

DEWSBURY

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



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SUMMARY OF THE SPECIAL INTEREST OF THE CONSERVATION AREA:

The town of Dewsbury has a recorded history from Saxon times but remained a small settlement throughout the Middle Ages. The population did not grow dramatically until the 18th and 19th Centuries when industrial growth and the prosperity of the town were based on the fortunes of the heavy woollen industry and associated manufacturing. The rapid expansion of the town grew from its historic medieval core around the Market Place. The immense wealth generated during the 19th Century left a legacy of fine Victorian and Edwardian municipal and commercial buildings and townscapes.

The town centre Conservation Area covers most of the area within the Ring Road and it is proposed in this document that the boundary is widened to include the Town Hall and other nearby Listed buildings. The special interest of this Conservation Area is that it provides a particularly important example of a Victorian town centre with fine examples of its commercial, civic and industrial heritage within an area that has suffered less from redevelopment than many other towns. The general consistency of the ashlar building materials and its location on the sloping land towards the Dewsbury Beck and the River Calder create the particular qualities and attractions of the heritage townscape

Although there are 57 nationally listed building within the current Conservation Area which contains approximately 280 pre-1939 buildings, it is the qualities and heritage characteristics of the townscape as a whole, which is of particular note and should be considered when assessing proposed changes and new development.

The Conservation Area is described in this Appraisal as a sum of its distinctive parts. Five Character Areas have been defined to provide a basis for understanding the particular heritage qualities and problems that should be considered when assessing future changes.

Both the positive and negative characteristics of the Conservation Area are identified. The economic difficulties suffered during the twentieth century have limited the pressures for redevelopment so retaining many of the heritage townscapes, but have also resulted in poor repairs and maintenance of the buildings. Particular problems are the number of inappropriate replacement shopfronts and signage, the unused and derelict buildings, and the areas where historic buildings have been demolished to be replaced with less sensitive new designs.

Management and enhancement guidelines are described including the positive and negative issues, the potential approaches for key sites to protect the character of the area; the opportunities for enhancement and technical guidance including a potential Article 4 Direction; and the involvement of the community.

The aim of this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan is to assist the Council to protect and enhance the heritage while enabling the public to recognise the benefits of living in a Conservation Area and their own responsibilities for protecting it.

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Current status of Dewsbury Conservation Area

The Dewsbury Conservation Area was designated in March 1981 and includes most of the historic core of the town. It covers almost 11 hectares and contains approximately 280 pre-1939 buildings – of which 57 are Listed as of Architectural or Historic Interest.

Figure 1.1 identifies the current boundary and a proposed extension to include the Town Hall (see justification in section 7.22 below), and highlights the statutory Listed Buildings within the area.

1.2 Statutory background

Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act 1967 and are defined as “areas of special architectural or historic interest the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. Conservation Area designation is more dependent on the overall quality and interest of an area, rather than individual buildings, although it is common for such areas to contain a number of Listed Buildings.

Designation as a Conservation Area has a number of implications. Most importantly, the local authority is required to give special attention to preserving and enhancing the conservation area in exercising its planning functions. Also, planning consent must be gained for certain types of development which are elsewhere classified as permitted development, such as various types of cladding, dormer windows, satellite dishes and radio masts/antennae. Consent is further required for the demolition of buildings within conservation areas. Designation also brings controls over works to trees.

The protection of an area does not end with conservation area designation. PPG15 “Planning and the Historic Environment” urges Local Authorities to prepare detailed assessments of the special interest, character and appearance of their conservation areas.

A character appraisal defines and analyses the special qualities and the architectural and historic interest that warranted the conservation area designation. PPG15 states that “the more clearly the special architectural or historic interest that justifies designation is defined and recorded, the sounder will be the basis for local plan policies and development control decisions, as well as for the formulation of proposals for the preservation and enhancement of the character or appearance of an area”. Character appraisals should therefore provide a framework against which development proposals can be assessed for their appropriateness in the historic environment.

Local authorities are under a duty from time to time to “formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are conservation areas” (Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (LBCA)) Act 1990, s.71).

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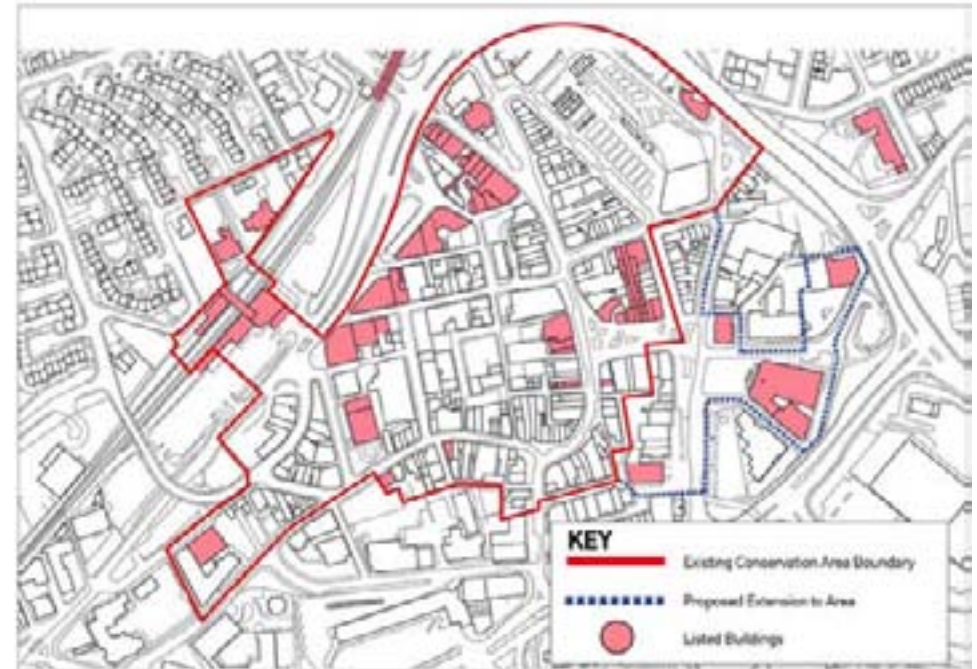


Figure 1.1 Conservation Area Boundary and Location of Listed Buildings

1.3 Planning policy framework

The current Kirklees UDP was formally adopted by Kirklees Metropolitan Council in March 1999. Historic environment policy is primarily set out in Chapter 4. The Built Environment, with key policies that are relevant to the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the Dewsbury town centre Conservation Area including:

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BE1/2. General Design Quality; BE3/4. Listed Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest; para. 4.14 Buildings of Local Significance; BE5/6/7/8 Conservation Areas; BE9/10 Archaeology; and particularly important for Dewsbury CA, BE11 Selection of Building Materials.

The Chapter 4 section on Shopping Centres emphasizes the importance of shop front design – policies BE16/17/18; pedestrian routes in centres – BE19; access of disabled people – BE20/21/22; and crime prevention – BE23.

Relating to Dewsbury CA, Chapter 5 Environmental Protection, EP26: Signs affecting Listed Buildings or Conservation Areas; Chapter 13 Shopping and Service Uses, includes Policy S2: on the protection shopping centre viability, and para 13.11 identifies opportunities for shopping development in Dewsbury town centre.

1.4 The Purpose of the Conservation Area appraisal

This Dewsbury Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan has been prepared in response to the guidance outlined above and, as such, discharges the Council's obligations and duties under the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990, as well as complying with English Heritage's current recommendations and advice. This Appraisal and Management Plan may subsequently form a Supplementary Planning Document to the Adopted Kirklees UDP and will be a material consideration when considering applications for development within the Dewsbury Conservation Area.



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2. LOCATION AND SETTING

2.1 Location and population

Dewsbury is situated between a number of larger towns and cities. Leeds and Bradford lie eight miles to the north, Huddersfield a similar distance to the south west, and Wakefield some six miles east. In recent years its proximity to these major urban centres, the M1 and M62 motorways with access to Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield, and the Huddersfield Line with rail links to Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool, have contributed to its rising popularity as a commuter town.

Dewsbury is part of the West Yorkshire Urban Area, and the natural boundaries of the town are not well defined, with built up areas of the town running into neighbouring Batley, Heckmondwike and Ossett.

The population of the Dewsbury Poor Law Area was 29,730 in 1801 and grew to 167,643 in 1901. The period of fastest growth was between 1851 and 1881 when the population more than doubled – 71,768 to 153,712, an increase of 82,000 people.

The Dewsbury Conservation Area is located within the town centre and includes most of the area inside the Inner Ring Road including the traditional retail commercial core and markets of Dewsbury. The Super Output Area within Dewsbury East ward, that includes and surrounds the Conservation Area, is ranked as having an Index of Multiple Deprivation within England's worst 4%. The permanent population within the Conservation Area is probably less than one thousand people

2.2 Urban and townscape setting

Dewsbury is dominated by hills, notably Earlsheaton, Dewsbury Moor and Thornhill with the town centre at between 40m - 55m above sea level to the north of a bend on the River Calder. The approach down from Earlsheaton through the Wakefield Road cutting, constructed in 1830, is dramatic with the view of the town centre nestling in the Calder Valley opening up on descent. The gateway views from higher land into the historic town need to be protected as an important introduction to the Conservation Area.

The topography of the Conservation Area includes slopes falling towards the River Calder and the more level land along the route of the brook identified by the Market, Market Place, Long Causeway and Dewsbury Minster.

Geologically, the town is situated on rock dated to the Carboniferous Period, consisting of coal measures and gritstones. Quaternary Period rock, glacial deposits and gravels exist in the Calder Valley. Coal, stone and gravel have all been exploited commercially around the town. Average rainfall is 100 cm per annum.

The urban form of Dewsbury has been structured by the hills, the river and its tributary, and the main historic entrances and gateways into the town

The earliest entrances, which joined at the Market Place are:

- The route to the north via Northgate and the Bradford Road
- The route to the east along Wakefield Road
- The route following Daisy Hill, Old Westgate and the Huddersfield Road to the west

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These were later joined in the 19th Century by:

- the Halifax Road which joins the Bradford Road within the Conservation Area on Northgate;
- the Leeds Road which now joins Wakefield Road on the Ring Road



- and there was no route to the south until 1863 when the Saville Bridge over the River Calder was opened and followed the route south from Church Street (previously called Prest Lane) past Dewsbury Minster.

Much of the clarity of these traditional gateways has been lost by the construction of the Ring Road and other road circulation changes. For example, the Wakefield Old Road has been closed and ends in a small car park.

2.3 Regeneration context

The downturn and changes in the economy of Dewsbury during the 20th Century resulted in many environmental adjustments. There are now significant efforts to regenerate and revitalise the key areas of Dewsbury coordinated by a strategic approach. The context for Dewsbury within the Leeds City Region includes the Local Development Framework, North Kirklees Development Framework, Batley Dewsbury Area Action Plan and the actions of Dewsbury Plus.

The North Kirklees Development Framework has a vision for Dewsbury as a business hub and have identified a 20 year programme to create sustainable communities. The tasks of Dewsbury Plus are to Masterplan and coordinate existing and new town centre projects through individual project teams.

Key regeneration projects include:

- Dewsbury Market is a major attraction and was voted as winner of Best Outdoor Market 2007. Recent refurbishment of £1.5 million will be followed by Phase 2 in 2009;

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- Planning and Conservation Area consent has been granted for the refurbishment and conversion of the Pioneer Building for retail and 95 apartments;
- A phased redevelopment of Dewsbury West Retail Quarter (including the Pioneer Building as Phase A) with about 300,000sq ft of retail, commercial, leisure and residential uses expected at a value of over £100 million;
- Public realm improvements and enhancement of previous schemes are being planned to improve the perception of the town;
- A shopfront scheme within a defined area will be launched in 2008 with Property Improvement Grants;
- Dewsbury Assets aims to make better use of Council assets including the Town Hall, the redevelopment of the Walsh Building and Wellington Street; and
- The Waterfront Scheme, though out of the Conservation Area, will have important links past the Minster into the town centre.

These regeneration initiatives will take account of the important conservation concerns and opportunities within the town centre to benefit from its unique heritage attraction.



Pioneer Building, Northgate

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3. HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Origins and historic development of settlement

Though there are signs of habitation in the area at the time of the Romans, the first records show that by Saxon times, Dewsbury had become a centre of importance – the Parish of Dewsbury covered a large area including Huddersfield and Bradford, and Paulinus, the first Bishop of York, is supposed to have preached at the site of the Minster in 627AD.

Through Medieval times, Dewsbury retained its ecclesiastical importance with a monastery probably existing on the site of the parish church. Elements of the street plan reflect the existence of an established market town that had developed on the relatively flat land to the north of a loop on the River Calder. A domestic system of wool cloth production prevailed during this period and was well established in Dewsbury by the 13th Century.

Dewsbury market was opened in the 14th Century for local clothiers, but the plagues in 1593 and 1603 closed the market until it was reopened in 1741 in Market Place. The progression from domestic to factory production of clothing increased the need to transport raw materials and finished products and provided the stimulus for transport developments.

Though the terrain around the town is hilly, the Calder Valley offered scope to promote trade expansion. The Calder and Hebble Navigation, part river and part canal, was opened from Wakefield to Brighouse in 1764. The town was also became a coaching centre at the hub of new turnpike roads to Halifax, Elland and Wakefield. These transport improvements gave further impetus to commercial development and the town began to take on a more prosperous appearance with merchants premises in Market Place and the rebuilding of much of the medieval parish church.

From 1840 onwards, rail companies made incursions into Dewsbury resulting in four stations with extensive sidings and goods warehouses. Wellington Road station opened in 1848 and is the only one remaining. Central station closed in 1964, Market Place station closed in 1930 and a goods-only station in Saville Town had been opened in the early 1900's. Road communications also improved, though until 1863 when the Saville Bridge was built over the Calder, there was no direct route to the south.

The invention of shoddy and mungo in 1814 – types of cloth based on fibres reclaimed from woolen rags, was accelerated by the use of steam-powered looms and this led to an unprecedented expansion throughout the Heavy Woollen District. Dewsbury, at its centre, benefited economically from its canal, road and rail links with nearby coal mines. Large scale mills became an important feature of the town. A remaining example in the Conservation Area is Machells' Mill built 1856 and extended as Cloth Hall Mill in 1874.

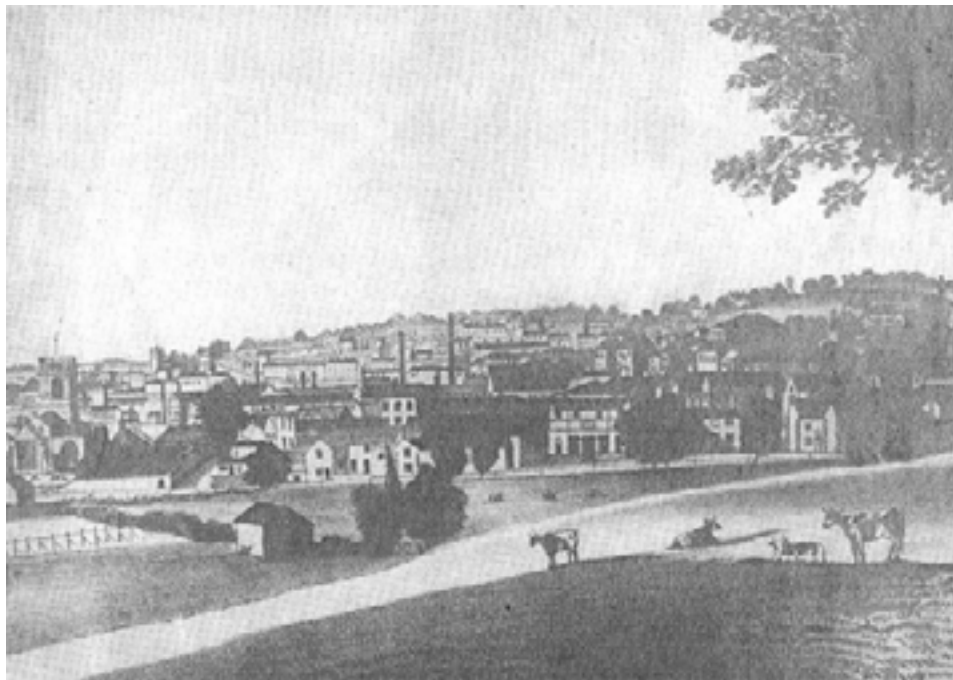
During the last decades of the 19th Century, extensive new shopping streets were developed in the town centre. Handsome new buildings replaced areas of older, smaller-scale buildings and extended beyond the limits of the 18th Century town. For example, Northgate had been built-up earlier, but it was the opening of the large store by the Dewsbury Pioneers Industrial Society in 1888 that developed it as a shopping street.

Civic consciousness was an important factor in the redevelopment of Dewsbury with the Municipal Borough – incorporated in 1864, being a prime mover. Examples included: creating new thoroughfares – Corporation Street replaced a narrow alleyway called New Bridge Street; a sewerage system was completed in 1883; the Town Hall was opened in 1889; the Baths and Library opened in 1896; a site was cleared for the Covered Market which opened in 1904; and the post office was erected in 1908.

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Dewsbury had grown from a small town of 4,566 in 1801 to a fine and important town of over 30,000 in the 1890's. Since the beginning of the 20th Century, the population of Dewsbury has remained nearly static – the 1911 population of 53,350 can be compared with 54,340 in 2001. This reflects the economic difficulties and increased competition. The textile industry has closed and the remaining mills are empty or have found new uses. Although some new developments have been introduced into the town centre, the economic difficulties have had the benefit of limiting the loss of the fine 19th Century urban architecture through redevelopment.



View of Dewsbury from Old Bank in 1835. The rural setting surrounds the tight urban area with the Minster on the left and the first mill chimneys showing above the skyline.

3.2 Stages of development

1600/1771:



1600

The 1600 plan of Dewsbury is taken from the Saxton map and shows how the layout has changed little up to the start of the 19th Century – see map of 1771. The roads can still be identified today with the Market Place, Wakefield Road, Northgate, Westgate, Daisy Hill and Church Street (Prest Laine) all following current routes. The early location of the town on the flatter land next to the Dewsbury Beck, to the north of a bend on the River Calder can be seen on the 1771 map.

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1771

1854:

The OS map of 1854 shows the extent to which Dewsbury has grown in the first fifty years of the 19th Century. The first railway station, sidings and warehouse are operational, and Northgate, Westgate and Market Place can be seen to be the centre of the town. Much of the Conservation Area has been built-up, though many of the buildings are small scale. Areas where there is limited development are - on the east side of the Dewsbury Beck which marks the end the Market Place; further north on the west side of the Beck, which was later to become the site of the open and covered market; and the streets climbing the hill towards the station have many empty sites.

1894:

The OS map of 1893 shows the Conservation Area fully built-up with most of the roads and buildings as seen today. Since the mid 19th Century new roads and their buildings have been built on the western hill slopes up to the Wellington Road station; new and larger buildings can be seen along



1854

key frontages – Market Place, Northgate, Westgate, etc; the Town Hall and its forecourt linking with the Market Place have been built; and the three town centre stations surround the town centre – particularly the Market Place station whose fine building creates an important townscape element facing the public realm.

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1894

1907:

By 1907, further redevelopment of prime sites has continued as property owners create more imposing buildings. Significant changes include the construction of Corporation Street; the opening of the Covered Market on Crackenedge Lane; and the development of the Arcade linking the Market Place with the new Corporation Street.



1907

1922/1933:

The maps of 1922 and 1933 and photographs of this period show that there are few significant urban developments that change the built environment. The building of the Post Office, and the clearance of the site for Kingsway and Queensway Arcades on Northgate and the site for Broadway House

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on Crackenedge Lane identify future new developments. Where changes occur, the existing buildings were often altered for any new uses. The static population of Dewsbury limited the impact of economic pressures for change within the Conservation Area.

During the second half of the 20th Century, further economic and social changes resulted in new alterations to the town centre townscapes. The construction of the Ring Road has had a major impact on the town centre. It has created a visual and movement barrier for many of the surrounding communities, but it also has removed through traffic and created the opportunity for effective vehicular and parking management. Changes in retailing resulted in the growth of new warehouse units outside the Ring Road and this competition for the traditional town centre led to the need for a purpose built development - the Princess of Wales centre on the edge of the Conservation Area. The Covered and adjacent Open Market has continued to prosper and it is now viewed as a considerable visitor attraction.



1922



1933

3.3 Archaeological significance

The Council is required to take archaeology into consideration as a material consideration when determining a planning application. Information on all known archaeological sites and finds in and around Dewsbury is included in the West Yorkshire Sites and Monuments Record (BCSMR), located in Wakefield.



North side of the Market Place in the early 20th Century

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PPG 16 (Archaeology and Planning) (DoE 1990) states:

“Archaeological remains should be seen as a finite, and non-renewable resource, in many cases, highly fragile and vulnerable to damage and destruction. Appropriate management is therefore essential to ensure that they survive in good condition. In particular, care must be taken to ensure that archaeological remains are not needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed. Where nationally important archaeological remains, whether scheduled or not, and their settings, are affected by proposed development there should be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation.”

There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the Dewsbury Conservation Area. However there is likely to be significant archaeological potential that could assist the understanding of the early urban and industrial development of this area.

Where a proposed development is likely to affect archaeology the Council will require further information before determining an application. This may be required in the form of a desk based study or an archaeological evaluation. In order to protect the archaeological remains it is sometimes necessary to modify proposals or carry out an excavation before development takes place.

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4. CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

4.1 Identification of Character Areas

The Conservation Area of Dewsbury forms the historic core of the town and is still the principal civic, retail and commercial focus for the area. The Conservation Area is exceptional in the continuity and integrity of the streetscape, which form a series of attractively scaled streets and urban spaces. Although there has been some loss of the original, predominantly 19th century, building stock, in general the buildings have been replaced in a scale and form that retains much of the spirit and essence of the town's inherent character.

One of the significant characteristics of the Conservation Area is the degree of unity and integration of the built form in respect of the building materials, detailing, scale and overall form. Within this consistent palette there is, however, variety and interest, as well as distinct character areas, which sub-divide the town centre into separate zones, each with their own individual characteristics. These character areas are identified on figure 4.1 and described in more detail below.

The historic focus of the town has been the Market Place and this area still forms an important central urban space within the town centre, although the market function itself has relocated a few hundred yards north. Whilst the Market Place is well enclosed and defined by the surrounding buildings, it is more open on its eastern side where there are views to the Town Hall, whose entrance steps, symmetrical façade and prominent clock tower convey a strong sense of civic authority and formality. The plaza in front of the Town Hall, bounded to the north by the Barclays Bank building, has its own identity and definition as an urban space and forms the civic counterpart to the more commercial character of the Market Place itself.

The separation of the two areas is accentuated by Long Causeway, a highway which passes between the two spaces.



Figure 4.1 Location of Principal Character Areas

Key

- 1: Market Place/Town Hall Character Area
1A - Market Place; 1B - Town Hall; 1C - Long Causeway
- 2: Market Character Area
- 3: Northgate Character Area
- 4: Westgate/Daisy Hill Character Area
- 5: Western Character Area
5A - Bond St/Croft St; 5B - Nelson St/Library; 5C - Station/County Court

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To the south of the Town Hall plaza, Long Causeway combines with a wide pavement to the west and an open area of public gardens to the east to form a linear space, which is an important arrival and gateway corridor to the town centre. This used to be the location of a rail terminus (see photo below) and now has an open character dominated by road surfaces.



This aerial photograph from the 1930s, is looking north west towards the Market Place and the Town Hall. The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway's Market Place Station, formed a much more robust boundary to the south side of the Town Hall plaza, now occupied by Long Causeway and the civic gardens. Market stalls can be seen to the rear of the building to the left of the Barclay's Bank building. Both were to be replaced, soon after this photograph was taken, by the first major brick buildings to be constructed within the area.

Together, these three spaces, visually and physically interlinked, form Character Area 1 – Market Place/Town Hall, the core of the town centre, but can be subdivided into the separate areas of Market Square (1.1), Town Hall (1.2) and Long Causeway (1.3), as indicated in figure 4.1.

To the north of this central core, the dedicated market site forms its own self-contained area of the town centre, Character Area 2 - Market.

From the western end of the Market Square, Northgate and Westgate lead north and south respectively. A triangular space, created by the forking of Northgate and Halifax Road, forms the focal part of this part of the town centre, and the heart of Character Area 3 - Northgate.

Westgate, links to Daisy Hill, and together they form an area where the narrow and enclosed streetscape, combined with the irregularity of the street alignment, forms an intimate and fine-grained ambience, Character Area 4 – Westgate/Daisy Hill.

To the west side of the town centre the wilfully grid-like layout of the street network, defies the constraints of the sloping ground to form an area with a strong sense of a formal, planned urban quarter. Narrow streets lined by tall, elegant, stone buildings form man-made canyons, which frame views west to the railway station and east, over the town centre to the wooded slopes beyond. This area forms Character Area 5 - Western, subdivided into Bond Street / Croft Street (5.1), Nelson Street / Library (5.2) and Station/ Court (5.3), as indicated in figure 4.1.

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The intimate character of Daisy Hill is reinforced by the narrowness of the street, with buildings set up to the back of the footpath; the variety of elevational treatment, unified by the common building line, the gentle curve of the street and the retention of stone setts for the road surface.



The gridded layout of the area around Bond Street forms a series of 'canyons' of stone faced buildings. The narrow streets, retaining their stone setts, form a unified and robust streetscape with the terraces of development, which step up the hillside towards the Wellington Road Railway Station.



The Dewsbury Pioneer's Industrial Society Limited building, in Northgate, provides a dominating physical presence within Northgate, despite its poor condition and boarded up shop fronts.

4.2 Description of Character Areas

Character Area 1: Town Centre

The Market Place, Town Hall and Long Causeway, form a series of interconnected urban spaces, which are both the historic and current 'town centre' of Dewsbury. Approach roads to the town, although now disrupted and fragmented by the inner ring road of the 1980's, converge and meet in this area and, despite the market itself now taking place on a new site slightly to the north, the area still has the air and identity of the retail and civic hub, in the Market Place and Town Hall respectively. Although the spaces within the area as a whole are visually and physically inter-linked, they each have their own separate identity and characteristics, outlined below.

A summary of urban design characteristics of the area is illustrated in figure 4.2.



The three built-up sides of the Market Place achieve a delicate balance of consistency and variety.



Within the Market Place, the cluster of signage, lighting, seating, planting, shade canopies, bins, phone box and bollards distract from the integrity and simplicity of the space itself.

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sub - area 1.1: Market Place

The three built-up sides of the Market Place achieve a delicate balance of consistency and variety, as seen in the photograph below. The building line is consistent and continuous, forming a strong and robust edge to the space. The building elevations are generally three storey although each has its own particular floor to ceiling heights giving a varied cornice line. The majority of buildings have a parapet wall behind which is a shallow pitched slate roof.

One rather negative aspect of the space is the extent of street furniture and urban 'clutter' within the central part of the Market Place area. The shrub planting seems inappropriate and creates a visual and physical barrier in an area where the buildings themselves have great interest and articulation and do not need additional enhancement. The cluster of seating, planting, shade canopies, bins, phone box and bollards creates a forest of obstructions, which inhibit movement through the area and distract from the integrity and simplicity of the space itself, as seen in the photographs on the previous page.



Several of the heritage buildings around the Market Place have been replaced with more recent structures, although the consistent and continuous building line has been retained. The poor quality of the shop fronts in the more modern buildings is very evident, as is the reduction of visual interest and variety in the skyline with the loss of many chimney stacks.

sub - area 1.2: Town Hall

The character of the Town Hall is complemented by the hard landscaped 'plaza' to the front, forming a civic space at the heart of the town centre. As with the Market Place, the proliferation of different components of street furniture and planting within the space, act as a distraction from the robust formality of the building itself.

To the north and east of the Town Hall, views are channelled towards the Market Place by the converging building lines of the Town Hall and Empire House assisted by the curving façade of the old Post Office.



The gently sloping area in front of the Town hall forms a paved setting for the building.



From the eastern edge of the Conservation Area, views are channelled towards the Market Place by the converging building lines of the Town Hall and Empire House. The curving façade of the old Post Office, (right) contributes further to this effect.



The comparison of the two photos shows clearly the additional enclosure and containment originally offered by the front elevation of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Station

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sub area 1.3: Long Causeway

Long Causeway forms an important entry point into the town centre and leads to the central linked spaces of the Market Place / Town Hall Plaza. Formerly the location of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Station, the removal of the station and the associated railway line has left an open, expansive space, allowing good views to the Town Hall. To the east side of the space, and outside the conservation area boundary, the low-rise Walsh Building, the design of which evokes the railway sheds of the past, has little visual impact on the area.



The three storey Bank building to the north side of the Town Hall plaza combines with the Town hall itself to create containment and enclosure to the space. The more recent Empire House, (centre), lacks the subtlety, scale and design detail of its 19th century neighbours.



The width of Long Causeway is accentuated by the bus laybys to both sides, the expanse of pavement to the west (left in the photograph) and the public gardens to the east (to the right of this photo view). The red brick of Broadway House built in the 1930's is in contrast to the ashlar, which predominates within the town as a whole.

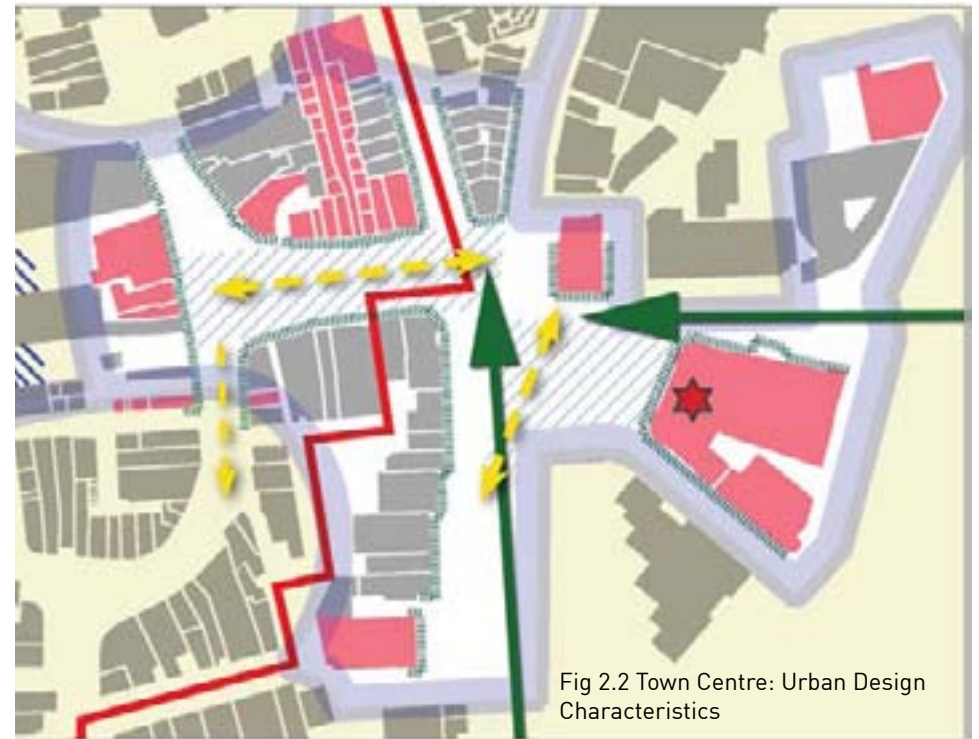


Fig 2.2 Town Centre: Urban Design Characteristics



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Character Area 2: Dewsbury Market

Dewsbury Market was originally held in the Market Place, although the covered market was opened in 1904 and the last stalls in the original Market Place were finally moved to the present market location in 1937.

It is located on a relatively flat piece of ground with the regular grid of the stall layout providing a tight-knit network of pedestrian routes through the area. Although the market stalls are low-rise structures, the covered



To the north of the Market area, the cloth mills building dominates the skyline. Today the upper floors have been converted to residential development, originally constructed in 1863 for the Machell Brothers, manufacturers of shoddy and mungo.

market provides a more substantial built form and the area is well enclosed visually by the street frontages to the east and south, the retaining wall of the ring road embankment to the east, and the five storey, former mill building to the north.

A summary of urban design characteristics of the area is illustrated in figure 4.3.



The covered market was opened on 23rd July 1904. The cast iron, painted structure provides an attractive contrast with the stonework of the majority of the town centre.

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The two photographs, from 1938 and 2008, are looking east down Corporation Street, past the covered market. The buildings have changed comparatively little in those 70 years, apart from the shop fronts, with the projecting canopies no longer a feature and security grilles now in evidence. Beyond the conservation area boundary the retaining wall around the eastern side of the market in the 1938 view, supports the Central Station, opened in 1889 and closed in 1964. The spire of St. Philip's Church, now demolished, can also be seen in the earlier view.



The street level entrances to the former Central Station are evidence of the former use of the elevated platform, which now supports the inner ring road. They provide an attractive articulation of the structure. In contrast, the retaining wall to the north east side of the market is a featureless affair, further degraded by the open areas of car parking and the walled service areas.



Looking west from the elevated ring road embankment, the rooves of the indoor market and market stalls form the foreground to the terraced layers of building profiles which step up the hillside towards the Wellington Road station. The clock tower of the Dewsbury Pioneers Industrial Society Ltd building, completed in 1879, dominates the skyline. The red brick rear elevations of the buildings fronting onto Northgate can be seen, in contrast to their stone facades.



Some of the shop fronts along the western side of Crackenedge Lane, overlooking the market area, are of particularly poor design and quality. They create a negative impact on the area as a whole and, irrespective of any additional heritage issues, are detrimental to the character and appearance of the market area.

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Fig. 4.3 Market Area: Urban Design Characteristics

KEY

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Conservation Area boundary |  | Important vistas within conservation area |
|  | Character area boundary |  | Car parking, diminishing street scene |
|  | Listed Buildings |  | Landmark buildings |
|  | Important views into / out of conservation area |  | Elevations containing street scene |

Character Area 3: Northgate

The character of Northgate is encapsulated by the triangular space formed by the fork of Northgate and Halifax Road and the manner in which the buildings address the space. The narrowing, and 'pinching' of the streetscape to the south and the enclosure to views to the north provided by the stone arches of the elevated railway bridge, help to give this space an additional sense of containment. The Dewsbury Pioneer's Industrial



The Dewsbury Pioneer's Industrial Society Limited building provides a dominating physical presence within Northgate, despite its poor condition and lack of active use.

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Society Limited building provides a dominating physical presence within Northgate although its poor condition and the derelict retail units at ground floor level have a very significant negative impact on the area.

Although the inherent scale and enclosure of the space is attractive, the surface treatment, character and general use of the area is over-dominated by highways. The carriageways are widened more than normal due to the bus lay-bys in the area, which accentuates the dominance of black top and the prioritisation of vehicles over pedestrians. It also inhibits the unification and integration of the space as a whole. More sensitive accommodation of vehicles and the promotion of a more 'shared' surface treatment could enhance the area very considerably.

A feature of this part of the town centre are the glazed retail arcades that cut through the urban blocks.

A summary of urban design characteristics of the area is illustrated in figure 4.4



The fork in the highway, combined with the island building between the two roads, helps to create an enclosed triangular space in Northgate.



The boarded up shopfronts give an obvious signal of dereliction to the area. The active re-use of this building is a prerequisite for the overall enhancement of Northgate. There is great scope to improve the area by a reduction in the highway dominated character of the space and the incorporation of a more shared-surface treatment and the better accommodation of pedestrian movement across the area.



The curving facade of the listed corner building, at the north end of Halifax Road, helps to 'steer' the eye into the street and towards the town centre at this important entrance gateway to the conservation area. The visual prominence of the building accentuates the detrimental impact of its poor condition and lack of active use.



The glazed retail arcades within the area provide an attractive feature, here linking Northgate with the market area to the east.



The historic photograph from the early 1930's indicates the extent to which the built fabric of the area has remained intact. Whilst the current shop front treatment is far less subtle than the original, the integrity of the street frontage has been retained.



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23 Northgate is a particularly poor state of repair and has a detrimental impact on the area as a whole



There are many examples of successful corner-turning buildings within the conservation area, where the additional prominence of the building is exploited to good effect. This particular contemporary example fails, comprehensively, to take advantage of the opportunity. Its obvious weaknesses are particularly unfortunate in view of its high visibility and importance within the street and surrounding area.



Contemporary buildings, which have replaced earlier development, such as 18 Northgate, can provide an appropriate balance between sensitivity to the heritage context and a contemporary design that is appropriate for the 21st century. The sympathetic use of materials, proportions of window openings, and subtlety of the elevational treatment can provide a positive contribution to the conservation area.



Fig. 4.4 Northgate: Urban Design Characteristics

KEY

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | Conservation Area boundary |  | Important vistas within conservation area |
|  | Character area boundary |  | Car parking, diminishing street scene |
|  | Listed Buildings |  | Landmark buildings |
|  | Important views into / out of conservation area |  | Elevations containing street scene |

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Character Area 4: Westgate / Daisy Hill

Westgate leads off the Market Place, curving westwards to enclose views, meeting with Daisy Hill and Church Street at a junction, enclosed by buildings to form an irregularly-shaped, but well scaled urban space. Daisy Hill leads off this space. In comparison to the, typically, three storey scale of buildings around the Market Place and Northgate, Daisy Hill is largely made up of two storey, and compact three storey, buildings. Together with the finer grain of the narrow street and the gentle curve as it rises up the hill, this creates a more informal and intimate character, in comparison with the grandeur of the Market Place and the Town Hall or the planned formality of the grid layout of Bond Street and Croft Street. This characteristic is accentuated by the greater variety of building heights, materials and details. Stone and render are mixed together to form a less consistent elevational treatment than is found in the conservation area as whole.



The narrow street and tight dimensions between frontages forms an enclosed gateway to Daisy Hill. The stepped elevations up the hill and the curve in the street contribute further to provide an enclosed and intimate public realm.

The slope of Daisy Hill levels off adjacent to the raised courtyard entrance space in front of the Methodist Church. This marks the transition to a different character of streets and built form with a more planned, formal layout and a

A summary of urban design characteristics of the area is illustrated in figure 4.5.



The fundamental scale and form of Daisy Hill remains unchanged since the photograph from 1904. Chimnetstacks and pots have been lost, and the inappropriate shallow arches of the shop fronts to the right of the photograph are particularly inappropriate.



The building on the right of the photograph is one of the few listed buildings in Daisy Hill and occupies a particularly prominent corner location, accentuating the detrimental impact of its poor condition and maintenance.

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CHARACTER AREA 5: WESTERN



Fig. 4.5 Urban Design Characteristics, Westgate/daisy Hill



The western side of the town centre has a particular character and layout, which distinguishes it from the other areas described above. Despite being constructed on the steepest slopes within the area, the street pattern forms a grid of inter-connected routes. Three and four storey buildings to each side of the narrow streets create deep ‘canyons’ of public space between them, framing views westwards to the railway station and eastwards, over the town centre, to the wooded hillsides beyond.

The area has a different ambience to the other parts of the character area, not only because of the distinctive built form within the area but also because the buildings are largely in commercial use rather than the predominance of retail in the other parts of the town centre.

Although there is a cohesive and consistent quality to the area as a whole, it can also be divided into three geographic sub areas: Bond Street / Croft Street (area 5.1); Nelson Street / Library (area 5.2); and Wellington Road Station (area 5.3), (as previously indicated on figure 4.1). Each of these areas is briefly described below and a summary of urban design characteristics of the Character Area is illustrated in figure 4.6.

sub - area 5.1: Bond Street / Croft Street

This core part of the character area provides the connection to the heart of the town centre- Market Place and Northgate. It includes the principal warehouse and office buildings constructed in the 19th century, which are symbolic of the wealth and prosperity that the textile industry brought to the area of Dewsbury at that time.

The A638 Dewsbury Ring Road, also known as Wellington Road, passes adjacent to, and through, the area and forms a highway dominated setting

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to this edge of the conservation area and town centre as a whole. The three and four storey elevations of the buildings fronting onto the highway are of sufficient scale and presence to hold their own in this context and provide a very robust built edge to the area.



The substantial former warehouse buildings in Bond St. form a deep canyon of space with development hard up against the back of narrow pavements. The robust character is attractively reinforced by the stone setts and slabs of the surface materials within the street

Although Bond Street and Croft Street have good continuity of built development on both sides of the narrow streets, within the secondary streets of the grid pattern, Oates Street and Union Street, areas of car parking and less continuity and integrity of built frontage creates a somewhat 'backland character', and the sense of being 'behind' the main street frontages of the Northgate, Westgate and Daisy Hill to the east and south.



Rustication, mouldings and deep reveals provide strong shadow and contrast in the street elevations, as seen in Bond street.

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The listed warehouse buildings fronting onto Wellington Road provide a substantial built edge to the town centre area. The width of the street, and the car parking areas to either side, form a divisive element, allowing the dominance of vehicles and inhibiting pedestrian movement through the area.



The secondary streets of Oates Street and Union Street have a more backland character, incorporating car parking and service areas.



Opposite the Wellington Road railway station, the Ashworth Road and Wellington Street meet in an unusual narrow corner building. The area has the potential to become a very attractive urban space, which could be greatly enhanced if the dominance of the highway, in Wellington Road, could be diminished.



The gridded layout of the area incorporates some attractive 'sharp' corner buildings as seen here in Branch Road.



The modelled elevations of the warehouse buildings are attractively complemented by the grain of the cobbled setts within the area.

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sub - area 5.2: Nelson Street / Library

The Library building, from the late 19th century, incorporates dutch gables and ornate fenestration and has a more Victorian character in comparison with the classical and ordered elevational treatment of the other principal buildings within the character area as whole.



The listed Library building feels rather isolated and dislocated from the town centre as a whole, accentuated by the intrusion of the adjacent elevated highway, from where this photograph was taken.



The view into the Conservation Area from the south west is one of the weaker vistas within the area. The elevational treatment of the corner building is somewhat `unbalanced` and beyond it, along Old Westgate, gap sites expose the rear elevations of Nelson Street and Ashworth Road. To the southern side of the street, (outside the conservation area) the lack of street frontage results in an open character, in contrast with the well defined and enclosed ambiance in the conservation area as a whole.

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sub - area 5.3: Station/County Court

The A638 Dewsbury ring road forms a very substantial barrier within the area, visually and physically isolating the station and its environs from the remainder of the Conservation Area. Areas of car parking around the vicinity of the station accentuate this separation.



From the elevated Ashworth Road, which crosses over the A638, the tarmac `divide` between the station and the frontages to the right hand side of the photograph can be clearly seen. The elevated position of the listed County Court building, top right, gives it a commanding aspect of the area and forms an attractive skyline to the western extent of the Conservation Area.



The Wellington Road station, and the two listed buildings to the rear, are isolated from the remainder of the town centre by Wellington Road. The front elevation is obscured by the canopy in front of the station.



There are relatively few inappropriate `intrusions` into the conservation area, but when they do occur they can have a very detrimental impact on the streetscape.



The Courthouse and adjacent former Public House, in Eightlands Road are now accessed from the rear, giving a less impressive aspect in comparison to the formality of the front elevation. The setting of the buildings is marred by the poor quality of some of the adjacent development.

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Fig. 4.6 Western: Urban Design Characteristics

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
|  | Conservation Area boundary |  | Potentially successful urban space |
|  | Character area boundary |  | Car parking, diminishing street scene |
|  | Listed Buildings |  | Landmark buildings |
|  | Important views into / out of conservation area |  | Elevations containing street scene |
|  | Important vistas within conservation area | | |

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5.0 IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

5.1 General conditions

The Dewsbury Conservation Area and the proposed extension includes most of the town centre within the Inner Ring road. The Market Place, Northgate, Daisy Hill and Wakefield Road identify the mediaeval form of the settlement.

Although the Conservation Area has a very large number of significant historic buildings and townscapes, currently some of the area has a general run-down appearance that is primarily due to the difficulties of the local economy. The consequent lack of maintenance, empty properties and poor quality new development and repairs detracts from the undoubted heritage qualities.

The key issues affecting the current and future management of the area are:

Strengths:

- the focal heritage attraction of the Market Place and the Town Hall;
- the consistent integrated quality of the Georgian and Victorian buildings;
- attractive urban spaces between buildings and streetscapes;
- pedestrianised streets without vehicles;
- a successful open and covered market;
- and strong community identity within Dewsbury.

Weaknesses:

- the damage to the heritage townscape by inappropriate shop fronts and signage;
- the economic difficulties in the area which has led to a general lack of maintenance and care for historic details;
- the poor design and quality of some recent development;
- the impact of new road designs, parking places and associated signage;

Opportunities:

- improved built heritage management, including increase of planning controls;
- sensitive regeneration of key sites;
- gradual change of retail offer to create a complementary attraction to the new developments beyond the Ring Road, with a different shopping experience in a heritage setting;

Threats:

- competition from retail outlets beyond the Ring Road, out-of-town centres and
- the improved accessibility to other cities;
- future failure to adjust retail offer to provide complementary services to
- competition from new shopping developments;
- continuing inappropriate permitted development;

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Threats Continued:

- lack of maintenance and poor repairs affected by economic difficulties;
- pressures to demolish heritage buildings for redevelopment;
- and failure to recognise the economic benefits of respecting heritage attractions.



The Wellington Road / Bond Street junction shows examples of the fine ashlar buildings and townscapes that can be found throughout Dewsbury Conservation Area.

5.2 Positive issues and assets

The special heritage characteristics of interest that need to be protected and reinforced, include:

- **the consistent quality of the historic townscapes throughout the whole Conservation Area** is a particular feature of the Dewsbury town centre so that it represents a fine example of a successful traditional nineteenth century Yorkshire mill town. The continuity of the imposing ashlar buildings based on its mediaeval road layout and including its retail core, public buildings and examples of its industrial heritage creates a notable townscape with limited damage through redevelopment, or clearance. The scale is predominantly intimate with occasional landmark buildings.



Views from Market Place towards the Town Hall showing the linking public realm.

- **the public realm between the Town Hall and the Market Place** with its notable Victorian and Edwardian architecture, creates an important focus for the Conservation Area and the town. The Market Place has always been the heart of the town but with the construction of the Market Place station and the Town Hall, the combined space

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between has been a significant focal point. Old photographs, such as below, identify the appeal of this area, which is retained today as the most important town centre outdoor space.

- **the numerous individual incident buildings of note:** examples of those of particular heritage merit and/or locational impact include:
 - Town Hall, 1889
 - Covered Market;
 - Pioneer Cooperative Society building, Northgate;
 - the Arcade, Market Place to Corporation Street
 - Kingsway and Queensway Arcades;
 - Dewsbury Station;
 - County Court;



Kingsway Arcade 1913, Cloth Hall Mill 1856/74, Covered Market Hall 1904.

- Cloth Hall Mill;
- Central Methodist Church;
- Dewsbury Reporter building, Wellington Road;
- Old Library, Wellington Road;

- Old Post Office, Wakefield Old Road;
- Barclays Bank, Longcauseway (see old and current photos on page 32);

- **the historic network of roads and 'gateways' into the town centre** that follow medieval routes and connect through to the Market Place – see Section 2.2 above:
 - Northgate;
 - Westgate and Daisy Hill; and
 - Old Wakefield Road.

These routes provide important views both into and out of the Conservation Area which must be respected. ie. the CA roofscapes of consistent slate roofs viewed from surrounding hills; and the view along Church Street of the Minster.



Northgate junction with roads to Halifax and Bradford - 1930's and today.

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- the significant streetscape groups of buildings which make up the historic townscape within the Conservation Area and can be found in the following locations and include:
 - the three sides of Market Place;
 - Northgate;
 - Wellington Road;
 - Corporation Street to the Covered Market;
 - Bond Street;
 - Croft Street;
 - Wellington Street;
 - Daisy Hill; and
 - Wakefield Old Road.



Daisy Hill from westgate Junction



Wakefield Old Road looking towards Market Place



Bond Street



Wakefield Road



Wellington Road



Wakefield Old Road

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- **historic architectural detailing:**

The consistency of the local ashlar stone on buildings throughout the Conservation Area is regularly enlivened by the fine stone detailing that frequently uses Classical and Italianate designs. The examples below demonstrate the importance of this variety of treatments which ensures the visual interest of the commercial and civic buildings. The range of architectural heritage details, even where maintenance is limited, such as shown on the photo of chimney pots below, are particularly important features of the Conservation Area and their protection and sensitive repair is paramount.



- **Views both out of the town centre of the surrounding hills and the views into the Conservation Area from the entrance routes:**

The sloping land of Dewsbury town centre provides much visual interest for the heritage townscapes. In most parts of the Conservation Area one is aware of views of surrounding hills which also provide revealing views into the central area.



Bond Street view with distant hills.

View from Ring Road across Market with distant Kingsway/Queensway Arcades Pioneer Coop

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5.3 Negative issues and problems

The key negative issues and problems within the Conservation Area are:

- **the poor standard of building alterations, repairs and maintenance:**

Numerous buildings within the Conservation Area display a loss of some of their traditional heritage qualities that are gradually changing the overall historic townscape. The main examples are:

- loss of heritage details and materials including low quality repairs;
- introduction of render and other non heritage wall finishes to historic buildings;
- use of inappropriate roof materials;
- replacement of front doors with inappropriate designs and materials;
- replacement of wooden sash windows with aluminium and UPVC frames with different window bar designs;
- removal of heritage mouldings and other details;
- removal of chimney stacks and pots;
- addition of aerials and satellite dishes; and
- extensions of inappropriate design, scale and materials.



Painted stone walls and replacement pvc windows completely change the character of the building



Victorian shop window detailing in a poor state of repair and covered by inappropriate materials and rolling shutter box.

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Painted stonework; inappropriate replacement windows and doors; satellite dish; and insensitive replacement shop fronts and signage on key Westgate elevation.

- **the replacement of shop fronts and inappropriate signage:**

A particular concern throughout Dewsbury town centre Conservation Area is the removal of the Victorian shop fronts and their replacement with inappropriate designs and materials, and the use of garish and inappropriate signage on the shops. The overall impact of these changes has a significant influence on the local heritage townscape and detracts from the appearance of the setting of the historic buildings. Guidance is needed from a Shop Front and Signage Design Guide.



Photographs showing examples where traditional shop fronts on heritage buildings have been replaced or covered with inappropriate designs and poor signage.

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- **numerous unused and derelict buildings:**

Throughout the Conservation Area empty and derelict buildings detract from the visual qualities of the heritage environment and discourage new investment. Economic changes are needed to assist and encourage reuse before serious damage results in loss of historic townscapes.



- **insensitive new development**

Although the economic difficulties of the town have enabled the majority of the Conservation Area to retain its Georgian and Victorian streetscapes, many examples of new infill development have been of poor design quality which do not integrate with their adjacent heritage buildings.

demolition of heritage buildings leaving vacant plots:



Examples of inappropriate new designs adjacent to heritage buildings



Entrance to cinema from Market Place replaced by insensitive modern materials and design.

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- **demolition of heritage buildings leaving vacant plots:**

As further economic changes occur, it is likely that more heritage buildings will be in danger of demolition before redevelopment of their sites. This has had a negative impact in the past and is still occurring where an attractive heritage building has been demolished. The current lack of guidance from a Conservation Area Appraisal has enabled non-listed buildings to be demolished, so breaking a consistent streetscape of attractive Victorian buildings.

Numerous sites off the main thoroughfares have been cleared where economic uses have failed and the potential for parking spaces is in greater demand.



Branch Rd where the listed building now needs support



Sites where cleared commercial and industrial premises have been replaced by parking

- **the severance of historic routes and gateways into the town centre caused by new roads:**

Though the Ring Road and its associated access and circulation arrangements have brought benefits to the town centre, the scale and design of the roads has caused damage to the heritage environment and

severance between previously linked communities and destinations – particularly for pedestrians. This has changed the historic sense of arrival and deterred some movements.



Impact on heritage properties

Ring Rd severance between station/court & town centre



The high level Ring Road restricting views and damaging setting of station Hotel.

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- **the impact of difficult local economic conditions**

The difficult economic conditions for traditional industries throughout Dewsbury during the 20th Century has resulted in both benefits and problems for the heritage townscape of the town centre Conservation Area. The lack of demand for properties due to the low income catchment, the competition from other centres and the poor maintenance condition of many buildings is having a significant impact with limited pressures for redevelopment. The outcome has frequently been low property values and income resulting in limited maintenance with poor quality and often inappropriate repairs and replacement.



Numerous empty shops

Vacant properties deteriorate and become derelict

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6.0 POLICY GUIDANCE AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

6.1 CA development policy, design guidance & management

The application of policy and design guidance, both generic and local, with Conservation Area wide design advice and site specific recommendations will need to be linked with the Unitary Development Plan as a Supplementary Planning Document to be effective for planning applications.

The positive assets need protection while the negative problems need to be resolved or limited. The following framework provides a basis for the continuing improvement of the Conservation Area:

- Policy guidance for existing and new development in the Conservation Area
- Specific design guidance for selected sites and issues
- Strategy for management and protection of the public realm
- Coordinated decision making with additional controls
- and Community involvement

6.2 Policies for maintenance & enhancement of existing buildings

Approach to Repairs and Alterations:

Design guidance to encourage residents to repair original elements in preference to replacement, and to advise on how repairs and alterations should be carried out is available from the Council's conservation team and the following websites: www.ihbc.org.uk/stitch_in_time/index.htm and www.maintainyourbuilding.org.uk. Currently some minor alterations to unlisted buildings do not require permission and the results often compromise their historic interest and architectural integrity.

The proliferation of relatively minor building alterations is incrementally eroding the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Many modern alterations adversely affect the subtlety, balance and proportions of building elevations and can also be physically damaging to the fabric of historic buildings.

Important original features threatened by such alterations include timber sash windows, projecting bays, doors and door cases, cast iron handrails, railings, balconies and rainwater goods, chimney pots and stacks and boundary enclosures.

It is important, therefore, that property owners and occupiers adopt the right approach to repairs and the replacement of features.

General Principles:

In the first instance, regular maintenance should be carried out to prevent, or at least delay, the need for more significant repairs. Repairs should only be undertaken where considered strictly necessary to slow down the process of decay without damaging the character of the building. In the vast majority of cases, a traditional approach to repair should be adopted, replacing decayed material on a like for like basis.

In certain circumstances, decay may be so advanced that the fabric is beyond repair and the replacement of the features may be necessary. Care should, however, be taken to avoid the unnecessary loss of historic fabric. The discrete insertion of modern draft seals can greatly enhance the performance of sash windows in respect of heat retention and ease of use.

The following guidelines are intended to advise the owners and residents of the Dewsbury town centre Conservation Area of the general approach to be taken when contemplating external repairs or alterations. Owners

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and occupiers should, however, always seek the advice of the Council conservation officers before carrying out works to their buildings.

Guidelines for External Repair and Alteration Work:

- Chimneys

Chimneys requiring repair should be reinstated or rebuilt accurately to the original height and profile, in materials to match the existing, which in most cases in Dewsbury, is brick. Original clay chimney pots should be replaced appropriately or reinstated where necessary.

- Windows and doors

Existing windows and external doors should be retained and carefully repaired wherever possible; it is important to retain and repair early surviving casements. In the Dewsbury CA, most original windows on the older buildings, are of a timber sliding-sash design. If replacement is unavoidable, new windows should be accurate replicas of the original design, in both pattern and detail. PVC frames will fail to achieve these aims.

- Shop Fronts and signage

The traditional shopfronts should be retained and opportunities to reinstate heritage designs should be required whenever alterations are proposed. New or replacement shopfronts and their signage should comply with advice from the Council Conservation Section and will be designed so as to preserve or enhance the building and conservation area.

- Boundary Treatment

Original walls, fences, railings and gates should be repaired to match the existing, or reinstated to the original design wherever possible. This is a particular concern where the original brick walls have been replaced by other materials.

6.3 Policies for new development

Where inappropriate development has occurred in the Conservation Area, such as Empire House, to the north of the Town Hall on Wakefield Old Road, this has been detrimental to the streetscape, the heritage setting and the environmental qualities of the town centre and Conservation Area.

Where individual infill developments reflect the scale, massing and form of their neighbours and are of good quality, they can generally be absorbed into the streetscape with success.

Where new development is proposed it is important that it is guided by sound principles of urban design, as well as sympathetic detailing in relation to its historic context. All forms of new development in the Conservation Area should:

- Preserve and reinforce the distinctive pattern of historic development, including street patterns, open spaces, plot boundaries and boundary treatments.
- Maintain key views and vistas within, into and out of the Conservation Area.
- Reinforce the distinctive architectural character of the Conservation Area through an informed understanding of distinctive building forms and styles, features and materials. Pastiche forms of development and the superficial echoing of historic features in new buildings should be avoided.
- Reinforce the scale and massing of surrounding buildings. It is essential that new development is not out of scale with existing buildings by way of its height, floor levels, size of windows and doors and overall massing.

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- Reinforce existing building lines and the orientation of existing development.
- Minimise the visual impact of parked vehicles and the provision of parking areas on the streetscape setting of historic buildings.

6.4 Strategy for management of the public realm

The design and management of the public realm is an important concern for the appreciation and presentation of the historic buildings of Dewsbury Conservation Area. The Ring Road has caused a significant severance between the town centre and the surrounding communities but it has now provided the opportunity to control vehicular movement and parking within the Conservation Area.

The main pedestrian public realm within the Conservation Area includes the Market Place, the space in front of the Town Hall and either side of Longcauseway – a road which unfortunately severs this linked area. This important focus for the people of Dewsbury requires particular attention to coordinate the use of the spaces and present the setting of the historic surrounding buildings with appropriate designs – see sections 4.2 Character Area 1. and 6.5.

Elsewhere there are few open spaces and the public realm is mainly limited to the pavements and road surfaces. The other notable spaces include the area in front of the station, the open market, cleared sites – now mostly used for random parking, and the grassed area in front of the Central Methodist Church on Daisy Hill that includes a few of the limited number of trees in the Conservation Area. Important road junctions such as Northgate with the Halifax and Bradford roads, and Eastgate with Daisy Hill and Church Street deserve particular attention to respect their historic importance.

The roads within the Conservation Area with road setts and stone flagged pavements and curbs stand out as good examples of appropriate designs for the public realm, whereas other streets with widespread use of tarmac and concrete slabs do not provide such a sensitive setting for the historic stone buildings. The continuing care for these surfaces will be an concern for the future management of the CA

The design of railings and lighting around the Conservation Area provide an opportunity to reflect historic designs and also it will be important that road signs and lighting are sensitively designed and located to accord with good practice to be defined in a future Streetscape Design Guide manual for Conservation Areas – see section 9.5 below.

An overall strategy with designs for pedestrian movement throughout the public realm within the historic environment is needed to improve the links between key locations – the station, the bus station, the Market Place; connections to the surrounding communities, public facilities – the library, the Minster, the sports centre, etc. that are beyond the ring road; and to reinforce and protect the historic gateways to the town centre.

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6.5 Guidance for buildings and key sites

6.5.1 Key unused buildings:

Successful conservation requires viable uses for historic buildings. Where there are completely empty buildings within the Conservation Area, priority should be given to finding new uses to protect the historic buildings and townscapes and to ensure funding for the necessary repairs and maintenance.

This is a significant problem for the use of upper floors above shops, etc. Many such areas are in poor condition and require improvements to enable them to be reused.



Examples in the Conservation Area include key sites and even shops on Westgate close to Market Place demonstrate limited demand and viability.

6.5.2. Northgate site:

The most striking Listed building that is currently empty and in urgent need of regeneration and new uses is the Pioneer House on Northgate junction with Halifax Road. There are well-advanced proposals for redevelopment of this site that ensures the protection of this important building. Planning and Conservation Area consent has been granted for refurbishment, conversion and new build for retail uses and 95 apartments. Sensitive

designs are essential to respect the historic structure and its associated buildings that can best be viewed from Branch Road.



6.5.3 Vacant plots

Throughout the Conservation Area there are numerous back-land sites away from the main frontages onto Northgate, Market Place, Corporation Street, Westgate, Daisy Hill, etc., that have been cleared through lack of economic uses. These are now frequently used for parking but are an important longer-term asset that will have real value when there is an economic upturn for the town centre. Most are adjacent to, or facing historic buildings and townscapes, and particular attention is needed to ensure any future designs for these sites are appropriate for these sensitive locations. Designs for any gap sites that are outside but adjacent to the Conservation Area boundary should also respect the local historic townscape.



Examples of vacant plots & gap sites that provide potential for sensitive redevelopment.

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6.5.4 Public realm linking Market Place and the Town Hall:

Kirklees Council has identified the need for improvements and enhancements to the town centre public realm. Initiatives will be developed that are complementary to other developments that improve the perception of the town. The concern is that the designs respect the important historic setting of the buildings and townscapes and that inappropriate materials and pastiche designs are avoided.

The most important public realm in the Conservation Area is the public space between the Town Hall and Westgate at the end of the Market Place. Old photographs show the significance of this area and demonstrate how it was used as one continuous space. Currently the design of Longcauseway and its traffic divides this area. It would be a positive benefit and attraction for the town if this focal area could be unified by designs that ensure the traffic crossing this space are aware that they are in a pedestrian area, rather than the converse.



View along Longcauseway showing the severance caused by the road.

6.5.5 Potential regeneration initiatives:

Within the Conservation Area there has been consideration of a number of major regeneration initiatives which could have a significant impact on the historic buildings and townscapes. The value of the heritage buildings and the historic townscapes as a positive economic driver needs to be a prime consideration when designing and promoting regeneration.

- **Shop front initiative:**

Property Improvement Grants are to be made available in a new Initiative that will be launched in 2008. A selected area has been identified to ensure that a combined impact will noticeably improve the local townscape and economy.



Examples of shop fronts on Westgate that detract from the quality of the buildings compared with a more sensitive period design - even with the inclusion of shutters.

- **Dewsbury West Retail Quarter:**

There are longer term plans to redevelop additional areas of Dewsbury town centre within the Conservation Area. Following the reuse and redevelopment of the Pioneer House site on Northgate, the proposals

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focus on areas to the west of Northgate and Westgate, and to the south of Daisy Hill. These are some of the oldest areas of Dewsbury town centre and include some fine frontages and interesting back streets of historic note that need to be retained. Regeneration of these areas should recognise these particular attractions and benefit from their conservation appeal.



Junction of Westgate and Daisy Hill



Union Street, an historic back street

- **Heritage area regeneration potential:**

Areas within the Conservation Area are particularly suitable for potential historic grant-aided schemes such as the Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage Initiative and the English Heritage Partnership Scheme. The possibility for a future application for funding should be considered.



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7.0 MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Resources needed in the area

Kirklees Council will coordinate the necessary resources to manage the Conservation Area. A framework of need will be identified from this Management Plan, including the implementation of policies both to achieve the heritage aims and to ensure the impact of a conservation led approach to economic development and regeneration issues.

Priority management time and skills will be required to implement the decision making procedures and policy changes, to ensure effective enforcement and monitoring, to prepare technical guidance and to inform the community.

7.2 Decision making procedures

All Council departments involved in decisions affecting change within the Conservation Area should understand the significance of Conservation Area designation and work corporately in a team approach to ensure that development decisions are appropriate for the historic context and will not damage the heritage fabric or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Further procedures to ensure consistent decision making will be identified and supported by the following recommended policy changes to maintain the character of the area through extra controls:

7.2.1 Local listing

There are currently no buildings within the Dewsbury Conservation Area that have been identified as Buildings of Local Significance. The Kirklees Unitary Development Plan 1999 recommends the "inclusion of the best of

the District's unlisted buildings on a 'local list' that satisfy guideline criteria" (paragraph 4.14). As there are significant numbers of such properties within the Conservation Area, for example:

- The Old Post Office, Wakefield Old Road, 1908;
- The Covered Market Hall, 1904;
- Cloth Hall Mills building, 1863;
- Kingsway and Queensway arcades;
- Tapps public house, 2 Bradford Road;
- Broadway House, Crackenedge Lane, 1930;
- Properties on Nelson Street;
- Properties on Wellington Road, particularly the curved end of the Dewsbury Reporter Building; etc

It is recommended that an appraisal identifies these and other important buildings of Local Significance that require additional protection with a Local Listing designation.

7.2.2 Boundary changes

The Dewsbury Conservation Area was designated in 1977 and this Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, 2007, has reconsidered the boundaries and proposes a significant change to be adopted by Kirklees Council.

Areas to be retained within the Conservation Area:

It is recommended that all areas within the current Conservation Area boundary are retained. Section 4. above identifies the important heritage and townscape qualities of each of the Character Areas

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Recommended changes to the Conservation Area boundary:

It is recommended that a significant area to the east of the Conservation Area boundary should be added to the current Conservation Area. See Figure 7.1 – proposed Conservation Area boundary change. This includes some important Listed buildings, including the Town Hall, and a number of significant unlisted buildings that are of heritage or architectural note. It also provides the opportunity to link the conservation management of the focal historic open space within Dewsbury – the public realm in front of the Town Hall and the Market Place. The importance of this space is recognised on many old photographs – see below.



The Listed buildings within this proposed extension area are – see Figure 1.1:

- The Town Hall
- Barclays Bank, Longcauseway;
- Dewsbury Baptist Church, Wakefield Old Road; and
- United Reformed Church, Longcauseway

The unlisted buildings of note include:

- The Old Post Office, Wakefield Old Road, opened in 1908
- and Broadway House, Crackenedge Lane, a 1930's development with period detailing that was the first major brick building in Dewsbury town centre.

Together, these key buildings and the heritage townscape they create around the historic open space, are worthy of inclusion in the Conservation Area.

The newly built two-storey shopping terrace between Market Place and the United Reformed Church on the west side of Longcauseway is included as it forms an important edge to the open space facing the Town Hall and designation will assist control of any further changes.

Any development on gap sites or redevelopment on sites adjacent to the current and proposed boundary should respect their setting and the priorities for change within the Conservation Area.

See Figure 7.1 on next page to identify this potential boundary change.

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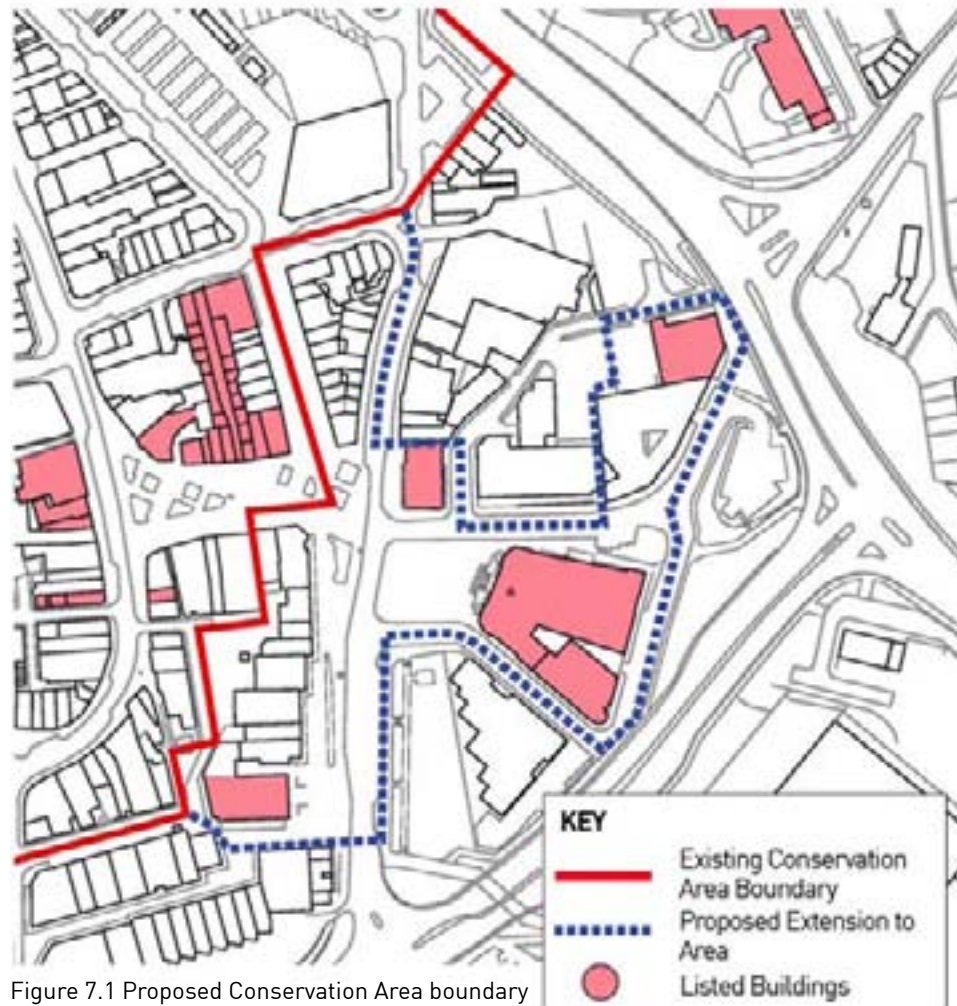


Figure 7.1 Proposed Conservation Area boundary change showing additional area including the Town Hall.

7.2.3 Article 4 Directions

Article 4(2) Directions can be imposed by local planning authorities to control certain alterations to dwellings that would otherwise be automatically permitted development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Thus, for example, the replacement of windows, doors, roof coverings etc. can come under planning control, the object being to prevent works that are considered to be damaging or inappropriate to the historic fabric or features of the buildings.

It is recommended that an Article 4 Direction is imposed on the Conservation Area as a whole. This will help prevent further deterioration of the heritage details throughout the area. It should be noted that such Directions only apply to properties in use as dwelling houses. A significant proportion of the built development within the Conservation Area is in commercial use, which does not have the same permitted development rights as residential property and therefore should be less at risk from permitted inappropriate changes and loss of heritage character. Property owners should be made aware that planning applications may be required for all alterations, etc.

The classes of development proposed be covered by the Article 4 Direction include:

- Enlargement, improvement or other alteration to the public face of the building
- Design & materials for windows, doors, shop fronts, signage & advertisements;
- Addition or material alteration to the shape of the roof;
- Erection, construction, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure;

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- Cladding of any part of the exterior with artificial stone, timber, plastic or tiles;
- Installation, alteration or replacement of a satellite antenna; and
- Rendering or painting of the exterior masonry/brickwork of the building.

7.3 Enforcement strategy

Kirklees Council's Conservation team with Development Control Officers and legal advisors, can pursue a programme of appropriate legal action using powers available under Sections 48 and 54 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 where this may be deemed necessary.

The powers available to local authorities, that Kirklees Council are prepared to use, include:

- Taking enforcement action against unauthorised development – planning contravention notices / breach of condition notices / enforcement notices / stop notices / and injunctions;
- Serving repairs and urgent works notices; and
- Compulsory purchase orders

7.4 Mechanisms for monitoring change

BV 219b and 219c requires both a regular re-assessment of Conservation Area Appraisals and the development of management proposals.

In addition to a regular review of the Conservation Area to encompass changes and new priorities, key tools to monitor changes could include a dated photographic survey and further research.

7.4 Conservation and urban design guidance

The future protection of the Conservation Area will require detailed policy and technical guidance to ensure future change and development is appropriate for the heritage context. There is a specific need for Technical Guidance Notes to be prepared which set out the principles with good practice examples identified.

Priority Conservation Area topics for Technical Guidance Notes include:

- **Security – shutters/ alarms/ security lighting/ CCTV cameras/ etc:** to identify inappropriate locations and suggest preferred designs and installations for different types of property.
- **Advertising:** with recommendations on scale and design when used on shops, commercial properties and stand-alone hordings;
- **Aerials and dishes:** advice on location and scale of apparatus to be used;
- **Streetscape manual:** with specifications for paving, street furniture, signage, etc;

and particularly important:

- **Shop fronts:** with advice on traditional designs to discourage inappropriate designs and materials

General **Shop Front and Signage Design Guidance** has been prepared as a draft to assist development control. This requires further expansion, then following public consultation should be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Council's Unitary Development Plan.

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New or replacement shop fronts and signage in the Conservation Area have significant impact on the historic and visual qualities and should be designed so as to preserve or enhance the character of the building and the Conservation Area. Original historic shop fronts should be retained and opportunities to reinstate traditional shop fronts should be taken as they arise. There will be a presumption against projecting box signs, oversized fascias and internally illuminated signs. Formal policies will be contained in a Shop Front Design Guide and these policies should be adhered to in order to preserve or enhance the character of buildings and that of the Conservation Area.

7.6 Community involvement

Continuing community review and involvement will be managed by Kirklees Council with assistance from Dewsbury Matters.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG 15) advises that authorities consider setting up Conservation Area Advisory Committees, both to assist in formulating policies for the conservation area, and as a continuing source of advice on planning and other applications that could affect an area.

