



HERITAGE STATEMENT

71 Daisy Hill, Dewsbury, WF13 1LT

CLIENT

Muhammad Suhaib Bin Arshad

ADDRESS

71 Daisy Hill, Dewsbury, WF13 1LT

PROJECT

Change of Use of First and Second Floors from Use Class E to 2 No. Residential Dwellings (Use Class C3) with External Alterations

DRAWING REFERENCES

2616/02 (Floor Plans) | 2616/03 (Elevations) | 2616/04 (Site & Location Plans)

PREPARED BY

UHDesign Architectural Services

DATE

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STATUS

Planning Submission

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1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by UHDesign Architectural Services on behalf of Muhammad Suhaib Bin Arshad in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the first and second floors of 71 Daisy Hill, Dewsbury, WF13 1LT, from Use Class E (financial and professional services) to two self-contained residential dwellings (Use Class C3), together with associated external alterations. The ground floor is to be retained within Use Class E(c)(ii).

The statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in relation to the Historic Environment. It identifies the relevant heritage assets, assesses their significance, and evaluates the impact of the proposed development and external alterations upon that significance, with reference to Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Chapter 16 of the NPPF, and adopted Kirklees Local Plan policies LP51 and LP52.

2. Description of Proposal

The application proposes the following:

- Change of use of the first and second floors from Use Class E (financial and professional services) to 2 no. self-contained residential dwellings (Use Class C3). The ground floor is retained in its existing Use Class E(c)(ii) use.
- Replacement of the existing ground floor commercial shopfront with a new frontage in natural stone, incorporating entrance doors and windows appropriate to the mixed commercial and residential character of the building.
- Two pitched roof dormers to the rear elevation to serve the upper floor residential accommodation.
- Roof lights (Velux style) to the front roof slope to provide natural light to the second floor residential dwelling.
- Straightening of the existing raking rear eaves to create a level eaves line, consistent with neighbouring properties.
- Replacement of the existing flat roof to the single-storey rear extension with a pitched roof, with the ridge height held at or below the level of the existing flat roof so as not to increase the overall height envelope.

The building has been vacant and derelict since approximately 2012-2013. Its last active commercial occupiers were RKS Solicitors (approximately 2008-2013), preceded by Smith & Co Chartered Surveyors and Estate Agents, both uses within Use Class E(c)(ii) under the current Use Classes Order. The proposed conversion of the upper floors to residential use, whilst retaining the ground floor in commercial use, reflects a mixed-use approach that is consistent with the character of Daisy Hill and the wider Dewsbury town centre area.

3. Heritage Assets and Designations

3.1 Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area

The application site falls within the Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area, designated by Kirklees Metropolitan Council. The Conservation Area encompasses the historic commercial and civic core of Dewsbury, including its Victorian and Edwardian shopping streets, the Minster, the Town Hall and the surrounding network of fine-grained commercial streets.

The Kirklees Conservation Area Appraisal identifies the Westgate/Daisy Hill area as Character Area 4, described as having a narrow and enclosed streetscape where the irregularity of the street alignment creates an intimate and fine-grained ambience. The appraisal recognises the importance of the traditional stone-built commercial buildings lining these streets, the continuity of the built frontage, and the historic character of the upper floors and roofscape.

The Conservation Area is identified as being at risk. Kirklees Council and Historic England have established the Dewsbury Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) to address the widespread vacancy and deterioration of buildings within the conservation area boundary. The HAZ promotes a "living town" concept that specifically encourages the reuse and conversion of vacant commercial buildings, including the introduction of residential use at upper floors, to bring buildings back into active occupation and sustain the vitality of the historic town centre.

3.2 Listed Buildings

The building at 71 Daisy Hill is not listed. There are listed buildings within the wider Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area, including Dewsbury Minster and the Town Hall, but these are not in the immediate vicinity of the application site and are not materially affected by the proposed development.

3.3 Archaeological Potential

Dewsbury town centre has recognised archaeological potential relating to its early urban origins and medieval development. However, the application proposals involve no ground-breaking works and the existing building footprint is entirely retained. No archaeological evaluation is therefore considered necessary.

4. Significance of the Heritage Asset

4.1 Historic and Architectural Character

The building at 71 Daisy Hill is a three-storey mid-terraced stone-built property forming part of the continuous commercial frontage of Daisy Hill. Its stone construction, vertically proportioned windows and traditional roofline are characteristic of late Victorian and Edwardian commercial development and contribute positively to the group value and historic character of the Westgate/Daisy Hill character area.

The building's significance derives principally from its contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, specifically the continuity and integrity of the historic commercial frontage, its massing, scale and materials, and its relationship to neighbouring properties within the terrace. The building does not carry individual designation and does not possess exceptional historic or architectural interest beyond its contribution to the group and the conservation area as a whole.

4.2 Current Condition and Vulnerability

The building has been vacant and derelict since approximately 2012-2013, a period in excess of ten years. It is in serious disrepair throughout, with the roof in particularly poor condition requiring replacement. The existing ground floor commercial shopfront, whilst historically characteristic of the building's former commercial use, currently presents as a vacant and dilapidated frontage that detracts from rather than enhances the character of the streetscape. The existing flat roof to the rear single-storey extension is equally incongruous with the character of the historic stone building.

Long-term vacancy and dereliction represent one of the primary threats to the character and integrity of historic town centre conservation areas. The Dewsbury HAZ programme has specifically identified this pattern of deterioration as the principal risk to the conservation area's significance, and directly promotes schemes of this nature as the means by which that risk is addressed.

5. Assessment of Impact

5.1 Change of Use, Upper Floors to Residential

The conversion of the first and second floors to two residential dwellings, whilst retaining the ground floor in commercial use, represents a mixed-use approach that is fully consistent with the character and grain of Daisy Hill and the wider conservation area. The retention of the ground floor in Use Class E(c)(ii) maintains the active commercial frontage at street level, which is an important contributor to the vitality and character of the historic streetscape.

The reactivation of the upper floors, which have been vacant and deteriorating for over a decade, through residential conversion will secure the long-term future of the building, arrest ongoing deterioration, and ensure that the building fabric is properly maintained going forward. This outcome is directly consistent with the objectives of the Dewsbury Heritage Action Zone and the "living town" concept supported by both Kirklees Council and Historic England. The introduction of residential occupation at upper floors is a well-established pattern on Daisy Hill and across the wider Dewsbury town centre conservation area.

5.2 Front Elevation, Shopfront Replacement

The removal of the existing vacant and dilapidated commercial shopfront and its replacement with a new frontage in natural stone is considered a positive heritage outcome. The new frontage will be constructed using genuine natural stone, matching in character the traditional stone construction of the upper floors and the wider streetscape. This approach is of higher quality than that adopted by at least one neighbouring converted property on Daisy Hill, which has used a pressed panel system imitating stone rather than genuine stone construction.

The use of real natural stone is significantly more appropriate in the context of the Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area and more sympathetic to the character and fabric of the historic building. Historic England's guidance on shopfront design and the Kirklees Conservation Area policies both recognise the removal of intrusive or incompatible shopfronts and their replacement with materials and designs sympathetic to the host building as a positive heritage intervention. The retention of the ground floor in active commercial use ensures that the frontage continues to contribute to the vitality of the street at ground level.

5.3 Roof Lights to Front Elevation

Velux-style roof lights are proposed to the front roof slope to provide natural light and ventilation to the second floor residential dwelling. Roof lights that sit flush with the roof plane are widely recognised as the most sympathetic form of roof alteration in conservation areas, as they do not interrupt the roofline or add bulk to the roof form. Historic England's guidance and the Kirklees Conservation Area Appraisal both identify flush roof lights as generally acceptable in conservation area settings where they are required to provide habitable accommodation within the roof space.

The roof lights will not be visible from the street at close range due to the pitch of the roof, and their impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area as experienced from the public highway is considered to be negligible. They represent a significantly less interventive approach than a front dormer and are fully consistent with the conservation area setting.

5.4 Rear Dormers

Two pitched roof dormers are proposed to the rear elevation to serve the upper floor residential accommodation. Both dormers are designed with pitched roofs, consistent with Kirklees Council's design preferences and Historic England's published guidance, which identifies pitched roof dormers as generally more sympathetic to traditional roof forms than flat or mono-pitch alternatives. The use of two smaller dormers rather than a single full-width dormer is considered a more sensitive approach, retaining greater areas of the original roof slope between and to the sides of the dormers and avoiding a dominant or monolithic addition to the rear roofscape.

The rear elevation of the building is not visible from any public highway or public space. The rear dormers therefore have no impact on the publicly experienced character or appearance of the conservation area. The roof covering will match the existing roof materials.

5.5 Rear Eaves, Straightening

The straightening of the existing raking rear eaves to create a level eaves line is a minor but positive alteration that improves the appearance of the rear elevation and is consistent with the approach already taken by neighbouring properties on Daisy Hill. As the rear elevation is not visible from any public vantage point, this alteration has no adverse impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area.

5.6 Rear Single-Storey Extension, Pitched Roof Replacement

The replacement of the existing flat roof to the rear single-storey extension with a pitched roof is a positive design intervention. The existing flat roof is in poor condition as part of the wider dereliction of the building and is incongruous with the character of a traditional stone-built Victorian terrace. Its replacement with a pitched roof, held within the same height envelope as the existing flat roof, improves the visual quality of the rear elevation and is consistent with good conservation practice. The retention of the same overall height ensures no adverse impact upon the neighbouring residential property in terms of loss of light, outlook or overbearing effect.

5.7 Impact on Listed Buildings

The nearest listed buildings are located within the wider conservation area but are not in the immediate vicinity of the application site. The proposed development will have no impact, direct, indirect or visual, upon the significance of any listed building or its setting.

5.8 Overall Heritage Assessment

Taking the proposals in the round, the application represents a well-considered scheme that will bring a long-vacant and deteriorating building back into productive mixed use, improve its condition and appearance, and make a positive contribution to the character and vitality of the Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area. The retention of the ground floor commercial use maintains the active street-level frontage that is important to the character of Daisy Hill. Each of the external alterations has been carefully designed to be sympathetic to the character of the historic building and the conservation area setting. No harm to the significance of any heritage asset is identified.

6. Statutory Duty and Policy Compliance

6.1 Section 72, Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon the local planning authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. It is submitted that the proposed development satisfies this duty in full. The external alterations preserve and in several respects enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, most notably through the replacement of the derelict shopfront with a high-quality natural stone frontage, the use of flush roof lights rather than a projecting front dormer, the use of two sympathetically designed pitched roof dormers to the rear, the replacement of the incongruous flat roof to the rear extension with a pitched roof, and the reactivation of a long-vacant and deteriorating building in a manner consistent with the Dewsbury Heritage Action Zone objectives.

6.2 NPPF Chapter 16

Paragraph 199 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets affected by a proposal. This Heritage Statement fulfils that requirement. Paragraph 200 requires an assessment of impact on heritage significance. The assessment at Section 5 above demonstrates that the proposal will preserve and in a number of respects enhance the significance of the Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area. Paragraph 206 provides that where less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset is identified it should be weighed against public benefits. In this case no harm to heritage significance is identified, the proposal is wholly beneficial in heritage terms and is therefore fully consistent with Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

6.3 Kirklees Local Plan (Adopted February 2019)

Policy LP51 of the adopted Kirklees Local Plan requires that development within or affecting conservation areas preserves or enhances their character or appearance. As demonstrated above, the proposal does both, preserving the external fabric of the historic building, retaining the active commercial ground floor frontage, and enhancing the condition and appearance of the building through high-quality external alterations.

Policy LP52 requires development affecting heritage assets to be informed by an assessment of their significance. This Heritage Statement provides that assessment and demonstrates full compliance with LP52.

6.4 Established Precedent

There is a clear and well-established pattern of approval for comparable commercial-to-residential conversions with external alterations on Daisy Hill and within the wider Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area. The following decisions on Daisy Hill are of direct material relevance:

1. 67 Daisy Hill (Ref: 2022/91597), Change of use of retail unit to create residential dwellings within a Conservation Area: CONDITIONAL FULL PERMISSION granted December 2022.
2. 81-83 Daisy Hill (Ref: 2017/90071), Change of use of ground floor from office (A2) to 2 self-contained flats and installation of windows, doors and bin store to rear: APPROVED.
3. 85 Daisy Hill (Ref: 2016/93130), Listed Building Consent for conversion of shop/living accommodation to 6 flats within a Conservation Area: APPROVED.
4. 81-83 Daisy Hill (Ref: 2013/91671), Alterations to convert existing offices/vacant storage floors to 5 apartments within a Conservation Area: APPROVED.

In addition to these specific decisions, numerous properties on Daisy Hill and in the wider Dewsbury town centre conservation area have undergone comparable conversions from commercial to mixed or residential use, with associated external alterations, demonstrating the well-established and widely accepted principle of this type of development in this location.

7. Conclusion

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the first and second floors of 71 Daisy Hill, Dewsbury, WF13 1LT, from Use Class E to two self-contained residential dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated external alterations, on behalf of Muhammad Suhaib Bin Arshad. The ground floor is to be retained in Use Class E(c)(ii), maintaining an active commercial presence at street level consistent with the character of Daisy Hill.

The principal conclusions are as follows:

- The building at 71 Daisy Hill is not listed but contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area through its massing, scale, stone construction and its role in maintaining the continuity of the historic commercial frontage of Daisy Hill.
- The building has been vacant and derelict for over ten years. Its reactivation through a mixed-use scheme, retaining commercial use at ground floor and introducing residential use at upper floors, directly addresses the principal risk identified by the Dewsbury Heritage Action Zone and is wholly consistent with its objectives.
- The replacement shopfront in natural stone is of higher quality than comparable conversions in the immediate vicinity and represents a positive heritage outcome, preserving the active commercial frontage at ground floor whilst improving the appearance of the building.
- Flush roof lights to the front roof slope represent the most sympathetic form of roof alteration in a conservation area setting and will have negligible visual impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area.
- Two pitched roof dormers to the rear elevation are designed in accordance with Kirklees Council's design preferences and Historic England's guidance. The rear elevation is not visible from any public vantage point and the dormers have no impact on the publicly experienced character of the conservation area.
- The straightening of the rear eaves and replacement of the flat roof to the rear extension with a pitched roof held within the same height envelope are positive design interventions that improve the appearance of the building without adverse impact on any neighbouring property or the conservation area.

- The proposal fully satisfies the Section 72 duty, is consistent with Chapter 16 of the NPPF, and complies with adopted Kirklees Local Plan policies LP51 and LP52.
- The proposal is directly supported by an established and consistent pattern of approved commercial-to-residential conversions on Daisy Hill and in the wider conservation area.

UHDesign Architectural Services respectfully commends this application to Kirklees Metropolitan Council for favourable consideration.

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