ACUMEN
Designers & Architects

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT
HAICHS BUILDINGS, HUDDERSFIELD

Revision A

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This design and access statement has been prepared by Acumen Designers & Architects, with inputs from the wider design team to accompany a planning application for the erection of extensions to form 16 self contained student studio apartments.

This document has been produced to outline the design process which has lead to the proposal in its current form. This document should be read in conjunction with the supporting reports and documents submitted as part of the application to ensure the proposal can be assessed on its individual merits.

This document outlines the principle concepts and design principles which have been applied in the design evolution.

This document will outline the clients needs and aspirations, site context and a summary of the design evolution. The document will summarise the key environmental, and contextual design factors.

This statement has been produced and is submitted in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England)
(Amendment) Order 2015, CABE Design & Access Guidance, and DCLG Guidance on information requirements and validation.

This document has been prepared by James Fearnley, BSc(Hons) MArch PgDipArch who is a registered architect.

CONTEXT

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

The site is located on the junction of King's Bridge Road and Firth Street, which link Huddersfield Town to the South . located at OS Grid Reference: SE 146159
The site sits 500 meters to the south of Huddersfield Town centre. The site is 150 meters away from The closest University of Huddersfield buildings, with the remaining campus being within a further 200 meters to the north east.

Fig.1 location of site. Satellite images from Google Earth

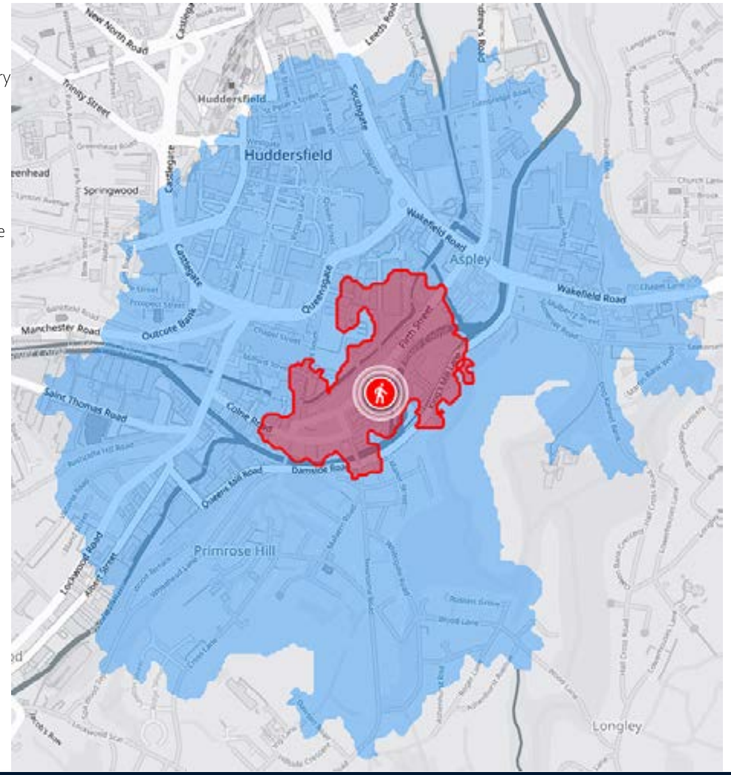
CONNECTIVITY

The site offers great connectivity both locally and on a wider scale.

Students living in the proposal will walk and bike as their primary mode of travel. The diagram to the right (Fig. 3) shows the 5 minute (red) and 15 minute (blue) walk-ability of the site.

Within a 5 minute walk sits the university campus as well as several convenience stores.

Within a 15 minute walk sits the main town centre, including the proposed cultural heart development. The bus station is within a 15 minute walk, with the train station sitting just beyond this. Also within this range are larger supermarket style grocery shops.



PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

There are no public rights of way through the application site.

EXISTING BUILDING ON SITE

The site is currently occupied by a stone building which was historically divided into three units. The building was most likely constructed in the latter half of the 19th century. The building has been combined and previously adapted to create cluster student accommodation.

The building is faced in pitched regular coursed natural stone. The ground floor is elevated off street level and the current doors are accessed via steps up.

On the ground floor the building has 3 entrance doors, one off King's Bridge Rd and two off Firth St. Between the doors on Firth street is a covered walkway with arched head over.

The corner of the building is chamfered on the ground floor before being corbelled out using an enlarged stone head to form a full corner to the first floor.

All windows on the building feature stone cills and rounded stone heads. The external doors have full surrounds with a decorative door pediment.

To the rear of the building a lower floor is accessed via the covered underpass off Firth Street, with access also available from the underpass next door to the west.

The building has a high level eaves cornice which carries the guttering. The roof is currently blue slate.

Overleaf are a collection of 3D Google images of the building currently on site.

SURROUNDING LAND USE

Fig.2 Below shows the adjacent land uses within a 70m radius of the site

The map highlights areas and their current main uses.

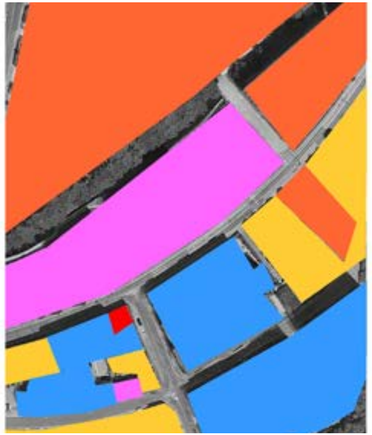
The site is surrounded predominately by student accommodation and private housing. There is a spread of commercial premises which are a mix of light industrial through to professional services.

North
A converted range of grade II listed mill buildings. These are now residential units. The buildings themselves are faced in natural stone with regular fenestration and modest detailing.

East
A large purpose built student accommodation complex 'Aspley House'. The building is faced in stone with simple fenestrations, typically larger to ground floor.

South
Immediately attached to the site is a modern building comprising retail units on the ground floor with student accommodation over. The building is faced in a mix of natural stone and reconstituted ashlar with a standing seam metal upper floor.

West
Immediately attached is another former mill building which has been converted to student accommodation. The building is stone faced with a regular grid of fenestration and plain detailing.



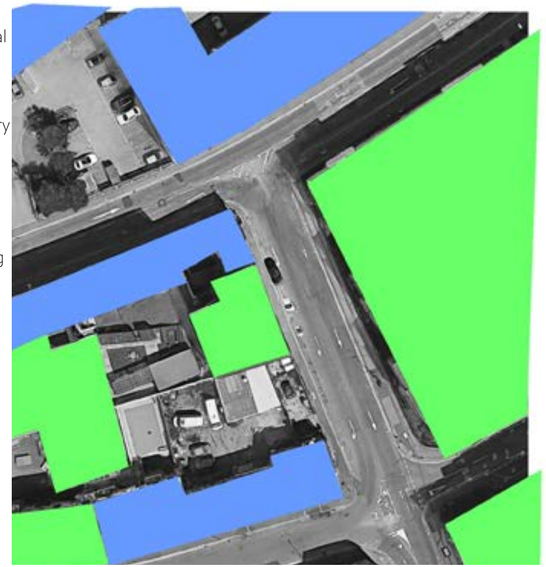
Site
University Building
Commercial
Student Accommodation
Private Housing/ apartment

SURROUNDING BUILDING AGES

The area immediately north of the proposal site is characterised by large former industrial buildings. These buildings are large in scale and simple in form.

To the south and east are more contemporary student led developments. These are also large in scale and relatively simple in form.

The building on site itself is mid - late C19 and was developed at the same time as the surrounding area was industrialised following the completion of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal.



LATE 19TH C
21ST C

Surrounding Building Heights

The surrounding buildings are of varying scales. The scale of the buildings in the area is led by the historic scale of the former mills and industrial buildings.

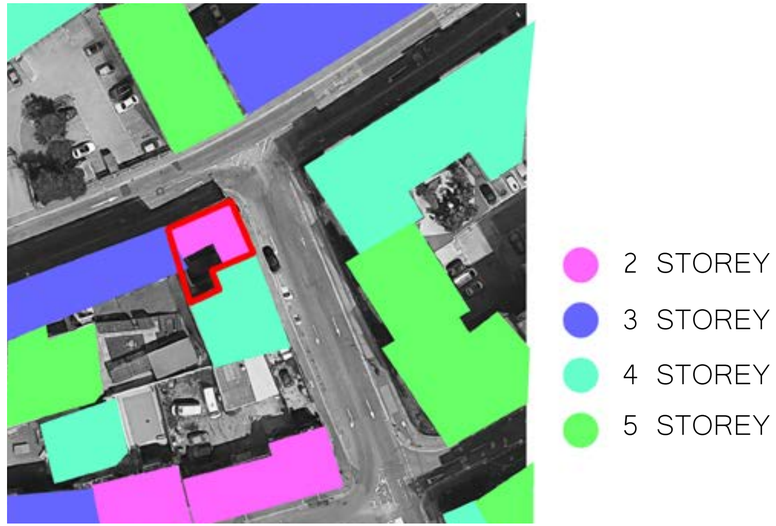
The newer developments around the site are mostly of 4 storeys or more to reflect the heights of the historical context.

The existing building on site is 2 storeys on both roadsides and is somewhat an outlier when compared to its immediate context.

The only other two storey buildings are those to the south which are located within a terrace row of houses.

The diagram shows that large tall buildings are not uncommon in the area.

Fig.12 building heights



2 STOREY
3 STOREY
4 STOREY
5 STOREY

Surrounding Roof Profiles

The buildings surrounding the site are a combination of flat and traditional pitched. The more modern developments have flat roofs whilst the older industrial buildings feature pitched roofs.

Flat roof
Pitched/ tiled roof

PLANNING POLICY

NPPF

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It states that "The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development ". This then gives rise to specific guidance for local planning authorities when discharging their duty as local decision makers, namely:

- "Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way
- "They [Local Planning Authorities] should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work pro-actively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable Development where possible ".

BUILDING A STRONG COMPETITIVE ECONOMY

The NPPF requires that the planning system should drive and support sustainable economic development. The NPPF establishes the Government's commitment to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth and that "**significant weight** should be placed on the need to **support economic growth** and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. "

ACHIEVING WELL DESIGNED PLACES

The NPPF states that good design is a key element of sustainable development: "In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote **high levels of sustainability**, or help **raise** the **standard** of design more generally in an **area**, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings. "

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND FLOODING

- The NPPF identifies the key role the planning system has in supporting the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, helping to 'minimise vulnerability and improve resilience. When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- The NPPF calls upon the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.
- When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.
- The decisions of local planning authorities should aim to "prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability."

LOCAL PLAN CONTEXT

The site sits within the developed area and shown on the local plan policy map with no allocation.

To the south of the site on Colne Rd sits a priority employment area.

An image to the right shows the site on the local plan mapping system.

PLANNING STATEMENT

A full planning policy appraisal is included as part of this application which explores the full planning policy context of this application.

THE PROPOSAL

LAYOUT

The site is relatively constrained due to its proximity to neighbouring properties and the relationship with First Street and King's Bridge Road.

The proposed layout works within the constraints of the existing stone buildings, working with them to maximise the site's potential.

The proposed layout has been developed in parallel to the massing strategy. This strategy uses materiality to break up the proposal following on from the precedents set on other buildings surrounding the site.

Overleaf is the proposed site plan transposed onto aerial photography.

SCALE

The scale of the proposal has been informed by the surrounding context. The calibre of development reflects the surrounding urban scale.

The design is four floors tall onto Firth Street. Of this, the existing lower floors are built from stone and heavy massing material, while the proposed upper floor extensions are to be finished in standing seam metallic cladding.

The tallest point of the building sits below the ridges of the surrounding warehouses.

The massing of the building has been designed to reflect the local vernacular and is informed by the conservation area appraisal.

BUILDING FORM & ORIENTATION

The form and orientation of the proposal has been determined by the existing building on site. The restricted nature of the site left little opportunity for changing the orientation of the building.

Like most buildings off Firth Street, the proposal has a basement floor which are not visible from any public highway due the yard style of the urban grid.

The form of the proposal reflects the design of surrounding historical mill buildings, which were relatively simple in form, offering repetitive rows of fenestration, with little embellishment. The order of the windows and decision to emphasise the structural grid was taken from the existing surrounding buildings as key design drivers.

The roof has been designed as to allow the roof line to blend more cohesively with neighbouring properties.

USE & AMOUNT

The building offers 16 self - contained student studio apartments.

This has been identified by our client as a key demographic with high demand.

The closure of the large out of town student accommodation and the change of market to studio flats rather than cluster apartments has led to a high demand.

Each studio is at least 19m² and contains a small en-suite. Within the rooms are a double bed space, and a small living kitchen area with a study space.

Whilst the rooms are below the nationally described minimum space standard of 37M² it is widely acknowledged that student term-time accommodation such as this is not a primary residence and is therefore assessed differently by local authorities. This approach has been used on several recent student developments in Huddersfield.

The configuration of the rooms has been led via feedback from the client on previous schemes and as a direct market response.

The proposal contains a separate communal lounge, kitchen and laundry for use of the occupants.

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY USE

The developer is committed to running the building as efficiently as possible. The proposal will be 100% electric and run on renewable tariffs.

All existing windows and doors are to be replaced an upgraded as part of the works and the new extensions will be built to at least meet the minimum building control requirements, and surpass these where possible.

SITE SECURITY

The proposal will be equipped with CCTV throughout common areas.

All rooms will be equipped with RFID locking doors, as well as security chains and spyhole to allow the residents to check who is at the door. There will be a centralised video entry system to allow residents to check who is at the external perimeter before permitting entry.

All external access gates will be equipped with magnetic lock systems which residents will have fob access to. All external gates will be equipped with automatic closing devices to stop doors/ gates being accidentally left open.

MASSING

Considerable attention has been given to the massing of the proposal.

The scheme has been designed to be of a similar scale to the neighbours which currently join the site.

The proposal will be no taller than any of the immediate surroundings, making the building fit in more to its current setting.

LANDSCAPING

Due to the sites constrained nature and low level of external space there is no scope for the creation of landscaped areas which would be effective or offer benefit.

DISABLED ACCESS

The existing building is not accessible to those in wheelchairs due to the steps leading up or down to any existing access.

The proposal includes the creation of a single stair tower and circulation zone to the south of the scheme. This will be accessed via the underpass at Broomfield House, and offers step free access into the building.

The proposed circulation tower to the rear has been designed with easy going stairs and a passenger lift.

CONTEXTUAL RESPONSE

The proposed elevation treatment has been carefully considered to respond and reflect the surrounding context.

The proposed fenestrations follow the linear set out of the original building below, much like the other buildings in the immediate area.

The proposal sees the existing lower floors retained and celebrated. The masonry will be cleaned to lift the building and refresh and highlight the detailing.

The upper levels formed by the proposed extension are to be finished with standing seam metal cladding. The lighter appearance of the standing seam will help create a lighter upper floor treatment to avoid the proposal becoming 'top heavy'.

The existing eaves cornice shall be retained and form a natural break point for the new upper levels. Beyond the cornice shall be carefully positioned masonry panels to break up the proposed cladding. The stone panels help tie the new proposal back to the existing building.

The uppermost floor features a glazed surround underneath a carefully considered sawtooth roof. The design of the upper floor has been carefully considered to create a lightweight appearance in contrast to the weight of the masonry below.

The roof is a contemporary reflection of a sawtooth roof, of which there are several examples within the immediate context. The roof form has been selected to allow the scheme to reflect the surrounding industrial roof-scape. This will be especially important for any long distance views of the proposal.

Fig.19 showing two elevation bays.

MATERIALITY

The proposed material palette has been selected to sensitively respond to the surrounding buildings. The use of these materials allow the delivery of a sensitive contemporary interpretation of a building of this scale in the area.

The materials not only respond aesthetically, but have been selected for their durability. The building is to be built in an urban environment where weathering and pollution are inevitable. The proposed materials have been chosen thanks to their great durability and their need for minimal maintenance.

The image to the right shows the proposal photo stitched to the existing neighbouring building as well as annotated materials.

Standing seam cladding. To match neighbour

Regular course natural stone

To match neighbour

Retained eaves cornice

Existing cleaned stone

HERITAGE IMPACT

ASSET DESCRIPTION

The site is not within a Conservation Area, however does sit across the road from a collection of listed buildings. The listed buildings are part of two separate listings, both grade II.

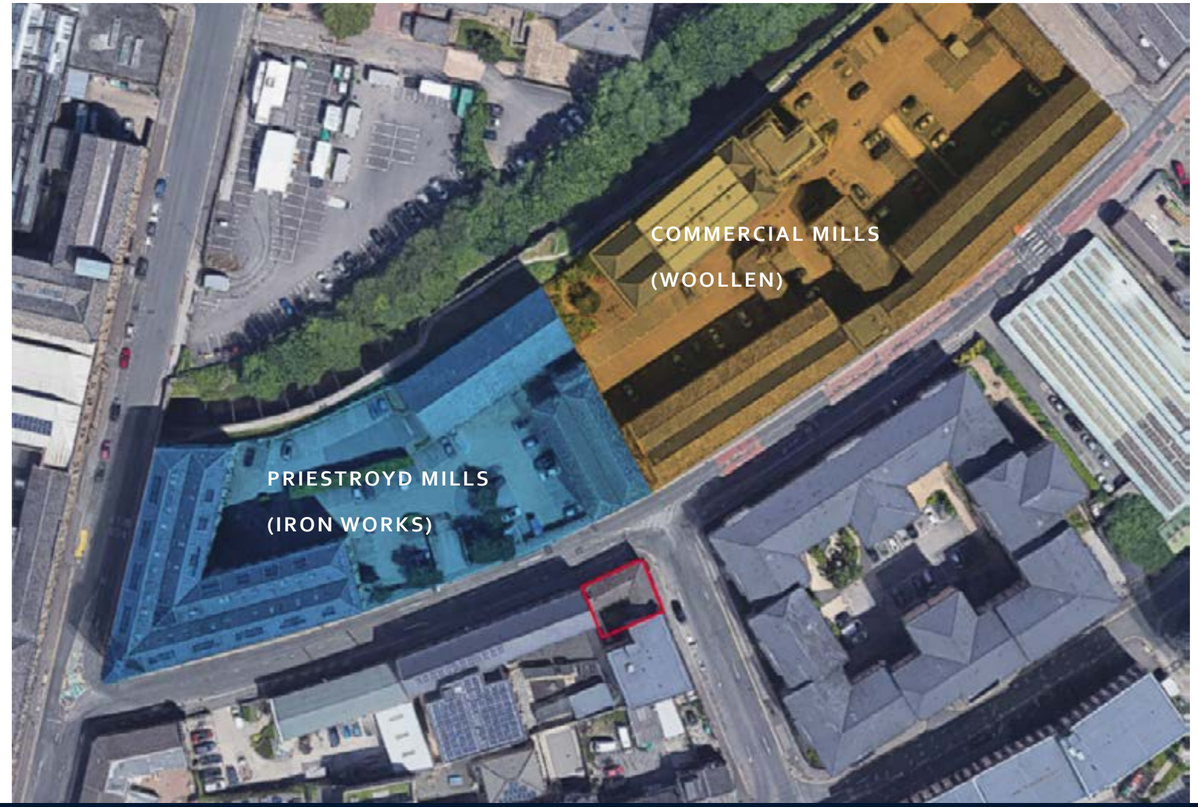
The listed buildings directly north of the site are part of the listing for 'Priestroyd Mills' The list entry for the group of buildings states -

FIRTH STREET 1. 5113 (North Side) Priestroyd Mills SE 1415 39/515 21.3.77. II GV 2. 1835 and 1869. Hammer-dressed stone. Pitched slate roof. Block on corner of Firth Street and Queen Street South 1869. 5 storeys to Firth Street, 4 to Queen Street South. Modillion eaves cornice. Coped gable ends on kneelers. 14 ranges of industrial windows to Queen Street South, 17 to Firth Street. Chief feature is impressive chateau-like tower at the corner, of irregular plan, its acute angle blunted: one storey higher than rest and crowned by steep pitched tiled roof, with gabled lucarnes near top, and elaborate cast iron cresting near apex. Near base is ashlar plaque, inscribed "Priestroyd Mills 1869". Block to east, along Firth Street frontage presumably 1835. One storey. Coped gable ends. 15 round-arched windows with vermiculated voussoirs and plain continuous imposts. 3 windows at west end have mezzanine floor. Chimney (to north of 1835 block) has octagonal red brick stack. Gates (at east end of 1835 block) have 2 cast iron depressed arches, one broad, one very narrow with "Priestroyd Iron Works 1835" in relief. Gates appear to be slightly later: elaborate pattern, ornamental finials.

The listed buildings to the north east of site are part of the listing for 'Commercial Mills'. The list entry for this group of buildings states -

1864. Hammer-dressed stone. Pitched slate roof. Coped gables. Three storeys. Stone brackets to gutter. Thirty-eight ranges of industrial windows with glazing bars on road side. Tower of two taller storeys in middle. Four ranges to Commercial Street, with two oculi in gable ends. Ground floor windows round-arched, with vermiculated voussoirs and continuous moulded impost band. Tower has hipped roof with moulded and bracketed cornice. Round-arched entrance, hollow chamfered surrounds, jambs and voussoirs alternately vermiculated and ashlar: spur stones. Frieze and moulded cornice with pediment-shaped blocking course above ground floor, inscribed "Commercial Mills" and "1864". First floor has two segment-headed sashes, set in segment-headed panel with rusticated voussoirs, each alternate one vermiculated.

The diagram overleaf shows the two listed collections of buildings in relation to the proposal site.



HERITAGE IMPACT

ASSET DESCRIPTION

The listing text for both groups of buildings mainly relates to the central building of each development. These main buildings are relatively remote from the development site.

The buildings which the proposal will have the most impact upon are the warehouse within Priestroyd Mills and a wing of the main building from Commercial Mills. The image to the right shows these blocks in relation to the application site.

The warehouse of Priestroyd Mills is plain in nature and features repetitive fenestration with four ranges of equally sized industrial windows over five floors. All windows have sawn ashlar cills and ashlar heads with smaller ashlar pieces forming a string course joining the heads.

The eaves has corbels arranged in pairs sat over the upper floor window string course.

The wing of Commercial mills has 16 ranges of windows with glazing bars per the listing text. The windows are detailed per the listing text with arched heads to the ground floor.

The listed buildings were erected around the same time period as the building occupying the application site. The whole area was developed in the mid 1800's following the arrival of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal which was completed in 1811.

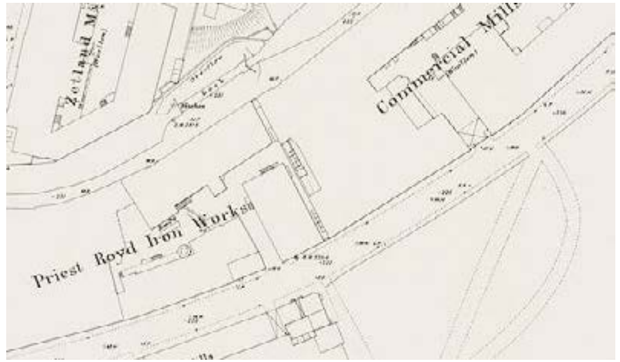
The opening of the canal led to large scale industrialisation to the south of the town centre, including along the River Colne. Historic maps to the right shows the level of development within the area between 1851 and 1890.

By 1890 there were no less than 8 large mills along the length of Firth Street. These were a mixture of Woollen mills, Cotton Mills and Priestroyd Iron works on the Junction of Queen Street South.

The remaining listed mills form an important part of Huddersfield's rich industrial landscape. The listed mills adjacent to the site have been converted from their former industrial uses in the early 2000's and have produced high quality living accommodation.

Other mills along Firth Street and within the surrounding area have in the most part been converted to other uses, or demolished in the 20th Century.

Top 1851 Town Plan
Below 1890 Town Plan



HERITAGE IMPACT

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

The groupings of former industrial buildings are highly significant and form an important part of the narrative of Huddersfield's industrial history.

Their sensitive refurbishment has meant the buildings futures are safeguarded for years to come.

The buildings contribute to the aesthetic quality of the area. Their robust and mostly functional design contributes to the industrial feeling of the Firth Street area.

The collection of buildings have a high historical value as remaining industrial buildings in the area which tells the story of the rapid and prosperous industrialisation of Huddersfield. Their connection with the canal offers another layer to the narrative of this areas industrialisation.

Following several schemes of development and modernisation both mill sites are considerably less dense than they originally were. The aerial photo to the right from 1952 shows the density of the mill sites.

HERITAGE IMPACT

IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposal sees the refurbishment and addition of two floors to an existing building. The building sits within an urban block somewhat remote from the main focuses of the listed building groups.

Although the main listed building focus is relatively remote, it has been established that the satellite buildings which are close to the proposed development have their own significance.

The proposed scheme has been designed to respond to the immediate context including the listed mill buildings.

The proposal is restrained in nature and would have limited impact on any views of the listed buildings. The scale of the listed buildings is so large that they are un-readable from close context. This contributes in its own right to their significance, however the proposal would have no impact on this.

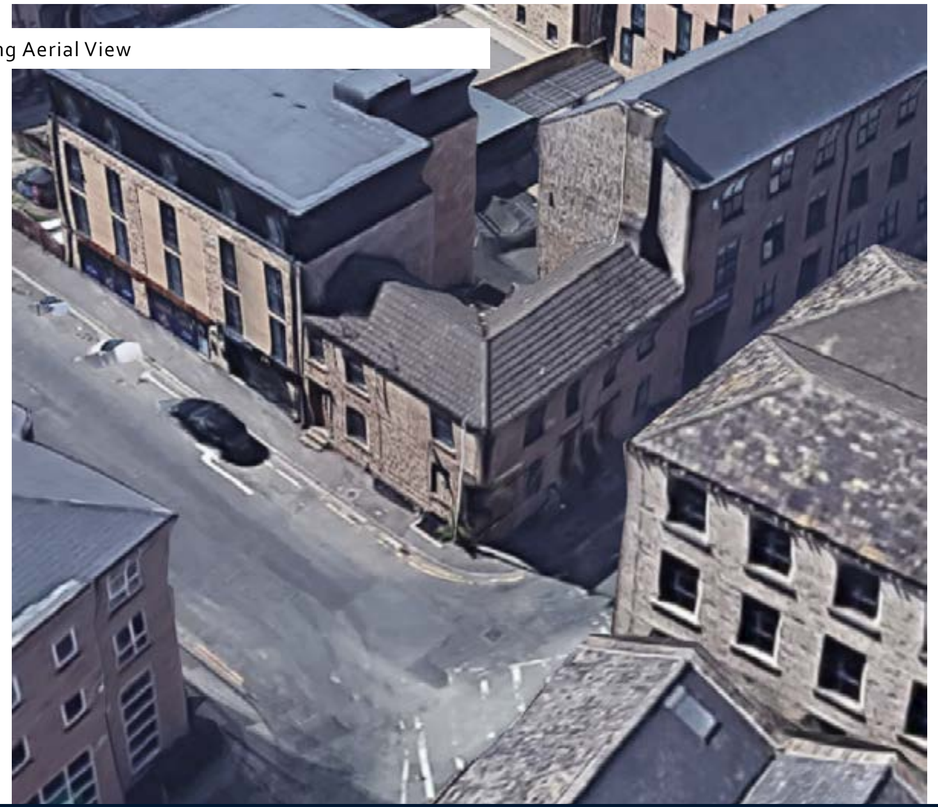
The scale of the proposal responds to the existing surrounding buildings and large monolithic nature of the existing mills, warehouses and more modern student accommodation buildings.

The proposed development would not detract from the historic narrative of these former industrial buildings, nor would it detract from their significance or impact upon their scale or legibility thereof.

Original Building Context

Photo montage of Proposal in Context

Existing Aerial View



Proposed Aerial View

CONCLUSION

The existing site is constrained but offers potential for the creation of needed high quality student accommodation in Huddersfield.

As demonstrated within this report, the proposed scheme is in proportion with the surrounding built environment. The design reflects the repetitive and regimented facade treatments of the surrounding buildings.

The proposed form factor and massing reflects the building which surround the site. This sensitive approach allows the proposal to fit within the surrounding urban mass.

The proposed scheme has been designed following an extensive review of the surrounding built form as well as ensuring it causes no harm to the listed buildings.

The proposal offers high quality student accommodation, within a 10 minute walk-able radius of the town.

- High quality student accommodation in a highly sustainable location

-Design which responds to the context

- Sensitive approach to massing and scale which reflect the character of the surrounding area.

STATEMENT PREPARED BY

ACUMEN
Designers & Architects

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WRITTEN - JF

CHECKED HG/ JC