

Cassidy+  
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C+A

Architecture + Building Surveying + Town Planning

# STANLEY BUILDINGS

## Heritage, Design and Access Statement

On behalf of Blackpool Council

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Cassidy + Ashton have prepared a Heritage, Design and Access Statement in support of a full planning application for the renovation and refurbishment of the Stanley Buildings at Church Street / Counce Street, in Blackpool.
- 1.2 This Statement describes the site and its surroundings, before setting out the relevant national and local planning policy context, particularly those pertaining to heritage, under which the application should be considered.
- 1.3 This Statement is required due to the buildings being locally listed. The site also falls within the boundary of a designated Conservation Area, the Town Centre Conservation Area. It is therefore necessary to demonstrate that any proposed works will not have a detrimental impact upon the significance of the key heritage assets.
- 1.4 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, Local Planning Authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. This heritage assessment has therefore been prepared to evaluate the significance of the heritage assets of the Stanley Buildings and the surrounding Conservation Area and the potential impact of the proposal upon this significance.
- 1.5 The following approach has been undertaken to produce the heritage assessment:
- Desktop study of existing literature and a site visit;
  - Assessment of the first stage to establish the significance of the heritage asset; and
  - Assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon the identified asset.
- 1.6 The Design and Access Statement within this document is submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and the guidance contained within National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
- 1.7 The National Planning Practice Guidance states that a Design and Access Statement must:
1. Explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development; and
  2. Demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development, and how the design of the development takes context into account.
- 1.8 The NPPG also sets out what should be included in a Design and Access Statement and makes the following points:

- A development's context refers to the particular characteristics of the application site and its wider setting. These will be specific to the circumstances of an individual application and a Design and Access Statement should be tailored accordingly.
- Design and Access Statements must also explain the applicant's approach to access and how relevant Local Plan policies have been taken into account. They must detail any consultation undertaken in relation to access issues, and how the outcome of this consultation has informed the proposed development.

1.9 In particular, the Statement explains the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development in regards to:

- Amount and Use
- Layout
- Appearance
- Scale
- Landscaping
- Access

1.10 In order to fully satisfy national planning policy and local validation requirements for application submissions, the application is accompanied by the following supporting information:

- Application form and certificates
- Full plans and elevations
- Heritage, Design and Access Statement

1.11 This document should be read in conjunction with the drawings and application forms submitted alongside the application.

## 2.0 SITE CONTEXT

### Site Description

- 2.1 The application site comprises a triangular plot located between Church Street, Cauce Street and Cookson Street, known as the Stanley Buildings.
- 2.2 The exact location of the site is shown in Figure 1 below.

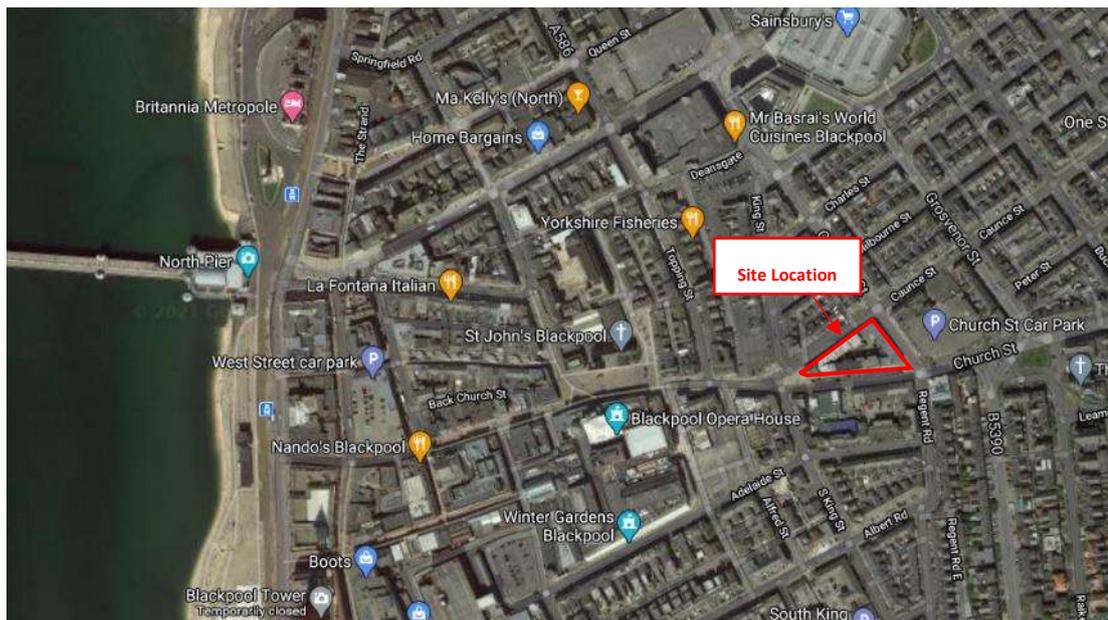


Fig. 1 Site Location [Source: Google Maps]

- 2.3 The buildings are set out across a maximum of three storeys from ground floor level, with a basement floor providing additional facilities in three areas of the building. The buildings are constructed in a triangular shape with a central courtyard. The external appearance of the building is finished with an art deco façade with mosaic tiling surrounding the shop fronts.
- 2.4 Currently, the units are predominantly occupied by retail and office uses although some parts of the building are vacant.
- 2.5 The former Midland Bank, located on the western corner of this triangular plot, has been converted to a takeaway at ground floor level and it is understood that the floors above this unit have a residential use.
- 2.6 Immediately surrounding the application site is a primary school, public house, further retail uses and residential properties.

## Historic Context

- 2.7 Church Street appears to historically have been a main thoroughfare connecting Layton and further afield to the east, with Blackpool town centre in the west.
- 2.8 By the late 1800s a row of terraces was present at the application site, facing onto Church Street, named the Stanley Terrace, with a smaller row of terraces north of this facing onto Counce Street.
- 2.9 The terraces were demolished to allow for the development of shops and offices, with the works completed in 1935. However, the former Midland Bank, a red brick corner building, was retained.
- 2.10 When constructed, the Stanley Buildings, designed by Borough architect, J.C. Robinson, was set back to the building line of the bank, to allow for the widening of the road to incorporate a new set of tram lines. The building originally comprised retail units on the ground floor with three Corporation departments in offices above, named the Stanley Chambers.

## Heritage Status

- 2.11 The application building is locally listed. The description of the building within the relevant Historic Asset Record is:
- Striking parade of shops on a triangular site, completed in 1935. The retained buff faience to the elevations and green mosaic surrounds to the shop windows, and the retention of several apparently original shopfronts makes this a very positive asset on the street and within the town centre.*
- 2.12 The site falls within the Town Centre Conservation Area and therefore an analysis of the Conservation Area is included within this statement.

2.13 The Town Centre Conservation Area was originally designated in 1984. It was then extended in 2015, to include the application site.

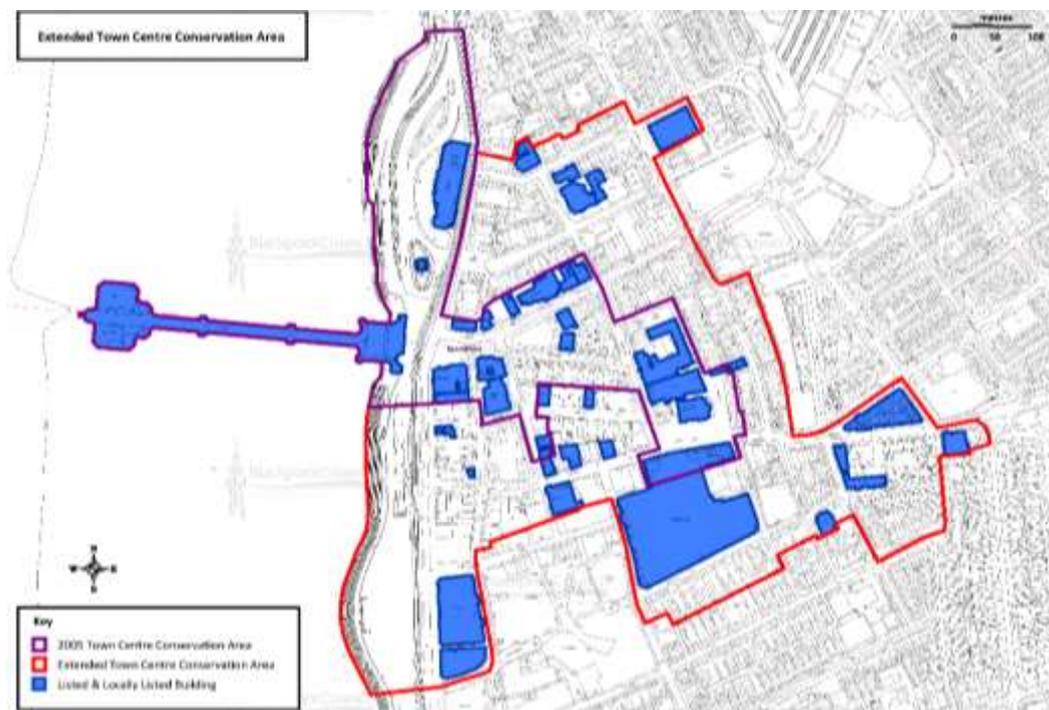


Fig. 2 Conservation Area boundary [Source: Blackpool Council]

2.14 It was thought that by extending the Town Centre Conservation Area many of the town’s key entertainment and public buildings could be brought together, enabling the settings of these buildings to be managed more effectively and helping to raise the quality of design for new buildings and alterations to existing buildings.

2.15 The Town Centre Conservation Area Proposed Extension of Boundaries document, prepared in 2014, provides the following description of the application site:

*“Nos 150-170 are part of the 1935 rebuild of Stanley Terrace, which is locally listed. The approach to the corner of this building from the west has strong townscape significance, and the former red-brick Midland Bank is a positive and important landmark along Church Street (Fig. 68).”*

2.16 It is also noted, with reference to the application site, that within the Conservation Area:

*“there is varied treatment of shopfronts, fascias and advertising signage, most of which are modern and of low merit. Their poor design is an overriding issue in the town’s commercial area, and often erode the quality of positive buildings such as the Stanley Buildings on Church Street, which otherwise has good examples of shopfronts to the ground-floor.”*

## 3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 This planning application is submitted to Blackpool Council to obtain approval for the refurbishment and renovation of the Stanley Buildings.
- 3.2 Currently, the building is divided into a number of retail, residential and commercial spaces across 3 no. floors plus basement, with an existing gross internal floor area of 4,528sqm. Whilst most units at ground floor level are currently occupied, parts of the building are vacant.
- 3.3 The works proposed comprise:
- Demolition of three modern elements of the building within the internal courtyard
  - Conversion of existing hot food takeaway to a café (permitted development)
  - Conversion of residential unit to café and function space
  - Internal refurbishment and reconfiguration of floorspace
  - Removal of existing canopies to Church Street and Caunce Street elevations
  - Loss of retail unit (Unit 16) to create an entrance lobby
  - New landscaped courtyard to include refuse and bike store areas
  - Unit 5 converted from retail to office use (no change of use as both uses fall under Class E)
  - Units 2 and 3 converted from retail and leisure to office space (no change of use as both uses fall under Class E)
  - Bookshop on first floor converted to office use (no change of use as both uses fall under Class E)
  - New and refurbished office space at first and second floor level
  - Provision of function room and roof terrace at second floor level with refurbishment of existing terrace at first floor
  - Refurbishment of existing flat roof to first and second storeys
  - Refurbishment of external elevations to include repairs to the existing faience block and mosaic tiles, new shop fronts at street level and new window systems to the upper floors
- 3.4 It is expected that the retail units will have similar opening hours to their current operation whilst the office units would have 24 hour access.
- 3.5 The overall objective of the proposals is to develop the existing site to provide a mixed use offering of offices and retail space with supporting communal facilities by way of a newly landscaped courtyard and terraces, which would support a range of small and medium sized enterprises at this highly sustainable site within the town centre.

## 4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The Development Plan relevant to this application is comprised of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy (Adopted January 2016) and the 'saved' policies of the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016 (June 2006). The Blackpool Local Plan Part 2 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in June 2021. Whilst not yet adopted, policies of relevance are included here for completeness.
- 4.3 Other planning policies and guidance which are material considerations in the consideration of this proposal are:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
  - National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as revised in July 2021, sets out the Government's planning policies for England.
- 4.5 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 10), which should be seen as the golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking (paragraph 11). At paragraph 8 the NPPF provides that there are three dimensions to sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. These objectives are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
- 4.6 Chapter 6 seeks to help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt with significant weight to be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 4.7 Chapter 11 requires the effective use of land, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or brownfield land (paragraph 119).
- 4.8 Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land (paragraph 124).

- 4.9 The creation of high-quality buildings and places are fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, with good design a key aspect of sustainable development (paragraph 126).
- 4.10 Chapter 12 seeks to achieve well-designed places, with planning policies and decisions ensuring 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;
  - e) Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
  - f) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience (paragraph 130).
- 4.11 Chapter 16 concerns heritage policies and the requirement to conserve and enhance the historic environment.
- 4.12 Paragraph 194 states that in determining applications, 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.
- 4.13 Paragraph 197 requires local planning authorities, when determining applications, to take account of:
- a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable use consistent with their conservation;

- b) The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

4.14 Paragraph 199 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.

4.15 Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (Paragraph 202).

4.16 The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (Paragraph 203).

4.17 Paragraph 206 encourages local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, 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.

4.18 Paragraph 207 recognises that not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 201 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

### Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016

4.19 The Blackpool Local Plan was adopted in 2006. Upon adoption of the Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy document in 2016, a number of the Local Plan's policies were superseded and the document will be replaced in full once the Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Document is adopted. Until this time, a number of policies within the 2006 document will continue to be 'saved'. Therefore, the key policies from this Plan, relevant to the development proposals, are listed below:

- 4.20 Policy LQ1 (Lifting the Quality of Design) – All new development will be expected to be of a high standard of design and make a positive contribution to the quality of its surrounding environment.
- 4.21 Policy LQ2 (Site Context) - The design of new development proposals will be considered in relation to the character and setting of the surrounding area.
- 4.22 Policy LQ4 (Building Design) – The detailed appearance of facades will need to create visual interest and must be appropriate to the use of the building.
- 4.23 Policy LQ7 (Strategic Views) – Views of the following are considered to be of strategic importance; into and within Conservation Areas.
- 4.24 Policy LQ10 (Conservation Areas) - Applications for development in Conservation Areas will be considered against the following criteria:
- I. The development must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
  - II. The development will need to respect the scale, massing, proportions, materials and detailing of similar building forms within the Conservation Area
  - III. Trees and other landscape features contributing to the character and appearance of the area must be retained.
- 4.25 Policy LQ11 (Shopfronts) – Applications for new or alterations to existing shop fronts will be considered having regard to the character of the building and the street scene. Particular attention will be paid to:
- a) The relationship of the ground floor with the upper floors of the property
  - b) The retention of original features such as pilasters, mullions, toplights, doors and stall risers
  - c) The use of appropriate materials
  - d) The relationship with adjoining properties, in terms of fascia height, materials and design
  - e) The use of recessed doorways to provide a transition between the street and to provide disabled access
  - f) The provision for signage and security measures where appropriate
- 4.26 Policy LQ14 (Extensions and Alterations) - Extensions and alterations must be well designed, sited and detailed in relation to the original building and adjoining properties. Past, unsympathetic alterations and extensions of adjoining properties should not be regarded as a precedent for further similar proposals. (B) Materials will need to match or be complementary to the original building.

## Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy

- 4.27 The Blackpool Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in January 2016 and replaced many of the policies within the Local Plan 2001-2016. The policies of relevance to this application, particularly pertaining to heritage and design matters, are as follows:
- 4.28 Policy CS1 (Strategic Location of Development) – Blackpool’s future growth, development and investment will be focused on inner area regeneration.
- 4.29 Policy CS3 (Economic Development and Employment) – Sustainable economic development will be promoted to strengthen the local economy and meet the employment needs of Blackpool and the Fylde Coast Sub-Region to 2027, with the focus on amongst other things, safeguarding around 180ha of existing industrial / business land for employment use and enhance these sites with new employment development on remaining available land and through opportunities for redevelopment and promoting office development, enterprise and business start-ups in Blackpool Town Centre including the Central Business District.
- 4.30 Policy CS7 (Design) – New development is required to be well designed, and enhance the character and appearance of the local area.
- 4.31 Policy CS8 (Heritage) - Development proposals will be supported which respect and draw inspiration from Blackpool’s built, social and cultural heritage, complementing its rich history with new development to widen its appeal to residents and visitors. Proposals will be supported that:
- a) Retain, reuse or convert, whilst conserving and enhancing the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting.
  - b) Enhance the setting and views of heritage assets through appropriate design and layout of new development and design of public realm.
  - c) Strengthen the existing townscape character created by historic buildings.

Developers must demonstrate how any development affecting heritage assets (including conservation areas) will conserve and enhance the asset, its significance and its setting.

## Blackpool Local Plan Part 2

- 4.32 The Council submitted the Part 2 document to the Planning Inspectorate for examination in June 2021. Once adopted this document will replace the previous Local Plan. Given the status of the document, the following policies are considered of relevance to this application:

- 4.33 Policy DM17 (Design Principles) – All development should be of a high quality, and should enhance and respond to any positive character of the local area to create well designed, attractive and distinctive neighbourhoods in Blackpool. This policy sets out a number of requirements for new development within the area.
- 4.34 Policy DM19 (Strategic Views) - Development should protect and enhance views of the following buildings and features of strategic importance:
- Into and within conservation areas; and
  - Views of listed and locally listed buildings.
- 4.35 Policy DM20 (Extensions and Alterations) - Extensions and alterations must be well designed, sited and detailed in relation to the original building and adjoining properties.
- 4.36 Policy DM22 (Shopfronts) - Proposals for new shopfronts or alterations to existing shopfronts must:
- a) have regard to the character of the building and the streetscene and create a positive visual impact;
  - b) have a complementary relationship with the upper floor(s) of the building where appropriate;
  - c) have a fascia depth proportionate to the shopfront, adjacent properties and the wider streetscene which retains or reinstates vertical breaks between buildings;
  - d) include signage only at fascia level and in proportion to the shopfront and fascia;
  - e) retain features such as pilasters, mullions, toplights, canopies/awnings, doors and stall risers which contribute to the character of the building and the wider area; or introduce such features where appropriate and where they would not obscure architectural details;
  - f) provide independent access to the upper floor(s) where appropriate;
  - g) retain recessed doorways to provide a transition between the street and to provide disabled access;
  - h) provide transparent display windows.
- Shop units in corner properties should include shopfronts which wrap around the corner and should be designed to have high quality elevations to both frontages to avoid blank walls in the streetscene.
- 4.37 Policy DM24 (Advertisements) – Proposals for advertisements must preserve or enhance the character of their setting and host building and be of the highest design quality.

- 4.38 Policy DM27 (Conservation Areas) - Proposals within or affecting the setting of any of Blackpool's conservation areas, should conserve or enhance those elements that make a positive contribution to their special character and appearance including its setting as identified within the conservation area appraisal. Proposals should:
- a) Be appropriate to their context including setting, scale, density and physical characteristics;
  - b) Conserve or enhance features making a positive contribution. In particular, design, massing and height of any building should closely relate to adjacent buildings and should not have an unacceptable impact on townscape and landscape;
  - c) Not have an unacceptable impact on historic street patterns or roofscape;
  - d) Not result in harm to public or open spaces;
  - e) Retain individual features of interest, including doorways, cobbles, trees, hedges, railings and garden walls;
  - f) Reinforce distinctiveness of the area, reflecting the local pallet of materials and local building styles;
  - g) Retain, repair, reinstate and enhance traditional shopfronts.
- 4.39 Policy DM28 (Non-Designated Heritage Assets) - Proposals which would retain, reuse and repair the significance of Blackpool's non-designated heritage assets will be supported. There will be a presumption in favour of their retention when considering development proposals. Development which would remove, harm or undermine the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will only be permitted where robust evidence can demonstrate that the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm. Proposals must be accompanied by a heritage statement, the detail of which is proportionate to the heritage asset affected.

### Planning Policy Summary

- 4.40 The proposals have been developed with an understanding of the national and local planning policy pertaining to the development.
- 4.41 Both the NPPF and Local Development Plan policies state that new development must be of a good design which enhances the quality of the local area. There is a presumption in favour of retaining, reusing or repairing heritage assets with a design which is sympathetic to the architectural and historical value of the identified asset.

4.42 The heritage and design requirements have been considered in the preparation of this planning application and are considered further within this document.

## 5.0 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

5.1 The relevant national and local planning policies pertaining to matters of heritage are set out in full within the preceding chapter. These policies demonstrate the actions necessary to appropriately assess the significance of a heritage asset and the impact of any development proposals upon it.

### Assessment Methodology

5.2 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF requires applicants to identify and assess the particular significance of heritage assets or their setting and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

5.3 The significance of a heritage asset may comprise a number of factors, which are similar to the criteria for listing, including, but not restricted to:

- Age and rarity: most buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed, as are most built between 1700 and 1840
- Architectural interest: through architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship and also important examples of particular building types and techniques
- Historic interest: encompassing buildings which illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural or military history, or close historical association with nationally important people or events
- Group value: especially where buildings are part of an important architectural or historic group or are a fine example of planning (such as squares, terraces and model villages)

5.4 Taking such factors into account, the relative significance of the elements of the site can be assessed, using the following scale:

- High significance – buildings/features which make an important contribution to the architectural and historic interest and character of the site, through age, rarity, architectural merit or historical association or group value, and whose preservation and enhancement is considered essential
- Medium significance – those making a lesser contribution, but which nevertheless are also considered worthy of preservation or enhancement
- Low significance – those making only a limited contribution to the site overall, although not necessarily detracting from it.

## Assets of Significance

### Stanley Buildings

- 5.5 The Stanley Buildings are a non-designated heritage asset being locally listed. As such, they are of considerable local significance. The summary of the building's importance as set out on the Historic Asset Record states:

*Striking parade of shops on a triangular site, completed in 1935. The retained buff faience to the elevations and green mosaic surrounds to the shop windows, and the retention of several apparently original shopfronts makes this a very positive asset on the street and within the town centre.*

- 5.6 The Stanley Buildings were built in 1935, designed by Borough architect, J.C. Robinson, following demolition of the terraces which had previously occupied the plot. The Midland Bank, a red brick corner building, was retained and as such comprises the oldest element of the site.
- 5.7 The buildings have a prominent position on Church Street, visible from the Winter Gardens in the town centre, when viewed eastwards, as shown on the photograph below.

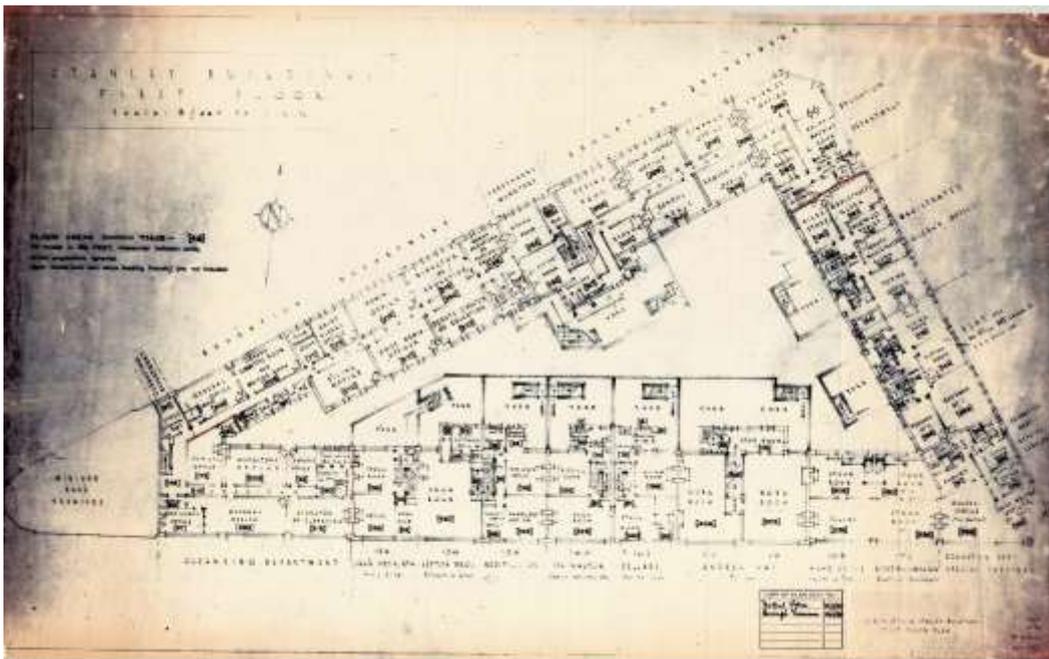
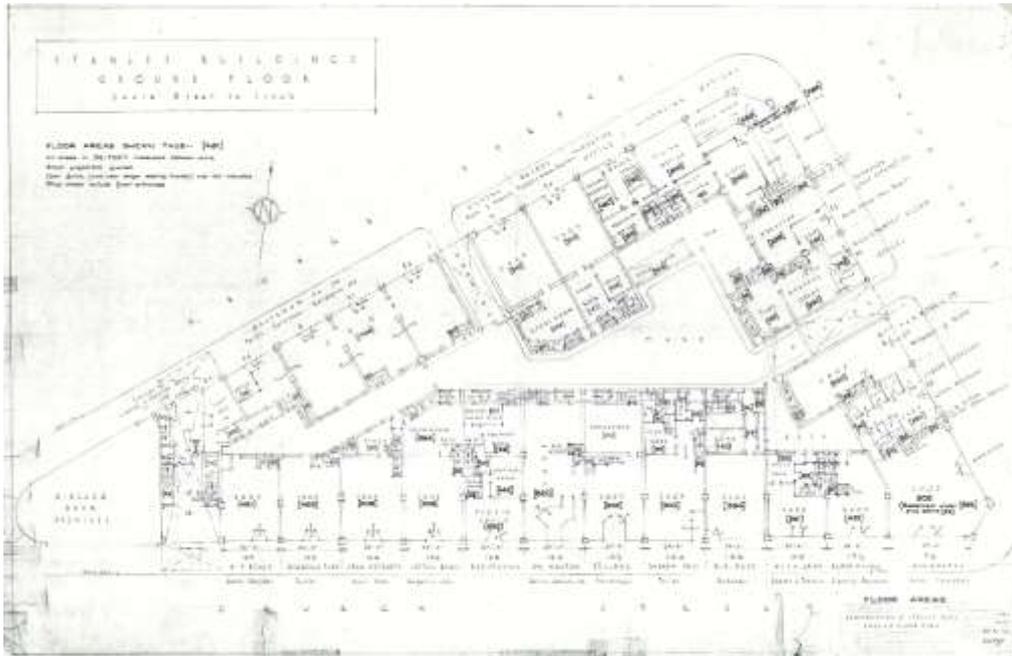


**Figure 3. Photograph of the Stanley Buildings looking east from the Winter Gardens**

- 5.8 Originally, the building contained 26 no. shops at ground floor level and housed Corporation Departments on the upper floors in what was known as the Stanley Chambers. The buildings are of steel framed construction, clad in off-white terracotta with a flat roof and a central courtyard. Green mosaic tiles surround the shop units at ground floor level. Each elevation is symmetrical, comprising two

storeys with a central five bay feature of three storeys to the north and south and a corner tower at the eastern street junctions. The north and south elevations are considered to retain the most original features. Currently, the ground floor units remain primarily in retail use, whilst the upper floors contain either storage for the retail units, a residential unit or vacant office space.

5.9 The corporation branding for Blackpool between the years 1933 and 2001 was green and cream. This was used on public transportation as well as some of the art-deco style architecture, such as the Stanley Buildings. The use of faience blocks was popular in achieving this look and can be seen on buildings throughout the town including at the application site.



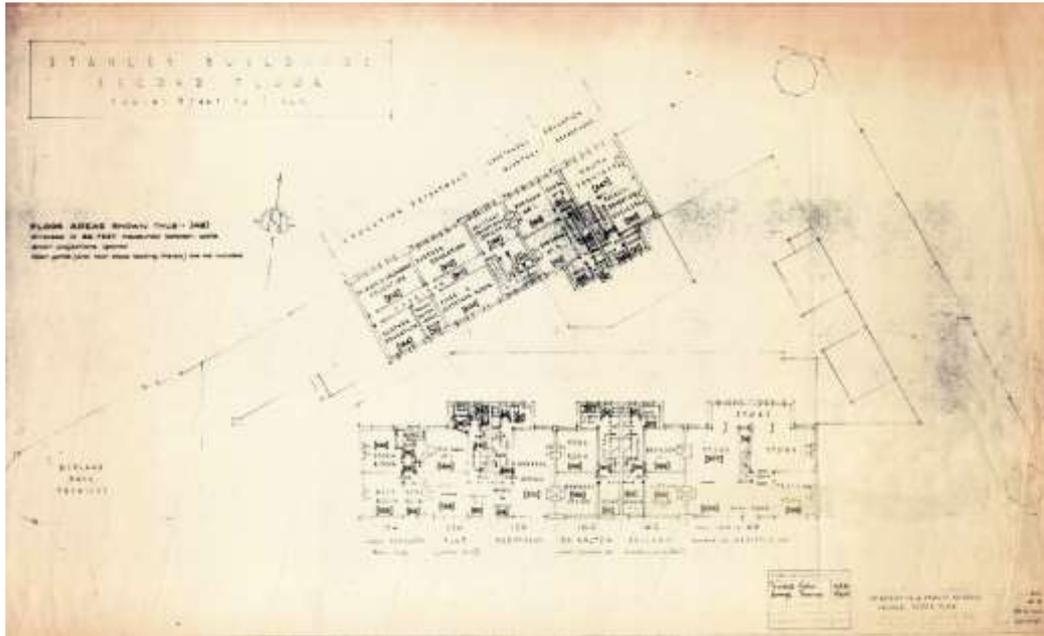


Figure 4. Original Floor Plans of the Building (source: Blackpool Council)

5.10 The Stanley Buildings represent an important landmark within the town centre with the ‘Town Centre Conservation Area – Proposed Extension of Boundaries’ document stating that it is a positive building with good examples of shopfronts to the ground floor.



Figure 5. Photographs of the Stanley Buildings

## Town Centre Conservation Area

- 5.11 The Conservation Area in which the application site is located is also of high significance.
- 5.12 The Conservation Area was first designated in 1984 and originally called the Talbot Square Conservation Area. It was renamed and extended in 2005 and extended again in 2014 to include the application site. The Conservation Area designation is seen as an opportunity to enhance parts of the Town Centre.
- 5.13 The 'Town Centre Conservation Area – Proposed Extension of Boundaries' document, prepared by Blackpool Council, states that Church Street, in Victorian times, mainly comprised lodging houses with a handful of tradesmen but by 1866 most of Church Street was in retail use.
- 5.14 The architectural character of the town centre is noted as being varied, with a mix of styles and material finishes, including Renaissance, Baroque and classical styles, with the Conservation Area document stating:
- Quite a number of buildings exhibit interwar features, reflecting a spike in activity during this period when re-building and re-fronting of existing properties occurred. Styles adopted are typical of the period and include free classical compositions and others of Art Deco inspiration. A good example of the latter is the collection of faience-clad buildings on Topping Street. No. 28 was re-modelled in 1933 as the new showrooms for Naylor's Fireplaces by John C. Derham, FRIBA, of Blackpool, emulating a proscenium arch or even a giant fireplace. Stanley Buildings on Counce Street/Church Street is another good example, which was designed by J C Robinson of the Borough Surveyor's Department.*
- 5.15 It is noted that there are good views through the Conservation Area down Church Street, with the former Midland Bank, within the application site, a positive and important landmark.

## Impact Assessment

- 5.16 The principle aim of the proposed development is to retain the existing built development on site and ensure its sustainable, long-term use.
- 5.17 As the application site is a locally listed heritage asset and it is located within a Conservation Area, consideration needs to be given to the impact of the proposed development upon these heritage assets and whether it will result in harm, as per Paragraph 200 of the NPPF.
- 5.18 The works will ultimately refurbish and renovate this building through minor demolition, conversion, internal reconfiguration and decoration, the provision of a new landscaped courtyard and roof terrace alongside refurbishment of the external elevations. This will ultimately improve the appearance of building and its usability, with the intention of attracting new occupiers and bringing visitors to the site.

- 5.19 The works will improve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through revitalisation of the external elevations of this landmark building. The works would not increase the scale or massing of the building rather making best use of the land and floorspace available. The use of materials would enhance the appearance of the building within public views ensuring that the building continues to positively contribute to the Conservation Area.
- 5.20 The proposed demolition comprises 3 no. multi-storey elements located within the existing courtyard, as such their removal will not alter the appearance of the building from public views. The total volume of the demolished areas would be 684.6 cubic metres.
- 5.21 The important elements of the building, as set out on the Historic Asset Record, will not be negatively impacted upon by the proposals.
- 5.22 It is therefore considered that any impact upon this locally listed building and the Conservation Area will be neutral, or at worst, less than substantial. In this respect the impact of the proposal should be weighed against its public benefits, as per Paragraph 202 of the NPPF. In this case, the benefits are the refurbishment of a locally listed building, which is a key landmark and feature within the Conservation Area. The works will allow the building to be utilised efficiently, creating modern and attractive office and retail accommodation and supporting the operations of local businesses for the long term.

## 6.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS

6.1 In line with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and the NPPG, a Design and Access Statement has been included within this submission. This section is intended to explain the design principles and philosophy behind the current proposals.

6.2 The Government is committed to delivering sustainable development (Paragraph 8 of the NPPF) and encourages local planning authorities to promote urban regeneration to improve the wellbeing of communities, improve facilities, promote high quality and safe development and create new opportunities for people living there.

### Amount and Use

6.3 The site extends to 0.256ha. The building comprises three floors plus a basement, set around a central courtyard.

6.4 The amount of floorspace will reduce slightly due to the elements of demolition proposed, from 4,528sqm to 4,365sqm. The element of demolition equates to 684.6 cubic metres.

6.5 As existing, the buildings are occupied by a hot food takeaway (Sui Generis), a residential unit (Class C3), retail units (Class E) and office space (Class E). As proposed, the building would support a café, retail units and office space (all within Class E).

6.6 The proposed development comprises the following works:

- Demolition of minor, modern elements of the building within the internal courtyard
- Reuse of existing floorspace and internal refurbishment and reconfiguration
- Landscaping within central courtyard and provision of refuse and bike store area
- Provision of function room and roof terrace at second floor level
- Refurbishment of external elevations to include repairs to the existing faience block and mosaic tiles, new shop fronts at street level and new window systems to the upper floors providing uniformity whilst sympathetically responding to the buildings detailing

6.7 The amount of development proposed is considered appropriate for the size and nature of the development site and makes efficient use of the land available.

## Layout

- 6.8 The layout of the development is set by that of the existing built development, comprising a triangular configuration set across four floors around a central courtyard.
- 6.9 A new café will occupy the red-brick element of the building fronting Kings Square whilst the remainder will comprise a mix of retail and office uses, with shop fronts at ground floor level.
- 6.10 Some ground floor retail units would have self-contained storage provided on the floors above and the café will also have a seating area at first floor level. The remainder of the first and second floors will comprise a range of office and ancillary space with associated facilities including meeting rooms, break-out space, a function room and outdoor seating terraces.
- 6.11 The external layout of the building will remain unchanged, with no extensions proposed, whilst within the courtyard this area will be upgraded to create an inviting external space for users as well as providing appropriate separated space for refuse and bike storage. Internally within the building, reconfiguration is proposed largely to open up some spaces, provide a better flow throughout, optimising access and egress and demarcating spaces across the floors.

## Scale

- 6.12 The scale of the development is confined to the extent of the existing structures and associated outdoor space located within the internal courtyard.
- 6.13 No extensions are proposed to the building but refurbishment of the existing first floor roof terraces and the addition of a second floor terrace is proposed.
- 6.14 A small amount of demolition is also proposed to remove three built elements within the courtyard. This will allow greater flexibility in terms of the use of this area and open up the space.

## Appearance

- 6.15 As part of the design evolution, consideration has been given to the existing vernacular and whether the proposed development would positively impact upon this.
- 6.16 The Blackpool Corporation colours of green and cream were used throughout the town during the period of 1933 – 2001 and are evident in the appearance of the Stanley Buildings. The use of faience blocks were a popular way of achieving the branding and there are many examples, alongside the application building, of this within the town.
- 6.17 The existing building is built off a structural steel frame with brick walls to the inner courtyard areas and faience cladding to the external elevations. The former bank building facing King's Square is built

of red brick. The faience cladding to the building is assumed to be, as traditionally used, a cast and glazed hollow block build up which is then filled with clinker fill concrete, with the blocks tied back to the steel structure.

6.18 To understand the buildings elevational rhythm a series of photographs were taken and stitched together to provide a clear image of each existing elevation. As seen at Figure 6, the images show an element of symmetry throughout as well as fine detail through the faience façade.



Counce Street



Cookson Street



Church Street

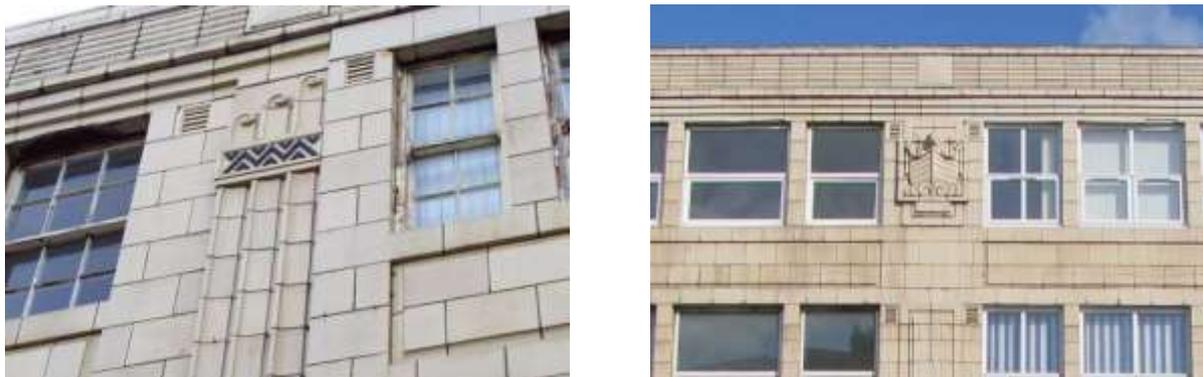
**Figure 6. Existing Elevations of the Application Building**

6.19 The former bank building sits between Church Street and Counce Street, fronting King’s Square. It comprises a two storey brick built building with a converted roof space and basement. As such, this position provides the building with visual prominence on approach from the town centre, along Church Street.



Figure 7. Photograph of the former Midland Bank

- 6.20 Each elevation to Caunce Street, Cookson Street and Church Street contains a number of bays. Caunce Street has five dominant, central three storey bays which step down to two storeys on either side. Detailing is evident in the faience blocks to the three storey parts and the openings within this are timber sash windows, presumed to be original, although there is evidence of some having been replaced with UPVC units. On this elevation, the access point to the internal courtyard is provided centrally.
- 6.21 The Cookson Street elevation is the shortest and the elevation also steps slightly to the end bays by way of a raised coping line which gradually curves downwards from the centre. The majority of window units on this elevation have been replaced. There is again a central access point to the internal courtyard at ground floor level on this elevation. 45-degree splays to the corners create a visual continuity to the building as you move around it.
- 6.22 The Church Street elevation provides further detailing, with reliefs of Viking Ships. There is a flat roof canopy across some of the bays, with it understood that this marked the entrance to the former arcade cut through and access to the public toilets, located in the basement. There are noted to be no timber sash windows remaining on this elevation and also no courtyard access. The existing canopies to Church Street and Caunce Street are to be removed as they represent modern fittings in a bad condition.



**Figure 8. Photographic examples of detailing on the upper floors**

6.23 The building has evident signs of deterioration and failing to the façades as can be seen on the photographs in Figure 9. It is understood that one of the main reasons for faience cladding to fail is due to the corrosion of the structural steelwork and wall ties, which can cause movement within the structure.



**Figure 9. Evidence of deterioration on the external elevations**

6.24 The use of faience cladding is evident in the local area and an example of a contemporary, contextual response to the Stanley Buildings can be seen at the St John's C of E Primary School, located opposite the application site on Church Street. This is achieved through the colour and rhythm of the cladding used and window proportions. The Winter Gardens represents a grand example of the use of this material and the building has also undergone recent refurbishment to its Church Street elevation. No 78 Topping Street is another example of both faience cladding and the corporation branding in cream and green.



Figure 10. Examples of Faience Cladding within the town centre

6.25 A number of options ranging from retention and repair to over cladding have been considered for the street facing elevations of the building and how to address the deterioration of these facades. A brief description of these options is as follows:

- Option 1 - Retain and Repair
  - Remedial works to the current fabric and structure to restore the building to its former self
  - Due to the build-up and detailing of the building this may potentially be a costly option as the restoration of faience requires a bespoke process and the existing steelwork will need to be investigated and treated
- Option 2 - Replace and Renovate
  - Replacement of windows and doors to a modern standard whilst restoring as much of the original character as possible
  - This could introduce uniformity back to the retail element at ground floor level and hint toward the style and proportions of the original shop fronts
- Option 3 – Combining Window Bays
  - By combining certain windows within each bay into ‘clusters’ it would reduce the amount of restorative work, bring uniformity back to the upper floor levels and satisfy modern standards whilst retaining the buildings original character and proportion
- Option 4: Creating a New Bay Formation

- Combining all window units within each of the existing bays into one window system would address the issues with regards to structure, failings of cills, heads and faience blocks and reduce the levels of required restoration
- The new bays have been designed in a way which responds to the heritage, detailing and proportion of the building whilst offering a fresh look to the building and complying with current codes and standards
- Option 5: Over cladding
  - Further options were explored to overclad parts or all the building to reduce the extensive restorative works and bring a new uniformity across the facades
  - This would include the replacement and combining of windows as per the previous options
  - Over cladding would provide a contemporary look to the building and could hint to the original façade through palette and proportion

6.26 Discussions were held with Head of Planning and Conservation, Carl Carrington, on these options, with the main points concluded:

- Combining the upper floor window bays with a 'lighter feel' to them
- Removing the shop fronts recessed doors to provide a flat elevation to the street frontage
- Retain and repair the mosaic tiles to the ground floor frontage
- Introduce anodised bronze windows and doors.

6.27 Following the elevation appraisal and further design discussion the proposals were developed in a holistic way to bring uniformity and order to the street elevations. This has been achieved by addressing the window bay arrangement and shop fronts at ground floor level. The design of the former red brick bank has been worked to subtly tie in with the proposed Stanley Buildings refurbishment through the treatment of its glazing and openings.



**Fig. 11 Proposed Church Street Elevation**

6.28 By combining the window arrangement into a bayed formation, it will reduce the amount of faience repair, which at present shows signs of failings to the window heads and cills, whilst avoiding disruption or removal of the intricate detailing to the façade.



Fig. 12 Proposed Cookson Street Elevation

6.29 The overall design responds sympathetically to the history and heritage aspects of the Stanley Buildings whilst giving it a contemporary feel and new lease of life within the town centre. The former red brick bank building is shown to include large expanses of glazing connecting back to the town and providing opportunity to utilise King's Square for al fresco dining. As proposed, all windows and doors to the street elevations are to be replaced with anodised bronze frames. Existing canopies to the shopfronts at ground level are to be removed.



Fig. 13 Proposed Counce Street Elevation

## Landscape

- 6.30 The landscaping of the scheme has been led by the proposed use and applicant's requirements. The layout of the site has been developed by identifying the physical parameters of the site to create an optimum balance of built form and natural environment.
- 6.31 The existing building is triangular in form set around an internal courtyard. The internal courtyard consists of hard standing ground with brick and concrete extensions off the main façades which are of varying height and scale. The courtyard currently has restricted access, with gates into this area from Counce Street and Cookson Street. The area is considered to be in a poor condition and used for vehicle parking and storage at present.
- 6.32 By demolishing some of the courtyard extension elements, which are in a poor state of repair, it provides the opportunity for a landscaped courtyard to be created to support and enhance the working environment of those utilising the buildings. A communal seating area is proposed centrally within the

space, with the remaining space used to provide functional facilities, such as refuse and cycle storage in designated areas.

- 6.33 Elsewhere within the building outdoor amenity space is provided via the refurbishment of the first-floor terraces and creation of a second-floor terrace. These areas would provide further social and break-out spaces with seating. In these areas as well as the courtyard there would be opportunities for planting to improve the appearance and character of the building.

### Access

- 6.34 There is no parking associated with the building although there is on-street pay and display parking available on Church Street and Counce Street which would not be affected by the proposals.
- 6.35 Each ground floor unit is accessible via an entrance door on the front elevation of their unit. Access to the upper floor offices, formerly known as the Stanley Chambers, is provided off each street. Access to the internal courtyard is via gated passageways on Counce Street and Cookson Street with numerous points of direct access from the building.
- 6.36 As proposed, each retail unit until will retain their front elevation entrance points as well as access directly from their unit to the internal courtyard. Gates will be retained to the courtyard entrance points on Counce Street and Cookson Street. A new entrance lobby will be created through the conversion of an existing retail unit on Counce Street to provide a formal access to the upper floor offices with alternate access via the ground floor office spaces. An external staircase will provide fire escape access to the terraces.
- 6.37 The development will meet all relevant Building Regulations requirements in respect of access.

## 7.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the starting point for planning applications is the Development Plan. Applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In accordance with Section 38(6), the following chapter assesses the application proposals against the relevant Development Plan considerations, namely; the principle of development, heritage and sustainability.

### Principle of Development

- 7.2 The proposed development comprises the refurbishment and renovation of the existing Stanley Buildings in Blackpool. The proposals would refurbish the existing units, for use as retail, café and office accommodation, whilst also providing a new and attractive roof terrace and internal courtyard. Alongside this, the elevations of the building will be revitalised to improve the external appearance of the buildings which have become degraded.
- 7.3 It is considered that the uses of the building, for retail, café and offices purposes are entirely appropriate given the site's location within the town centre.
- 7.4 Core Strategy policies CS1 and CS3 support development within this location with an emphasis upon promoting office, enterprise and business start-ups. Therefore, the refurbishment of the previously titled Stanley Chambers, to create modern, collaborative spaces is wholly supported by policy.

### Heritage

- 7.5 The NPPF sets out the current heritage policies to guide the determination of developments affecting the historic environment.
- 7.6 Consideration of the significance of the existing heritage assets (the Stanley Buildings themselves and the Conservation Area) and an assessment of the impact of the proposals upon their significance has been undertaken within Chapter 5.0 of this statement, in line with the NPPF's requirements at paragraph 194 and 195.
- 7.7 Paragraph 199 requires great weight to be given to an asset's conservation when considering the impact of a proposed development upon its significance. In this respect, the proposals will ensure the continued protection of the heritage asset, maintaining its long-term viable use. The proposals are functional and sympathetic to the building, looking to preserve and enhance the features of significance found externally upon the building.
- 7.8 It is considered that the development proposals would have a neutral (or at worst a less than substantial) impact upon the heritage asset. Paragraph 202 requires that where a development

proposal will lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. In this respect, the works represent the renovation and refurbishment of an existing locally listed building within the Town Centre Conservation Area. The works have been carefully designed so as to ensure they are sympathetic and restore and protect the elements of significance at the building. The provision of new office accommodation will also bring investment and employment opportunities to the site and the wider town centre.

- 7.9 As such, it is considered that the development accords with the requirements of both national and local policy in respect of proposed works to heritage assets.

### Sustainability

- 7.10 Under the NPPF, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, of which there are three interlinking strands to sustainability; economic, social and environmental.
- 7.11 Economically, the works to renovate and refurbish the existing retail and office space will provide an opportunity to improve the appearance of existing units and attract new investment to this area. The revitalised office accommodation will create spaces for collaboration and networking through communal spaces and modern units which will be available for new enterprises and start-ups.
- 7.12 Socially, the proposals will retain existing uses within the building to support local residents in provide a vibrant community in which they can live and work.
- 7.13 Environmentally, this application represents the renovation and refurbishment of an existing building within Blackpool town centre, as such, it is of little environmental importance. The development would ultimately improve the visual appearance of the site and provide additional facilities such as the roof terrace and courtyard where there would be opportunities for planting and landscaping.
- 7.14 The proposed development has therefore been demonstrated to represent sustainable development for which there is a presumption in favour of.

## 8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This statement supports a full planning application for the renovation and refurbishment of the Stanley Buildings.
- 8.2 The assessment undertaken during the preparation of this statement demonstrates that the development will result in no harm to the heritage asset.
- 8.3 Good design is a core component of the proposals design process, creating visually distinctive places, which complement the local and wider context. The proposals have sought to conserve the elements of the building which are of highest significance whilst ensuring its longevity. In preparing the application, the design team has taken on board the views and advice of the local authority. It is therefore concluded that the proposals represent a viable, functional and high-quality scheme.
- 8.4 It is therefore considered that the development complies with the relevant national and local planning policies, and for that reason, full planning permission should be granted.

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