

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Proposed Conversion of Offices to form 2no. Serviced Apartments at First Floor Level, and Renovations to Existing Apartment at 2nd Floor Level, including installation of 2no. New and Enlargement of 1no. Roof Window at Elmbank, 14 Castle Street, Banff, AB45 1DL.



Site Location Map (not to scale)

Job #: 240101
Report #: 01
Date: April 2024
Architect: Vanessa Brown

Studio Broon Ltd.
W: www.studiobroon.co.uk
T: 07783118977
E: vanessa@studiobroon.co.uk

1.0 Introduction

This statement has been prepared in support of a Planning Application for proposed works at Elmbank, 14 Castle Street, Banff. The proposed works, detailed on the application drawings, comprise:

- Conversion of first floor offices to form 2no. serviced apartments.
- Renovation of and amendments to existing apartment/flat at 2nd floor level to form serviced apartment.
- Enlargement of 1no. existing roof window to principal elevation (conservation type).
- Installation of 2no. new roof windows to principal elevation (conservation type).

This statement aims to provide additional explanation and justification for the proposed works.

2.0 Location + Background



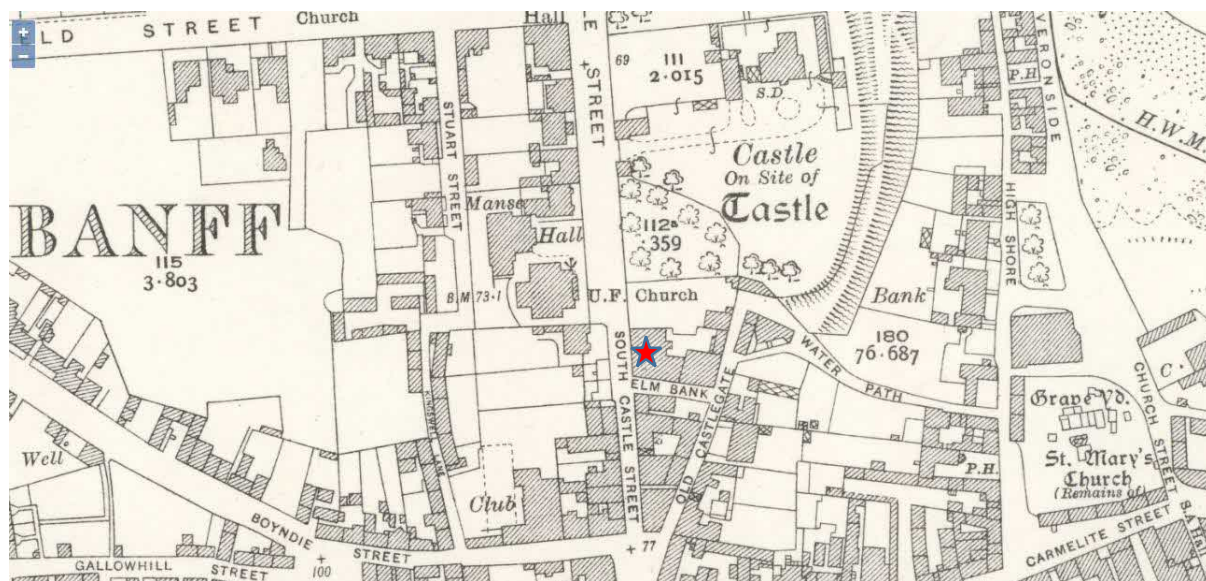
Elmbank is situated in Banff town centre, on the north-east corner where Castle Street meets Castle Lane. The building is grade C listed and sits within the Banff Conservation Area. There are a number of grade A, B and C listed buildings in the vicinity, e.g. *Banff Castle* (grade A) to the north-east and *Castle Street Trinity and Alvah Church* (grade B) north-west across the street.

The original building at Elmbank is understood to have been built as a domestic tenement, approx. 150 years ago, in around 1870. We understand the building was subdivided into separate commercial ownership in the 1960s. At that time, the central section of the building, now under our client's ownership and relating to this application, became offices, stores, and a retained flat/apartment at the 2nd floor, for A.D. Walker Limited (joiners and funeral directors).

Following a considerable period of vacancy, the central part of the property was put on the market and purchased by our client in late 2023. With a view to restoring the property to a usable building and preserving it for future generations, our client seeks to convert the building back to domestic accommodation (serviced apartments), as per the application drawings.

Site Plan (not to scale)

3.0 Existing Building



Historic Map, 1929, source: oldmapsonline.org (not to scale)

Elmbank was likely built as (merchant) tenement housing at a time when (fishing) trade was thriving in the area and Banff had recently become well connected by road and rail to Aberdeen and Inverness. Typical of that period, the building has high ceilings, large windows and moulded detailing (cornicing, skirting and door/window surrounds) and a grand central stair. There is little recorded history on the building but it is known to have been subdivided in the 1960s. The parts of the building under our client's ownership, and the subject of this application, appear largely unchanged from the original construction. Floor plans are overleaf.

On the ground floor, our client's property includes the main central entrance to the building and the vestibule and original stair beyond it. At the ground floor, the southern part of the building is currently occupied by *TSB Bank* and the northern part by *Atholl Scott Accountants*.

Tucked behind the ground floor stair is a second stair leading down to a basement. This is split by a thick central masonry wall into 2 small store rooms of limited use due to restricted height and existing services and structural propping. The outer basement room protrudes beyond the main rear wall of the original building and has a window and door leading to a mutual yard at the rear of the property. There is also a fire with large chimney in the north wall. A flat roofed extension above this part of the basement forms part of the accountancy offices.

The main central stair leads to a grand and spacious first floor. The first floor accommodation is split into 4 main rooms, which are likely largely unchanged from their construction, and a collection of toilets and kitchenette to the rear, which was likely added in perhaps the late 1960s/early 1970s to serve the offices of A.D. Walker Ltd. This 'utility block' is within a blockwork walled extension with a felt flat roof. The original rear wall is clearly evident. The remainder of the first floor (at Castle Lane) is understood to be owned by the bank.

The 2nd floor accommodation feels much more domestic, with lower ceiling heights and dormer windows within the roof space. This part of the building was most recently, and likely will have always been, domestic. Aside from a flat roofed dormer to the rear at the kitchen and the presence of a fitted bathroom, this part of the building seems largely unchanged from its construction. The remainder of the 2nd floor (at Castle Lane) is understood to be owned by the bank.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Proposed Conversion (Offices to 2no. Apartments) + Flat Renovation, incl. Roof Window Amendments, at Elmbank



CDM Notes

This project has been assessed under the construction design management regulations (CDM), following the procedure set out in paragraph 2.1 of the regulations. The contractor and other designers involved in the project are deemed to be working under a common safety certificate (CSCS) and are therefore not required to provide a separate CSCS certificate for the project.

Project Details:
 Studio Broon Ltd
 Chartered Architect
 Project Name: Elmbank
 To be completed by: 12th June 2024
 CDM Co-ordinator: [Name]

Legend:

Dimensions	Existing	New Building
Structure	Structure	Structure
Structure	Structure	Structure
Structure	Structure	Structure
Structure	Structure	Structure
Structure	Structure	Structure

Existing Construction

Floors: Existing concrete slab on ground level. Existing concrete floor slabs on ground level. Existing concrete floor slabs on ground level.

Walls: Masonry walls with an external finish of pebbledash. Masonry walls with an external finish of pebbledash. Masonry walls with an external finish of pebbledash.

Roof: Pitched roof structure with a concrete slab on top. Pitched roof structure with a concrete slab on top. Pitched roof structure with a concrete slab on top.

External Finishes: Existing external finish is pebbledash. Existing external finish is pebbledash. Existing external finish is pebbledash.

Existing External Finishes

Roof: Existing external finish is pebbledash. Existing external finish is pebbledash. Existing external finish is pebbledash.

Walls: Existing external finish is pebbledash. Existing external finish is pebbledash. Existing external finish is pebbledash.

Floors: Existing external finish is pebbledash. Existing external finish is pebbledash. Existing external finish is pebbledash.

Important Notes

All work to be carried out in accordance with the contract documents and any amendments thereto.

The contractor shall be responsible for the safety of the work and shall ensure that the work is carried out in a safe and sound manner.

The contractor shall be responsible for the safety of the work and shall ensure that the work is carried out in a safe and sound manner.

The contractor shall be responsible for the safety of the work and shall ensure that the work is carried out in a safe and sound manner.



STUDIO BROON
Chartered Architect

Project: Proposed Works at Elmbank
 14 Castle Street
 Banff, AB9 1DL

Client: Dawn Carus

Drawing: Survey - Existing Floor Plans

Job #: 240101 Dwg. #: S01 Rev: -

Date: Jan. 2024 By/Ch: JB/VB Scale: A1

E: vanessa@studiobroon.co.uk T: 07783118977

© Studio Broon Ltd, Company No. 07575210
 Address: The Station House, Banff, AB9 1DL
 Drawings to be read in conjunction with all other related drawings and scale correctly from drawings.
 All dimensions to be checked and verified on site prior to commencement of work.
IF IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT ANY ASPECT OF THIS DRAWING THEN CONTACT STUDIO BROON FOR CLARIFICATION.

Existing Floor Plan Drawings, as surveyed January 2024 (not to scale)

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Proposed Conversion (Offices to 2no. Apartments) + Flat
Renovation, incl. Roof Window Amendments, at Elmbank



Elmbank was listed (category C) in 1972 (ref. LB21956). Historic Environment Scotland's listing details are as follows:

“Dated 1870. 2-storey and attic, 5-bays with modern shop fronts filling ground floor. Dark squared whinstone frontage, rubble whinstone return gables and rear, contrasting sandstone ashlar dressings and margins. Moulded jambs to regular 1st floor windows; 3 canted dormers; 4-pane sash and case glazing.

RETURN (S) ELEVATION TO CASTLE LANE: 3-storey and dormerless attic, wide 4-bays. Regular plain fenestration with horizontal 12-pane glazing in 1st and 2nd floor fenestration. Pair small round-headed attic lights in E rear gable. Coped end stacks; slate roofs.”

Elmbank also appears on Historic Environment Scotland's *Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland*. The building's condition is noted as *fair* and its risk category as *low*. This is based on an external site visit made in October 2013, when the upper floors of the building were noted as being vacant/disused. The external condition was described as follows:

“In generally fair condition but with badly maintained windows and very corroded gutters and downpipes block by weeds in places.”

Following our internal and external survey of the existing building (the parts of it under our client's ownership and where access allowed), and a site visit by a structural engineer, the building is considered to be in fairly good condition, given its age and 10+ years of vacancy. Some basic repairs are likely to be necessary but the building is considered suitable for the proposed works without major intervention to the existing building structure and fabric.

The existing elevation drawings, as surveyed in January 2024, are shown overleaf. The principal elevation on Castle Street likely remains largely unchanged from its construction (with the exception of signage etc. at the ground floor commercial units and now adjoining flat roofed units to the north). The rear elevation is far less formal and has clearly had a number of later additions and alterations made over the lifetime of the building. Some of these are likely to date from before the building was listed in 1972.

A selection of photographs of the existing building are shown on the following pages. Unless noted otherwise, these were taken by the architect in late 2023 / early 2024.



Note that 7no. private car parking spaces on Castle Lane also form part of the application site and are under the same ownership.

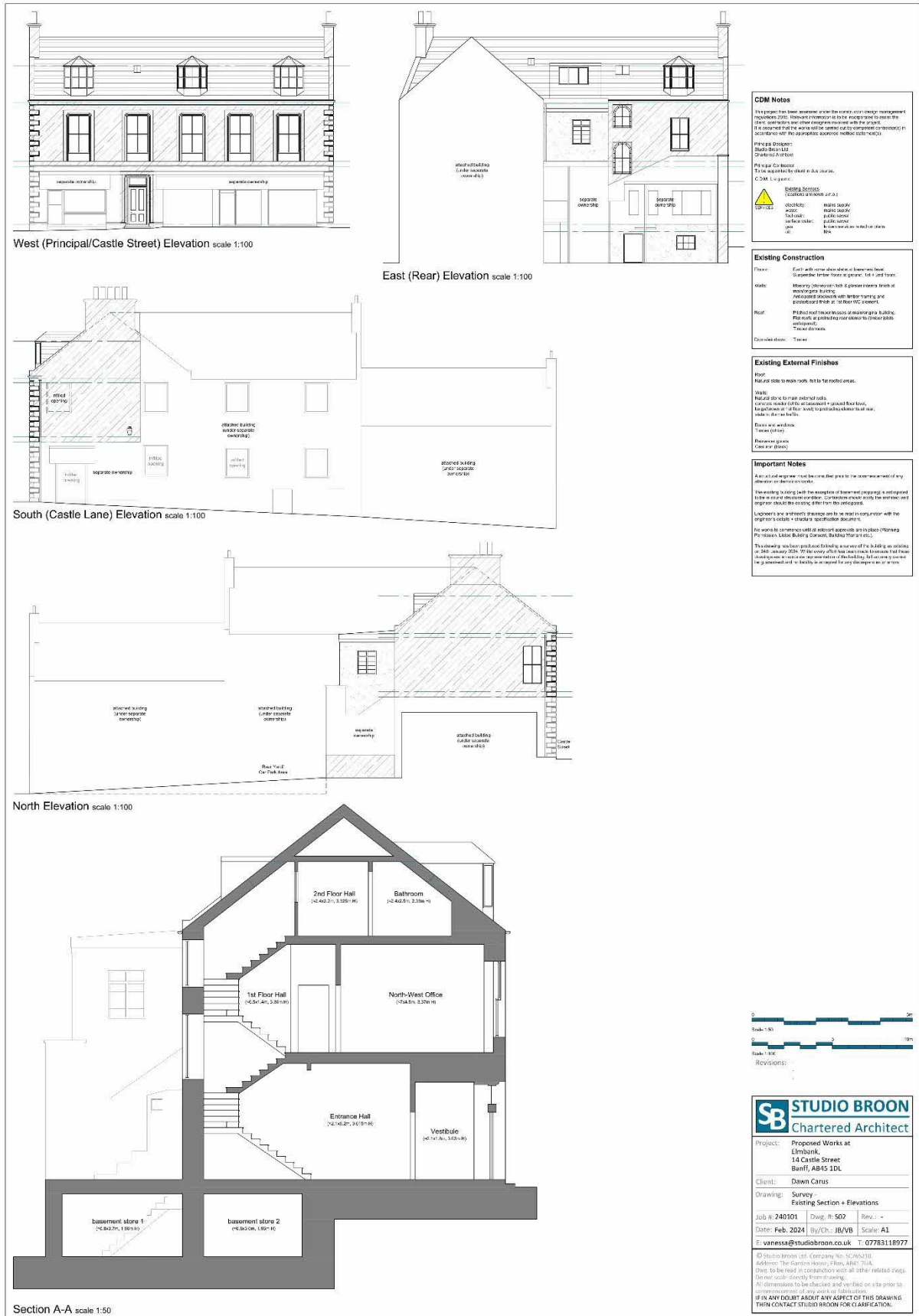
The parking area is shown in the photograph opposite.

The parking area is defined by a building to the rear, the public road to the front, and metal railings to the sides.

Photograph 1: Private Car Parking Area,
source: Google Streetview, 2024

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Proposed Conversion (Offices to 2no. Apartments) + Flat Renovation, incl. Roof Window Amendments, at Elmbank



Existing Elevation + Section Drawings, as surveyed January 2024 (not to scale)

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

**Proposed Conversion (Offices to 2no. Apartments) + Flat
Renovation, incl. Roof Window Amendments, at Elmbank**



Photograph 2: West / Principal / *Castle Street* Elevation, taken from beyond *Castle Street* at car park opposite for a wider perspectived view, roof is less visible from the street



Photograph 3: South / *Castle Lane* Elevation

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

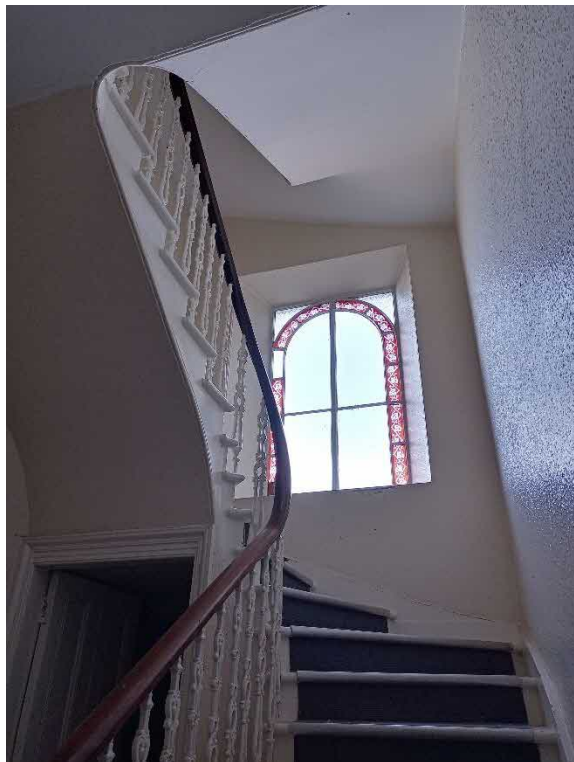
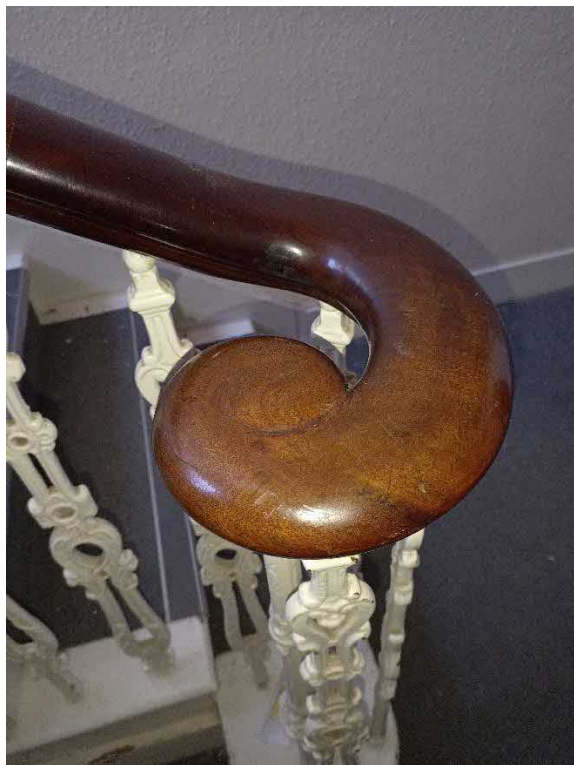
**Proposed Conversion (Offices to 2no. Apartments) + Flat
Renovation, incl. Roof Window Amendments, at Elmbank**



Photograph 4: East / Rear / *Old Castle Gate* Elevation,
Note arched windows at main stair and beige rendered WC block at 1st floor level



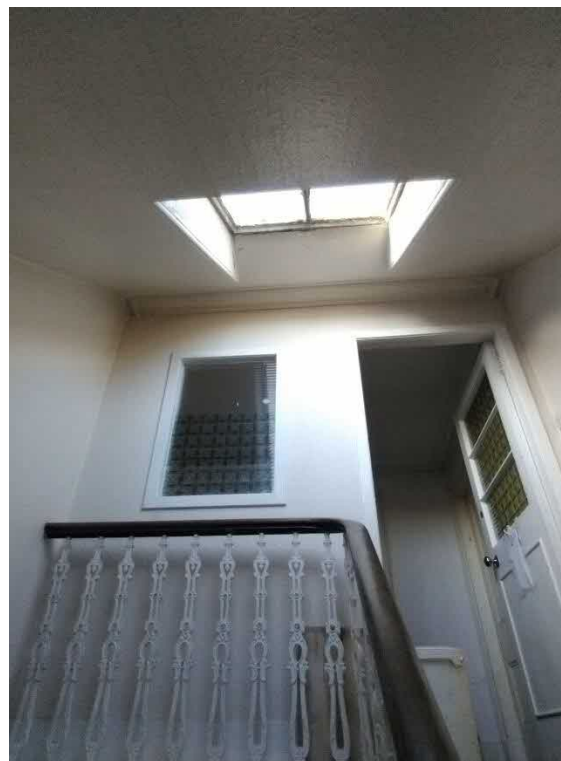
Photograph 5: North / Side Elevation facing *Banff Castle + Castle Gardens*



Photographs 6.1-6.4: Ground Floor Architectural Details,
Note: External door photograph, C. 2013, source: Buildings at Risk Register Scotland



Photographs 7.1-7.4: First Floor Architectural Details



Photographs 8.1-8.4: Second Floor Architectural Details

4.0 Proposed Works

Our client purchased the application site in late 2023. Having grown up in Banff and with strong family links to the area, she was already very familiar with the building and its setting within the historic town. The applicant has experience in both property renovation and the hospitality industry. To support her planned move back to Banff in the near future, she plans to draw on both these areas of expertise to renovate and bring back into viable use this noble building within her home town.

The proposed works, detailed on the application drawings (and shown overleaf), comprise:

- Conversion of first floor offices to form 2no. serviced apartments.
- Renovation of and amendments to existing apartment/flat at 2nd floor level to form serviced apartment.
- Enlargement of 1no. existing roof window to principal elevation (conservation type).
- Installation of 2no. new roof windows to principal elevation (conservation type).

Subject to the relevant approvals, the applicant intends to let the completed flats as serviced apartments. She has experience in hospitality and intends this business to support her move back to the area. It is understood that the building was originally domestic and the accommodation as it is today lends itself to conversion back to domestic without major intervention. Particularly at the first floor level, the grand spaces, large windows and sea views show strong potential for conversion to desirable luxury apartments. It is felt that this is a viable business plan. However, if for whatever reason circumstances change, then the building as converted will work equally well as individual private apartments.

Externally, some essential maintenance is anticipated, e.g. rainwater gear, slate and flashing servicing and repairs as necessary. All external repairs are to be on a like-for-like basis. All windows are anticipated to be retained. Some local repairs and repainting to match existing may be required at some windows. No full replacements are anticipated. Whilst it would be desirable to upgrade the single glazed windows to double glazing for better energy efficiency and noise, this is not financially viable for the project at this time.

Internally, some fairly minor amendments are proposed as per the drawings. The walls around the central stair, separating walls between apartments and external envelope of the building are anticipated to require upgrading to meet building regulations with regards to fire, noise and insulation/energy.

The property has been vacant/disused for at least a decade now. Ultimately, that is how a historical building generally comes to be on the *Buildings at Risk Register*. If a building is in regular use then it is far more likely to be well maintained and minor problems, leaks etc. can be known and repaired in good time rather than left to deteriorate further.

This building is in relatively good condition given how long it has been vacant. However the cost of the proposed works is a considerable financial investment. The applicant will have a strong financial interest to continue to look after and preserve the building post completion. That commitment will benefit the building, Banff conservation area, and the community.

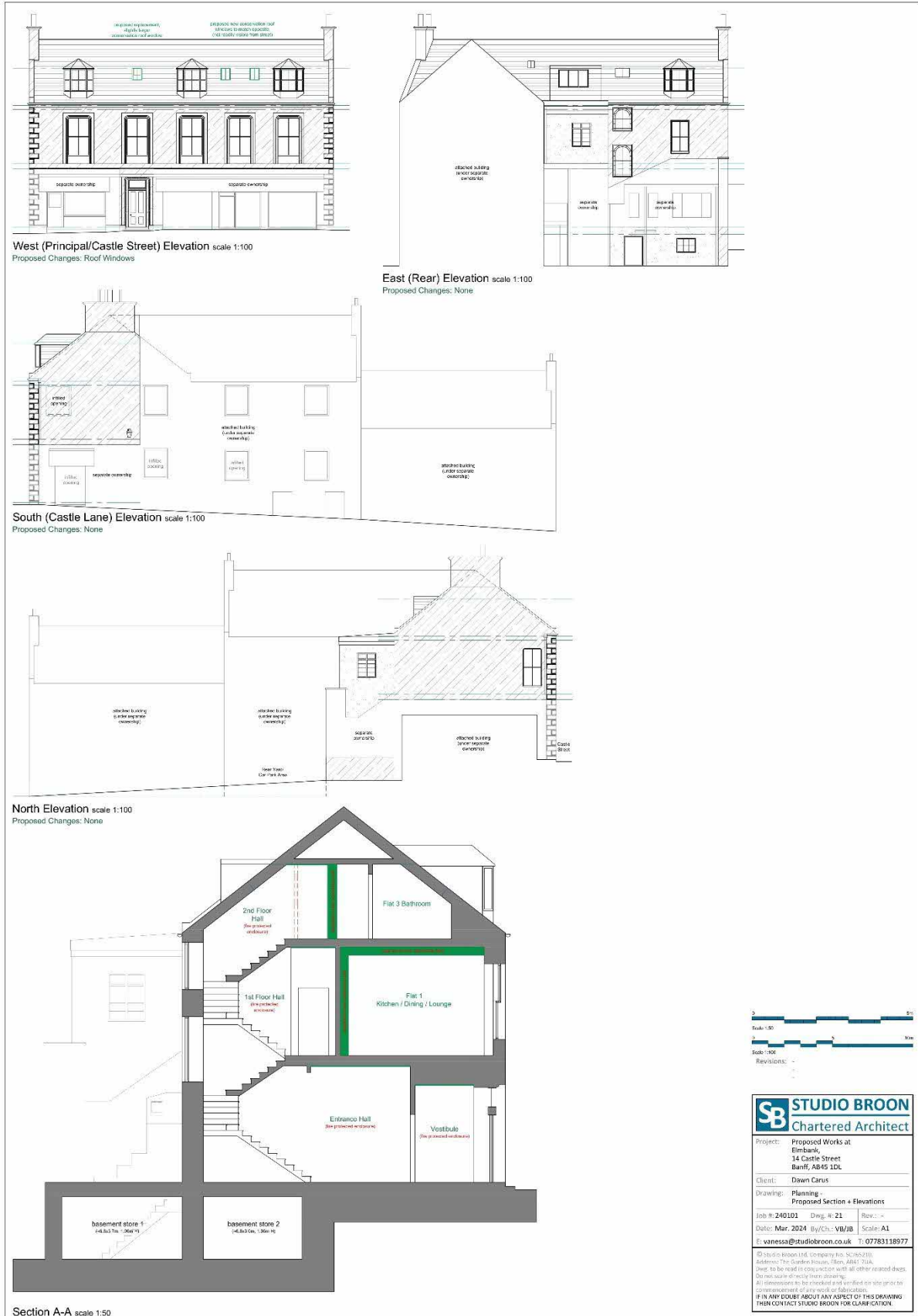
SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Proposed Conversion (Offices to 2no. Apartments) + Flat Renovation, incl. Roof Window Amendments, at Elmbank



Proposal Floor Plan Drawings (not to scale)

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
Proposed Conversion (Offices to 2no. Apartments) + Flat
Renovation, incl. Roof Window Amendments, at Elmbank



Proposal Elevation Drawings (not to scale)

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Proposed Conversion (Offices to 2no. Apartments) + Flat
Renovation, incl. Roof Window Amendments, at Elmbank



5.0 Conclusion

The applicant hereby applies for planning permission for the proposed works at Elmbank, Banff. The proposed works aim to find a viable use for this long term vacant, 'at risk', listed building, within Banff Conservation Area. The proposed works will create more domestic accommodation (serviced apartments) within Banff. The project will also help to support local businesses during construction and use. The proposed use and the relatively modest proposed alterations to the building are considered appropriate for the building and context, are anticipated to conserve the building for future generations and benefit the conversation area and community.