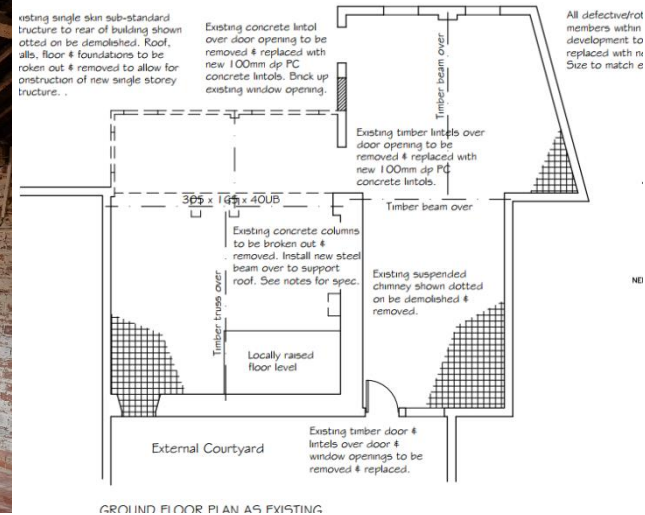


## Planning Statement/Design & Access Statement– Land to rear of 27 Market Place, Egremont CA22 2AG

### Proposal:

Conversion of former brick house bakery building to conference facility.



**Applicant:** Emma Ralls Wealth Management Ltd, 27 Market Place, Egremont, Cumbria, CA22 2AG

18<sup>th</sup> September 2024

## 1.0 Introduction

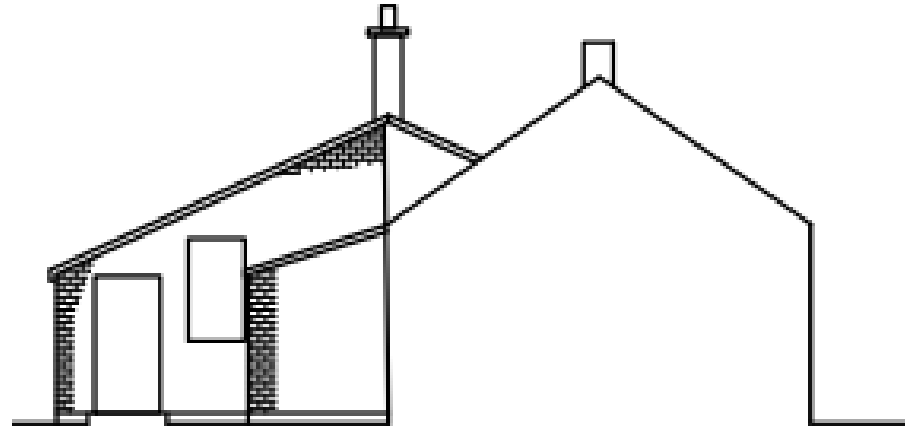
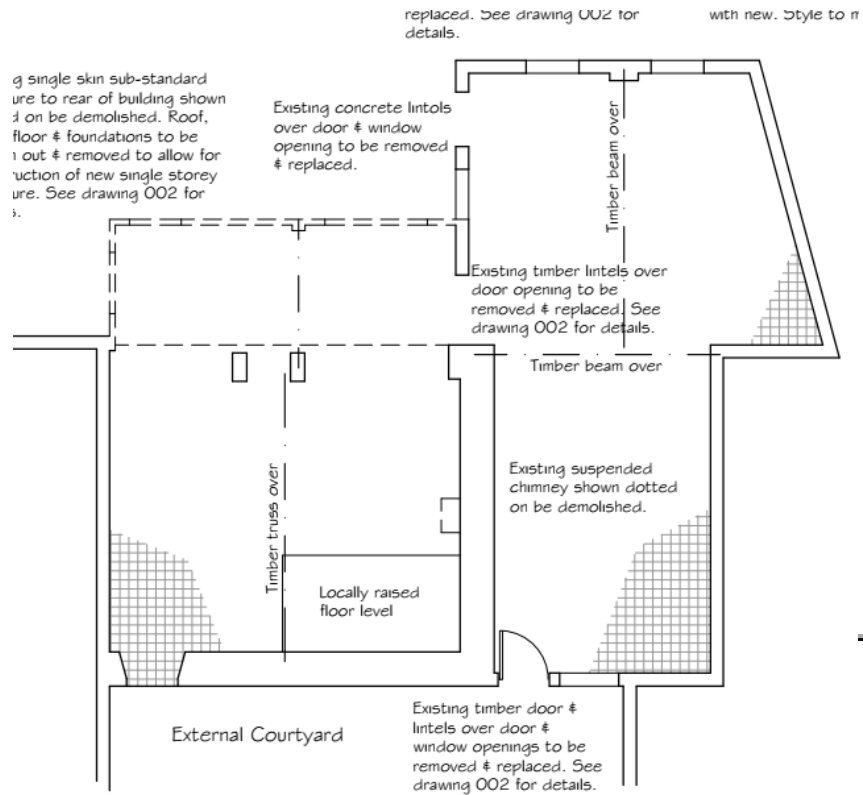
- 1.1 This document should be read as a Planning Statement and Design & Access Statement to support the owners of the property, Emma Ralls Wealth Management Ltd, looking to convert a building to the rear of their existing business. Over the last couple of years the owners have successfully converted 27 Market Place into a thriving office providing financial and mortgage advice to their local clients and being active within many community events such as the Egremont Crab Fair.
- 1.2 The land to the rear includes an old bakery building that originate from when a local bakery, Murphys, operated out of the building. More recently this building was used as a workshop/outbuilding by the previous occupants.
- 1.3 The owners are looking to provide a small conference facility that can be used by local businesses and people to host events. There is no service like this in the town and the owners believe this will be popular for training events, conferences, small parties and local meetings. The facility can also help to encourage local small businesses to host their own events/a working facility for use such as art and craft classes to fitness classes. They will also be opening it up to local charities to use and also hold events to raise money for the legendary Egremont crab fair, which the staff and owner are on the crab fair committee for and already host events for raising capital for the charity and also for the Egremont Rugby girls under 14 teams. The proposed use will be an asset to the town, community and encourage more footfall to the town.
- 1.4 The conversion of the building will be bring a derelict building in the heart of the town centre back to use, encourage footfall into the town centre and provide a facility that gives something different to the local area.

## **2.0 Relevant Planning History**

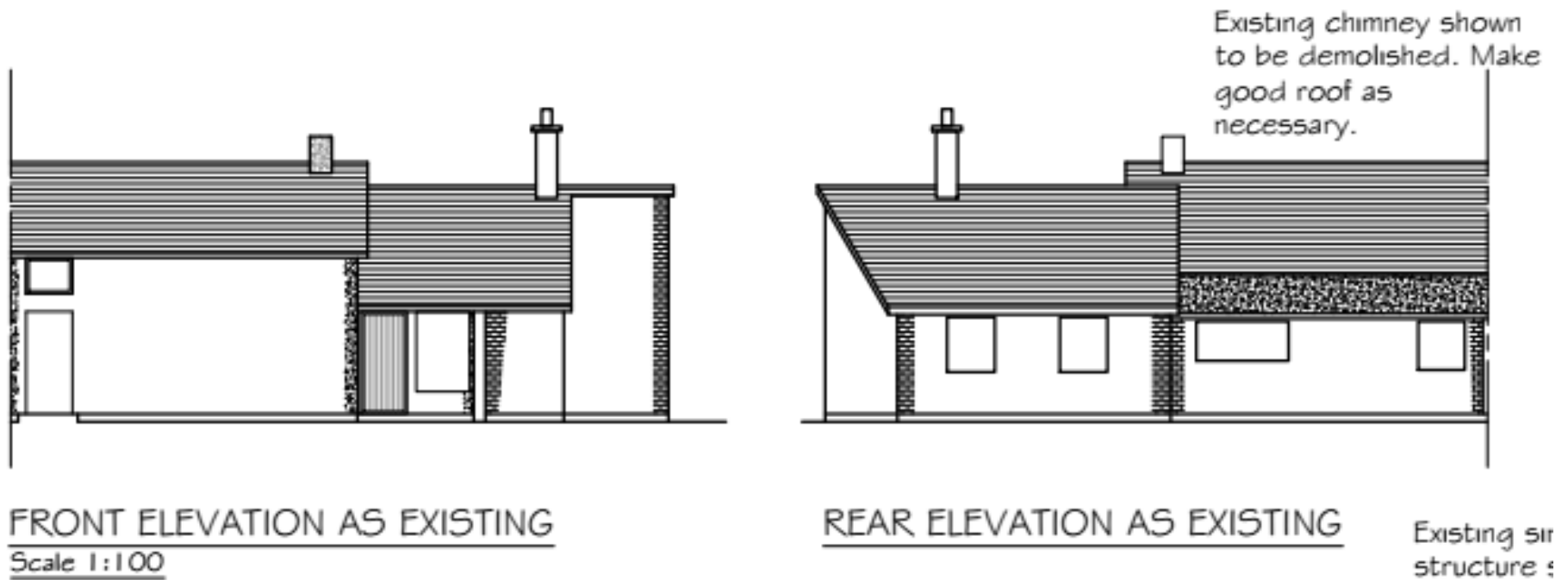
2.1 There is no relevant planning history associated with this proposal to the applicant's knowledge

## **3.0 Design**

3.1 Please see full plans that have been submitted to accompany this application to show how the owners plan to restore and convert the bakery building. Furthermore the below plan shows the footprint of the property in its current condition:-



SIDE ELEVATION AS EXISTING



3.2 Please see below photo also highlight the condition and appearance of the property at present:-



Existing front elevation and external courtyard between offices and bakery





Existing access on front elevation





Southern room





Northern room

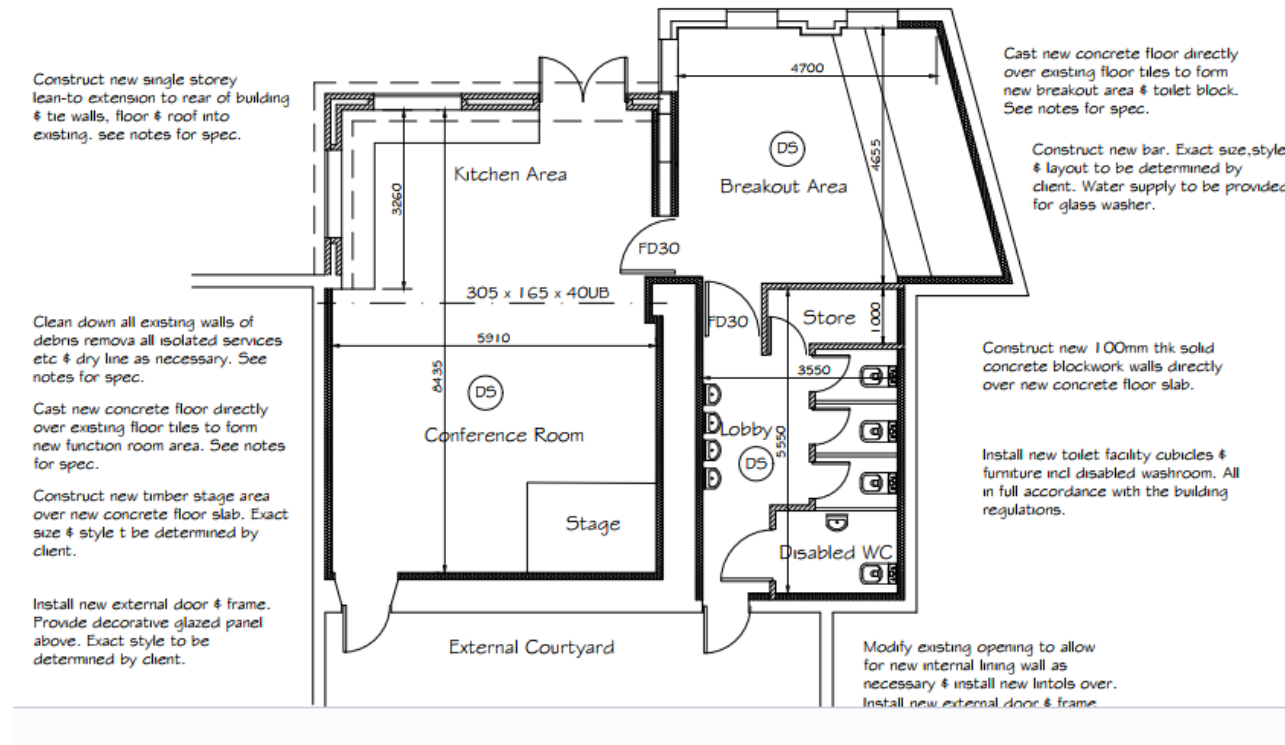




Existing Rear Elevation



3.3 Below is a plan showing a footprint of the restored property and how each room will be utilised:-



#### 4.0 Access

4.1 The main access will be from the gated access on Market Place Egremont. Alternative accesses are available including from St Bridget's Lane directly to the building and through the offices of 27 Market Place itself.



## 5.0 Planning Policy and its application to the proposed development

- 5.1 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in December 2023 and is the most recent planning policy document to be considered as a material planning consideration. **Paragraph 224 NPPF** confirms that the policies contained within are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication. Plans may also need to be revised to reflect policy changes which within the NPPF
- 5.2 Cumberland is a single local planning authority following the amalgamation of Cumbria County Council, Carlisle City Council, Allerdale Borough Council and Copeland Borough Council on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2023. The land falls within what was Copeland and therefore, until a Cumberland Local Plan is adopted, the most recent local plan is the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (December 2013) (“Local Plan”). **Paragraph 225 NPPF** states existing local plan policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 5.3 It should be noted that there is also the draft Copeland Local Plan (2021-2038) (“Emerging Local Plan”). The Emerging Local Plan has been through a public examination and is currently out for a Major Modification consultation. **Paragraph 48 NPPF** allows local planning authorities to give weight to emerging local plan policies, particular those policies with no unresolved objections.
- 5.4 Therefore it is worth considering this proposal against the relevant policies within the NPPF, the policies that align with the NPPF in the adopted Local Plan and the relevant policies that are contained in the Emerging Local Plan. Reviewing the three policy documents and the proposed development the following themes emerge:-

### The Principle of Development

- 5.5 **Paragraph 11 NPPF** requires local planning authorities to approve proposal that are in accordance with up to date local plans without delay. In areas where there is no up to date local plan policies planning applications should be approved unless there are policies within the NPPF that provide clear reasons for refusing development or there are adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh any benefits when assessed against the NPPF policies as a whole.
- 5.6 **Paragraph 38** states local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Furthermore they should work proactively with applicants to secure development that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It is suggested that this proposal will improve the economic, social and environmental condition of Egremont town centre.
- 5.7 **Policy ST1** of the Local Plan sets out the Council's Strategic Development Principles the following all accord with the proposed development:-
- support development that contributes to Copeland's social and community infrastructure
  - reuse existing buildings where possible
  - prioritise development in the main towns
  - support the restoration of derelict sites
- The policy concludes that development that supports the above principles should be approved without delay.
- 5.8 **Policy ST2** looks to focus development within the main settlements of the Copeland area including Egremont itself as an identified Key Service Centre. Key Service Centres, such as Egremont, are locations where mixed use development is encouraged as well as small and medium enterprises are encouraged to be set up and grow. All of which aligns with the proposed development.

- 5.9 Egremont is located in the sub region West Copeland in the Local Plan where there is a further level of detail of challenges and opportunities for the sub region. Specifically it states the need for “improvements and attention to vacant and derelict properties are needed as part of a continuing environmental improvement programme”. This proposal aligns with the Council’s ambition for the West Copeland sub region.
- 5.10 Policy DS4PU of the Emerging Local Plan supports the principle of development within defined settlement boundaries. The proposed development is in the centre of Egremont’s settlement boundary.

### **Economic Development and Town Centre Regeneration**

- 5.11 **Paragraph 90** NPPF states that planning decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of their communities by taking a positive approach to their growth. **Paragraph 85** states that planning decisions should give significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The proposed development will support local economy and encourage greater footfall into Egremont town centre.
- 5.12 **Strategic Objective 4** of the Local Plan looks to promote the vitality and viability of existing town, take advantage of the built heritage that exists in Copeland’s town with particular reference to Egremont. This scheme looks to do exactly that too by converting and restoring a building in the heart of Egremont town centre. **Policy ST3** identifies town centre renewal of Egremont as a priority for development. **Policy ER7** seeks to enhance the services and facilities provided in Egremont as a Key Service Centre. This proposal is an opportunity to further enhance the services on offer in Egremont town centre. The policy also seeks to encourage evening and night time use that contributes to the vibrancy and economic vitality of key service centres. The proposed development could be utilised for evening meetings and celebrations. For clarity the facility would be open no later than 11pm.



- 5.13 **Policy ER9** of the Local confirms that evening entertainment and leisure uses would be acceptable in Key Service Centres, such as Egremont, but subject to Policies **DM6** and **DM7**. **Policy DM6** permits non retail leisure uses in town centres so long as such uses do not lead to an overconcentration of non retail uses. The test would be if 3 consecutive premises had a non retail use within a town centre. 27 Market Place is next door to Marions which is a retail unit and therefore this proposal passes the test set out in **DM6**. **Policy DM7** has a focus on hot food takeaways, pubs and other uses that are not applicable to this planning application. **Notwithstanding the above Draft Policy R9PU** of the Emerging Local Plan supports non retail development in Egremont Town Centre where it widens the town centre's offer and would not harm local residential amenity. It is contended that the proposal aligns with emerging policy too.
- 5.14 **Draft Strategic Policy R1PU** of the Emerging Local Plan seeks to enhance the vitality and viability of town centres by supporting vibrant and resilient town centres and supporting both regeneration projects and refurbishment of buildings.
- 5.15 **Draft Policy R4PU** encourages development that supports Egremont town centre by strengthening and diversifying its offer particularly where it encourages evening and night time use that contributes to the vibrancy, inclusiveness and economic vitality of the town centre, promotes the reuse of brownfield land, results in the repair and renovation of derelict and historic buildings.

#### **Promotion of Community Facilities**

- 5.16 **Paragraph 97 NPPF** states that decisions should plan positively for the use of communal facilities to enhance the sustainability of communities.
- 5.17 **Strategic Objective 8** of the Local Plan aims to ensure that towns such as Egremont are sustainable locations by supporting appropriate new facilities that can be used by the community. The proposed conference facility will be

an asset to the town and can be utilised by local businesses, community groups and local people for small birthday celebrations.

- 5.18 **Draft Policy SC2PU** of the Emerging Local Plan supports the principle of leisure facilities in locations such as Egremont. Furthermore it encourages brownfield development where possible, ensure there is no unacceptable harm to residential amenity and be accessible from sustainable transport modes. The proposed development is brownfield, in walking distance to a bus stop and will not cause any unacceptable harm to residential amenity.

### **Conservation and Design**

- 5.19 **Policy DM10** of the Local Plan aim to achieve high quality design and quality of place by various measures including:-

- incorporating a mix of uses within town centres
- careful selection and use of building materials
- create and maintain reasonable standards of amenity

The proposed development does all of the above with the conference use adding to the vitality of the town centre, the design of the conversion being sensitive and in keeping with the character of the existing building and the use will maintain a reasonable standard of amenity as expected in this town centre location.

One possible impact of the development would be that the creation of a new window on the south elevation of the extension to the building could cause an element of overlooking to the neighbouring property. The window has been provided to provide natural light to the property. We are happy to agree to a pre occupation planning condition that will ensure that the window is opaque glazing to ensure there is no detrimental impact or overlooking on the adjoining property as a result of this proposed development.

- 5.20 **Paragraph 203 NPPF** states that planning decision should take into account the desirability of sustaining an enhancing heritage assets and putting them to a viable use. **Paragraph 208** states where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed up against the public benefits of the proposal. **Paragraph 209** states that the effect on the significance on a non designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. The building, although not a designated heritage asset, has some historical and cultural merit in that it associated with Murphys Bakery which was located on the site and is a fondly remembered business by those who grew up in the town in the twentieth century. However this application is an opportunity to bring the building back into use and give it a viable future.
- 5.21 **Paragraph 212** states that Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. It is suggested that this proposal reveals part of the Conservation Area that is rarely seen and its conversion will be done so in a sympathetic manner.
- 5.22 **Strategic Objective 17** of the Local Plan aims to protect and enhance places and buildings of historical, cultural and archaeological importance and their settings. Although the building is not listed, it is located in the Conservation Area and it's restoration and use will ensure the building enhances the Conservation Area and provides it with a financially viable future.
- 5.23 **Policy ENV4** of the Local Plan aims to protect and enhance heritage assets by supporting proposals for heritage led regeneration and ensuring heritage assets are put to an appropriate, viable and sustainable use. This application is an opportunity to bring a redundant building within the Conservation Area back into use with only sympathetic work to the building by utilising existing opening and making minimal changes to the property externally.



- 5.24 **Policy DM27** states that development that conserves and enhances heritage assets, such as Egremont's Conservation Area will be supported. This proposal does so by bringing a redundant and derelict building back into use and providing a sustainable and viable future.
- 5.25 **Draft Policy BE2PU** of the Emerging Local Plan states development should preserve or enhance designated heritage assets. The more important the asset, the greater weight that will be given to its conservation. Proposals that better reveal the significance of heritage assets will be supported in principle. It is argued that the proposal has a net positive impact on Egremont Conservation Area.

### **Brownfield Development**

- 5.26 **Paragraph 124** NPPF states that planning decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements.
- 5.27 **Strategic Objective 20** of the Local Plan encourages the development of brownfield land which is in line with this proposed development.

### **6.0 Conclusion**

- 6.1 It is contended that the principle of the proposed development is acceptable in accordance with the NPPF, Local Plan and Emerging Local Plan by aligning with the principles of all three documents, supporting economic regeneration in Egremont town centre, improving the provision of communal and leisure facilities, protecting and enhancing the Conservation Area and a non designated heritage asset and utilising brownfield land. The applicants look forward to bringing this proposal forward and further growing the local economy of Egremont Town Centre.