



**Change of Use of Ground Floor of Former Bank to Wine Bar / Café
Lowther Street, Whitehaven**

HERITAGE STATEMENT

February 2025

This planning application is for Change of Use of part of the ground floor of 71 Lowther Street, Whitehaven, The building was constructed as Whitehaven Bank and latterly become Natwest Bank before closing. The building extends over five floors to the street frontage with basement level, banking hall, and offices above. To the rear is a more modern single storey flat roofed extensions with two storey plant room to the rear.

The building has sat empty for a few years and the upper floors were leased to a local Accountants for fifty one years prior to the building being sold in 2024.

The property is not a Listed Building and carries no special designation. The LPA inspected the property in 2023 and sought not to apply for Listed Building Designation.

The proposed works will see removal internally of the modern partitions, removal of the IT and surface mounted cabling/ trunking and small power circuits and re-instatement of the grandeur of the old banking hall. This will be with high ceilings, cornicing and deep skirtings.

The uppers floors do not form part of this application and remain vacant.



Internal view of original building frontage – blockwork wall infills show location of cash machines now removed and sandstone repairs completed to outside. Suspended ceilings to be removed.



Existing cash chute to basement bank vault / safes, this is a more modern addition and not originally featured in the bank. This will be retained in situ and the aperture sealed at floor level to create a 60min fire compartment.



Internal view looking into the depth of the former banking hall, the large masonry pier aligns with structural walls on the upper floor and are to be retained. Suspended ceilings are to be removed to expose the original coving on the upper floor. Surface mounted cabling, IT and alarms to be removed.



Modern internal dividing wall within the banking hall, previously added for security, is to be removed full height. At this time it is unknown whether the coving has been cut to allow the walls to be installed. Fixings and floor apertures for IT provision for the bank as shown are to be removed and made good.



External views looking across the single storey flat roof element of the building below the old offices. Concrete / glass rooflights provide daylight into the depth of the ground floor plan.



Rear Office – this sits under the single storey rear extension, this has a concrete flat roof above with rooflights. The inset ceilings allow for heating and air ducting to transfer between the plant room in the two storey rear plant room and the main banking hall and offices. This area is to be stripped out of dado trunking and services. To the rear left hand side is the original ground floor bank vault, with 5' thick steel doors, this is to remain.



Two storey Service building bounding the rear of the site, Fire escape access across the flat roof. This building includes the plant room, toilets and staff room for the bank, this was constructed around 1970's. Fire Escape access is available on to the rear lane.



Rear view of the building at first floor area. The application site refers to areas below the flat roof and ground floor of the main building. The upper floors shown here first , second and third do not form part of the application.

In summary the works only see to improve the existing building and allows for modern partitions and additions to be removed therefore exposing the original architecture of the building. There are no external alterations proposed and as such the re-use of an existing building in a declining town centre should be supported by the LPA.