
Heritage Statement

Application: Land to the north of George Street & west of Bankhouse Lane, Milnsbridge
Applicant: SKA Property Management Company Limited
Project: 4442
Date: March 2025

1. Introduction:

This statement has been prepared by Heppenstall Architects on behalf of the applicants SKA Property Management Company Limited in support of a planning application for the land use and boundary treatments, to a site located at the eastern end of George Street at the junction of George Street & Bankhouse Lane, Milnsbridge.

The statement aims to address the heritage issues required to validated this application, as the site lies within the Milnsbridge Conservation Area.

2. Policy & Guidance:

2.1. Historic England Good Practice

Historic England's Guidance Good Practice Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment sets out information to enable local planning authorities make well informed and successful decisions. It covers areas such as:

- Assessing significance
- Finding appropriate expertise and information
- Recording and archiving
- Assessing the proposals
- Unauthorised works to designated assets.

This statement has been prepared according to the principles set out above.

2.2. National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updated December 2023 contains similar policies to PPS5. The relevant policies are as follows:

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

195. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

195. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

197. When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

198. Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:

a) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and

b) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.

199. Local planning authorities should make information about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy-making or development management, publicly accessible.

2.3. Proposals affecting heritage assets.

200. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

201. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

202. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

203. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

2.4. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

"Local planning authorities should take into account:

• The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

• The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality.

• The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."

2.5. Kirklees Local Plan

The Kirklees Local plan replaced the former UDP in 2019, setting out the principles that are expected by the council and are to be followed in the submission of a planning application in Kirklees. The guide hopes to promote:

- High standards of design.
- High quality public spaces.
- A sustainable town-centre.

Section 11 of the Local Plan specifically covers design and through Policy LP24 addresses the quality of design, heritage, building materials, shopping, access, and crime prevention. Policy LP35 Specifically addresses the Historic Environment and is detailed below.

The key extracts from Policy LP24 are listed below:

Proposals should promote good design by ensuring:

a. the form, scale, layout and details of all development respects and enhances the character of the townscape, heritage assets and landscape;

d. high levels of sustainability, to a degree proportionate to the proposal, through:
vi. incorporating adequate facilities to allow occupiers to separate and store waste for recycling and recovery that are well designed and visually unobtrusive and allows for the convenient collection of waste;

e. the risk of crime is minimised by enhanced security, and the promotion of well-defined routes, overlooked streets and places, high levels of activity, and well-designed security features;

The Local Plan further promotes the re-use of existing buildings and the use of brownfield land to meet development needs and support the regeneration of areas

2.6. Policy LP35 Historic Environment

Development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) should preserve or enhance the significance of the asset. In cases likely to result in substantial harm or loss, development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposals would bring substantial public benefits that clearly outweigh the harm, or all of the following are met:

a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;

b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;

c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

2. Proposals which would remove, harm or undermine the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, or its contribution to the character of a place will be permitted only where benefits of the development outweigh the harm having regard to the scale of the harm and the significance of the heritage asset. In the case of developments affecting archaeological sites of less than national importance 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.

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 contribute to their significance;

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.

3. Assessment & Summary of Use and Fence

3.1. Regularisation of land use & boundary treatment

The subject of this application is the regularisation of land use and boundary treatment at this site.

The site has long been in use as industrial and storage facilities as detailed in the accompanying design & access statement.

3.2. Assessment of the Heritage Asset

The "Milnsbridge Conservation Area Appraisal" can be found on the Kirklees Council website, and it offers full details into the conservation designation.

The appraisal states that the special interest of this Conservation Area is that of the "urban grain of Milnsbridge... characterised by an industrial quarter, green wedges by the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and River Colne, traditional cottages, and the railway viaduct. The proposed conservation area is aiming to preserve and enhance the essence of the strong industrial character and diversity of Milnsbridge".

The appraisal refers to historic poor repairs and maintenance of some buildings. Particular problems are the number of inappropriate replacement shopfronts and signage, the unused and derelict buildings, and even where listed historic buildings have been left to deteriorate. Paragraph 11 of the Milnsbridge Conservation Area Appraisal describes the impact of economic decline on parts of Milnsbridge, but also more recent development which may provide an important economic base "has been undertaken in a manner which is insensitive to the character and setting of the area.

George Street runs eastwards from Market Street, the central spine of the northern section of the Conservation Area, and has a mix of residential, commercial, industrial and service sector establishments. There is little uniformity along the length of George Street with typical 2 storey terraced properties at the western end and a mix of industrial premises continuing along to the eastern end of varying styles and age from stone-built mill premises from the mid-1800s through to more modern steel framed buildings with steel clad walls and roofs.

Boundary treatments also vary with stone walls, mesh fencing and many with steel palisade fences & gates. The site is located towards the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area, being within the defined "Industrial Centre" on maps attached to the Conservation Area Appraisal.

3.3. General Assessment

The Application relates to regularisation of the current land use, boundary treatments.

The "Milnsbridge Conservation Area Appraisal" offers full details into the conservation designation and can be found on the Kirklees Council website.

The Conservation Area covers all the village centre of Milnsbridge and includes 12 listed buildings, these being predominantly mill buildings, the Church of St Luke and a number of weavers' cottages which remain. None of these specifically itemised heritage assets are within the immediate vicinity of the site, and cannot be affected by either the use or boundary treatment.

The application site is located within an industrialised area to the very east edge of the conservation area. The use of the site is no different than existing uses on adjacent sites and we consider appropriate use for the site.

It is worth noting that the previously approved application 2024/91624 although not implemented did consider and approve the erection of an industrial building together with parking and a perimeter boundary fence as this application seeks to regularise.

3.4. Impact Assessment

The impact of the use and replacement boundary fence on the Milnsbridge Conservation Area.

The Application site is at the eastern boundary of the Conservation Area at the junction of George Street and Bankhouse Lane. To the immediate west there is a sub-station of brick construction and single storey mill premises of stone construction with brickwork gables and pitched roofs with asbestos and metal clad coverings.

To the south side of George Street are mill premises, being single storey constructed in traditional stone, with north lights roof form. These premises are occupied by the tenant who operates and uses most of the Application site in association with his manufacturing business. To the north of the site the topography rises to residential properties lining Armitage Road with a buffer of mature trees and shrubbery.

The replacement of the dilapidated existing chain-link fence with a palisade fence widely considered the standard in an industrial/commercial setting was undertaken to reflect other established examples that exist within the conservation area.

Before the conservation area was formed and there are examples of exactly the same palisade fence located within the conservation area that both existed before the conservation area was formed and that have been erected after the conservation area was formed. These are shown in Appendix B.

In the context of other established palisade fences of the same height and positioned at the back edge of the footpath that also exist within the conservation area we consider this site's fence will cause less than substantial harm to the character of the conservation area.

There are no listed buildings in the vicinity, the nearest being mill premises at Tanyard Lane & Factory Lane, 200m to the south, and Milnsbridge House, 300m to the west, at the junction of George Street and Dowker Street.

The regularisation of the parking and storage uses in association with the existing adjacent industrial & Commercial uses are mirror other existing uses within this conservation and we consider will cause less than substantial harm to the conservation area or impact on the significance of any heritage assets.

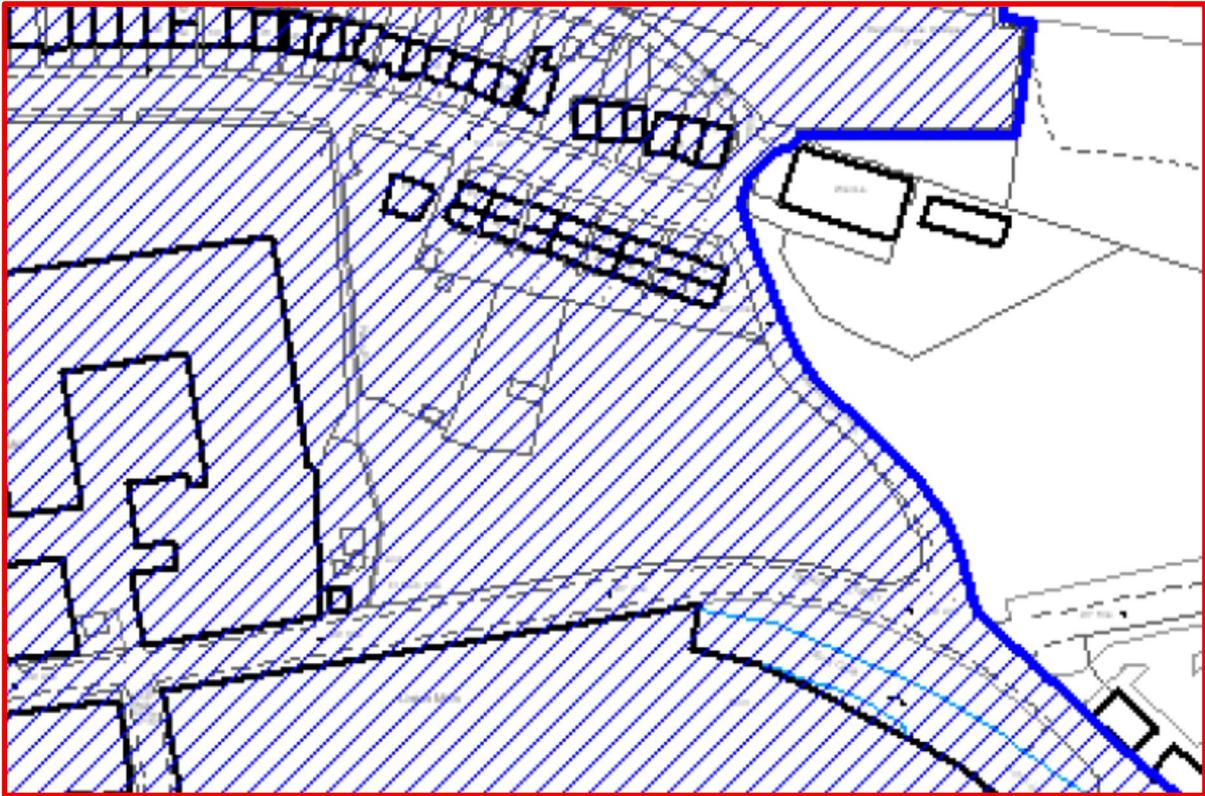
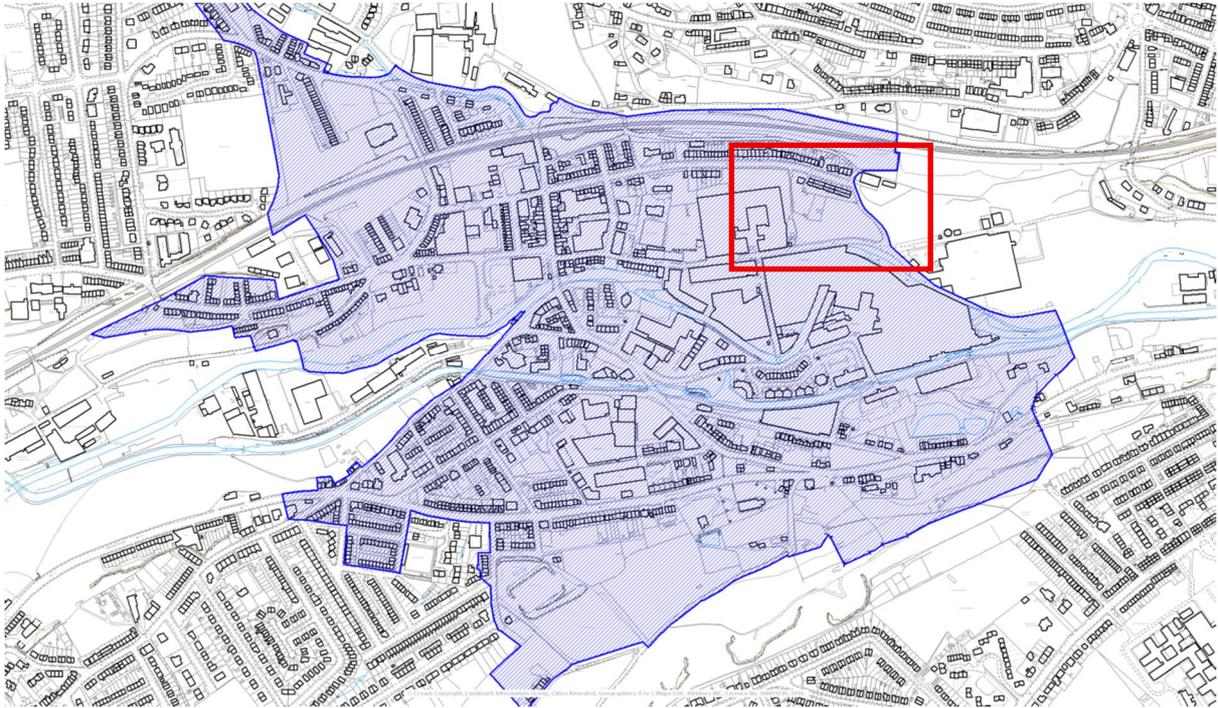
4. Concluding Statement

It is considered the storage and carparking are essential uses to ensure the continuing operation of the established adjacent businesses and are uses that are typical within other adjacent uses within the conservation area. This applications use will cause no greater harm than other similar established uses within this industrial zone of the conservation area.

The boundary treatment, has been an industrial chainlink fence in the same position as the replacement palisade fence. This fence is essential to ensure the site is secure and replicates the materials & style of fencing prevalent at many industrial & commercial premises along George Street. The palisade fence although visually different from the one it replaces is in keeping with other palisade fences that exist within this conservation area.

In summary this applications regularisation of the existing uses and replacement fence will cause less than substantial harm

Appendix A: Milnsbridge Conservation Area map



Appendix B: Existing Palisade fences

Existing palisade fence location within the conservation area marked **red**
Application Site marked **green**

