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HERITAGE STATEMENT

Project Reference: PD-2026-050 / HS

Site Location: 57 Norman Road, Birkby, Huddersfield, HD2 2UD

Designation: Birkby Conservation Area

Proposal: Heritage and Historic Environment Statement to support a joint retrospective application for Full Planning Permission and Advertisement Consent for a change of use within Class E, external cladding installations, promotional signage, and an upgraded low-wattage down-lighting scheme.

1. Introduction & Site Context

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a retrospective planning application at 57 Norman Road, Huddersfield. The subject property is a traditional Victorian end-of-terrace building constructed of local natural stone with a slate roof. The premises occupies a prominent corner plot within the designated **Birkby Conservation Area**.

In accordance with **Policy LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan** and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), this statement assesses the historical significance of the building and demonstrates how the retrospective shopfront updates preserve the character, visual amenity, and commercial fabric of the conservation asset.

2. Historical Commercial Significance & Use Class E Continuity

An evaluation of the site's planning history and historical map data confirms that 57 Norman Road has maintained a continuous, active commercial function within the local street scene for decades.

Historical photographic and satellite evidence indicates that the ground floor unit has been consistently occupied by retail and commercial business formats since at least 2009. The property previously operated as a retail shop, transitioned into a high-street barber shop ("Angel"), and has now returned to a neighbourhood convenience retail format ("M1 Market").

Because both the baseline operation and the retrospective use sit entirely within **Use Class E (Commercial, Business, and Service)**, the core commercial nature of this historic corner plot remains unbroken. The continuity of an active business format prevents the building from falling into dereliction or long-term vacancy, which is a primary objective of heritage conservation within urban districts.

3. Assessment of Impact on the Birkby Conservation Area

The physical works undertaken at 57 Norman Road have been carefully executed to ensure the historic character and visual fabric of the Conservation Area are preserved:

- **Preservation of Structural Fabric:** The original local stone masonry, structural stone piers, lintels, and upper-floor architectural features remain entirely intact and unaltered. No structural alterations, modifications to building height, or volume extensions have been introduced.

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- **Retention of Joinery:** The existing white uPVC window framing and door configurations are retained completely as existing, maintaining the long-established architectural proportions and openings of the ground floor unit.
- **Reversibility of Cladding and Graphics:** The newly introduced branding panels and graphic wraps are purely superficial, non-structural, and non-destructive. They are fitted tightly over the existing commercial masonry surround, leaving the underlying historical building fabric fully protected and capable of being reversed in the future without any loss of historic materials.
- **Signage Integration:** The promotional signage is scaled proportionately to sit within the building's natural architectural fascia zone, providing a clean, tidy, and orderly street scene appearance.

4. Proactive Lighting & Amenity Mitigation

In order to respect neighbouring residential properties and protect the historic character of the street scene at night, **the existing temporary, high-intensity external security lighting will be completely and permanently removed from the building frontage.**

The replacement lighting scheme introduces a robust, low-wattage commercial specification operating purely as shielded down-lighters. This engineering choice completely eliminates light spill into adjacent windows, prevents glare, and ensures a sensitive, highly restrained evening appearance appropriate for the Birkby Conservation Area.

5. Conclusion

The development at 57 Norman Road respects the architectural constraints and historical significance of the Birkby Conservation Area. By upgrading the shopfront envelope superficially and maintaining an active Use Class E local convenience format, the long-term maintenance and viability of this Victorian building are secured.

The works comply fully with **Policy LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan** and the conservation guidelines of the NPPF. Accordingly, the Council is respectfully requested to support this application and regularize the development.