

Justification for the demolition of the rear chimney to 27 Market Street

INTRODUCTION

This document supports an application for **Listed Building Consent** for the removal of the rear chimney at 27 Market Place, Dewsbury. The building is Grade II listed and located within the Dewsbury Conservation Area. The chimney is no longer functional and is in a state of advanced deterioration.

Please refer to drawing GR830199-BLD01 for drawn and photographic information relating to this document.

DESCRIPTION OF CHIMNEY

A large chimney circa 1200mm long x 400mm wide and built to a height of 2,000mm is located to the right-hand side of 27 Market Place, Dewsbury. The Chimney is built in brickwork with a stonework plinth below flashings. The chimney would have had chimney pots, but these have been removed and are now capped with a concrete slab sealing off the old stack.

Flashings (apron, soaker and gutter) to the chimney are in leadwork. The gutter between the chimney stack and adjoining property is narrow at 100mm in width. The remainder of the gutter along this area is 150-200mm wide.

CONDITION

We confirm the condition of the chimney stack as follows:

1. A large percentage of the mortar is missing to the chimney stack and much of it is sat in the back gutter of the chimney.
2. Higher up the chimney stack there is evidence where further pointing is about to fall out.
3. Lower sections of brickwork are badly eroded and frost damaged to the state where arises have been rounded. Repair options are limited. Replacement bricks would be needed.
4. The stonework plinth below the flashings is eroded beyond repair. New stonework would be required to provide a suitable bed to rebuild the chimney.
5. Lead flashings are pitted and showing signs of heavy oxidation.
6. Lead flashings are falling away from the chimney.

CURRENT PROBLEMS

Below is a list of problems found on site due to the condition of the chimney:

1. The gutter is full of moss and other detritus.
2. Due to blockage and poor condition of stone and leadwork had led to water penetration in 27 Market Place in numerous locations. Wet rot has been found within roof timbers (rafters, gutter boards and supporting framework)
3. Dry rot has been found within 27 Market Place. Whilst located in the centre of the building we cannot discount that the condition of the roof has contributed to the outbreak.

STRUCTURAL RISK

Whilst no formal structural assessment has been undertaken by a structural engineer the current condition assessment has noted that low level masonry erosion to both brick and stone. Given the relatively tall chimney structure there is a potential risk of collapse and risk of a fall of the chimney into 27 Market place. At present the risk is considered low. The risk of collapse will increase if left in its present state over the medium term.

HERITAGE IMPACT

Below is list of points we consider are pertinent to heritage matters.

1. The chimney stack no longer performs the function intended.
2. Chimney pots have been removed and replaced with a concrete slab.
3. The chimney has no discerning architectural features it's a simple rectangular structure.
4. The site is surrounded by the Dewsbury Arcade and properties on Northgate, Foundry Street and Corporation Street. Loss of the chimney will not be noticeable from ground floor level.
5. A full photographic record of the chimney and salvage of any reusable materials could be undertaken in any rebuilding option.

REMEDIAL WORKS AND ALTERNATIVES

There are 2 options available to overcome the condition of the chimney at 27 Market Place:

Repair and build

In our opinion this option is not viable due to severe erosion and inability to salvage all the original materials. We would effectively create a new structure with limited historic value.

In the event of any future flashing replacement, it is likely that the chimney will require full demolition and rebuilding due to the restricted space available at eaves level to adequately detail the leadwork and ensure the gutters remain wind and weathertight.

Demolition/Removal

Remove the chimney in total. This would simplify the roof detail, improve rainwater discharge and reduce the risk of blockages and water penetration into the building. Removing the chimney would also reduce heat loss and pest intrusion.

PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

In our view the proposal demolition of the chimney aligns with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guidance (Paragraph 202) which allows for removal where harm is outweighed by public benefit. It also supports Historic England guidance on managing change where features are beyond reasonable repair.

CONCLUSION

Removal of the chimney to 27 Market Place, Dewsbury is justified due to:

- Irreparable damage to stone and brickwork
- Structural instability and risk of collapse
- Ongoing water ingress causing internal decay

Benefits include:

- Improved roof detailing and drainage
- Prevention of further damp penetration and rot
- Reduced maintenance burden on a vacant building