

Heritage, Design and Access Statement

Proposed External Awning

26 King Street,

Gravesend,

Kent

DA12 2DU

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1. Introduction

This combined **Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement** has been prepared in support of applications for **Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent** for the installation of a traditional retractable external awning at **26 King Street, Gravesend**.

The document assesses the proposal against design, access, and heritage considerations, demonstrating that the works preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building and the character and appearance of the King Street Conservation Area.

2. Site and Heritage Context

26 King Street is a Grade II listed former County Court building located within the King Street Conservation Area, Gravesend. The building occupies a prominent position within the historic commercial frontage of King Street and makes a strong positive contribution to the streetscape through its formal ashlar stone façade, architectural detailing, and civic presence.

The surrounding context is characterised by a coherent historic townscape comprising listed and unlisted heritage assets in predominantly commercial use at ground floor. External features such as traditional shopfront elements and awnings are present along this stretch of King Street, where they contribute to street activity when appropriately scaled and sensitively designed.

Nearby premises, including The Goose at 23–25 King Street, incorporate traditional awnings that respect the historic setting and demonstrate that such features can be accommodated without harm to heritage significance.

3. Listed Building Significance

The building was listed at **Grade II on 3 July 1975** (List Entry Number: **1089061**). It dates from circa 1870 and is constructed in ashlar stone with stone dressings beneath a slate roof.

Key architectural features include:

- A balustraded parapet incorporating a quatrefoil motif
- A triglyph frieze
- Four coupled pilasters
- Two round-headed doorcases with decorated spandrels
- Double doors with fanlights incorporating swag moulding and the original date
- A strong plinth and pointed mullioned windows

The significance of the listed building derives principally from its external architectural form, materials, detailing, and historic civic function. The principal elevation facing King Street is of particular importance, and any intervention must preserve its legibility and architectural integrity.

4. Proposed Development

4.1 Description of the Proposal

The proposal seeks Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for the installation of **one traditional retractable external awning** to the ground floor frontage of the building.

The awning will:

- Be modest in scale and proportionate to the host elevation
- Be fully retractable to minimise visual impact
- Be positioned to avoid obscuring architectural features
- Provide weather protection to support the active commercial use of the premises

The awning has been designed to remain visually subservient to the listed façade, ensuring the building's architectural detailing remains clearly visible at all times.

5. Design Statement

5.1 Design Principles

The design approach is informed by the historic and architectural significance of the building and the established character of King Street. The proposal adopts a **traditional, understated form** that complements rather than competes with the host building.

The awning is intentionally restrained in scale, projection, and appearance, ensuring that it does not dominate the façade or detract from the building's architectural hierarchy.

5.2 Relationship to Surroundings

Along this section of King Street, awnings are a recognised and established feature of the streetscape where they are traditionally designed and carefully integrated. The proposed awning reflects the scale, form, and visual restraint of neighbouring examples, including those at The Goose, thereby reinforcing a cohesive and harmonious streetscene.

When extended, the awning will enhance street-level activity; when retracted, the façade will remain fully legible and unchanged in appearance.

6. Access Statement

6.1 Inclusive Access

The proposal does not alter existing access arrangements to the building. The awning will be installed above head height and will not obstruct pedestrian movement along the public footway.

The provision of weather protection at ground floor level may improve accessibility and comfort for customers, particularly during adverse weather conditions.

6.2 Safety and Visibility

The awning will be clearly visible when extended and will not introduce hazards to pedestrians or building users. No illumination, signage, or moving elements beyond standard retraction mechanisms are proposed.

7. Awning Specification (Conservation Area – Gravesham)

Awning Type:

Traditional retractable external awning

Form:

Open or half-cassette system with discreet housing

Projection:

Approximately 2000 mm

Width:

Approximately 7100 mm

Fabric Specification

- Material: Solution-dyed acrylic
- Finish: Matt, woven, canvas-textured surface
- Appearance: Traditional, non-reflective, conservation-appropriate
- Weight: Approx. 300–305 g/m²
- Thickness: Approx. 0.55 mm
- Colour: Heritage neutral tone
- UV Protection: High resistance
- Colour Fastness: High resistance to fading
- Water Resistance: Shower-resistant
- Breathability: Breathable fabric
- Mould & Mildew Resistance: Suitable for UK climate

Frame and Fixings

- Frame Material: Powder-coated aluminium or painted steel
- Frame Colour: Heritage neutral tone
- Fixings:
 - Reversible mechanical fixings
 - Fixed into mortar joints where feasible
 - No cutting, chasing, or removal of historic masonry

Conservation and Installation Notes

- Awning to remain visually subservient to the host building
- No illumination, logos, or signage
- Fully retractable
- Installation to avoid architectural detailing
- System to be fully reversible

Maintenance

- Cleaning using water and mild detergent only

Planning Note:

The awning will be installed in accordance with Gravesham Borough Council Conservation Area requirements.

8. Heritage Impact Assessment

The proposed awning will result in **no loss, alteration, or permanent obscuring of historic fabric**. All fixings are reversible, and the awning can be fully retracted, preserving the appearance of the principal elevation.

Due to its modest scale, traditional design, and heritage-appropriate materials, the proposal preserves the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the King Street Conservation Area.

The proposal results in **no harm** to heritage significance and accords with national and local heritage policy objectives.

9. Conclusion

The proposed external awning represents a **minor, sympathetic, and fully reversible intervention** to a Grade II listed building.

The design, materials, and fixing strategy respect the architectural significance of the building and its Conservation Area setting while enhancing the usability of the ground floor premises.

The proposal preserves the listed building's significance, supports active street frontage, and is considered acceptable in design, access, and heritage terms. It is therefore fully supported for the grant of **Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent**.