

## 2. Site Description

The application property occupies a prominent position on Market Street within Huddersfield Town Centre and forms part of the town's historic commercial core.

The building is Grade II listed and is constructed in natural stone with traditional architectural detailing characteristic of nineteenth-century commercial development. The building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding historic streetscape.

The ground floor is occupied by the British Heart Foundation retail store. The upper floors have been vacant for a significant period and are currently underutilised.

## 3. Existing and Proposed Use

The proposal relates solely to the vacant upper floors of the building.

The existing British Heart Foundation retail use at ground floor will remain unchanged, maintaining an active commercial frontage on Market Street and contributing to the vitality and viability of Huddersfield Town Centre.

The proposal seeks to convert the vacant upper floors into self-contained residential apartments.

Historic investigations undertaken during the preparation of the application have identified evidence that parts of the upper floors were previously used for residential accommodation. Previously blocked sections have been reopened and accessed via the existing rear staircase, confirming the former residential occupation of the building.

The proposed development therefore represents the reinstatement of a historic use rather than the introduction of a wholly new function.

## 4. Design Principles

The proposals have been informed by recognised conservation principles including:

- Retention of significant historic fabric.

## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT INCORPORATING HERITAGE STATEMENT

**Application:** Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent

**Proposal:** Conversion of Vacant Upper Floors to Residential Apartments

**Property:** British Heart Foundation, Market Street, Huddersfield

**Heritage Designation:** Grade II Listed Building

### 1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement, incorporating a Heritage Statement, has been prepared in support of an application for Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for the conversion of the vacant upper floors of the British Heart Foundation building on Market Street, Huddersfield, into residential apartments.

The ground floor retail premises occupied by the British Heart Foundation will remain in its existing use and continue to operate without alteration. The proposal seeks to secure the long-term future of the building by bringing the vacant upper floors back into beneficial use whilst preserving its architectural and historic significance.

The proposal has been developed in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment), Historic England's guidance *Conservation Principles*, and the adopted Kirklees Local Plan.

## 7. External Appearance

The proposals have been specifically designed to preserve the external appearance of the listed building.

There are no visual alterations proposed to the principal elevations.

All existing windows will be repaired wherever practicable using traditional conservation techniques.

Where replacement is necessary due to deterioration beyond repair, new windows will exactly replicate the existing in terms of:

- Materials
- Sections
- Profiles
- Glazing pattern
- Opening arrangements
- Finish
- Architectural detailing

The proposed works will therefore preserve the external appearance and special architectural interest of the building.

## 8. Heritage Statement

### Significance

The building derives its significance from its:

### Architectural Interest

- High-quality Victorian commercial architecture.
- Traditional stone construction.
- Historic window proportions.
- Original structural arrangement.
- Surviving architectural detailing.

- Minimum intervention.
- Repair before replacement.
- Reversible alterations where practicable.
- Respect for the historic layout and plan form.
- Preservation of architectural character.

The scheme has been carefully designed to provide modern residential accommodation whilst safeguarding the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

## 5. Proposed Works

The proposed development comprises:

- Conversion of the vacant upper floors into residential apartments.
- Internal refurbishment and repair.
- Installation of modern building services.
- Fire safety improvements.
- Thermal upgrades where compatible with the historic fabric.
- Continued use of the existing external staircase.
- Construction of a new external staircase providing a compliant secondary means of escape.

No alterations are proposed to the principal elevations.

## 6. Access Statement

Pedestrian access to the residential accommodation will continue to utilise the existing external staircase.

A new external staircase is proposed to provide an additional means of escape in accordance with current Building Regulations and fire safety requirements.

No vehicular access is proposed.

The existing historic circulation routes have been retained wherever possible to minimise intervention within the listed building.

- Securing the long-term conservation of a Grade II listed building.
- Bringing long-term vacant upper floors back into productive use.
- Delivering new town centre housing.
- Supporting sustainable regeneration.
- Retaining the continued operation of the British Heart Foundation retail premises.
- Enhancing the vitality and viability of Huddersfield Town Centre.

## 10. Residential Amenity

An independent Acoustic Assessment accompanies the application.

The assessment demonstrates that appropriate internal noise levels can be achieved through suitable mitigation measures and confirms that the proposed residential accommodation will provide an acceptable standard of amenity for future occupants.

## 11. Sustainability

The proposal represents sustainable development by:

- Reusing an existing listed building.
- Retaining embodied carbon.
- Avoiding unnecessary demolition.
- Supporting town centre living.
- Reducing pressure for development on greenfield land.
- Supporting existing businesses and local services.
- Ensuring the continued commercial use of the ground floor premises.

## 12. Planning Policy Assessment

The proposal has been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted Kirklees Local Plan.

The scheme accords with the objectives of the NPPF by securing the optimum viable use of a designated heritage asset while conserving its significance.

## Historic Interest

The property reflects the historic commercial development of Huddersfield Town Centre and contributes positively to the character of Market Street.

Historically, the building accommodated commercial activity at ground floor with residential accommodation above, reflecting the traditional mixed-use pattern common within historic town centres.

## Evidential Value

Evidence uncovered during investigation confirms former residential occupation of the upper floors.

The reopening of previously inaccessible areas demonstrates that residential use historically formed part of the building's evolution, supporting the principle of reinstating that use.

## 9. Heritage Impact Assessment

The proposed works have been designed to preserve the significance of this Grade II listed building.

The majority of interventions are confined to the interior and seek to retain existing historic fabric wherever practicable.

No alterations are proposed to the principal street elevation.

Window repairs will follow recognised conservation practice, with replacement only where unavoidable and on a like-for-like basis.

The proposed external escape staircase has been positioned to minimise its impact upon the listed building and has been designed solely to satisfy modern fire safety requirements.

The proposal therefore results in less than substantial harm, as defined by paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

This limited level of harm is clearly outweighed by substantial public benefits, including:

The proposal is also considered to comply with the relevant policies of the Kirklees Local Plan, including:

- **Policy LP1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development**, by making effective use of an existing building within a sustainable town centre location.
- **Policy LP15 – High Quality Design**, through a sensitive design approach that respects the character and appearance of the listed building.
- **Policy LP16 – Place Making**, by contributing positively to the regeneration and continued vitality of Huddersfield Town Centre.
- **Policy LP35 – Historic Environment**, by preserving the significance of the Grade II listed building and ensuring that alterations are sympathetic to its architectural and historic interest.
- **Policy LP36 – Development Affecting the Setting of Heritage Assets**, by ensuring that the proposed works preserve the building's contribution to the wider historic townscape.
- **Policy LP51 – Sustainable Travel**, recognising the site's highly accessible town centre location where future residents have excellent access to public transport, services and facilities.

The proposal also supports the Council's wider objectives of encouraging the productive reuse of vacant upper floors within town centres and promoting sustainable mixed-use development.

### 13. Conclusion

The proposal represents a carefully considered and conservation-led scheme that will secure the long-term future of an important Grade II listed building.

The conversion of the vacant upper floors to residential apartments will restore the building's historic mixed-use function whilst retaining the successful British Heart Foundation retail operation at ground floor, thereby maintaining the commercial vitality of Market Street.

The proposals preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, introduce no harmful visual alterations to the principal elevations, retain and repair historic fabric wherever practicable, and provide a sustainable long-term use for previously vacant accommodation.

The development delivers significant heritage, economic and social benefits through the conservation of a designated heritage asset, the provision of much-needed town centre housing and continued support for the vitality and viability of Huddersfield Town Centre.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Historic England guidance and the relevant policies of the Kirklees Local Plan, and planning permission together with Listed Building Consent are respectfully requested.