

**Architectural & Historic
Buildings Consultants**

Mob: 07909 544908

Email: info@dgc-consultants.com

Web: www.dgc-consultants.com

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT &
**HERITAGE STATEMENT &
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

in connection with

Minor Internal Alterations, Recovering of Roof and External Repairs to Glazed Rooflight

to

70, High Street, Sevenoaks



INSTITUTE OF HISTORIC
BUILDING CONSERVATION

Ref: DGC22125

Date of Issue: 24th May 2021

Revised 1st June 2021

Web: www.dgc-consultants.com



Registered Office:
The Spinney St Mary's Lane,
Bemill on Sea East Sussex TN39 5JE

DGC (Historic Buildings) Consultants Limited
Registered in England and Wales No. 6239686
VAT Reg No. 914 6059 13

Table of Contents

Overview and Summary.....	3
Heritage Policy and Guidance Summary	3
Methodology	8
Statement of Significance	9
Historic Overview	10
Significance Assessment.....	14
Proposals.....	16
Impact	17
Conclusion	17

All Rights reserved.

Copyright © DGC (Historic Buildings Consultants Limited
While Copyright in this volume document report as a whole is vested in DGC
(Historic Buildings) Consultants LTD, copyright to individual contributions
regarding sections of referenced works belongs to their respective authors,
and no part may be reproduced, transmitted, stored in a retrieval system in any
form or by any means whether electronic, mechanical, via photocopying,
recording or otherwise, without the prior permission in writing by DGC (Historic
Buildings) Consultants Limited.

Document production © DGC Consultants Limited

1.0 Overview and Summary

- 1.1 The application site comprises a grade II listed building, 70 High Street, Sevenoaks, within the Sevenoaks High Street conservation area. The site is a three storey 1920s Queen Anne revival building, faced in red brick with vitrified headers with prominent street facing pediment, multipaned Georgian style sash windows and timber shopfront set behind 4 fluted Ionic columns supporting a moulded entablature with dentilled cornice. Ornamental cast iron railings surmount the office front and forming long narrow verandah in front of first floor windows. The former bank building, recent used as an undertakers, includes a vaulted ceiling and timber panelling at ground floor and panelled front desk and reception.
- 1.2 The proposals are for removal of 20th century internal partitions at ground and first floor, recovering of the roof and repairs to rear pitched rooflight plus repair works to the windows and replacement of cills where past economic repair.. The works are of minor nature and would restore the original floor plan in the principle historic areas of the building and repair deteriorating roof coverings and rooflight above the former banking room of the building.
- 1.3 The proposals would meet the requirement of Sevenoaks Development Management Policy EN4 - Heritage Assets and preserve the significance of the listed building and conservation area. The proposals would also meet the requirements of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

2.0 Heritage Policy and Guidance Summary

Legislation

- 2.1 The primary legislation relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 66(1) reads:
"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."
- 2.2 Section 72(1) reads:
"Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."
- 2.3 The Courts have determined that "preserve" in the context of the Planning Acts, means the minimum requirements of the Act would be met if there is an absence of harm. This statutory requirement relates to designated heritage assets.
- 2.4 The NPPF and Historic England's Good Practice Guide in Planning No. 3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England) [GPA3] makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset in the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced is a material consideration.
"The Courts have held that it is legitimate in appropriate circumstances to include within a conservation area the setting of buildings that form the heart of that area (R v Canterbury City Council

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

ex parte David Halford, February 1992; CO/2794/1991) and NPPF paragraph 80, for example, makes it clear that historic towns are regarded as having a setting.”¹

And

“In primary legislation, the setting of conservation areas is not a statutory duty. However, the NPPF states that the setting of a designated heritage asset can contribute to its significance.”²

Revised National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.5 A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 and revoked all past Planning Policy Guidance and Statements and now embodies national policies and objectives.
- 2.6 Under the heading ‘Achieving sustainable development’ we are advised in paragraph 8 that
- “Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.”*
- 2.7 Under an “economic objective” this is defined as:
- “to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure”*
- 2.8 Under “a social objective” we are advised that this involves:
- “to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being;”*
- 2.9 Under “an environmental objective” this is referred to as:
- “to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”*
- 2.10 Although there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, footnote 6 makes it clear that it is not an automatic presumption where designated heritage assets are concerned. Paragraph 124 sets out that “good design is a key aspect of sustainable development” and that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- “a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*

¹ GPA3, ‘The extent of setting’ Box 1, page 2

² GPA3, ‘The extent of setting’ Box 2, page 2

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield), provided it is not of high environmental value, conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations."

- 2.11 Chapter 16 relates specifically to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' with paragraphs 184 – 202 being relevant to the consideration of proposals affecting heritage assets. Paragraph 189 indicates that:

"... local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance."

- 2.12 The definition of a heritage asset as set out in the NPPF Glossary includes:

"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)."

- 2.13 Attention is drawn to paragraph 185 which requires, inter alia:

"the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets ... the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place."

- 2.14 Paragraph 192 states that:

"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."

- 2.15 Paragraph 195 indicates that where a development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

"a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and

b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and

c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and

d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."

- 2.16 Paragraph 196 refers to cases that will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm is to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including where appropriate securing its optimum viable use.

- 2.17 Paragraph 197 requires that consideration be given to the impact of development proposals, directly or indirectly on non-designated heritage assets. This would include unlisted buildings in conservation

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

areas. Again, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

- 2.18 Paragraph 198 specifically states that LPAs should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.
- 2.19 It is noted that Paragraph 200 indicates development is not prohibited within the setting of heritage assets where proposals would enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of the asset are to be treated favourably. The NPPF therefore recognises the need to clearly identify relative significance at an early stage and then to assess the impact of development proposals in that context.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 2.20 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in March 2014 as a companion to the NPPF, replacing a large number of foregoing Circulars and other supplementary guidance. In respect of heritage decision-making, the PPG stresses the importance of determining applications on the basis of significance and explains how the tests of harm and impact within the NPPF are to be interpreted.
- 2.21 The PPG also notes the following in relation to the setting of heritage asset:

"A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it." (Ref ID: 18a-014-20140306)

Historic England Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance 2008

- 2.22 Historic England sets out in this document a logical approach to making decisions and offering guidance about all aspects of the historic environment, including changes affecting significant places. It states that:

"New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if: a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place; b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed; c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future; d. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future" (page 59).

Historic England Making Changes to Heritage Assets Advice Note 2 (February 2016)

- 2.23 This advice note provides information on repair, restoration, addition and alteration works to heritage assets. It advises that:

"The main issues to consider in proposals for additions to heritage assets, including new development in conservation areas, aside from NPPF requirements, such as social and economic activity and sustainability, are proportion, height, massing, bulk, use of materials, durability and adaptability, use, enclosure, relationship with adjacent assets and definition of spaces and streets, alignment, active frontages, permeability and treatment of setting." (page 10)

Historic England Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment Historic Environment Good Practice Advice (GPA) in Planning Note 2 (March 2015)

- 2.24 This advice note sets out clear information to assist all relevant stake holders in implementing

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). These include:

“assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.” (page 1)

Historic England The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice (GPA3) in Planning Note 3 (July 2015)

- 2.25 This document presents guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes. Bullet point 4 on page 2 of GPA3 states that:

“Setting in urban areas, given the potential numbers and proximity of heritage assets, is therefore intimately linked to consideration of townscape and urban design and of the character and appearance of conservation areas. The character of the conservation area, and of the surrounding area, and the cumulative impact of proposed development adjacent, would suggest how much impact on the setting should be taken into account.”

- 2.26 Under the heading ‘Views and setting’ we note that the contribution of setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views which can be static, dynamic, include a variety of views across or including that asset, and views of the surroundings from or through the asset.³ At the same time it is noted that one does not need to be in direct view of a heritage asset to be within its setting. It does not depend on public rights or the ability to access it.⁴

- 2.27 GPA3 sets out a stepped approach to assessing setting and the role that it plays in contributing to the significance of a heritage asset/s. This process requires one to have an understanding about the significance of the asset/s in order to be able to determine if harm would arise. It is advised that the following steps are undertaken:

- Step 1 - identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
- Step 2 - assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);
- Step 3 - assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;
- Step 4 - explore the way of maximizing enhancement and avoiding or minimizing harm;
- Step 5 - make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

- 2.28 It is acknowledged that this is not the only method of assessing setting, the role that it plays and if a site falls within that setting. It has however stood the test of time and has been accepted by Inspectors at appeal and public inquiries.

Local Policy

- 2.29 Policy EN4 - Heritage Assets

Proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset. Applications will be assessed with reference to the following:

³ Appendix 3: GPA3, ‘Views and setting’ paragraph 5, page 3

⁴ Appendix 3: GPA3, ‘Setting and the significance of heritage assets’, page 4

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

- a) the historic and/or architectural significance of the asset;
- b) the prominence of its location and setting; and
- c) the historic and/or architectural significance of any elements to be lost or replaced. Where the application is located within, or would affect, an area or suspected area of archaeological importance an archaeological assessment must be provided to ensure that provision is made for the preservation of important archaeological remains/findings. Preference will be given to preservation in situ unless it can be shown that recording of remains, assessment, analysis report and deposition of archive is more appropriate

3.0 Methodology

- 3.1 The aim of this Statement is to assess the value or significance of the identified heritage assets including their settings and to consider the sensitivity of the assets to accommodate change.
- 3.2 Beyond the criteria applied for national designation, the concept of value can extend more broadly to include an understanding of the heritage values a building or place may hold for its owners, the local community or other interest groups. These aspects of value do not readily fall into the criteria typically applied for designation and require a broader assessment of how a place may hold significance. In seeking to prompt broader assessments of value, Historic England's Conservation Principles categorises the potential areas of significance (including and beyond designated assets) under the following headings:

Evidential value	derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity...Physical remains of past human activity are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them...The ability to understand and interpret the evidence tends to be diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement
Aesthetic Value	Aesthetic values can be the result of the conscious design of a place, including artistic endeavour. Equally, they can be the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time. Many places combine these two aspects... Aesthetic values tend to be specific to a time cultural context and appreciation of them is not culturally exclusive'
Historic value	Derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative... Association with a notable family, person, event, or movement gives historical value a particular resonance...The historical value of places depends upon both sound identification and direct experience of fabric or landscape that has survived from the past but is not as easily diminished by change or partial replacement as evidential value. The authenticity of a place indeed often lies in visible evidence of change as a result of people responding to changing circumstances. Historical values are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated or concealed them, although completeness does tend to strengthen illustrative value'
Communal Value	Commemorative and symbolic values reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it, or have emotional links to it... Social value is associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Some may be comparatively modest, acquiring communal significance through the passage of time as a

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

	result of a collective memory of stories linked to them...They may relate to an activity that is associated with the place, rather than with its physical fabric... Spiritual value is often associated with places sanctified by longstanding veneration or worship, or wild places with few obvious signs of modern life. Their value is generally dependent on the perceived survival of the historic fabric or character of the place, and can be extremely sensitive to modest changes to that character, particularly to the activities that happen there
--	---

Table 1: Heritage Values, extracted from Conservation Principles 2008

- 3.3 In summary, Evidential value relates to the physical remains of a building/structure and its setting; Aesthetic value relates to the visual qualities and characteristics of an asset; Historic values to the age and history of the asset and/or the strength of its tie to a particular architectural period, person, place or event; Communal value relates to the role an asset plays in a historic setting, and what it means to that place or community. It can be also linked to the use of a building, which is perhaps tied to a local industry or its social and/or spiritual connections.
- 3.4 Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008) also considers the contribution made by setting and context to the significance of a heritage asset.
- “Setting is an established concept that relates to the surroundings in which a place is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships to the adjacent landscape.*
- Context embraces any relationship between a place and other places. It can be, for example, cultural, intellectual, spatial or functional, so any one place can have a multi-layered context. The range of contextual relationships of a place will normally emerge from an understanding of its origins and evolution. Understanding context is particularly relevant to assessing whether a place has greater value for being part of a larger entity, or sharing characteristics with other places”⁵*
- 3.5 In order to understand the role of setting and context to decision-making, it is important to have an understanding of the origins and evolution of an asset, to the extent that this understanding gives rise to significance in the present. Assessment of these values is not based solely on visual considerations but may lie in a deeper understanding of historic use, ownership, change or other cultural influence – all or any of which may have given rise to current circumstances and may hold a greater or lesser extent of significance.
- 3.6 Once the value and significance of an asset has been assessed, the next stage is to determine the 'magnitude' of the impact brought about by the development proposals. This impact could be a direct physical impact on the assets itself or an impact on its wider setting, or both. Impact on setting is measured in terms of the effect that the impact has on the significance of the asset itself rather than setting being considered as the asset itself.

4.0 Statement of Significance

- 4.1 Significance is considered to be the sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, as defined by its evidential value (the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity); historical value (the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present), aesthetic value (the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual

⁵ Conservation Principles (2008) page 39

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

stimulation from a place) and communal value (the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory) (Historic England, formerly English Heritage, Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance 2008).

5.0 Historic Overview

5.1 70 High Street is a grade II listed former purpose built bank building. It was constructed in 1927, and sits within the Sevenoaks High Street conservation area.

5.2 The list description reads:

"HIGH STREET 1. 1614 (East Side) No 70 (National Westminster Bank) TQ 5354/1/16 13.4.51 II 2. Modern Georgian style building. Dated 1926. 4 storey pedimented facade with 3 windows to each floor and centre circular attic window in pediment. Red brick filth blue headers. Red brick quoins and dressings. Flat arches of rubbed red headers over windows with centre projecting stone voussoirs. Centre stone voussoir over centre window on 1st floor carved and enriched. Recessed rectangular brick panels of blue headers over 1st floor windows. Sash windows in moulded exposed frames with glazing bars and projecting moulded stone cills. Centre sash windows on all floors with 3 vertical panels. Narrower sash windows to right and to left with 2 vertical panels. Top circular window in pediment with glazing bars and 4 stone voussoirs placed diametrically. Painted wooden moulded modillioned pediment with carved and enriched console brackets and egg-and-dart moulded fillet. Leaded roof to pediment gable and ridge tile roof to rear. Ground floor with slightly projecting office front with 4 fluted Ionic columns supporting moulded entablature with dentilled cornice. Ornamental cast iron railings surmounting office front and forming long narrow verandah in front of first floor windows. Stone plinth to office front. Panelled double doors to left (up 3 moulded stone steps) with fan- light over in moulded wooden arched surround with centre projecting voussoir. 2 office windows to right with glazing bars in wooden arched moulded surrounds. 2 ornamental panels of cast iron railings in front of both office windows. The whole of the ground floor office front is of unpainted dark teak.

Listing NGR: TQ5310854580 (1) In 1994 a survey on cellars in the Sevenoaks area was undertaken. 70 High Street was found to have the entire floor area taken by the cellar. Cellars at back of property."

List descriptions are traditionally used to identify the building for inclusion on the National Heritage list for England, rather than be a complete catalogue of the building. The list description for 70 High Street, is an older style entry, and does not included information on significance or reasons for listing. On inspection of the building, the list description is not complete, nor entirely accurate. For example, the fluted columns to the shopfront, are modern timber, inserted during 1990s (although they may have replaced older versions) and there is no evidence of a cellar.

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent



Fig i) 70 High Street, Sevenoaks

- 5.3 The building plays a positive role in the historic significance of the conservation area. The Sevenoaks High Street conservation area appraisal states:

"From the fountain and the jettied timber-framed building formerly housing Outram the saddlers and now a fish restaurant, the High Street continues in a north easterly direction towards the site of the old market, now reduced to a few stalls on a Saturday. The fork in the road is presided over by a bank, built in 1924 [sic] to replace the simpler, smaller shop with three angled facades that formerly face this junction"

- 5.4 Internally, the ground floor reception and adjacent former banking hall are timber panels, with the banking room a double height vaulted ceiling, with decorative rooflight. The first and second floor rooms are simple offices, with modern fittings. The staircase is also likely to be original, at least in part.

Historic Maps

- 5.7 Historic maps are helpful identifying contextual changes to heritage assets, from wider landscape scale down to the streetscape level and even to the changes in the footprint of the asset. This all contributes to the understanding of character and significance.

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

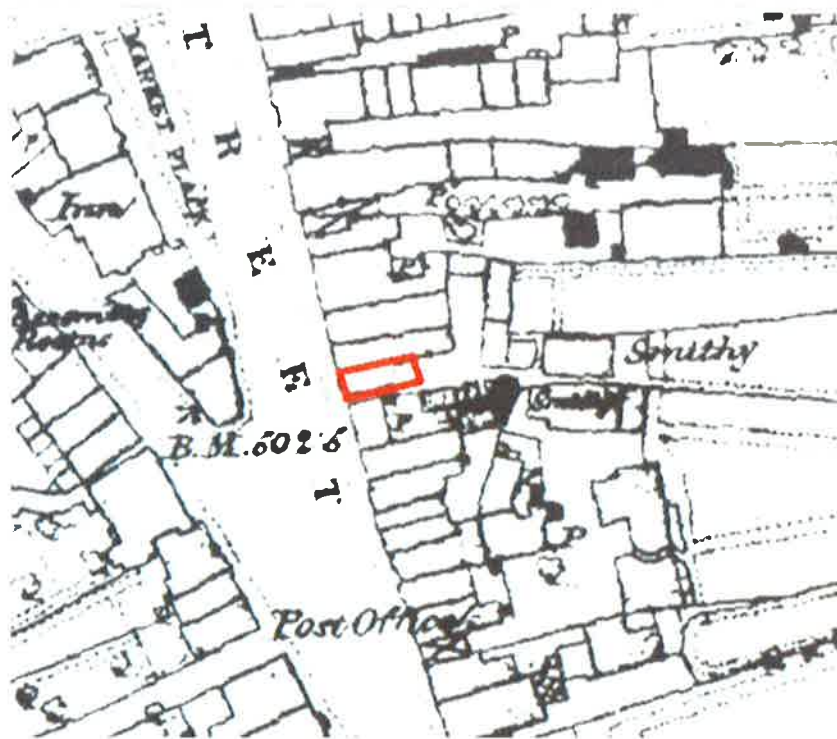


Fig ii) OS County series, Kent 1:2500, 1895



Fig iii) Kent XL.5 - Revised: 1937, Published: 1941

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

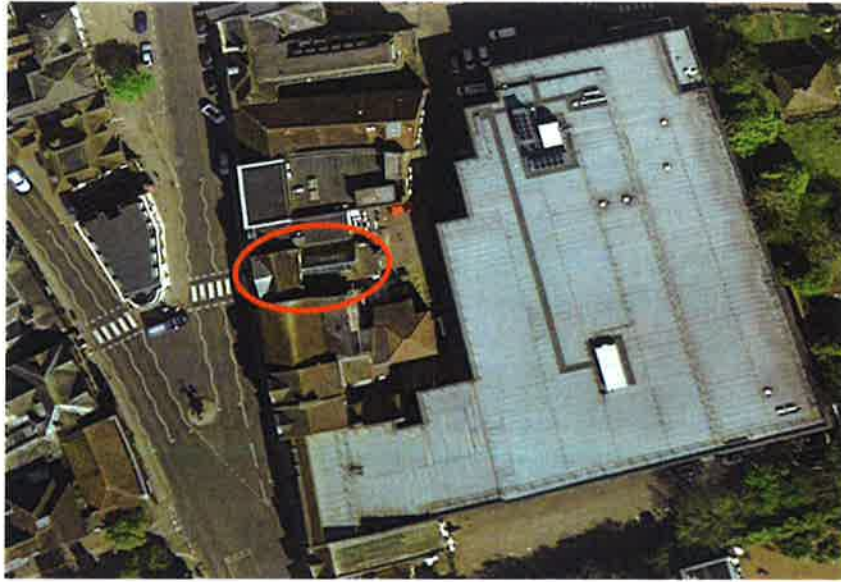


Fig iv) Google maps aerial photography 2021

- 5.8 The historic mapping indicates that the simple linear burgage plot layout of the medieval era has been consistent in the principle historic development of the High Street and London Road throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The 1895 map shows the earlier structure on plot was half the length of the existing 1927 bank building which is shown marked "BANK" in the 1941 map at figure 3. The aerial photograph shows the roof structure of the building is intact with gabled pediment fronting the street, pitched roof beyond and a pitched rooflight extending to the rear. The surrounding area has been redeveloped in the later 20th century with a large supermarket/retail unit to the rear but most of the linear plot widths fronting High Street remain, even in 2021.

6.0 Significance Assessment

- 6.1 The significance of the building is a combination of the age and architectural detailing of no. 70 High Street as a good example of a 20th century purpose built bank. The front elevation with grand pediment, multipaned windows and formal timber shopfront set behind pilasters presents the image of a successful financial institution which would have been attractive to potential customers and one of the most prestigious buildings on the High Street. This is a purposeful design with the intention of presenting a positive image to the town. The front elevation is generally intact and its architectural ornamentation forms part of the significance of the building.



Fig v) Front elevation, 70 High Street

- 6.2 Internally the planform and historic context remains; designed with a formal reception area, the original layout would have allowed views of the banking “hall” to the rear. This “hall” also includes panelling and has a vaulted ceiling with decorative rooflight. Externally in this area a pitched rooflight over plain clay tiled roof allows light into the hall. This arrangement layout and architectural detailing is again purposeful and contributes positively to the significance of the building as an early 20th century bank.

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent



Fig vi) Rear banking hall – ground floor



Fig vii) Rear Banking hall – windows set within timber panelled walls with pilasters and plastered niches.



Fig viii) Rear pitched rooflight and plain clay tile roof in poor state of repair.

- 6.3 Internally there are aspects considered to have historic value including the staircase and cornices on the first floor which provide legibility to the original plan form although there have been some alterations by way of timber partitions these appear to have been scribed around original features and are essentially reversible. The simple architectural character of the first and second floor detailing, including cornice and skirting boards suggest these upper floors were ancillary office accommodation, and not originally intended for public viewing and depict a hierarchy that informs upon the evidential use of the building.



Fig ix) Modern partition at second floor

- 6.4 Overall the building draws its significance from being a good example of a purpose-built bank, fronting the High Street with a positive and successfully detailed architectural design. Whilst it has

Heritage & Significance Statement: 70, High Street, Sevenoaks, Kent

been adapted it retains sufficient original fabric, composition and detailing to inform upon the economic and social importance of Sevenoaks as a growing town in the early 20th century.

7.0 Proposals

7.1 The proposals include:

- Removal of modern partitions at ground and second floor.
- Repair of damaged window panes with single glazing to match
- Refurbishment of pitched roof and rooflight to the rear including replacement to the modern Georgian wired glass, and refixing of clay tiles.

8.0 Impact

- 8.1 The removal of modern partition at ground floor would restore the historic floor plan affording views from the reception to the former banking hall. This is a significant component of the building historic interest and would enhance the historic character and appearance of the building. Works to the floor and ceiling would be made good to match.
- 8.2 At second floor, the removal of the modern timber panelled office partition again would restore the original floor plan and reinstate the historic plan form and context. This would enhance the historic character and appearance of the building. Cornicing and skirting board would be made good to match the existing.
- 8.3 Repair of damaged window panes with single glazing to match is a simple like with like repair that would ensure longevity of conservation of the asset and sustain the buildings' significance. The replacement of cills and frames in a like with like manner, using the same mouldings, design, and opening methods where appropriate. Joinery details can be conditioned.
- 8.4 Refurbishment of pitched roof and roof light to the rear including replacement to the modern Georgian wired glass, and refixing of clay tiles is considered in a like with like repair, that will ensure the building is wind and watertight safeguarding the historic ceiling below from water ingress.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 The application proposes works which take account of the historic character and appearance of the building and would either enhance the significance of the building or repair on a like with like manner areas of the fabric that are necessary.
- 9.2 It is considered that the proposals and the existing works meet the requirements of local Sevenoaks Plan Policy EN4 - Heritage Assets and paragraphs 193, 194, 196 and 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework