

Connect Housing

CHB0-MWA-01-XX-RP-A-0002

Design and Access Statement

Sustainability and Retrofit Improvements at 21
Bond Street

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Document Control

Document Name: CHB0-MWA-01-XX-RP-A-0002
Title: DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
Code: MWA-D01-B

Revision	Status	Prepared By	Approved By	Issue Date	Comments
PI	S2	DH	MM	01/05/26	Issued for Planning

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1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement supports the application for Sustainability and Retrofit Improvements at 21 Bond Street. It sets out the design principles and how access has been considered. A Heritage Statement accompanies this application to address the listed building and conservation area impacts.

2. Site and Context

The application site is located within the Dewsbury Conservation Area, and is closely associated with a Grade II listed building. The surrounding area is characterised by a strong historic townscape, comprising former industrial and commercial buildings constructed in traditional materials, with a consistent rhythm of masonry façades, vertical proportions, and established street patterns that reflect Dewsbury's 19th-century expansion as a textile manufacturing centre.

The principal elevation of the Grade II listed building is the north-facing Bond Street frontage, which is identified in the listing as exhibiting a late 19th-century Italianate architectural character. This elevation is of highest heritage significance and makes a strong contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

To the east, the building comprises a series of four adjoining gabled roof forms, which include a modern glazed curtain walling link between the historic front and rear elements of the structure. This demonstrates that sensitive and appropriately designed modern interventions have already been introduced to the building, reflecting its continued adaptation and functional evolution over time.

The southern elevations form part of the building's former mill structures and are characterised by more utilitarian façades, with regular, symmetrical proportions and restrained architectural detailing typical of industrial mill architecture. These elevations are less visually prominent within the wider streetscape and provide a more flexible context for appropriate modern interventions.

3. Design

The proposed development comprises the installation of photovoltaic (PV) solar panels to the existing roof slopes of 21–23 Bond Street, Dewsbury. The panels are proposed to be located on the south-facing roof pitches, where they will achieve optimum solar efficiency. This orientation also ensures that the panels are positioned away from the principal Bond Street elevation, which is the most architecturally significant façade and the primary focus of the building's designation within historic area assessment and listing documentation.

While the roof slopes are not entirely concealed within the wider townscape, it is important to note, as set out in the accompanying Heritage Statement, that the proposed solar panels would not be visible at street level from Bond Street or immediately adjacent public viewpoints. Their visibility is therefore extremely limited in close-range views, preserving the integrity of the principal elevations and the character of the conservation area at pedestrian scale.



Figure 1 – 21 Bond street viewed from Grove Street.
Note the roof scape is not visible.



Figure 2 – 23 Bond street viewed from the throughfare
between Grove Street and Wellington Street.

From more distant viewpoints, particularly from the south of Dewsbury along Wakefield Road on approach into the town, there are intermittent glimpse of 21–23 Bond Street above the roof line. From this more distant and elevated view point, some of the proposed solar panels will be partially visible. However, at this distance the installation would be read as a subtle addition within a wider roofscape context rather than a dominant feature.



Figure 3 – 21/23 Bond street viewed from
Wakefield Road.



Figure 4 – Optical zoom of Figure 3

In terms of material and visual appearance, the proposed panels are considered to integrate appropriately with the existing roof form. The dark finish of the PV panels would sit comfortably against the existing dark slate roof coverings, minimising visual contrast. Furthermore, the regular, planar geometry of the panels complements the strong rectangular rhythm of the roof structure. This is particularly appropriate in contrast to hipped roof forms, where solar installations can often appear incongruous; in this instance, the roof geometry allows for a coherent and disciplined arrangement.

It is also relevant to note that the existing building already contains strong contemporary architectural elements, including dark-toned curtain wall glazing and roof detailing with a comparable tonal and modular character to that of the proposed PV panels. As such, the introduction of solar technology is consistent with the existing architectural language and would sit comfortably within the established palette of materials and finishes.

In the wider context, comparable modern interventions within the surrounding area demonstrate a precedent for sensitive roof alterations to historic and former industrial buildings. In particular, the adjacent Field House at 15 Wellington Road, Dewsbury, also a listed building within the conservation area, has undergone significant redevelopment, including the removal of traditional roof structures and the introduction of a new mansard roof form under planning permission 2019/92963 for conversion to residential use.

Against this background, the proposed PV installation represents a more modest and reversible intervention than nearby precedent developments. It sits comfortably between the retention of the existing roof form at 21–23 Bond Street and the more extensive roof-level alterations seen at adjacent buildings, thereby maintaining a balanced and contextually appropriate approach to the evolution of the building.

4. Summary

The proposal has been prepared having regard to the statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and relevant policies within the Kirklees Local Plan relating to heritage assets and sustainable development.

The NPPF requires that great weight is given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, including listed buildings and conservation areas, recognising that their significance can be harmed by inappropriate development. Where a proposal results in less than substantial harm to a heritage asset, Paragraph 208 of the NPPF requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

In this instance, any potential harm is considered to be limited and less than substantial, given that the proposed solar panels are located on secondary roof slopes, are not visible from street level, and do not affect the principal elevations of the listed buildings which contribute most

strongly to their significance and the character of the conservation area. Any limited visibility from longer-range viewpoints is considered minor in the context of the wider townscape.

The proposal delivers clear public benefits through the generation of renewable energy and reduction in carbon emissions, which aligns directly with the NPPF's overarching objective to support the transition to a low-carbon future and to support sustainable development.

At a local level, the Kirklees Local Plan supports proposals which conserve and enhance the historic environment whilst allowing for sensitive adaptation and the continued beneficial use of heritage assets. The approach taken ensures that the significance of the listed buildings and the character of the Dewsbury Conservation Area are preserved, while enabling appropriate modern environmental improvements.

Overall, the proposal is considered to accord with both national and local planning policy, as it preserves heritage significance, results in at most limited less than substantial harm, and delivers clear and meaningful environmental benefits.