently used as a banking facility.

The 2 storey building also houses a basement facility which is a secure area for the bank. The first floor is an unutilized office space, with the main banking hall access from the ground floor.

3. Historic Interest

The building has been utilised as a banking facility since its completion in 1924 as the National Provincial Bank by FCR Palmer & WFC Holden, whom formed an architectural partnership to design several bank buildings across the UK. The neoclassical building forms part of an end terrace of structures on the corner of Green Street.

Extract taken from CADW:

Heritage Category: Listed Building Grade: II

List Entry Number: 11787

Date first listed: 05/01/1989

Location Statutory Address: 35 Green St, Neath SA11 1DB

Convex 7 bay 2 bay storey front. Balustraded parapet, moulded cornice. Panelled pilasters to first floor bays, broader to outer ends. Small paned 2 light casement windows. Moulded architraves, stressed keystones. Deep entablature to ground floor. Disc metopes and triglyphs with guttae to frieze. Modern fascia to centre. Doric columns on bases to ground floor bays, additional pilasters with similar details to outer corners. Low railings across bays. Tall round arched windows, moulded arches and impost blocks, keystones form consoles to entablature. Small paned glazing with fanlights. Similar detail to centre doorway. Blind tympanum with foliate carving, moulded architrave, panelled double doors. Further doorway under fanlight to let hand bay.

<https://cadwpublic-api.azurewebsites.net/reports/listedbuilding/FullReport?lang=&id=11787>

As noted in CADW's conservation principles document, the aim is to remove all modern fixtures which were installed for the sole purpose of the banking facility which will help to 'minimize adverse impacts on historic assets'. The matching materials proposed externally will restore the aesthetic value back to the building.

There will not be any 'material loss of evidence' for these works, we deem these works as non-destructive thus an improvement to the listed building. Furthermore, Point 30 in 'Conservation principles in action' notes, 'The quality of design and execution must add value to the existing asset', the works to be completed will be done sympathetically and with care.

4. Setting

Neath is a well-equipped town with a mix of amenities and landmarks in the centre, making it a convenient and accessible place for visitors. Public transport links are good, and the infrastructure supports easy access into town.

The building is formed as part of a terrace building on a high street. It dominates the corner of the high street, being one of the few listed buildings within the town center. The building does not match its immediate surroundings ie, the terraced concrete shops adjoining the building.

5. Fabric/ Features

The building is of masonry construction with stone exterior. Both entrance doors are decorated with stone doric columns and stone casing. There are a total of 8 arches housing windows / doors. The proposed works intend to remove modern features which were required for the banking facility and to use materials which match the existing.

6. Description of Proposed Works

The proposal involves:

- Removal of modern internal counters and associated stud partitions.
- Removal of external signage surfaces will be made good.
- Removal of a night safe and ATM units, with the openings infilled using brickwork to match existing materials in type, colour, and finish.
- Internal sealing of the letterbox/ night safe
- Removal of all non-original internal furniture.

The signage and other apertures are secured by screws fixings so on small holes will result which will be filled and sealed. Apertures left following removal of the night safe and ATM's will be infilled with masonry to match existing.

7. Impact Assessment

The proposed works will have a neutral to positive impact on the heritage asset. The removal of intrusive modern additions will enhance the legibility and appreciation of the building's original form. Making good works and infills will be carried out using sympathetic materials and craftsmanship, preserving the visual integrity of the façade.

No historic or significant features will be lost or altered. The proposals have been carefully considered to respect the listed status and will not harm the building's character, setting, and significance.

The main impact to our proposals are the removal of ATM on the side elevation (Summerfield Place), the equipment will be carefully removed and matching stone used to infill the aperture. The signage will be carefully removed and stone made good behind.

8. Justification

As noted in the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2023, a justification is required as to why the works are appropriate to the listed building.

The changes are essential to facilitate a new use for the building, ensuring its continued occupation and preservation. The equipment which is to be removed is niche to the banking facility and will be omitted to allow the building to thrive for other uses.

The changes are minimal and are restoring the building back prior to the modern installations and are sensitive to the building's historic character. The approach aligns with the Historic Wales Act 2023. guidance on the conservation of listed buildings, particularly in maintaining adaptability and avoiding unnecessary harm.

9. Schedule of Works

Please refer to appendix A.

10. Conclusion

The proposals represent a considered and heritage-led approach to altering a historic building. By removing banking fixtures and making high-quality, reversible repairs, the character and significance of the building will be preserved and enhanced. All methods will be sympathetic to the building and are in place to reduce damage to the building.