



## Speaking for Scotland's Buildings

26<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Cameron Kirk  
Planning and Economic Development  
Scottish Borders Council  
Council Headquarters  
Newtown St. Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA

Dear Mr Kirk,

**RE: 21/00501/LBC | RBS / Bank House, 11 & 12 Market Square, Duns**

Thank you for your consultation on this application. The AHSS Forth & Borders Cases Panel **objects** to some parts of this proposal. The applicants case is hampered by the lack of adequate justification for some of the more significant interventions to this Category B-listed building.

- 1) The proposed lift rightly avoids principal rooms towards the front of the building, but it will still necessitate the removal of original fabric and a secondary stair. There is no justification to explain why this intervention is required – if vertical access to all levels of the building is proposed, this information should be included to permit its critical assessment against the substantial heritage deficit it entails.
- 2) The proposal to join the two principal rooms towards the front of the first floor should be omitted: the current arrangement reflects the historic plan form, and where this remains, it should be respected. The dining room is a particularly fine room and should not be damaged to fit a kitchen, which should remain outwith the two most important rooms in the building. All its fittings, including its presses, doors, picture rail, window shutters and cornice form a single coherent whole which cannot be altered to the extent proposed without significantly detracting from its historic and special interest.
- 3) The exterior proposals are largely acceptable, and respect the strong contribution that the building makes to Market Square. However the proposed new round opening to the NW elevation is unnecessary, and oddly anachronistic – it does not reflect the style of the building (an oculus would not be created in this position), and detracts from the primacy of the double-height stair window on this elevation. It should be omitted.
- 4) The rooflights proposed to the front elevation are larger and more numerous than the present ones, and will detract from the principal elevation. The accommodation is labelled as attic rooms (i.e. non-habitable) and therefore these larger rooflights are not necessary or justified in this location.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr Alastair Disley, Convenor**  
on behalf of the Forth & Borders Cases Panel