West Yorkshire
Archaeology Advisory Service

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2025/92139 - The Old Dewsbury Library, Wellington Road, Dewsbury, WF13 1HN
Alterations to former library to form 14 apartments with associated internal and external works (Listed Building within a Conservation Area)
WYAAS Ref: CWY619

Dear William,

Thank you for the email of the 27th of February 2026.

I have reviewed the application, and the information held by the West Yorkshire Historic Environment. Despite the positive external repairs, WYAAS has some concerns regarding the impact of the proposed conversion on the highly sensitive historic interior of the building. The Grade II listing explicitly notes that the interior contains original features including glazed tiling, panelling, moulded plaster ceilings, and the 1931 Herbert Wood mural.

From an archaeological and historic building perspective, the proposed sub-division will obscure and permanently alter the historic spatial arrangement of this late 19th-century municipal building. Therefore, preservation by record is essential.

Recommended Course of Action

Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to grant consent, WYAAS strongly advises that a Level 3 Historic Building Recording is secured via condition prior to any stripping out, sub-division, or "boxing out" taking place. A comprehensive archaeological and architectural record would be recommended and can be secured by a suitably worded condition. This should allow any original elements of the building to be recorded.

Recommended Planning Condition

The WYAAS recommends that should planning consent be granted for the development. This work can be secured by the attachment of a suitable condition to any

grant of planning permission awarded. In accordance with the Department of the Environment's Circular 11/95, we recommend that the condition be worded as follows:

The following condition is suggested by Historic England in their Historic Environment Good Practice Advice, Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment, 2015 paragraph 37:

"No demolition/development shall take place/commence until a written scheme of archaeological investigation (WSI) has been [submitted to and] approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and

The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works

- The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI"

Detail of Archaeological Investigation

Details of the necessary archaeological work, in the form of a specification, will be provided to the developer on written request, by the WY Archaeology Advisory Service in our capacity as the Kirklees Planning Department's advisors on archaeological matters. The WY Archaeology Advisory Service will also be responsible for monitoring the work of the archaeological contractor commissioned by the developer to undertake this work, on behalf of the Planning Authority.

In order to aid the developer to meet the requirements of the above condition I would suggest that it might be helpful to add the following as a note to the planning permission:

"For further information please contact: David Williams, West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service: 0113 535 3257"

We would strongly suggest that the developer be advised that a reasonable period of time for the execution of the necessary archaeological work must be allowed for within the overall site timetable. Any commencement of work on site prior to the approval and implementation of an archaeological specification, and/or any failure to schedule work properly that results in inadequate archaeological recording, should be deemed by the Planning Department to be a breach of the planning condition.

Sincerely,

David Williams
WYAAS Team Manager