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Job reference: 2026 enquiry 74

Address: 17 Wellington Road
Dewsbury WF13 1HF

Date: 13-11-2026

Extra notes: **town centre policy assessment report**
change of use from vacant offices(Ec use) on ground floor to form 4no 1bed apartments(C3 use)

TOWN CENTRE POLICY ASSESSMENT STATEMENT

1. Introduction

This statement has been prepared in response to the Local Planning Authority's validation request for an assessment of the proposed development against Policies LP13, LP15 and LP18 of the Kirklees Local Plan. The application seeks permission to convert the existing vacant ground-floor office accommodation at 17 Wellington Road, Dewsbury, to provide 4no for one person self-contained one-bedroom apartments. The building is a Grade II listed former nineteenth-century textile warehouse. The upper floors have already been converted to residential accommodation. The current proposal seeks to bring the remaining vacant ground-floor accommodation into beneficial use.

The applicant acknowledges that the property is within Dewsbury Town Centre and that the proposal would result in the loss of the existing ground-floor office use. The following assessment therefore considers the marketing history, the previous planning history and the contribution the proposed development would make to the town centre.

2. Marketing History and Existing Vacancy

The property has previously been exposed to the commercial property market. The available marketing information confirms that the property was advertised through LoopNet on 18 July 2024. The online listing was subsequently updated on 23 October 2025 and article attached separately accompanying this application. The applicant confirmed that they picked up the keys in August 2026. The applicant understands that the property was purchased at approximately this time.

This marketing period demonstrates that the property was publicly exposed to the commercial property market for approximately 15 months before the applicant's

purchase it. From the last update marketed time till today is and 13 months of unoccupied space. The ground-floor accommodation has not subsequently been brought back into commercial occupation and remains vacant till todays date. The applicant is seeking to secure a viable and beneficial use for the ground floor, rather than allow the accommodation to remain unused and potentially contribute to the deterioration of the historic building.

3. National Planning Context – Class MA Permitted Development Rights
The applicant also draws attention to the national planning framework for the change of use of commercial premises to residential accommodation under Class MA of Part 3, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended.

Class MA provides permitted development rights for qualifying changes of use from certain commercial uses, including offices on ground floor within Use Class E, to residential use within Use Class C3, subject to the relevant limitations, conditions and prior approval requirements. The introduction and subsequent expansion of these rights demonstrate the Government's recognition that the reuse of suitable commercial premises for residential accommodation can contribute towards housing delivery, the regeneration of existing buildings and the efficient use of previously developed land. The applicant acknowledges that the subject property is Grade II listed and is therefore excluded from the relevant Class MA permitted development rights.

Consequently, the applicant cannot rely upon the permitted development route and has submitted this full planning application for consideration by the Local Planning Authority. Nevertheless, the underlying national planning objective remains relevant: where commercial premises are no longer required or are not attracting a viable occupier, their sensitive conversion to residential accommodation can represent a sustainable form of development. The current proposal should therefore be considered on its individual planning merits, having regard to the property's vacancy and marketing history, its previous planning history, the objectives of the Kirklees Local Plan and the benefits of securing the continued beneficial use of this Grade II listed building.

4. Previous Planning History
The applicant also draws attention to the previous planning application 2015/90702, which approved the conversion of part of the ground-floor accommodation to

residential use, with the remaining area retained for its existing office use. That permission was not implemented and has since lapsed. Although the previous permission does not establish an extant planning consent, it is a material part of the site's planning history. It demonstrates that residential use of part of the ground floor has previously been considered by the Local Planning Authority.

The current application seeks to extend residential use across the remaining ground-floor accommodation, providing 4no self-contained apartments and completing the transition of the whole building to a mixed residential use. The previous permission should be read as relevant planning context rather than as an automatic justification for the current proposal.

5. Assessment against Policy LP13 – Town Centre Uses
Policy LP13 seeks to ensure that main town-centre uses are located within defined centres and that proposals support the vitality and viability of those centres. It also seeks to maintain a complementary mix of uses and a strong town-centre offer. The applicant recognises the importance of retaining suitable commercial and other main town-centre uses within Dewsbury. However, the policy also supports a positive approach to the evolution and diversification of town centres.

In this instance, the ground-floor accommodation has been advertised through a commercial property platform, with the available listing commencing on 18 July 2024 and last updated on 23 October 2025. Despite this marketing exposure, the premises remain vacant till today. The proposal does not involve the demolition or redevelopment of the building, nor does it result in the loss of the historic building from the town-centre environment. It involves the sensitive re-adaptation of an existing building to secure its continued long term occupation and maintenance.

The introduction of 4no new homes would also provide a permanent residential population within the town centre. Residents would have the opportunity to use local shops, services, cafés, facilities and public transport, contributing to the wider town-centre economy. The proposal is considered to support the broader objectives of a diverse and sustainable town centre, particularly where the existing vacant ground-floor accommodation has not returned to active commercial use.

6. Assessment against Policy LP15 – Residential Uses in Town Centres
Policy LP15 supports residential uses within defined town centres, subject to criteria intended to protect primary shopping areas, shopping frontages, existing ground-

floor uses and the availability of space for other main town-centre uses. The applicant acknowledges that the policy generally seeks to direct residential accommodation to upper floors and protect active ground-floor uses. The current proposal must be considered against the particular circumstances of this vacant property.

The ground floor is currently vacant. It was advertised through LoopNet from July 2024, with the listing last updated in October 2025 and continue to be vacant till today. The applicant understands that the property was purchased at around that time. The previous planning history also demonstrates that part of the ground floor had previously been approved for residential conversion, although that permission was not implemented. The application is not seeking to remove office business. It seeks to find a sustainable use for vacant accommodation within a building whose upper floors are already in residential use. The proposed conversion would retain the building's external architectural character and would not involve an increase in its footprint or height. It would provide four additional homes in a highly accessible town-centre location.

7. Assessment against Policy LP18 – Dewsbury Town Centre
Policy LP18 sets out the Council's strategy for Dewsbury Town Centre, seeking to support its regeneration, vitality, diversity and evolution. It recognises the role that town-centre living can play in creating a more active and sustainable centre. The proposal would contribute directly to this objective by bringing 4no additional new homes into the Dewsbury town centre.

The site is within walking distance of Dewsbury railway station, local shops, services and other town-centre facilities. Future residents would be able to access many everyday needs without depending entirely on private car journeys, similar to those residents already on the upper floors. The proposed residential use would also help secure the continued occupation and maintenance of a Grade II listed building of considerable architectural and historic significance. The building was originally constructed as a textile warehouse and forms part of Dewsbury's historic commercial townscape. The reuse of vacant accommodation within an existing listed building is considered a positive contribution to the long-term sustainability and regeneration of the town centre. The proposal accords with the wider aims of Policy LP18 by supporting town-centre living, diversification and the beneficial reuse of an important historic building.

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8. Heritage and Regeneration Benefits

The property is Grade II listed and is an important example of Dewsbury's historic textile warehouse architecture. Its continued occupation is important to its long-term conservation. Bringing the vacant ground floor back into beneficial use would help secure the maintenance and future care of the building. The proposed conversion would retain the existing building envelope and principal architectural composition. The works would be designed to minimise intervention in significant historic fabric, in accordance with the separate Heritage Statement submitted with the application. The proposal would therefore provide both a residential benefit and a heritage benefit through the continued use of an important historic building.

9. Conclusion

The applicant acknowledges that the proposal would result in the loss of the existing ground-floor office use within Dewsbury Town Centre. However, the accommodation has been exposed to the commercial property market through LoopNet, with the available listing commencing on 18 July 2024 and last updated on 23 October 2025 and continue to be vacant till today. The premises remain vacant, and the applicant seeks to secure a sustainable alternative use. The previous planning application 2015/90702, which approved residential conversion of part of the ground floor but subsequently lapsed, is also relevant to the planning history of the property.

The proposed development would provide 4no new homes within a sustainable town-centre location, contribute to the diversification of Dewsbury Town Centre and secure the continued beneficial use of a Grade II listed building. Having regard to the circumstances of the site, its vacancy, the available marketing history, the previous planning permission and the objectives of Policies LP13, LP15 and LP18, the applicant considers that the proposed development represents an appropriate and justified residential use form of town-centre regeneration. The Local Planning Authority is respectfully requested to take these matters into account when determining the application.

Prepared by



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for and on behalf of Jade3 Architecture Limited