

BUILD Architects

DESIGN ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

October 2025

Proposed Restoration, Renovation & Extension

Dewey House
North Row
Warminster
BA12 9AD

1.0 LOCATION

Dewey House is a Grade II listed building which lies on North Row in the centre of Warminster, the building forms part of a secluded town centre street which has a variety of architectural styles & periods of development from the 18th century to the present day with an eclectic mix of design styles, adaptations, extension, developments, & building uses.

There are other listed building in the immediate area & the property also lies within the Warminster conservation area. To the rear of the site there is the service area & car park for the Three Horseshoes Walk shopping development which was built in the latter part of the 20th century offering a modern outdoor mall style shopping experience to the centre of Warminster.



Fig 1 – Front elevation of building to North Row

2.0 BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

This report has been prepared in support of the planning / listed building consent application submitted to the local authority in order to obtain approval for the proposed works, the application includes the following:

- **Change of use application**
- **Internal alterations to the ground & first floor**
- **Adaptation & extension of the existing side extension**
- **Review & upgrades to the mechanical & electrical systems to include sustainable systems where possible**
- **Provision of solar panels to the rear roof slopes**
- **Works to WC's / bathrooms & provision of improved sanitary facilities**
- **Remedial works to the exterior of the property**
- **Repairs to the roof to include improved insulation**

The design proposals have been prepared following discussion and development of a brief with the client and are considered to be a high-quality design which is sensitive and in proportion to the existing building, its neighbours and the wider context. Materials have been carefully chosen to maintain the character of the area and to reflect the setting.

The proposals do not seek to overdevelop the site and, in our opinion, offer harmony, proportion and balance all elevations, massing and appearance.

In addition to these general principles the proposals have been prepared to reflect the information given in the planning advice documents from the local authority. Attention has been paid to similar developments in the area which have previously been approved.

3.0 THE EXISTING SITUATION

The existing building has been under the ownership of Warminster Town Council for a number of years with the town council having moved to their offices in the new civic centre around 13 years ago, the building was then host to a number of related tenants & activities with the last being the Warminster Food Bank. The food bank relocated to new premises in February 2025 & since then the building has been vacant with the new owners taking possession earlier this year.

The building fronts on to North Row with rear access from the service yard of Three Horseshoes Walk, there is a small forecourt area to the front of the building including off street parking.

The existing building was originally built in 1704 as a meeting house & then altered in 1872 into a girl's school. We believe the main core of the building (the double roofed centre section) is from the 1704 construction with the front porch added in 1872 along with some internal alterations.

The building appears to have been adapted in the latter half of the 20th century with the addition of the side extension including WC provision & a kitchen as well as a variety of other internal alterations.

The previous owners did maintain the building to a good standard but many of the works that were executed have been crude & have meant the loss of previous internal fabric; the building services are also dated & will require extensive updating & overhaul to meet current safety standards for the protection of the building (electrical safety) & also for the continued use of the premises for any public or private use.

3.0 THE PROPOSALS

The proposals are addressed in the attached package of drawings with additional detail noted below relating to specific works & their impact upon the listed building, its setting & the historic fabric.

The works are intended to maintain a commercial / business presence on the site with the nature of the operation changing from the food bank / town council to a leisure facility & café with the following elements being the main subject of this application.

- **Change of use application**
- **Internal alterations to the ground & first floor**
- **Adaptation & extension of the existing side extension**
- **Review & upgrades to the mechanical & electrical systems to include sustainable systems where possible**
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Change of use application

We are seeking to change the use classification of the building to fall within “Class E” for a commercial business or service with the intention being to provide a café & day spa.

The building was previously owned & operated by Warminster Town Council but they relocated their local community provision to the Warminster Civic Centre in 2012 as the building did not meet their needs nor the needs of the community.

In recent years the building has hosted the activities of the Warminster & District Food Bank while still being owned by the Warminster Town Council; this organisation moved to new premises in February of this year & the Town Council was unable to find a new user group nor did it require this premises for its own activities. On this basis the building has passed in to the private ownership of the applicant who is seeking to maintain the non-residential use of the building.

The change of use will bring 2 new businesses to the centre of Warminster with an injection of commercial activity & economic growth to the town along with new jobs & interest in a town centre which has suffered from empty commercial units especially in older properties in recent years.

For example, the ground & upper floors of the original town hall has stood vacant for over 15 years & directly opposite the “Barleycorn” is also a heritage building which currently sits empty; these examples are within a one-minute walk of the site.

We are seeking to retain the building as a non-residential unit & also make best use of the historic location to bring jobs & economic gains to the town.

Internal alterations to the ground & first floor

The internal alterations look to work with the existing floor plan of the building to minimise the loss of any remaining historic fabric but to facilitate the new proposed uses.

The main “east / west” axis of the spine wall running across the building is retained with the alterations to the ground floor & first floor rooms only adjusting works which we believe were carried out as part of the 20th century phase of development when the building was updated internally & the side extension added.

The new mezzanine structure within the main meeting hall will be constructed in isolation from the original historic fabric such as the rear windows & decorative columns so that it can be read as a separate phase of development.

New showers & specialist spa facilities will be constructed on new flooring plates which will be constructed over the existing floors so as to retain these features with new services easily

able to pass in the newly created service zone thus minimising structural alterations & the subsequent loss of historic fabric. This approach also makes any repairs easier to execute & allows the works to be easily reversed in the future.

Adaptation & extension of the existing side extension

The existing side extension is a crude 20th century intervention including poor quality brickwork & an intrusive metal fire escape (although the service this provides is valuable).

It is proposed to replace this extension with a 2-storey wing which would host the proposed café space. The design has been developed based on the classical design & proportions of the existing building and its geometry and proportion can be traced back to the 5 orders of classical architecture which makes it a well-appointed addition to complement the existing building.

The new works will sit back from the primary façade of the main building to maintain the primary nature of the original structure & define the secondary / subservient nature of the new intervention.

Review & upgrades to the mechanical & electrical systems

The existing M&E systems have been provided as piecemeal services throughout the life of the property and currently stand as a disjointed system which does not offer harmony or best practice to the building.

A recent survey by an M&E professional has noted that there are potentially hazardous electrical installations which run the risk of sparking an electrical fire; the vast majority of the current installation has been inspected and has been recommended to be replaced and upgraded in order to satisfy current safety standards whether this is to maintain the existing use or any new proposed use.

It is proposed to remove these hazardous elements as well as removing any defunct / redundant systems & replacing all other systems with sympathetic modern fittings so that the building can be used safely. Any new works will look to make use of existing service routes or existing voids to minimise disruption to the historic fabric and will be executed by local professionals skilled in working with listed and historic buildings.

We are also looking at a number of sustainable technologies for the building, these include the following;

- **PV panels / solar panels**
- **Air source heat pump**
- **Thermodynamic heating / hot water**
- **Solar hot water**

The building will have its insulation provision improved where possible to improve the day-to-day use of the building & its performance for users and the new extension will seek to harness passive solar design to create a space which is easy to heat and does not have an adverse impact on its setting and the environment in its construction or operation.

Provision of solar panels / solar hot water panels to the rear roof slopes

At present we are looking to provide PV panels & solar hot water panels to the rear roof slopes as can be seen on drawing PP-022.

This installation will be fixed over the existing roof slope so keeping the existing roof material “as existing” & being reversible so that the panels can be removed if required & the roof returned to its original condition.

The location of the panels is proposed to the “rear” slopes of the roof so that they will not be visible from the primary elevation to North Row & only partially visible to the rear, it should be noted that the rear aspect of the building faces the modern context of Three Horseshoes Walk. The panels will be specified to avoid any glare or reflection so that they are not a nuisance visually for any neighbour or other interest holder.

As part of these works we will execute like for like repairs to the roof including the tiles to the roof slopes, the lead valley gutters & the rainwater goods / fascias. Works to roof are proposed as like for like repairs rather than wholesale replacement, we believe this will fall under repair work so will not require listed building consent. With this in mind we do propose to produce a schedule of condition / schedule of repair document so the works can be recorded for future reference.

These works will extend to the replacement of lead valleys and soakers which have reached the end of their serviceable life, all lead will be replaced in like for like manner with the aim being to use Code 5 or 6 lead where possible with all details executed in accordance with the best practice guidance of the Lead Sheet Association. This will address a number of areas where ingress water has been identified and is causing damage to the fabric of the building.

Existing rainwater goods will be inspected and repaired / replaced in a like for like manner as required, as with the works noted previously a record document will be maintained to chronicle the works for future reference.

During the roof works we will look to retain as much of the original materials as possible with all items carefully removed & stored on site for re-use, any new materials required will be carefully selected to match the existing in terms of material, finish, profile etc.

Existing insulation to the roof & ceiling spaces will be replaced with the aim being to meet with current building regulations however this will not be enforced by Building Control but is sought to improve the thermal performance of the building.

If required we will engage an ecological consultant to carry out a bat survey however as the property is occupied and in an urban setting it is very unlikely the building has any bat activity.

Works to WC's / bathrooms & provision of improved sanitary facilities

The existing WC's are mainly located in the 20th century extension & these are crude, basic facilities which should be upgraded to meet current performance standards.

The existing disabled WC is not correctly sized to meet legislation so we propose that this element is altered to meet DDA compliant provision & also include bay changing facilities.

Remedial works to the exterior of the property

These actions are referred to in more detail in section 8.0 of this document.

Generally, the proposals do not impact upon matters such as light, views, privacy or overlooking when considering neighbours. The proposals seek to deliver a sustainable and suitable development which will allow the future occupation and use of the property.

In our opinion the proposals will deliver a better balance of services, facilities and accommodation to the site allowing the current owners to operate their business successfully & maintain the site.

4.0 APPEARANCE & MATERIALS

Careful consideration has been given to the design and how it will impact on the building and its wider setting. As part of the design process, we have reviewed and responded to information provided by the local authority and believe that the proposed design offers the following in terms of its justification;

- **The design is well considered and of high quality**
- **Relationship between existing and new elements are complimentary / well proportioned**
- **Traditional materials and construction methods will be specified**
- **New materials will be selected to match or complement the existing material palette**

A full measured survey of the property has already been carried out and a further detailed survey will take place to identify and potential structural or material hazards moving forwards including the presence of asbestos or other materials hazardous to health.

While the proposed extension is contemporary in its style we have based the proportions carefully around the classical form of the original building picking up key lines & features from the original elevation to allow the new extension to sit elegantly against its historic host. We believe that this is the most appropriate solution is & an improvement on the rather crude wing previously executed & also favourable rather than a pastiche faux classical elevation which would not describe the narrative & development of the building; ours is a 21st century intervention & in our opinion all the more successful for that.

Existing materials will be carefully removed, labelled, catalogued and retained on site for re-use in the property either being refixed in their original position where possible or re-used elsewhere where practical, any new materials will be carefully selected to match the existing and will be agreed with the local authority as required.

5.0 ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

Where economically feasible it is intended to use sustainable materials and employ environmentally friendly techniques. The efficient use of water will be promoted during the building phase and all disposable materials will be collected by a reputable local firm for recycling where possible.

Local materials such as timber will also be specified for the proposed works and it is hoped to appoint a local builder to carry out the works thus helping to maintain and sustain the local economy.

It is assumed that the development will include low energy light fittings and low water use sanitary ware with appropriate controls. It is also assumed that all new white goods and other fittings will be energy efficient. The proposed design has window area capable of providing good natural lighting and a pleasant internal environment, this arrangement will reduce the need for additional artificial lighting.

We are also looking at a number of sustainable technologies for the building, these include the following;

- **PV panels / solar panels**
- **Air source heat pump**
- **Thermodynamic heating / hot water**
- **Solar hot water**

The building will have its insulation provision improved where possible and the new orangery will seek to harness passive solar design to create a space which is easy to heat and does not have an adverse impact on its setting and the environment in its construction or operation.

6.0 REFUSE & RECYCLING

The existing arrangements for the house will remain in place in terms of refuse, waste and recycling bins, these will be stored within a dedicated bin & refuse store & then placed in the forecourt for waste collections which will be carefully managed to ensure the flow of traffic & pedestrians on North Row is not impeded.

There will be recycling provision on site & also careful management of all waste including food waste being offered for compost etc. to minimise the “waste footprint” of the business.

Given the sustainable & holistic nature of the proposed business we believe that careful waste management is a key aspect of this application.

7.0 ECOLOGY & PROTECTED SPECIES

To our understanding there are no ecological assets or protected species present on the site with any trees or bushes being of no ecological importance.

8.0 LANDSCAPING

The front forecourt is currently a plain open area finished in tarmac & feels very much a utilitarian space in the same “Ministry of Works” style as the existing side extension. As part of the proposals for the side extension we propose to relay the forecourt in stone flags to better compliment the building & create a more attractive access to the building.

These works will also allow us to address disabled access to main building with pavings laid to falls to allow level access to the main front doors thus making the building accessible to wheelchair users, children, prams & other visitors with mobility & access needs. There will be no requirement for an external platform lift which can take up a large amount of space & appear unsightly & out of keeping with the building nor would we require any new handrails or balustrading to be erected.

The existing railings & boundary wall will be repaired in a like for like manner with careful repairs executed to restore these elements; there will be no change to the biodiversity of the site.

9.0 FLOOD RISK

The property does not lie within a flood risk area as confirmed by the Environment Agency Flood Map.

10.0 ACCESS

The proposed works do not change any vehicle access or parking arrangements associated with the property.

There is one parking bay associated with the building & this will be retained in the new design allowing for staff parking / disabled parking or for service calls / deliveries so as not to impede the flow of other traffic on north Row.

In its current use as a commercial property the building has seen the need for staff & visitors to access the building for many years with staff & patrons able to park in the town centre car parks, arrive as pedestrians / cyclists or to use the ample public transport network which serves the town centre locally, regionally & nationally.

Given the previous levels of occupation / capacity we see no overall change in the provision of parking on site nor any need to address general arrangements despite the change in the nature of the building & the services it provides. We will provide dedicated cycle bays to address these users & also look to offer an EV charging point on site.

11.0 HERITAGE

See below the full listing description for the property.

<i>Entry name</i>	<i>Former Girls' British School</i>
<i>Listing date</i>	<i>31 March 1978</i>
<i>Grade</i>	<i>II</i>
<i>EH Legacy ID</i>	<i>312971</i>

WARMINSTER NORTH ROW

Originally the "Old Meeting". Built 1704, altered 1872 into girls school. An excellent plain building close in style to Lord Weymouth's School in Church Street (qv). 2 storeys, red brick on coursed and squared rubble base. Stone quoins and dressings to 2 light stone mullion windows. M-section hipped old tile roof with sprocket eaves. Band over ground floor. 5 windows on 1st floor, 4 on ground floor with brick flat arches. Projecting central gabled porch (circa 1872) with moulded footstones to coped verge and moulded entrance with 4 centred arch. 2 large cross stone mullions and transom windows to east and a blocked doorway. Roof supported by 2 polygonal timber columns of massive scantling. Dwarf wall in front with spearhead railings (circa 1872) the standards having 4 quills to caps.

Listing NGR: ST8743845161

The building has been adapted and altered throughout its history with alterations continuing up to the present day.

12.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 17 states ‘Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both planmaking and decision-taking’.

The most relevant of these principles are number 6: planning should ‘support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy).’ And number 10: Planning should ‘conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.’ NPPF Paragraph 128 states: ‘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.’

Significance is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework Glossary as: ‘the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.’

The over-arching aim of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which is expressed in the Ministerial foreword, is that: ‘Our historic environment - buildings, landscapes, towns and villages – can better be cherished if their spirit of place thrives, rather than withers.’ Regarding preserving the significance of a heritage asset, the NPPF Paragraph 129 states that: ‘Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of available evidence and any necessary expertise.

They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.’ NPPF Paragraph 131 states the following: ‘In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to the sustainable communities including their economic vitality

- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'

NPPF Paragraph 132 states the following:

'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. 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. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I grade II* listed buildings, grade I and grade II* registered parks and gardens, and world Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.'

NPPF Paragraph 133 states the following:

Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following:

- The nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site
- No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation
- Conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible
- The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use

NPPF Paragraph 134 states the following: Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the of the designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

NPPF Paragraph 137 states the following:

Local planning authorities should 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 or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

Although the proposals will involve carrying out works to the listed building including new openings & other alterations, we believe the following should also be taken into consideration;

- **No decorative features other than skirtings and architraves will be lost as part of the work.**
- **The limited loss of historic fabric should be seen within the context of the building being maintained in use and the benefits that this would bring to the building & the community rather than lying vacant.**
- **The proposed restoration represents a considerable financial investment, which will reverse years of poor maintenance, and rescue the building from a point where it will start to go into serious decline.**
- **This work will help ensure the future of the building & its status as a heritage asset.**
- **If required in the future, it would be possible to reverse much of the work.**
- **As part of the work, the room has been fully recorded by photographs and a measured survey, which will provide a record of the area.**

With regards to national planning policy the following should be considered;

- **Although the proposals involve alterations to historic fabric, the effect on the overall significance of the building will be limited**
- **Alterations carried to the interior of the building since the mid-nineteenth century have robbed the building of much of its early historic interest but we seek to retain that which is still present in its fullest form**
- **The proposals seek to comply with NPPF Paragraphs 129 and 132**

The proposals will involve limited alterations to the historic fabric, which will result in less than substantial harm to the historic significance of the building, this complies with NPPF Paragraphs 132 and 133.

The less than substantial harm caused by the proposals has been carefully considered to have a limit the impact on the historic significance, and forms an important part of overall plans to restore the building from the point where it could go into serious decline. This will ensure the long-term future of the building and complies with NPPF Paragraphs 131 and 134.

13.0 CONCLUSION

It is our belief that this statement addresses the mandatory requirements for a Design, Access & Heritage Statement.

It has been also been demonstrated that the proposals would secure a number of planning and heritage benefits which will enhance the appearance and character of the listed building, while meeting the objectives of development plan policy and the NPPF.

The proposed work throughout the house has been carefully considered to be sensitive to the historic fabric and will enhance the historic significance of the building. Where changes are proposed these proposals have been fully described and justified in this document and if additional information or justification is required, we are happy to provide this.

The proposal has been carefully developed and designed to be relative to its location and the wider site. It is our belief that the proposed development will work in harmony with the existing property, the neighbouring buildings and the surrounding landscape.

As a result, we hope that we have justified the development and that this application will be supported by the authority.