

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 11/09/2026

Application Ref: HPK/2026/0312

Site Address: 2 Spring Gardens

Proposal: Replacing 4 existing timber frames with new timber frame windows painted in dark blue, removing the window astragal bars and replacing the single panes with double glazing; re-profile masonry to follow window line and reinstating the original window rectangular shape that was modified when the old ATM was installed and then the hole infilled with stonework following the ATM removal

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	Buxton Central Conservation Area
Non-Designated Heritage Assets(s) (NDHAs):	☒	Former Westminster Bank – 2 Spring Gardens

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

2 Spring Gardens is an unlisted building located within the Buxton Central Conservation Area. Buxton Central Conservation Area was designated for its predominant association as a planned spa town settlement implemented by the principal landowners – the Dukes of Devonshire – from late-18th century. The central part of the town is characterised by its high proportion of Georgian and Victorian buildings, association with select group of notable architects, cohesive design of buildings and high-quality parks and landmarks. The building occupies a prominent corner plot on Spring Gardens and contributes positively to the conservation area.

Historic photos of the property show that 2 Spring Gardens was likely a purpose-built bank building for Westminster Bank (later Nat West following a merger with the National Provincial Bank in the 1960s). The bank was built in the Gothic revival style built of ashlar stone, featuring pointed arches, irregular chimneys, small decorative turrets, hood mouldings and mullion windows. The ground floor façade has been altered, principally in the alteration of fenestration details. However, the building retains the majority of its original architectural features. As such the building is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).

Assessment and Impact

The application seeks consent for external alterations to the fenestrations. The

application proposes to remedy alterations made by the previous AMT an install clear glazing without glazing bars to the windows.

Firstly, the applications heritage statement fails to correctly identify the application site as a non-designated heritage asset. Furthermore, the heritage statement incorrectly identified the large rectangular windows as ‘original’ to the property. Historic photos of 2 Spring Gardens are readily available which show the large rectangular opening to be a later installation. As such the heritage statement submitted fails to comply with policy HE5 (1) (NPPF 2026).

Secondly, the large rectangular windows without glazing bars are considered inappropriate for installation on the NDHA. All windows on the property have a vertical emphasis which is achieved by the use of glazing bars and tall narrow windows. The glazing bars on the existing ground floor windows allow this vertical visual effect to be maintained. Historically the original windows at the ground floor were tall narrow windows with stone mullions and protective metal security bars in relation to the bank use of the building¹. The larger windows openings as present today were installed after the 1930s². As such closer attention should be paid to design of the proposed window alterations. The lack of glazing bars proposed makes the ground floor of the building look unusually squat and is out of character with both the historic of the property and its existing character. Furthermore, vertically emphasised windows are characteristic of the Conservation Area at large, typically in the form of sash windows. Revised windows retaining some glazing bars and a vertical visual effect are required.

Legislation and Policy

Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that with respect to any buildings or land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.

National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)

HE5: Assessing effects on heritage assets

1. Development proposals affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the assets affected (including any contribution made by their setting) and of the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is

¹ [Historic image c.1930 - Picture the Past](#)

² [Historic image c.1960 - Picture the Past](#)

necessary to understand the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The relevant historic environment record should be referred to in making this assessment, and appropriate expertise employed where necessary.

2. Assessments of the potential effects of development proposals on the significance of heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether proposals would be likely to:

- a. Have a positive effect, which is where the significance of a heritage asset would be enhanced, or better revealed; or
- b. Have no effect on the significance of a heritage asset; or
- c. Result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, either from work affecting the asset itself or from development within its setting. The degree of harm should be identified: substantial harm would occur where the development proposal would seriously affect a key element of the asset's significance; or
- d. Cause the total loss of the significance of a heritage asset.

HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets

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

3. Any harm to a designated heritage asset will be a matter of considerable importance and weight, which should be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs 4 to 6 of this policy.

4. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.

HE7: Decisions on non-designated heritage assets

2. Where a development proposal would harm the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal and a balanced judgement made, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

HE9: Conservation areas

1. Development proposals within or affecting the significance of conservation areas should:

- a. Retain and conserve buildings and other features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area where possible; and
- b. Consider the area's special architectural or historic interest (as identified as part of the designation of the conservation area) in the design of development.

Local Development Framework

Consideration should also be given to the following documents and local development framework policies:

- High Peak Local Plan (Adopted 2016) – EQ7 Built and Historic Environment
- Buxton area character appraisal (adopted April 2007)

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the heritage statement submitted fails to accurately identify the building as a NDHA and fails to successfully utilise publicly available historical sources to recognize historic alterations to the building's façade. As such the application fails to comply with policy HE5 (1) of the NPPF (2026). As a result, the proposed design of the fenestration alterations have not been informed by the buildings predominate architectural style and conflict with the principal character of the host building. Therefore, the proposal fails to consider the area's special architectural and historic interest (policy HE9 (1) of the NPPF 2026). Furthermore, the proposal is considered harmful to the historic and architectural interest of the NDHA (policy HE7 (2) of the NPPF 2026). As such it is recommended that in the absence of suitable amendments to the heritage statement and the design of the ground floor fenestration details the application should be refused in order to protect the conservation area and NDHA as outlined above.

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