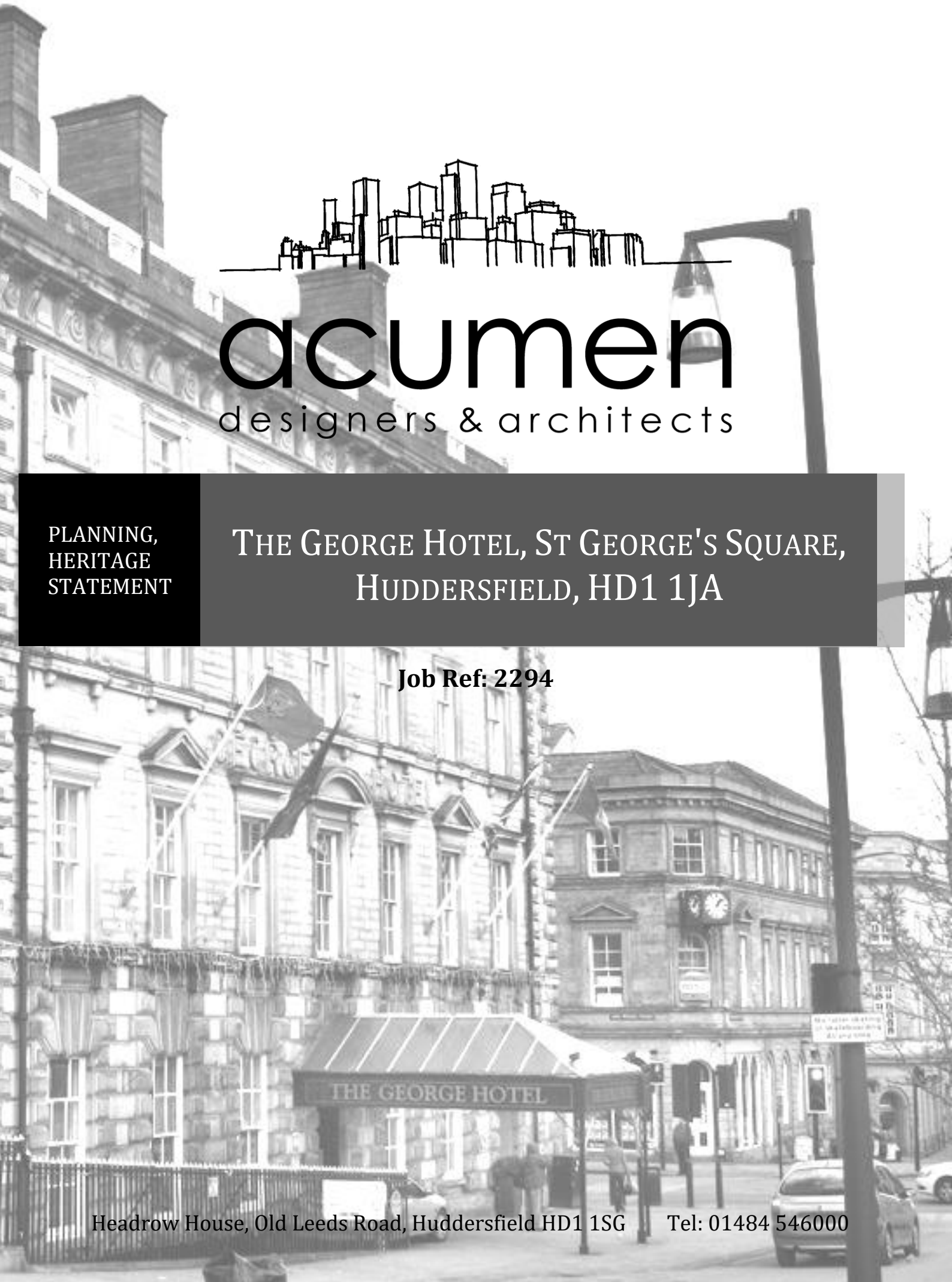
April 2019



acumen
designers & architects

PLANNING, HERITAGE STATEMENT

THE GEORGE HOTEL, ST GEORGE'S SQUARE, HUDDERSFIELD, HD1 1JA

Job Ref: 2294

Headrow House, Old Leeds Road, Huddersfield HD1 1SG Tel: 01484 546000

CONTENTS

CONTENTS - 2

INTRODUCTION - 3

BACKGROUND AND SITE DESCRIPTION- 3

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT- 9

KIRKLEES LOCAL PLAN AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) - 14

CONCLUSION - 15

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for the redevelopment of The George Hotel, St George's Square, Huddersfield, comprising - the change of use of the basement to create a spa, subdivision of units on the ground floor, and internal alterations to create an apart hotel.

2. The George Hotel is a grade II* listed building, which has a prominent position on St George's Square in Huddersfield town centre.

3. This statement responds to section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework which requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected and the impact or contribution of the proposed development upon the heritage asset.

SECTION 2: BACKGROUND, SITE & HERITAGE ASSET DISCRIPTION.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION & SITE LOCATION.

4. The application relates The George Hotel, St George's Square, Huddersfield HD1 1JA.

5. The George Hotel is a listed building, and sits within Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area.

6. The hotel sits in a triangular plot. Directly to north of the building is the railway station visitor car park, with staff parking beyond. To the east is John William Street. To the south of the hotel, its principal aspect, sits St George's Square, and to the west sits Huddersfield railway station.

7. The hotel is in a prominent position in St George's Square, and is surrounded by other notable listed buildings. The hotel is directly adjacent to the grade I listed train station which is one of the finest buildings in Huddersfield. The George Hotel is in direct sight of any passengers leaving the station as they arrive into the town.

8. St George's Square is home to the following listed buildings, all of which provide an incredible presence to the town -
   Huddersfield Train Station - 1847 - Grade I
   Britannia Buildings - 1856 - Grade II*
   Lion Arcade - 1853 - Grade II*

9. The George Hotel listing text is as follows;

ST GEORGE'S SQUARE 1. 5113 The George Hotel SE 1416 NW 1/42 20.9.77 II GV 2. 1849-50. Architects William Wallen of London, and Charles Child of Todmorden, Yorkshire. Ashlar sandstone. Slate mansard roof. Ashlar stacks. 4 storeys and attics. Deeply moulded eaves cornice with console-shaped triglyphs, between which are paterae*

alternating with diamond-facetted panels. Rusticated ground floor. Moulded strings above ground and 1st floors. Moulded long and short quoins. Facade breaks forward slightly 6 ins away from corners. 7 ranges of sashes with glazing bars; those on ground floor with vermiculated quoins and keys: those on 1st floor with moulded and shouldered surrounds, cills on brackets, full entablatures, triangular pediments to bays 2 and 6, and segmental pediment on console-shaped scrolls to bay 4; those on 2nd floor with moulded and shouldered surrounds and cills on brackets; those on 3rd floor with moulded and shouldered surrounds, 7 attic dormers with casements and segmental pediments. John William street facade. Similar fenestration. 3 bays. Central 1st floor window has ashlar balcony on 5 deep moulded consoles, with moulded handrail, panelled newels, balustrade composed of intersecting stone circles, and badge with St George in relief. West facade. 3 bays and one to north slightly set back. Similar fenestration, but ground floor windows have plain surrounds and all 1st floor windows have long scrolled consoles to cills. Set back bay has semi-circular on 1st floor with moulded cornice and parapet: 3 windows, same as others but without entablature. Extension to north. 3 storeys and attics. Eaves cornice. 5 bays, of which outer 2 have windows in plain surrounds and 3 inner ones break forward with rusticated quoins. 3 arched windows linked by moulded impost on ground floor; 5 segment-headed sashes with glazing bars in moulded and shouldered frame with keystones on 1st floor; three windows with moulded and shouldered surrounds on 2nd floor. Railings round area at west end of south front, and west front. Cast iron. Baluster finials. History: Built by Sir John William Ramsden, 5th Bart, to replace the George Inn, which stood on the north side of the Market Place, and was re-erected in St Peter's Street when John William Street was built.

10. The George Hotel is a major listed building in the town, and has been used as a hotel, with ancillary bars, ballrooms and meeting spaces, since its construction in 1851.

EXTERNAL DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ASSETT

11. The south facade of the hotel (FIG. 1) is the principal facade, which overlooks St George's Square. The building is of Italianate construction. The main material is natural sandstone ashlar of varying styles and decoration. The south facade is composed of 4 storeys, built in stone with a further attic floor within a mansard style blue slate pitched roof finished with dormers.



FIG 1

12. The ground floor is rusticated and features vermiculated quoins to window heads and surrounds forming the rustification. There is a central double timber door, with overhead protruding cast iron and glass canopy. The door has three sash windows to the right of equal spacing with two to the left with a far window opening previously extended to allow for the fitting of a fire escape door. The main central elevation is protruding by around six inches from some stepped back masonry on either side.

13. The first floor has seven ranges of sashes, complete with glazing bars and varying pediments as in the listing text.

14. The western elevation can be split into two areas. The first being part of the original hotel (FIG 2) and continuing the fenestration of the main southern facade, with variation. The first-floor windows have scrolls and carved panels below sill level. Topped with full entablature and cornicing. To the left of the first portion of the western elevation is a circular bay on first floor with 3 semi circular sashes as listing text.



FIG 2

15. The reminder of the western elevation (FIG 3) is a late 19th century addition with regular coursed natural stone with regimented openings. One larger opening is present to the south which spans over 2 floors. There are two

FIG 3



chimneys, one to the far left and one to the far right. The chimney on the right being a circular stack from the main boiler room.

16. The eastern elevation can also be split into two components. The first (FIG 4) being of a continuation of the southern fenestration, with the central 1st floor window having a balcony. The reminder of this portion is as listing text.

FIG 4



17. The remainder of the eastern elevation (FIG 5) is a later addition finished in natural sandstone ashlar. There are quoins and ashlar string courses between floors. The roof has been refinished in blue tiles. Remaining section is as listing.

FIG 5



18. Externally the hotel is in fair condition however repairs are needed. The roof being the major concern. It is evident some of the stonework has weathered and needs specialist attention during the proposed works. Windows are mostly fair and some have been refurbished in 2014, however some require repair, repainting, and some require new glazing panels due to damage. External doors are non original throughout however some of these require attention to ensure they are in a good state of repair. The cast iron rainwater goods are generally in good condition however these will need to be maintained and cleaned during the proposed works to ensure they function correctly.

INTERNAL DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ASSETT

19. Internally the hotel is laid out over 5 floors. The lowest being the basement. The basement was previously used for storage, maintenance as well as staff facilities. The basement also housed the Rugby League Museum, which was accessible via an entrance on John William Street.

20. The ground floor is most notable. The main entrance leads into a lobby area, with pillars and pilasters capped with various capitals. The lobby leads directly to various reception rooms as well as the founders bar, main ballroom and dining room, with associated kitchens and storage. The ground floor has various columns, details, skirtings and cornicing which has

remained mostly undamaged. There are various areas of walls which are severely damaged due to damp and water ingress.

21. Opposite the main door, in the lobby, is a lift which has been out of action for many years, and the main staircase. The staircase has a solid wood handrail supported by ornate cast iron spindles, of which some are missing or badly damaged. This staircase spans all floors of the hotel, apart from the basement.

22. The upper floors of the hotel have little heritage value; however, there are some features which stand out. The main corridor in the south portion of the hotel has various decorative beams overhead, as well as large door architraves and various areas of wooden paneling.

23. On the first floor there is one notable meeting room, which features a decorative ceiling with coving as well as pediments over the doors both in the room and off the corridors.

24. Throughout the hotel corridors there is little of interest and most rooms have been stripped of their previous furniture and decoration to prepare for the new works to take place as expediently as possible. Where they are present window architraves, tall skirtings and original room doors require restoration.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE ASSETT

25. The hotel has strong links with the history of Huddersfield, and occupies a prominent site in the heart of the town.

26. On the 29th August 1895 The George Hotel became the birthplace of the Northern Rugby Football Union which in 1922 became the Rugby Football League, and it was in the Charter Suite, situated on the ground floor, that the historic documents where signed. In 1973 the British Amateur Rugby League was also founded in the Hotel. A large area in the basement on the 30th August 2005 became the Rugby League Heritage Centre, which displayed memorabilia and the British Rugby League Hall of Fame, and was the only rugby league heritage museum in the UK and was visited by many. A number of rooms within the hotel are named after the historic event such as; the Charter Suite, Founders Bar, as well as many of the hotel rooms above being named after famous ruby league players. When the hotel closed its doors in January 2013, there was no alternative but to take the entire contents of the heritage centre to the John Smiths stadium. The only remaining evidence is the cast iron plate that is mounted outside the entrance of the Hotel and the name plates to the various function rooms and hotel rooms.

SECTION 3: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

27. This planning application seeks to bring the vacant George Hotel back into use as an apart hotel, with associated kitchen, bar and meeting facilities, as well as conversion of the under utilised basement to form a town centre spa facility.

28. The proposal preserves the heritage of the building to ensuring it can be retained and appreciated for years to come. The hotel, with its dated fittings, and now unmarketable room sizes and layout, had come to the end of its serviceable life and now requires substantial investment to ensure the building is preserved as a long term and viable business.

EXTERNAL WORKS

29. The most significant area of external works will be on the elevation facing John William Street. Here the proposals look to create a, glazed modern entrance to allow access off the street directly to the basement spa and unit one on the ground floor. This will be essential to the viability of the building as making these units independent from the hotel will be an important factor to potential operators. The area of these proposed works is currently in poor repair and features a low-quality fire escape, and is a link between the original hotel block prior to the first wing extension. The proposed new entryway will feature a new full high glazed door in lieu of the existing timber door which is beyond repair. This door will be surmounted by a glazed canopy which will provide a more distinctive entrance for suite 1 and the spa. (FIG 6)

FIG 6



30. On the facade facing John William Street, areas of signage are proposed between the existing windows on areas of bare ashlar as well as a small signage area above the proposed glass door within the arched area, coloured blue in Fig 6. The proposed front and side elevations submitted in support of the application show the indicative locations for signage associated with the ground floor tenants, who will be responsible for submitting details of any proposed signage at a later stage. However, as

part of this application we need to establish the principle of this level of signage as it will be necessary to attract commercial tenants to the building.

31. The proposal seeks to retain the external appearance of the building and to safeguard the features which make this magnificent building so special to the town. Externally all roofing will be repaired and wherever material is removed it is to be replaced like for like.

32. The external walls will be repaired where necessary, and should any new stone be required it will be colour matched sandstone to match the existing walls.

33. Existing windows to the south and east will be retained and refurbished. Internally secondary glazing will be fitted wherever it is not currently present to enhance the buildings thermal and acoustic performance, while reducing the carbon footprint significantly. Where appropriate new window hardware and fittings will be fitted to match the existing where present.

34. Window leaves may need to be replaced where necessary on the timber windows. If this is the case new window details will be submitted to the LPA for approval in writing.

35. Existing skylights and roof windows will be re glazed where necessary, as well as re-flashed if they have failed. It is not anticipated that these will need to be wholly replaced.

36. The steel windows on the western elevation have mostly failed and are at the end of their serviceable life. These windows will be replaced with new low profile double glazed aluminum windows, finished in white. To allow the first floor of the western wing to be better utilized new window openings will be formed, following the pattern of the apertures directly above on the second and third floors.

37. All doors are to be re-painted. Where necessary details will be provided for doors that are to be replaced.

38. The canopy for the main entrance will be retained and will be redecorated, as well as being repaired as some of the lower iron members are severely corroded.

39. External rainwater goods and soil pipes will be assessed and repaired accordingly. Any new external pipe work will be in black. There are to be no new pipes on the southern or eastern aspect.

SPA & BASEMENT

40. The proposed spa is to occupy part of the basement. Only under used storage areas are to be converted as part of this development. The spa will be waterproofed and ventilated in accordance to the latest building regulations.

41. The spa will be accessed from a new entrance lobby off John William Street. This access will consist of a new stairwell and glass elevator which will run from the ground floor to a small lobby in the basement.

42. The staff and ancillary areas to the north will be retained and refurbished to allow them to function as part of unit 1.

43. Whilst there is no certainty, the applicant will look to secure the relocation of the Rugby League Museum back to its original location in the basement of the hotel.

44. Existing plant areas will be retained with newer equipment installed where needed.

GROUND FLOOR

45. The ground floor will see some alterations; however, the main rooms will be retained and refurbished. The floor will be split into 4 units. A new street entrance will be formed onto John William Street to create a more active frontage.

46. The new entrance off John William Street will feature a new glass door. The existing fire escape and basement access vestibule, which was a later addition to the building, as pictured in Fig 7, will be removed to create a more spacious entrance. This will lead to a small flight of stairs which will bridge the level difference between the ground level and the floor level. There will also be a glass elevator which will run from the ground level, street level and basement level. This new lobby will be formed by partitioning off some of the current dining room. To retain the character of the space this glass partition will be frameless and run from the floor to the ceiling. The glazing will be detailed in such a way that it intersects the existing ceiling coving and appears to slice through it. The new street access lobby has been included in the design as it has been advised by a retail letting agent that the separate units have a clear street access and are



FIG 7

Showing mirrored vestibule where the current fire escape enters the building.

separately accessible without relying on the hotel lobby. The new proposed glazed partition will sit before the pair of pilasters pictured in Fig 7 and will run to the opposite wall. The corner pilaster has been removed when the existing vestibule was constructed.

47. The Charter Suite will be retained as a function room which will benefit from the new access onto St George's Square, providing independent access from the rest of the hotel. The existing doors into the hotel lobby from the Charter Suite will be replaced with lockable doors, allowing independent through the front of the building down the existing stairs and through the existing pair of doors. The unit will see two new openings formed. One opening will allow access to an independent storage area with the potential to form a new kitchen, making the unit more attractive to potential operators. The second opening will have a male and female toilet installed. The existing storage area will be fitted with an accessible WC.

48. The Founder's Bar will see significant alteration. Internally the bar has no historic assets apart from a fireplace, which is to be retained as part of the proposals. The rear section of the room where the bar currently stands will be converted into a toilet area, comprising a male, female and accessible toilet. There are currently no toilets on the ground floor which creates operational problems, and is not compliant with the equalities act. The unit will have a new opening into the current lobby [Fig8] This area is currently under used. This part of the lobby has no original features. The proposed



FIG 8.

Area of proposed opening to form unit 3

plans show how a new glazed screen will be erected between the columns allowing this part of the lobby to become part of the unit. This unit will be accessible from the existing fire doors onto St George's Square, as well as lockable glass doors into the hotel lobby. Once again the purpose of the works to this unit allows the ground floor to function more efficiently and to make the units more appealing to the commercial rental market. An existing screen will be removed and replaced with a glazed screen at an angle, to allow the lobby to open up and encourage better circulation within the lobby.

49. The ballroom, restaurant and kitchen will be one unit. The partition wall between the ballroom and dining room will receive 2 new openings between the existing columns and pilasters as previously approved in application 2014/62/90692/W. These openings will allow the area to be more flexible and offer more covers making it a more viable business opportunity. This modification to the building's fabric will be carried out by fitting a steel beam over the new opening. This will be done in a way which does not damage the existing decoration. The existing columns and pilasters will be left in situ. Only the blank wall sections will be removed. The existing bar in the ballroom will be walled up and the storage area behind given to the Charter Suite unit. A new bar and table store will be created by partitioning off an area between the kitchen and the ballroom. The new bar and doorways will be fitted in blank sections of the wall and will ensure the pilasters are retained.

50. The existing lobby will be retained and will see redecoration. This lobby will mainly serve the apart hotel and will act as a reception and meeting place, as well as having secondary links to the three separate units and the spa for guests and visitors. The base of the stairs will feature a glazed screen with access doors leading to the hotel rooms. This screen will be offset behind any pillars and will be mounted behind any decoration. This screen is the only means of securing the upper floors. Due to the lobby being shared by multiple units there is a risk that unwelcome people could access the hotel rooms.

51. The lift will be refurbished and will receive a new car, and doors to all floors to the latest safety standards.

UPPER FLOORS

52. The drawings accompanying this application show how the upper floors will be reconfigured to provide fewer, larger bedrooms than are currently in place. This is in line with market research and advice from industry leaders to ensure the proposed development is viable and economically sustainable.

53. All rooms have been stripped out and are in varying states of repair, with all fittings and furniture removed, ready for renovation. All upper floors will be accessed via the main staircase which is to be retained and refurbished. Wherever existing skirtings, covings or architrave exist, they are to be refurbished and are to become a feature. No historic fabric will be removed without written consent from the LPA.

54. The existing conference room is to be subdivided to form 2 rooms. While retaining the decorated ceiling, a new suspended ceiling will be formed. The existing pediments over the door will be retained as well as any original panel doors and architraves.

55. The NPPF provides guidance on assessing the impact of development on a designated heritage asset. It states that any harm of the heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

56. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF sets out that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

57. Paragraph 200 of the NPPF sets out that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Area, and with the setting of heritage asset, to enhance or better reveal their significance.

58. The site is identified within the Local Plan as being within Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area and is adjacent to a grade 1, and grade 2* Listed Buildings.

59. The Local Plan explains it is not necessary to preserve every detail of a conservation area, but there should be care in the control of new development to ensure that the appearance of the area is not affected in a way that would diminish its value.

60. Policy PLP 35 from the local plan states...

"1. *Development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) should conserve those elements which contribute to its significance. Harm to such elements will be permitted only where this is outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. Substantial harm or total loss to the significance of a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) will be permitted only in exceptional circumstances.*

2. Development proposals affecting archaeological sites of less than national importance should conserve those elements which contribute to their significance in line with the importance of the remains. In those cases where development affecting such sites is acceptable in principle, mitigation of damage will be ensured through preservation of the remains in situ as a preferred solution. When in situ preservation is not justified, the developer will be required to make adequate provision for excavation and recording before or during development. Proposals which would remove, harm or undermine the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, or its contribution to the character of a place are permitted only where the public benefits of the development would outweigh their harm.

3. Proposals should retain those elements of the historic environment which contribute to the distinct identity of the Kirklees area and ensure they are appropriately conserved, to the extent warranted by their significance, also having

regard to the wider benefits of development. Consideration should be given to the need to:

a. ensure that proposals maintain and reinforce local distinctiveness and conserve the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets;

b. ensure that proposals within Conservation Areas conserve those elements which have been identified as contributing to their significance in the relevant Conservation Area Appraisals;

c. secure a sustainable future for heritage assets at risk and those associated with the local textile industry, historic farm buildings, places of worship and civic and institutional buildings constructed on the back of the wealth created by the textile industry as expressions of local civic pride and identity;

d. identify opportunities, including use of new technologies, to mitigate, and adapt to, the effects of climate change in ways that do not harm the significance of heritage assets and, where conflict is unavoidable, to balance the public benefit of climate change mitigation measures with the harm caused to the heritage assets' significance;

e. accommodate innovative design where this does not prejudice the significance of heritage assets;

f. preserve the setting of Castle Hill where appropriate and proposals which detrimentally impact on the setting of Castle Hill will not be permitted"

SECTION 5: CONCLUSION

61. Great consideration has been given to the hotel's heritage and the impact the proposals will have on this landmark building.

62. The hotel secured planning consent previously under application 2014/62/90692/W. Proposals within the previous application shared similar goals however the latest plans no longer seek to have a dental practice or apartments. Externally this application has removed the sky bar element as is has been deemed not to be feasible.

63. The proposal seeks to retain the character and charm of this magnificent building both inside and out.

64. The majority of the works comprise the internal alterations and fit out of the hotel accommodation. Externally the hotel will be left mostly untouched apart from new windows on the rear elevation and a refurbished doorway onto John William Street. It will be refurbished and restored to ensure the hotel can last for many more years to come. The ground floor will retain its grand character and main reception rooms, with new access areas and servicing, creating an attractive set of modern units. The hotel's upper floors are no longer fit to meet market demands, and large-scale renovation has been long overdue. Previous alterations have comprised superficial repairs and redecoration which is not sufficient to ensure the building can perform in a modern hospitality market.

65. The restoration of the building safeguards the fabric of the building for the future. The building is of huge cultural and architectural significance and is a landmark within the town. The building requires essential works to allow it to

be suitable for the future market, and to ensure it is able to thrive, and is in a position to be enjoyed for years to come.



acumen
designers & architects

Prepared by Acumen Designers & Architects.
Headrow House, Old Leeds Road, Huddersfield HD1 1SG
Tel: 01484 546000

Written - JF | Checked - JC & HG