

Former bank gets permission to become café

The owners of a former bank building in a popular seaside town have been given the go ahead to turn it into a café.

The former Royal Bank of Scotland branch, on North Berwick's Westgate, was bought for more than double the £225,000 asking price when it went on the market in 2018.

But attempts to gain planning permission to convert it into a home met local opposition and were rejected by planners three times as East Lothian Council insisted it should be retained as a commercial unit in the coastal town's busy centre.

Now owners Nigel and Patricia Sharp have been granted planning permission to turn it into a two-storey café and two separate office units.

The single storey banking hall, which is attached to a Category-B listed building, was sold after the bank moved out of North Berwick in 2018.

The council said it received 13 objections to the commercial plans for the site which will include a first floor extension added for the café.

Objectors claimed the changes to the building would be "severely detrimental" to the heritage and character of the town's conservation area.



Ot
he
rs
cl
ai
me
d
it
wa
s
ov
er
-
de
ve
lo
pm
en
t
wi
th
on
e
ob
je
ct
or
ac
cu
si
ng
th
e
ow
ne
rs
of

on
ly
ta
ki
ng
ac
co
un
t
of
th
e
“g
ro
ss
ly
di
st
or
te
d
pr
ic
e
th
ey
pa
id
fo
r
th
e
si
te
”.

However in a design statement presented to councillors on the

owners behalf it compares the new plans for the building to an extension added to the neighbouring hotel insisting it would fit in with its surroundings.

Planners granted permission for the new café and offices.

By Marie Sharp, Local Democracy Reporter

The Local Democracy Reporting Service (LDRS) is a public service news agency. It is funded by the BBC, provided by the local news sector (in Edinburgh that is Reach plc (the publisher behind Edinburgh Live and The Daily Record) and used by many qualifying partners. Local Democracy Reporters cover news about top-tier local authorities and other public service organisations.