HERITAGE STATEMENT
FOR CONVERSION OF
SINGLE DWELLING
TO 2 FLATS AT
8 DOWKER STREET,
MILNSBRIDGE
HUDDERSFIELD

Milnsbridge is a valley floor settlement based on a bridging point over the River Colne; tightly defined by the A62 Manchester Road to the south and the Yorkshire/Lancashire railway line to the north. The main shopping street, Market Street runs north south and is dominated by the large mill at the junction with Savile street, and the imposing stone railway viaduct.
In 1795, Milnsbridge had fewer than a dozen buildings, not all of them dwellings. Savile's mill was built to the west of the bridge which spanned the River Colne, and to the east stood Radcliffe's Quarmby mill. At the boundary between these two estates (between Longwood & Golcar) was a stream which flowed into the river just below the bridge. South of the River Colne lay parts of Cowlersley and Linthwaite which belonged at that time to the Parish of Almondbury.

As Milnsbridge developed as a major centre for the wool industry during the 19th century, mills dominated the landscape and some of the mills which remain today are protected under stator listing. In 1937, the part of Milnsbridge which had been included in Linthwaite was transferred to the Huddersfield Borough.

Although the date of the earliest recorded reference to Milnsbridge is 1437, it is almost certainly a much older name. During the Middle Ages, the townships of Almondbury and Elland were connected by a road which descended from Almondbury via Lockwood Scar, forded the River Holme at Lockwood and continued more or less along the present route into Milnsbridge. The road crossed the River Colne before ascending the valley side via Quarmby Hall, Haigh House Hill and down into Elland.

A bridge was constructed at Milnsbridge to allow easy crossing of the river and it is assumed that the original crossing point was actually further down river from the present bridge situated on Market Street.

Until around 1795, the highway descended from Quarmby via Meg Lane, passing directly in front of the site of Milnsbridge House. However, in 1756 Sir Joseph

Radcliffe chose this location, on the site of an earlier house, to build his new mansion. As Meg Lane allowed him no garden to the west, the old road was re-routed at some date prior to 1795. Milnes Bridge House, then described as being 'built of correct Architecture' with lawns, shrubbery and two lakes and being situated in *'the most fertile and beautiful valley'* has a place in the history of the locality for its part in the Luddite rebellions of the early 19th century. Active opposition to the new machinery which was being introduced in the textile industry at this time, culminated in the murder of mill owner, William Horsfall of Marsden in 1812. The Luddite gang members responsible for the crime were croppers, the highly skilled elite of woolen processing, who believed they had the most to lose from mechanisation. The ringleaders were hounded by Radcliffe and imprisoned in the cellar of Milnes Bridge House before being hung at York in 1813.

By 1893, the landscaped grounds of the Grade 2* house were a pleasure garden and a popular attraction for boating, but by 1901 the building had been divided into five dwellings and the landscape gardens had been dissected into street. It is now closely surrounded by mills and terraced housing, a victim of the industrial development of Milnsbridge, as the Armitages and the Saviles released land for the building schemes during the 19th century.

8 Dowker Street is a 2 bedroom dwelling located within the Milnsbridge Conservation Area, located next door to the above mentioned Grade 2* house; many believe having a direct association with it. Now 2 separate dwellings (8 & 8A) it would have originally been one large property. When the property was split, we believe that significant alterations were carried out, including raising of floor levels, forming of new external windows and doors openings. Stud walls were added to form the ground floor kitchen and first floor bathroom. A window was also walled up on the north elevation at first floor level, the cill of which is still visible. Over the years the property has lost many of its original internal features, such as skirting boards, doors, architraves fireplaces, picture rails etc. We believe most of this occurred when the ground floor level was raised by about 600mm, and the ceilings lowered. We don't know why the ground floor level was raised but the soil stack runs in the void between the original & new floor structure, which gives access to the foul drainage system at the south end of the building. Raising of the ground floor is also noticeable on closer inspection of the original stone staircase in number 8, with another 3 steps visible in the floor void. We imagine the windows on the west elevation were also modified at the time of the adjustment of floor levels. The first floor level as also been raised with a screed floor on timber battens, this creates an awkward small step at the top of the staircase. A local story that the building was an ammunition store in the war has been rumored, maybe the screed was added as some form of fireproofing. The bottom boom of an original timber truss can also be seen from the first-floor level. Externally there is small hard paved yard to the south elevation, which is bounded by a timber fence.

It is a Grade 2 listed building, which was first listed in 1978, the original listing description is as follows: -

8 and 8A Dowker Street – *Listed on the 29TH of September 1978, under English Heritage ID 1134283.*
Early C19. Hammer-dressed stone. Pitched stone slate roof. Pediment shaped gable ends, with semi-circular windows in tympana. 2 storeys. Band. 3 ranges of windows in plain raised surrounds.

Listing NGR: *SE 1166816058*

The application seeks approval to divide the property horizontally to form 2 flats. The work involved in order to create the flats is deemed minor, both internally and externally. The main work externally will be to form a separate entrance to the ground floor flat. This will be achieved by modifying/adapting an existing window opening on the south elevation. As we have already stated we believe this window to have been added in order to provide natural light into the new kitchen area when the property was original divided into 2. Creating the new external door means the internal door off the main hallway will not be needed. When the opening is walled up the new walling will be set back slightly to reflect that an opening was previously there, even if non original. Both the existing and proposed doors will have sympathetic hardwood timber doors installed. Externally we also propose to remove and wall up the small window opening to the WC, and also re-instate the existing walled up window on this elevation. As part of the application we propose to install new hardwood double glazed sliding sash windows throughout, this will help with thermal insulation, but more importantly with sound insulation as the property lies on the gateway of a large industrial estate. Internally floor levels will be raised in the areas shown in the ground floor flat by means of adding timber suspended floors, the existing structures below will be retained in-situ. The already modified chimney breast is also shown removed. This chimney breast has been removed on the first floor and also externally. A new opening is shown to be formed in an existing wall in order to create access into the proposed en-suite. In the first floor flat we propose to re-arrange the bathroom area; this will require the removal of non-original stud walls as shown. The door into the lounge/kitchen is also proposed to be re-located.

To sum up, we feel that our proposals to create the 2 flats require minimal alterations to be carried out and there will be no detrimental effect on the listed building or the Milnsbridge conservation area. Our proposals will help preserve the listed building and breathe new life into the now tired property.

Currently there is one off street parking place assigned to the property, however there is plenty of on street parking available immediately outside the property. several bus stops are within walking distance providing access to a large number of surrounding areas.

There will be no effect on any neighbouring properties amenities.