

# MONTREAL ARMS, 62 ALBION HILL, BRIGHTON HERITAGE STATEMENT

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# INTRODUCTION

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1.1.1. This heritage statement (HS) has been produced by The Heritage Corp. to support a planning application for works proposed at 62 Albion Hill, BN2 9NX, hereby referred to as the subject property. The subject property is located within the administrative boundary of the Brighton and Hove City Council.

1.1.3. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, including policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements for applications, it sets out 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation."*[NPPF (2023) para. 200]

1.1.4. To comply with the above, Section 2 of this Statement identifies the Application Site and Section 3 describes its history and development. Section 4 identifies the relevant heritage assets proximate to the Application Site that may be affected and provides an assessment of significance of the identified heritage assets; proportionate to both the importance of the asset and the likely impacts. The assessment is undertaken on the basis of published information, and an on-site visual survey.

1.1.5. The Proposed Development is described in Section 6; this section also provides an assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development on the significance of the identified heritage assets in light of national and local planning policy for the historic environment, and relevant Historic England guidance.

## SITE AND CONTEXT

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2.1.1. The application site is located within central Brighton, in the Hanover area, which developed primarily in the Victorian era with characteristic, tightly packed terraces and cottages on grid-like streets.

2.1.2. It lies on the junction of Albion Hill and Montreal Road. Built form comprises largely uniform rows of houses, with some variation and later changes. Commercial premises have historically been a feature of ground floors of some corner properties, typically canted at the edge, serving as small shops, pubs and cafés. At present, the area is primarily residential and the majority of commercial units have been converted into domestic use in the 20th and 21st century. Whilst most front directly onto the pavement, a number include shallow forecourts and lightwells for semi-basements, bound by low brick walls. Building height ranges from two to two-and-a-half storeys, under clay tiled roofs, predominantly duopitched with some hipped examples. Rendered chimney stacks are a prominent feature of the roofscape, appearing on upstands between properties. Rooflights and dormer windows are now abundant







as loft conversions have become increasingly popular; these appear on both front and rear elevations.

2.1.3. No. 62 Albion Hill is a former pub which includes living accommodation at first floor, now vacant, in roughcast and glazed tiles to ground floor. The property is laid over a rectangular plan, canted at the south-western corner, double-pile, under a hipped concrete tiled roof with chimneys. Fenestration is in timber with casements to ground floor and coupled one-over-one sashes to first floor, painted green. Doors are a mismatched array of panelled and part-glazed examples. There are a number of unsympathetic extensions to the north at both ground and first floor level, where gated access leads to a small hard-landscaped area of amenity space. Whilst an invasive survey of the structure has resulted in some damage to the tiled frontage, the elevation has remained cluttered and in poor condition for years prior, and was fitted with awnings, satellite dishes, timber siding, external ducts, piping, and various signage. Further surveys have revealed the structural instability of the building frame and roof. Most recently substantial damage has been caused by squatters, perpetration of metal theft, and by graffiti defacing the exterior.



2.1.4. The application building is a non-designated heritage asset and has been included on the Council's local list. The site does not fall within a Conservation Area, and there are no listed buildings within the immediate surroundings.

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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## *Brighton*

3.1.1. Brighton was probably founded in the early Saxon period and its name is believed to derive from Brithelm's Tun. By the time of the Domesday book, it was well established as a fishing village of some 400 people. Archaeological finds in the Old Town include prehistoric features, a Bronze Age Beaker burial, Roman coins, Medieval and Post Medieval artefacts and building foundations. A Roman presence in the valley bottom along the London to Brighton Road to the east is evidenced by the discovery of a Roman Villa at Springfield Road and Roman Coins at St. Peters Church. At the top end of Church Street a series of previously unknown catacombs and many unrecorded burials were discovered during redevelopment.

3.1.2. The original fishing settlement consisted of the 'Lower Town' adjacent to the cliffs, and the 'Old Town' north thereof. This expanded onto higher ground development above the coast in the 13th or 14th century, when Brighton began its transformation into a busy market town. It continued to prosper throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods, yet whilst fishing and associated trade allowed the settlement to develop steadily, storms, maritime erosion, and foreign raids led to periodic destruction. Decline of the fishing industry at the end of the 17th century quelled good fortunes. Circa 1720s Brighton was dismissed by Daniel Defoe as "a poor fishing town, old built and at the very edge of the sea".

3.1.3. The fashion for taking spa waters and sea-bathing which begun in the mid-18th century brought prosperity once more. The sea became viewed as a source of health and relaxation, and Brighton's excellent quality of water and salubrious air made it an ideal location for therapeutic excursions. Population grew rapidly and by the 1760s the Old Town was nearing capacity. As improvements to roads reduced journey times, the eastern side was established as the area where new development would be concentrated. The construction of Prince of Wales' Royal Pavilion between 1787 and 1806 solidified the town's status as a pre-eminent seaside resort.

3.1.4. Brighton's popularity continued to grow during the Victorian era, and the booming economy allowed opportunities for speculation. Early expansion took form of grand schemes for the wealthy, with developments such as Kemp Town rivalling John Nash's projects in the capital. Another key factor in growth was the arrival of the railways, which made it easier and faster for people to travel. The first railway link to Brighton opened in 1841, and within a few years, the town was served by several railway companies, providing fast and convenient links to London and other major cities. In the ensuing decades tickets became increasingly cheaper, and Brighton found demand with working class day-trippers and commuters for whom more affordable housing schemes emerged.

3.1.5. Upon the outbreak of the First World War, the town's contribution to the war effort based itself mainly on providing aid to wounded soldiers. The Royal Pavilion as well as many other larger buildings were transformed into military hospitals. During the Second World War the town suffered

56 bombing raids and more than 5,000 houses were damaged or destroyed. Following these disruptions, however, the town continued to flourish. Slum clearance, which began in the 1930s, allowed space for municipal housing projects; these continued to provide affordable accommodation throughout the 50s, 60s and 90s. Social change during the 20th century has seen many of the 19th century townhouses converted to flats, along with the mews buildings which once served them. Brighton's economy still heavily relies on tourism, the conference trade, and leisure shopping. Its architectural heritage and the lively ambience of its historic areas, with their plethora of small shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs, are a major draw.

#### *The Application Site*

3.1.6. The application site forms part of the late Victorian phase of Brighton's expansion, as railway tickets became increasingly cheaper, and Brighton found demand with working class day-trippers and commuters. Whilst the subject land has for centuries served as fields, building began rapidly in the mid-19th century, by which time it was already built up with a dense grid of streets and small houses for workers, shops and businesses. The modest nature of the area provides contrast to more fashionable, grand forms of development along the river frontage, the Cliffs and the Styne.

3.1.7. Today, the area has maintained much of its early character, however the loss of commercial function within Hanover has been pronounced. Examples local pubs lost to residential conversion or demolition include The Albion Inn (approved under BH2015/00150), The Spread Eagle

(approved under BH2020/01857), London Unity (approved under BH2013/02995) and The Hanover (approved under BH2008/03949); this has also been a trend within wider Brighton as evidenced by planning applications ref nos. BH2008/03744 (The Victoria Public House), BH2010/01109 (Black Horse), BH2011/01177 (Bib & Tucker Pub), and BH2013/01403 (Stag Inn).

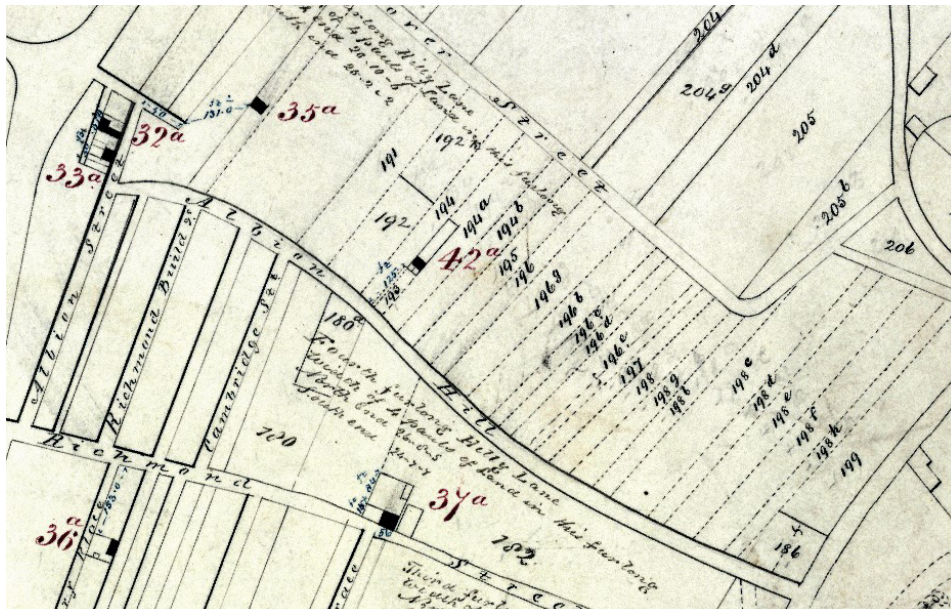
3.1.8. The subject property itself emerged in the late 19th century, though has experienced some alterations throughout the 20th/21st century. Reconfiguration and addition of extensions to the rear took place from the building's inception until the recent decades and resulted in an ad-hoc arrangement of low-quality appendages to north, prominent from the street and from within the gated amenity space. The façade has, at various points, been altered with the attachment of timber boarding at plinth level, in addition to awnings, cabling, ducts, lighting, and signage, the installation and removal of which produced damage and scarring to the tiled frontage and the rendered first floor. Poor upkeep has led to further deterioration of the building and the internal frame, described within specialist reports [attached] as 'beyond repair'. Failing lintels and walls have generated movement which led to cracking and bulging of various elements, including external tiles. Joinery had been poorly maintained and some original doors and glazing have been replaced.





J. Marchant's Map of Brighthelmstone c. 1815

Merchant's Map (1815) showing the early fishing settlement of Brighthelmstone (Brighton) prior to expansion. At this time, the site sits in an area of open fields to the north-east of the 'Lower Town'.



Tithe map of Brighton (parish), undated. Apportionment granted award by 1852

By the Tithe Map (circa 1840), the site remains undeveloped and laid to a strip field pattern. The accompanying apportionment informs the land use along Albion Hill was designated for the cultivation of gardens. Notwithstanding, major roads have been laid out and Queen's Park to the east is already present, developed from the 1820s.

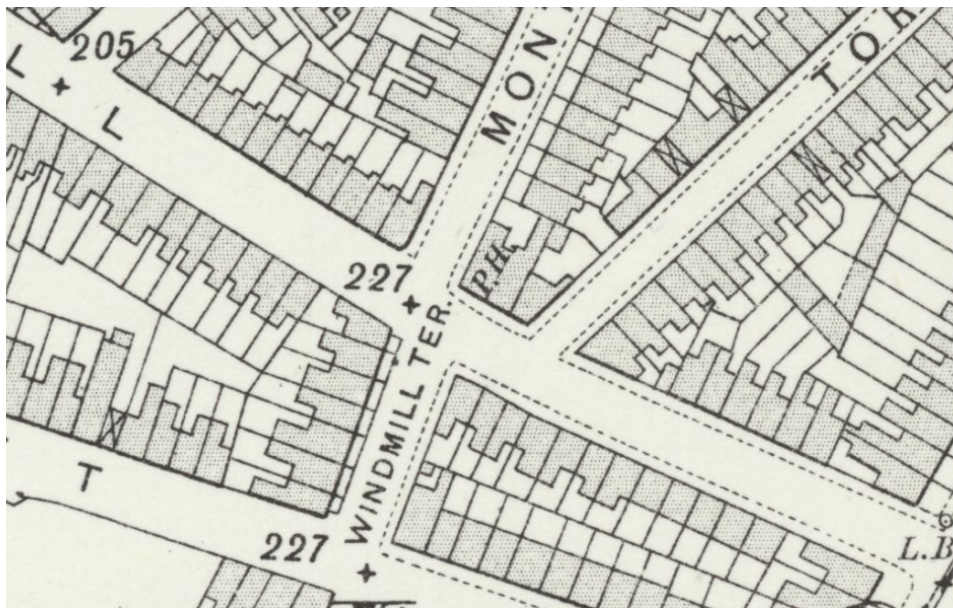




Brighton - Sussex LXVI.10.11  
Surveyed: 1873, Published: 1876.

The subject property first emerges on the 1876 Ordnance Survey map. It appears to have functioned as a pub from early years, labelled as P. H. (Public House). At this time, it included two ranges to the north arranged as parallel wings to the pub and a small infill projection.

There was an outbuilding in the north-eastern corner of the rear yard, rectangular in plan.



Sussex LXVI.10  
Revised: 1909, Published: 1911

By the OS of 1911, we see the disappearance of the outbuilding and an extension to one of the wings to north-east. The infill projection has been demolished and a small nib emerges on the planform, adjoining the rear elevation of the main pub and the north-eastern wing.





Sussex LXVI.10  
Revised: 1929, Published: 1931

By 1931, an outbuilding has been erected along the northern border of the site. No other changes are noted to the subject property in footprint. The north-eastern wing appears to have been rebuilt by the mid-20th century on a slimmer footprint as compared to its former proportions. Here, an addition of an infill to the wings is also noted.

The outbuilding to the north featured an open side along its southern elevation, as indicated by the dotted line.

Discounting the loss of the northern outbuilding, this largely corresponds to the current arrangement of the planform.



2022 Google Earth Image

A polycarbonate shelter was added the rear yard in 2008, under permission ref. no: BH2008/00356.

## HERITAGE ASSETS

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### *No. 62 Albion Hill, Montreal Arms*

#### *Description*

4.1.1. No. 62 Albion Hill, Montreal Arms, was included on Brighton and Hove City Council's register of Locally Listed Heritage assets in 2015. The listing description reads:

*"Two storey corner building, tiled to ground floor, rendered to first. Tiled hipped roof with deep eaves. Corner entrance, with further door and two windows to each elevation. It is likely that the windows originally contained stained glass (such as that to the Horse & Groom, Islington Road or Rose Hill Tavern, Rose Hill Terrace), which no longer survives. Fascia refers to the 'United' Brewery. This is a reference to the Portsmouth & Brighton United Breweries Ltd. This brewery was formed by the merger of the Portsmouth United brewery and Brighton's Rock brewery in 1927. The green-tiled frontage is typical of that company's design. Paired windows above. Pub sign set above main entrance within canted corner."*

4.1.2. The core of the property is roughly square in plan, built of bungaroosh; two storeys over a shallow cellar, double-pile, three bays



*Montreal Arms circa 1960s*



wide at ground floor and two bays wide to first, under a concrete tiled hipped roof. The rear includes a number of poor quality extensions of single and two storey height, under a variety of roof forms, in addition to a polycarbonate shelter. There is some amenity space within the rear yard, predominantly hard landscaped and enclosed by a rendered wall, where bin storage is provided. As the property is not statutory listed, the interiors are not of note or relevance to this application.

4.1.3. The principal elevation is rendered at the first floor level; a tiled frontage is a feature of the ground floor comprising glazed clay tiles. It is important to note that the frontage was added post-1927, following the merger of the Portsmouth United brewery and Brighton's Rock brewery, and is not an original feature of the pub. Hues of green distinguish the plinth and entablature, where the latter includes moulding and a cornice. Corbelled brackets frame the fascia at both ends, above a pilaster strip. The frontage is a standard Portsmouth & Brighton United Breweries design and appears on pubs of similar age throughout Brighton: examples within the area include The Heart and Hand and The Horse and Groom. Doors are a mismatched array of panelled and part-glazed examples, three in number. There are fixed case-

ment windows to ground floor and coupled one over one sashes to first floor; though frames may be of some age, the glazing is not original. A cellar hatch is located on the south elevation. The tiled frontage sustained damage due to investigative works to enable assessment of the condition of the building and the replacement of failing lintels. Prior to the works, movement of the walls and frame has led to bulging and cracking of the tiles. Historic damage had occurred due to fixture of timber boards at plinth level, the installation of awnings, signage, and numerous cable ducts. The elevation at various times included elements which contributed to an overall sense of visual clutter, such as lighting fixtures, a satellite dish, a signage bracket, etc., the installation and removal of which also resulted in some defects and scarring.

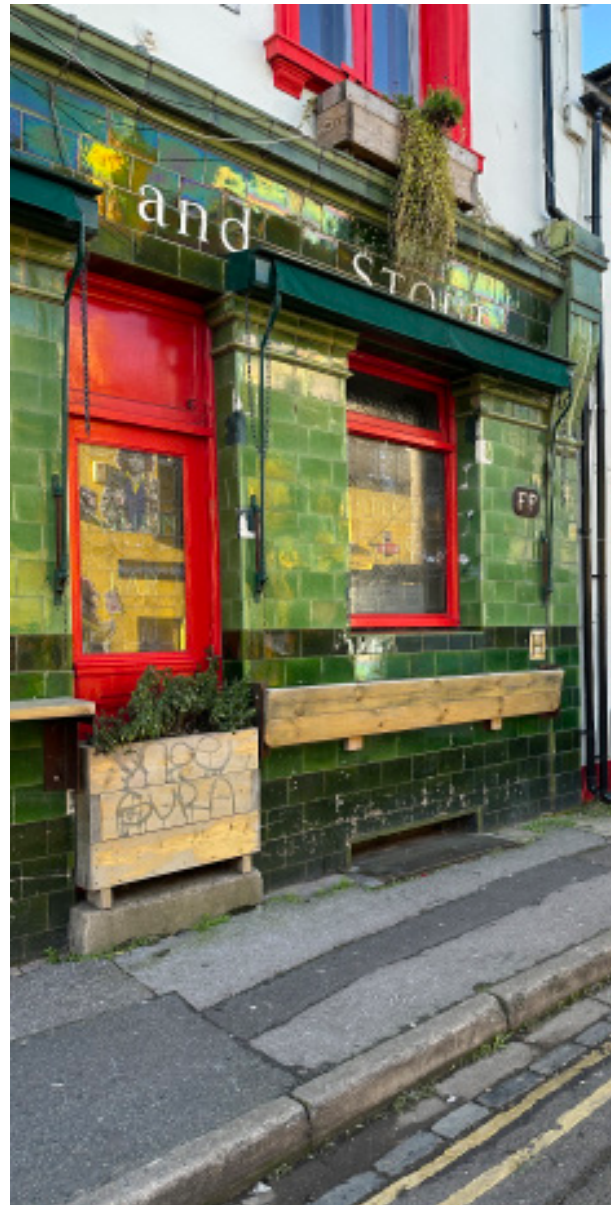
4.1.4. The special architectural interest of The Montreal Arms is primarily derived from the historic and architectural character of its principal street elevations at ground floor level. The tiled street frontage allows this building to be easily distinguishable as a former public house and to stand out visually in the street scene. This prominence is typical of this building typology; the eye catching design contributes to a landmark quality and identifies the building as a hub of local social activity. It also serves as evidence of

Portsmouth & Brighton United Breweries' historic presence in the area. Notwithstanding, it is noted this design is a late addition to the property (post-1927) and not particularly rare within Brighton. Additionally, many examples of a higher quality and better state of preservation exist. The Montreal Arms has ceased to be a viable pub in 2020 following years of declining sales, and the frontage sustained considerable damage during its years of operation. This lowers the overall significance of the building in terms of aesthetic and communal qualities, giving merely an indication of what once was. At present, major works are necessary to repair the failing structure beneath and further loss of original fabric is inevitable.

4.1.5. The north (rear) elevation is notably more utilitarian character reflecting its lower status, relative to the principal frontage overlooking the street. Having experienced much change, it is currently a pragmatic arrangement of various extensions including single and two storey elements under tiled monopitched roofs and a flat roof to the first floor extension. A polycarbonate shelter on a timber frame is also a feature. Fenestration includes timber sashes and casements, in addition to a single roof-light. A plain timber door serves to provide an entrance to and from the yard, where bin stor-



*The Heart & Hand, 75 North Rd, Brighton, features a similar frontage, in better condition*



age is provided. Various pipes and ducts clutter the elevation. Overall, the later extensions and alterations have diminished the building's significance. The unsympathetic changes detract from its architectural quality, so that overall this part of the building makes a negative contribution to its heritage significance.

4.1.6. The generally unkempt and deteriorating condition of the property is obvious. This, as evidenced by streetview images from previous years, has been the case for some time prior to survey works carried out recently. What is more, professional surveys have identified a number of key safety concerns regarding the condition of the current building. Specialist reports lead to the conclusion that the majority of the frame is unsalvageable, with extensive woodworm infestation, rot, mould, water ingress and structural cracks. The roof structure is also in need of wholesale replacement. The building has been described as 'beyond repair'. The state of the existing building is described in further detail in the accompanying Design & Access Statement and Supporting Reports which should be read alongside this statement.

4.1.7. Most recently, the building has been subject to vandalism by graffiti and the presence of squatters. Police reports detail instanc-

es of metal theft in the stripping of copper wires internally and lead flashings on the exterior. Attempts to secure the property have been unsuccessful and urgent works are required to prevent the building from becoming a nuisance to neighboring occupants.

#### *Summary*

4.1.8. The Montreal Arms is a late 19th century former pub, which incorporates a number of 20th century ranges to the rear. Although it features an attractive frontage, it is rather conventional for its type displaying limited individuality of design and quality of craftsmanship. Much of the property's significance has been eroded by its deteriorating condition and unsympathetic alterations since it was first built. These include the loss of historic glazing and doors, the addition of poor quality extensions, a polycarbonate shelter, and visual clutter created by modern cabling, ducts, uPVC downpipes, guttering, and a satellite dish. Whilst the architectural interest and significance of the building is primarily expressed through its principal elevation at ground floor level, the value of the tiled frontage is relatively low due to post-1927 origins, its poor state of preservation and lack of uniqueness or rarity.

# RELEVANT POLICIES

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## *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*

5.1.4. Section 16, paragraphs 195 to 214, of the framework sets out the national planning policy basis for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

5.1.5. Paragraph 195 recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations

5.1.6. Paragraph 200 places a duty on local planning authorities to 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.

5.1.7. Paragraphs 205 to 214 of the framework address the impact of a proposed development on the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

5.1.8. Paragraph 209 of the framework is considered particularly relevant to the current application, this states that:

*'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.'*

## DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

6.1.1. The proposal involves the restoration of a building which has, within various surveys and condition reports attached, been deemed in need of significant repair. The majority of the frame, including walls, lintels, beams, and roof need to be replaced to allow safe use of the property.

6.1.2. The restoration of Montreal Arms will allow this building to be brought back into safe use and preserve its significance.

6.1.3. The proposal includes the adaptation of the facade to pay homage to the building's heritage. This will involve repositioning the green tiles to higher levels, safeguarding them against street-level wear and tear, as observed in the previous facade. A dark green render on the lower portion will nod to the existing frontage. This choice not only maintains continuity with the building's heritage but also offers a resilient surface capable of withstanding wear and tear. Elements such as bands of color from the previous design, column features, and decorative end corbels (created using casts of the originals) will be retained to honor the building's heritage. Cornices at the top of the building have been designed to complement those of neighboring structures, ensuring architectural coherence within the neighbouring prop-

erty.

6.1.4. Redevelopment proposals are considered to retain the landmark quality of the site and preserve townscape interest, allowing this vacant building to be brought back into use.

6.1.5. Full details of the proposals can be viewed in the accompanying application packs.



# VISUALISATIONS

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# CONCLUSION

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7.1.1. The significance of the locally listed building is ascribed largely to the architectural and historic interest of its tiled frontage. Although its value is recognised, the decaying state of the property necessitates major repairs and the restoration of its frame is necessary to bring it back into safe use. The proposed changes provide a nod to the former building in the employment of traditional elements, whilst avoiding pastiche or inappropriate historicism, and will not affect the ability to appreciate the landmark quality of the site.

7.1.2. The above is considered appropriate to the nature and condition of the Montreal Arms.