



George Hotel Sub-Station

24.715.000_Heritage
Impact Assessment_Rev 1

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1. Introduction

As part of the proposals approved in 2025 to redevelop the Grade II* listed George Hotel in Huddersfield (2025/91148) as a 108 bedroom hotel it is necessary to renew the electrical sub-station. The new sub-station is required to provide additional capacity for the hotel as since closure of the hotel in 2010, insufficient capacity exists as all spare capacity has been reallocated to the railway station due to requirements of the Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade.

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by Richard Storah of AHR Building Consultancy to meet the requirements set out in para 215 of the NPPF. This Heritage Impact Assessment will consider the impact of the new sub-station on the historic building and its context within the Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area.

The report will consider any 'harm' created by the proposed new Electricity Sub-station and consider these in relation to the benefits of the project. This will allow the LPA to make a judgement in respect of this as required by the conservation policies in Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan.

2. Context of the Project

The project is part off a wider proposal for the redevelopment of the George Hotel, a grade II* listed hotel building in the centre of Huddersfield. The hotel has been vacant since 2010, there is a need to service the building to allow it to return to its original and optimum viable use, for this a new sub-station is required.

3. Context of the surrounding Heritage Assets

The history of the George Hotel is described in detail in the Bowman Riley report of 2022.

The history of the Railway Station is interrelated with that of the hotel. Both were constructed as part of the Ramsden remodeling of Huddersfield Town Centre. The hotel being rebuilt to provide a station hotel and a dining room for travelers.

The railway station dates from 1846–50. It was constructed as a joint station by the Huddersfield and Manchester Railway and the Huddersfield and Sheffield Junction Railway. Each company had amalgamated prior to the station opening, becoming the London and North Western Railway and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway respectively.

The station is constructed in a robust neo-classical style to the design of the architect James Pigott Pritchett. It was built by the local firm of Joseph Kaye in 1846–50.

Each company had separate ticket offices flanking the central entrance. A canopy was added in 1880. The station has since been replanned with the ticket office moved into the central entrance pavilion and the two flanking pavilions converted to public houses. The L&Y ticket office has become 'The Head of Steam' whilst the LNWR booking office is 'The King's Head'.

The principal interest in the building is its grand station frontage which dominates St Georges Square. The station has been described as "the most splendid in England" (John Betjeman) and "one of the best early railway stations in England" (Sir Nikolaus Pevsner).

St George's Square forms the grand arrival point to the grid planned Huddersfield 'New Town' planned by the Ramsden Estate. It is surrounded by a collection of high status Italianate commercial buildings of the late C19.

The site is within the Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area.

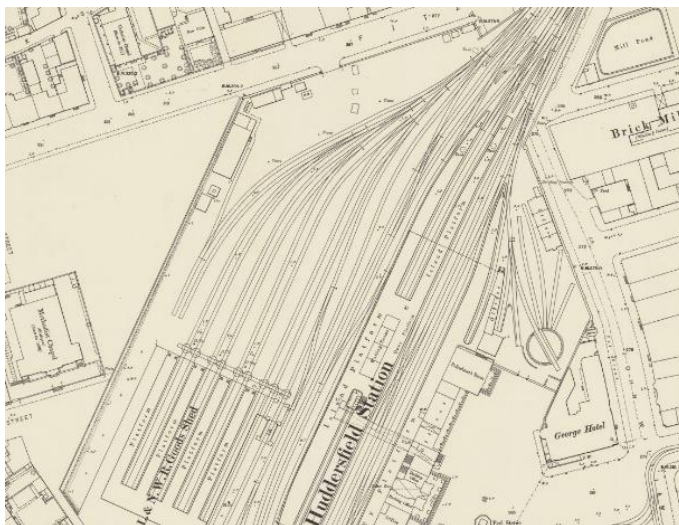
4. Historic Background

The sub-station site in a car park, formerly the goods yard between Huddersfield Railway Station, built in 1846-50, listed, Grade I) and the George Hotel built in 1850 and listed, grade II*. The location and context have altered extensively over time.



Ordnance Survey Town Plan: Huddersfield Sheet 5, Surveyed: 1848

The station and hotel sit within a wider station forecourt extending north of the hotel.

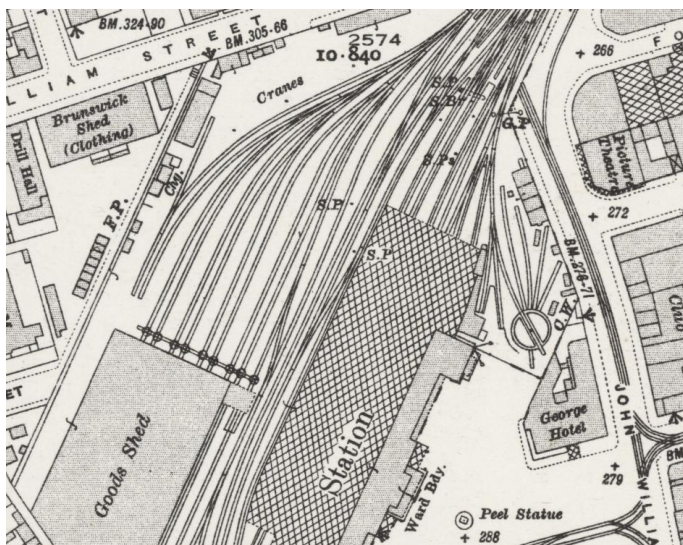


Ordnance Survey: Yorkshire CCXLVI.15.3 Surveyed: 1889

The goods yard has been developed and the fence installed from station to hotel.

The dining room with its bay and further wings have been added to the hotel.

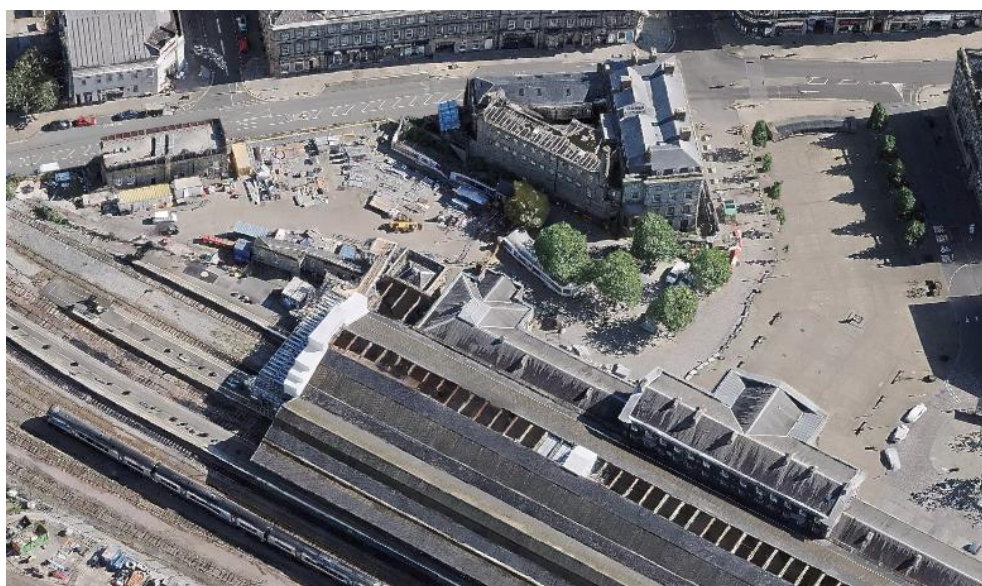
Ticket facilities have moved to the centre of the station. The northern pavilion is now a Refreshment Room.



Ordnance Survey: Yorkshire CCXLVI.15 Revised: 1930
The form of the station and hotel are relatively unchanged.



Aerofilms image of 1928, showing the Square relatively clear of street furniture and other objects.



Contemporary view (Apple Maps), showing kerb lines, planting and the removal of parking from in front of the George Hotel.

5. Significance

This section assesses the relative significance of the site and its key significance values. 'Conservation Principles' (English Heritage, 2008) sets out a range of heritage values that can be used to establish the significance of a building or place. These include evidential value (the physical aspects of a building that yield evidence about its past), historical value (the extent to which a building is associated with or illustrative of historic events or people), aesthetic value (includes design, visual, landscape and architectural value) and communal value (includes social and commemorative value and local identity). These values may be tangible, for example, the listed building's grade or they may be intangible, for example, the site's association with a past event or group of people.

Significance is a concept for measuring the cultural value of a place, using judgement to assess the place and its various aspects in a hierarchy. The established levels of significance are

- Exceptional – important at national to international levels, reflected in statutory designations, such as Grade I listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments
- High – important at regional or sometimes a higher level, e.g., Grade II listed buildings
- Medium – important at a local level, and possibly at a regional level, for example for group value
- Low – of no more than local value
- Negative or intrusive features – features which in their present form detract from the value of the site.

5.1. Significance of the George Hotel

The significance of the George Hotel is described in detail in the Bowman Riley report of 2022. Impacts of the proposals as a whole are described in the ARR Heritage Impact assessment of 18 April 2025.

The George Hotel has High Significance due to:

- Appearance and Townscape value.
- Associative value as a mid-C19 railway hotel, developed with and alongside the grade I listed Huddersfield Railway Station.
- Associative value with other buildings as part of the Ramsden Estate's redevelopment of the area in the mid-late C19.
- Associative value as the birthplace of Rugby League.
- Communal value as a venue in the collective memory of the town.

These values relate to the physical appearance of the building and its position in the context of the town. The importance of the building is recognised in its inclusion in the statutory list as a Grade II* listed building.

5.2. Significance of the Railway Station

Huddersfield Railway Station is an important example of the development in railway architecture, during the early years following the explosion in passenger transport in the 1840's. It is constructed in high quality materials and a style to reflect the ambitions of the period, and in particular those of the Ramsden family, significant local landowners who were also developing Huddersfield New Town, of which the station was a part.

The railway station of the London and North Western Railway and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. It is constructed in a robust neo-classical style to the design of the architect James Pigott Pritchett of York and built by the local firm of Joseph Kaye in 1846–50.

The principal interest in the building is its grand station frontage which dominates St Georges Square. The station has been described as "the most splendid in England" (John Betjeman) and "one of the best early railway stations in England" (Sir Nikolaus Pevsner).

Huddersfield Railway Station has High Significance due to it's:

- Railway heritage value.
- Appearance and Townscape value.
- Associative value with other buildings as part of the Ramsden Estate's redevelopment of the area in the mid-late C19.
- Townscape value in the conservation area and to the setting of St George's Square.
- Communal value as a venue in the collective memory of the town.

These values relate to the physical appearance of the building and its position in the context of the town. The importance of the building is recognised in its inclusion in the statutory list as a Grade I listed building. The fencing attach to the station is also listed at grade II.

6. Significance of the Conservation Area

Huddersfield Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was prepared by Purcell and Kirklees MBC in October 2024. This divides the conservation area into different character areas. The Station, Hotel and St George's Square are grouped within a Station Character Area (incorrectly mapped as Civic and Cultural on p. 31 of the report). The character statement notes

"The Conservation Area has at its core the Huddersfield Railway Station and its associated architecture and street pattern. The area has numerous, highly listed buildings that face onto St. George's Square constructed following the arrival of the Leeds-Manchester Railway in the late-1840s; these include: including the Grade I Listed Railway Station; the George Hotel (Grade II); and Britannia Buildings (Grade II*) all exceptional examples of neo-classical, Italianate architecture forming a strong group and defining the edges of the public realm around the square. Huddersfield Railway Station The station, completed in 1850, is one of the finest railway stations in the country, built as the network was rapidly expanded and reaching its dominance. The station and associated square form a key landmark and focal point for the town with St. George's Square Huddersfield's most important and impressive space surrounded by buildings of high architectural merit."*

7. Proposals – The need for the Works

The George Hotel has been empty since 2010, refurbishment is now underway.

It has become apparent that the electrical supply to the former hotel was barely adequate. It is also apparent that since closure of the hotel in 2010, further demands of the substation have been made providing additional electrical load to Huddersfield Railway Station as part of the TransPennine Route Upgrade. The sub-station requires renewal at a greater capacity.

The existing substation can not be reused as it is undersized. It is also subterranean and integral to the building, neither of which are acceptable to the suppliers.

There is a requirement to provide a new sub-station to provide for the refurbished hotel and to maintain electricity to the railway station.

8. Proposed Sub-Station

It is proposed to locate the sub-station to the side of the square in a recessed location between the hotel, railway goods yard fence and the rebuilt rear of the hotel.

It was considered that the use of a standardised modular sub-station would be inappropriate in this location. The sub-station as proposed will be built in local stone to match the hotel and railway station. It will have a pitched, slated roof. Doors will be colour matched to the listed railings behind.

9. Policies - The National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF was revised in December 2024. Chapter 16 considers Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 215 states 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

10. Policies – The Kirklees local Plan

The Kirklees Local Plan was adopted in 2019. Policy LP35 requires proposals to *'retain those elements of the historic environment which contribute to the distinct identity of the Kirklees area and ensure they are appropriately conserved, to the extent warranted by their significance'* it also states that proposals should *'secure a sustainable future for heritage assets at risk ... and institutional buildings constructed on the back of the wealth created by the textile industry as expressions of local civic pride and identity'*.

The sub-station although it does not directly contribute to Local Plan aims, is modest in scale in local materials and contributes to public benefit in providing power for sustainable use of the hotel.

11. Heritage Impact

The sub-station is modest in scale in a discrete location, within a service zone in the corner of the square. It is in local materials to match the listed buildings to each side.

12. Conclusion

Both the Railway Station and the George Hotel are considered of high significance and national importance, being listed at grades I and II* respectively. The street scene of St George's Square is also of acknowledged heritage value, as is the adjacent grade II listed fence.

The hotel has been vacant since 2010. In the proposals to refurbish and reopen the hotel, power will be needed. For this a new sub-station is required.

The recent regeneration of the area has introduced planting and other landscape elements as can be seen in the photographs in section 4. These provide screening and context for discrete small scale additions to the perimeter of St George's Square. The impact of the sub-station on the heritage assets (the listed buildings, listed fence, curtilage and conservation area) is slight as has been demonstrated. The new sub-station is not considered to affect the significance of the Square, nor the historical evidence base. It is considered minor harm to the conservation area.

In assessing change Historic England's document Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment, para 29 notes *'Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged. The nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change'*.

There is a public benefit in returning the George Hotel to an active and optimum viable use. The sub-station is required to enable this. Although the sub-station is a change, and therefore must be defined as harm, it is only considered to be minor harm which does not affect the significance of the conservation area or the setting of the listed buildings within the conservation area.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of national and local planning policy.

13. Document History

Version	Date	Issue / Revision Details	Prepared By	Checked By	Approved By
01	03.08.26	First Issue	RS	TO	AF