

Project Darling -
Yards Enhancements

Planning & Heritage Statement

Clarks & Bucktons Yards

Darlington Town Centre

ELG



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning and Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Darlington Borough Council to accompany an application for Listed Building Consent for a range of improvement works throughout Clarks and Bucktons Yards in Darlington Town Centre. The requirement and scope for the application has been agreed with the Council's Conservation Officer prior to submission

1.2 The statement assesses the proposals in the context of the adopted development plan and any other material considerations that are deemed relevant to the determination of the application, including the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). As such, it should be read in conjunction with the following information also submitted as part of the planning application package:

- Completed application forms;
- Plans and Elevations;
- Specifications of products to be used and method statements for their use/installation.

Structure of Statement

1.3 This Planning and Heritage Statement is structured as follows:

Section 2 provides background as to how the proposal has arisen.

Section 3 explains about community involvement / engagement on the project to date.

Section 4 provides an overview of the site.

Section 5 sets out the relevant planning policy context.

Section 6 describes the significance of the heritage assets involved in the proposal

Section 7 explains the effects upon the heritage assets

Section 8 draws conclusions on the overall findings of the Statement.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Darlington Town Centre plays a key part in the wider economic strategy for the borough. A recent report identified the town as the third highest retail centre in the North East of England, placing it behind only Newcastle and the Metro Centre. In particular, the Town Centre is seen as being particularly attractive for small to medium sized businesses and the boroughs emerging local plan indicates that it should grow and retain its status as a sub-regional shopping centre.

2.2 In order to achieve this, a framework to deliver a range of improvements has been developed by the Council which is set out in its Town Centre Strategy. This seeks to create a “living town centre” which will be the heart of the community for many years to come.

2.3 Investment in heritage assets is just one of the areas that have been identified for investment/improvement. The historic Yards and Wynds areas are seen as being “hidden gems” that make the town centre unique. However, due to their location, tucked away out of view of the main thoroughfares, these are often overlooked. With appropriate investment though, these spaces could become more attractive and help drive footfall in the town centre. The Council has recently been successful in a bid to MHCLG for “Towns Fund Accelerated Funding” which has resulted in a package of public realm improvement works being developed to re-invigorate the historic Clarkes and Buckton’s Yards areas, in order to make them an attractive proposition for town centre users. Details can be seen in the masterplan below. In brief, these include:

- Entranceway enhancements to the Yards from both Skinnersgate and High Row
- A general clean-up of paths and footways
- Introduction of landscaping throughout
- New outdoor seating
- Lighting improvements
- Shop front improvements, including painting, new signage and doors

2.4 Of these works, some involve designated Listed Buildings, namely,

- 1 Clarks Yard DL3 7QH (Falafel Fella)
- 4 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (Luck and Love Tattoo)
- 4 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Cheese and Wine Shop)
- 6 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Barber Shop)

- 12 High Row, DL3 7QQ (RJ Brow Bar)
- 12a High Row, DL3 7QQ (Sawasdee Thai Massage)
- 14 High Row, Darlington, DL3 7QQ (Rowlands Pharmacy)
- 15-16 high row (Start Fitness / Just a Fiver)
- 17 High Row, Darlington, DL3 7QQ
- 18 High Row DL3 7QQ (Guinot)

- 78 Skinnergate DL3 7LX (Games Workshop)
- 79 Skinnergate, DL3 7LX (Yaeger)

2.5 As a result, this submission has been prepared to secure the Listed Building Consent that is necessary for the works to these buildings. When looking at the associated documents, it should be noted that the works to the Listed Buildings are identified by annotations contained within blue boxes. It is only these works which fall within the scope of this submission.

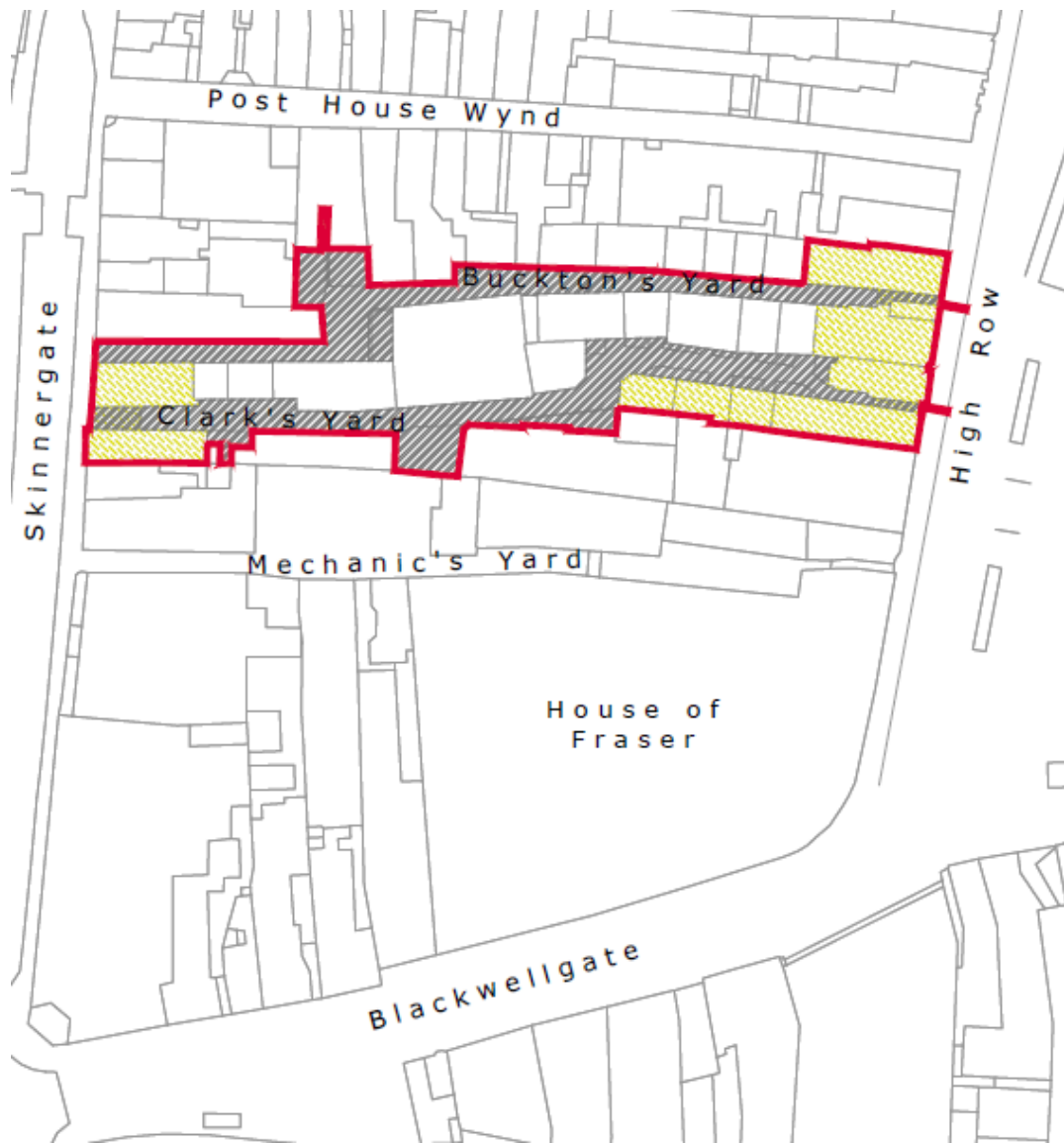
2.6 Other works that are shown on the submitted drawings such as street furniture and planters etc. have been included to provide some context and understanding of the overall programme of works. It should be noted that such works can be undertaken as “Permitted Development” by the Local Authority, under Schedule 2, Part 12 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. This allows Local Authorities to install a range of public infrastructure required in connection with the operation of any public service administered by them.

3 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In order to ensure the project achieves its objective of enhancing and improving the public realm of The Yards, the Council's Towns Fund Team have engaged with the local businesses who occupy the premises there throughout the development of the project. These discussions have helped inform the overall range of proposed improvements and are ongoing at the time of submission.

4 **SITE OVERVIEW**

Buckton's and Clarkes Yards are situated within Darlington's Town Centre's Conservation Area. As is detailed in the Councils Conservation Area appraisal document (2010), the Yards form a locally distinctive and integral part of the character of the area. They run between High Row and Skinnergate, providing a welcome break from the hustle and bustle of the busier shopping streets. From High Row each of the Yards is identified by their name engraved in stone and projecting, hanging signs at the entranceways and from Skinnergate they are identified by projecting hanging signs at entranceways.



The Application Site

4.1 Clark's Yard - Historical Overview

Clark's yard is one of the best-preserved yards and has retained many of its original features. This includes a rainwater head close to the High Row Entrance which is marked 'JP 1767'. The hopper forms a part of the Grade II Listed 13 High Row, which has a long 18th century range. This building is understood to be the site of John Pease's 1750 House. Later it was owned by the Herald newspaper and the hoist which was used to haul the heavy newsprint rolls still remains.

The Grade II Listed Buildings affected by the proposal in Clarks Yard are:

- 12 High Row, DL3 7QQ (RJ Brow Bar)
- 12a High Row, DL3 7QQ (Sawasdee Thai Massage)
- 14 High Row, Darlington, DL3 7QQ (Rowlands Pharmacy)
- 1 Clarks Yard DL3 7QH (Falafel Fella)
- 13 High Row, Comprising:
 - 4 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (Luck and Love Tattoo)
 - 4 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Cheese and Wine Shop) and
 - 6 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Barber Shop)

4.2 Buckton's Yard - Historical Overview

Buckton's Yard was originally called Colling's Yard which is understood to be because Colling's Grocers owned property here in the 1780's. By the early-19th century it had changed names to Swan Yard in association with the Public House at the eastern end Yard. The present name dates from 1832 with the name being associated with John Buckton, who was born in North Yorkshire in 1798. He is understood to have been a Grocer and Brandy Merchant, owning property on High Row, just off the Yard. John was a shareholder and Director of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. He was also the Director of the Stockton, Middlesbrough and Yarm Water Company.

The Grade II Listed Buildings affected by the proposal in Buckton's Yard are:

- 15-16 high row (Start Fitness / Just a Fiver)
- 17 High Row, Darlington, DL3 7QQ
- 18 High Row DL3 7QQ (Guinot)
- 78 Skinnergate DL3 7LX (Games Workshop)
- 79 Skinnergate, DL3 7LX (Yaeger)

5 POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 National Planning Policy

At the heart of the National Planning Policy framework (the Framework) is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is an important component of the Framework's drive to achieve sustainable development. The appropriate conservation of heritage assets forms one of the 'core planning principles' that underpin the planning system. Section 16 of the Framework seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment. The following paragraphs are of particular relevance:

5.2 Paragraph 189 states that in determining applications, LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected. Paragraph 193 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

5.3 Paragraph 200 states that LPAs should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

5.4 Local Policy

At a local level, work is underway to prepare a new Local Plan for the Borough of Darlington, formally known as the Local Development Framework (LDF). The new Local Plan will gradually replace saved policies in the existing Borough of Darlington Local Plan (adopted 1997, with alterations 2001). However, at the time of this submission it is noted that this new plan has yet to undergo its examination and as such only limited weight can be afforded to the guidance contained therein. Therefore, for the purposes of this submission consideration has been given to the following policy from the LDF:

Policy CS14: Promoting Local Character and Distinctiveness

This Policy requires proposals to pay due regard to the distinctive character of the Borough's built, historic, natural and environmental townscapes, landscapes and strong sense of place. It recommends that such areas should be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced by a range of criteria including the following which are applicable to this submission:

- a) Protecting and improving the distinctive character of Darlington town centre; and
- e) Protecting, enhancing and promoting the quality and integrity of Darlington's designated nationally significant built heritage.

6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ASSETS

As explained earlier, the overall programme of works seeks to improve and enhance the appearance of both of the Yards areas, in order to bring further vitality to the Town Centre.

6.1 To enable the Local Planning Authority to assess the effects of the proposals on the Listed Buildings in the Yards, it is necessary to describe the significance of these buildings, including any contribution made by their setting. Paragraph 189 of the Framework advises that the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'. Accordingly, the following paragraphs provide the necessary commentary on the significance of these Heritage Assets.

6.3 **Group 1**, comprises

- 12 High Row, (RJ Brow Bar)
- 12a High Row, (Sawasdee Thai Massage)
- 14 High Row, (Rowlands Pharmacy) and (Part of) the adjoining 1 Clarks Yard (Falafel Fella)
- 15-16 High row (Start Fitness / Just a Fiver)

This group of buildings are Grade II Listed and are described in List Entry Number: 1322926. They were first listed in September 1977.



6.4 The listing describes the group of buildings as being from the early 18th Century and of three storeys in height. They are constructed from old narrow irregular red bricks. The front elevation has a parapet front partly concealing a high-pitched roof, which is now slated. A number of windows to the front are also described.

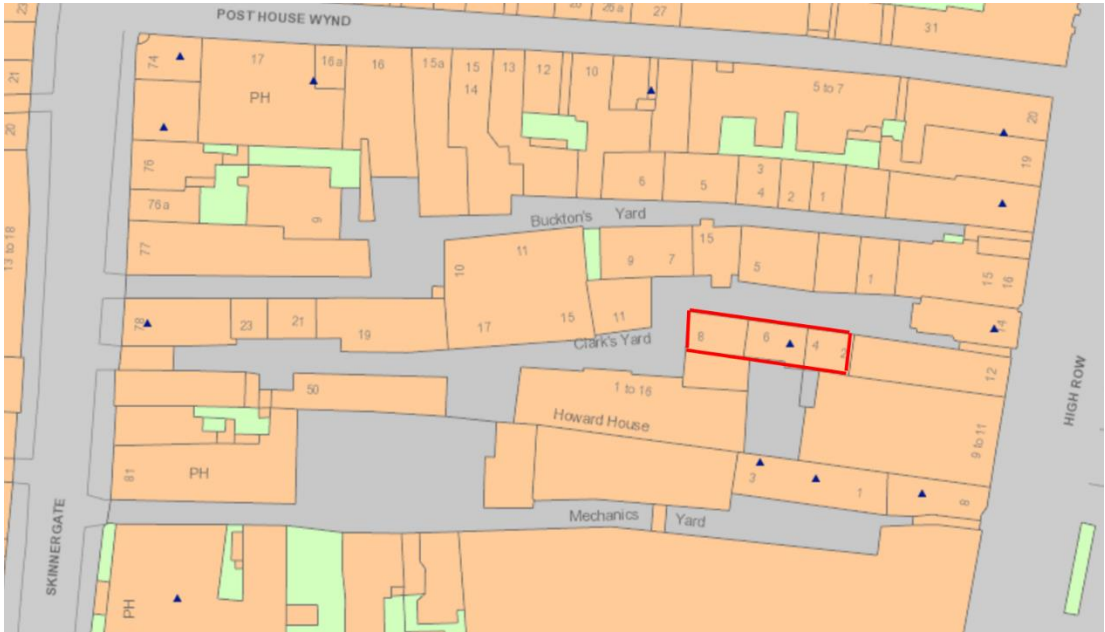
6.5 The entranceway to Clark's Yard is included covered by the Listing as well as the 5-bay 18th Century rear wing that adjoins No 13, which is constructed from similar pinkish bricks and includes gauged brick arches and two windows with radial heads .



6.6 **Group 2 - 13, High Row**

This group are also Grade II Listed and is described in List Entry Number 1121268. It was also first listed in September 1977. This building comprises a number of units that are now addressed as Clarks Yard, namely:

- Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (Luck and Love Tattoo)
- Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Cheese and Wine Shop)
- Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Barber Shop)

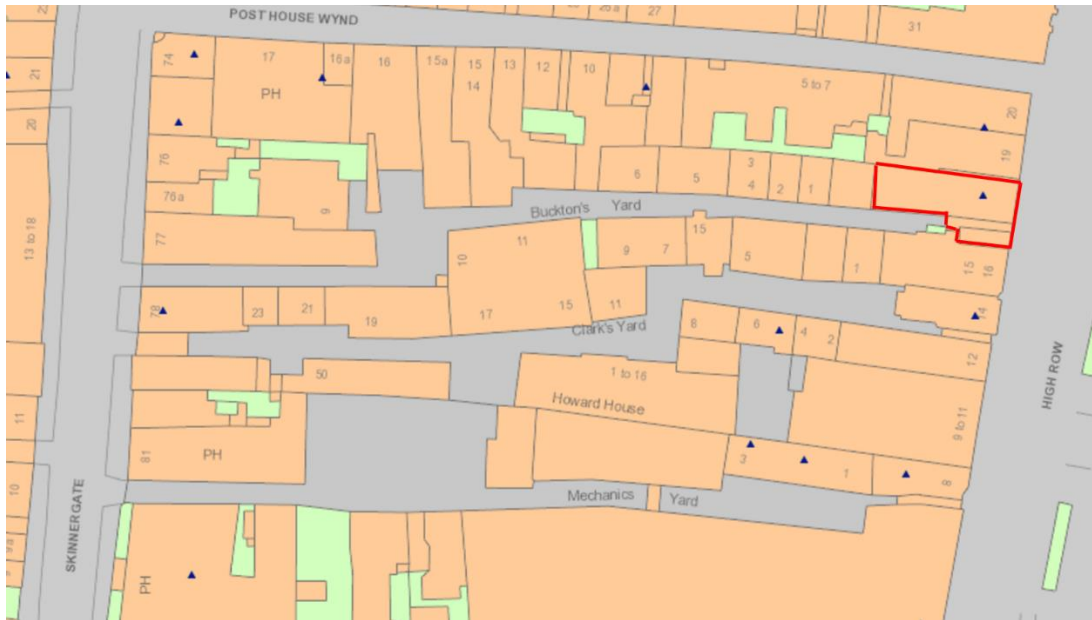


6.7 The building is described as being from the 18th Century and includes a decorative rainwater head dated 1767 and including the initials “I.P” It is three storeys in height with 6 bays, constructed from local pinkish brick in a bond of 5 courses of stretchers alternating with one course of headers. The windows have gauged flat brick window arches. There are a variety of windows, some horizontal sliding sashes, some 19th Century one-bar casements. The ground floor is much altered with a loading door in the 2nd bay from the right. An elliptical headed window of 17th Century appearance can be found in the west gable end.



6.8 **Group 3 - 17 and 18 High Row.**

This group of buildings are also Grade II Listed and are described under List Entry Number 1322927. They were also first listed in September 1977.

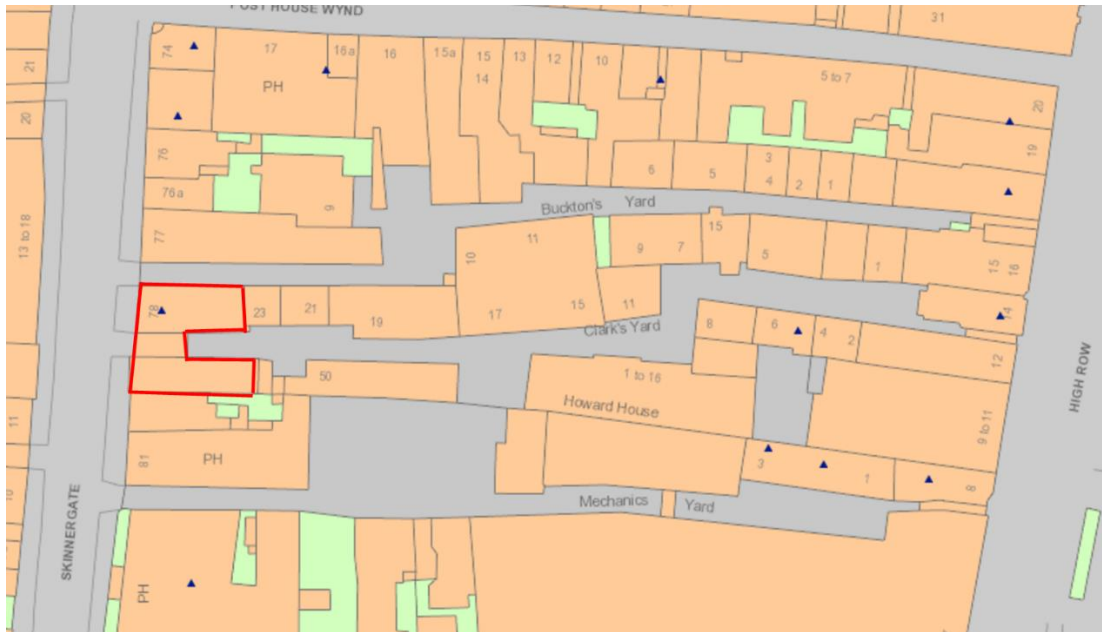


6.9 The buildings are described as being three-storey, with a 3-window pedimented front of mid-18th Century appearance. They are constructed from old irregular red bricks with stone cornice bands and pediment cornices. All windows have gauged brick flat arches and stone cills. The First-floor windows have been shortened to accommodate high modern shop fronts. The entrance to Buckton's Yard can be found in the centre.



6.10 **Group 4 - 78 and 79, Skinnergate**

These properties are Grade II Listed and are described under List Entry 1310133. They were first listed in September 1977.



6.11 Constructed in the late 18th Century, they are three storeys high with 4 windows in all and include a central elliptical archway to Clark's yard running through the middle. Made from old pinkish brick, number 78 features a stretcher bond with 3 courses coming between one header course and number 79 features a bond of headers and half-headers. Gauged brick flat arches with key blocks can be found to the 1st floor windows (except in the later 19th Century canted bay to the right). Sash windows are present in wood architraves. The rear elevation features a small round window with radial glazing above the arch; and gable ended wings running back at each side. No 78 also has some cambered gauged brick window arches with keystones.



7 EFFECTS ON THE HERITAGE ASSETS

As the Framework makes clear, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a listed building, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

7.1 As explained, the programme of works has been developed to have a positive and enhancing effect on both the setting of the Yards area when experienced as a whole and also upon each individual building that has been identified for intervention. As a result, the reader should consider the effects on all of the heritage assets described in this section as being positive and beneficial and are not considered to result in any harm.

7.2 Works to Group 1

As explained in the preceding section, the listing for this group of buildings focuses largely upon the main frontages of those buildings that front onto the High Row. These frontages are unaffected by the proposals. However, the entranceway to Clark's Yard is also included in the listing as well as the 18th Century rear wing that adjoins No 13. (Sawasdee Thai Massage)

7.3 Clarks Yard Entrance/Alleyway

The entrance/Alleyway into Clarks Yard from High Row is formed from the side/flank walls of 12 High Row, (RJ Brow Bar) and 14 High Row, (Rowlands Pharmacy) In this area, localised repairs to the rendered walls are proposed, along with the removal of a plastic bulk-head light. All render repairs are to be undertaken using conservation-specific render. The replacement bulk-head lights will be carefully affixed to the wall in a manner to be agreed with the Conservation Officer. Details of these works are illustrated on drawing no 1233_313. Technical specifications are also included separately.



PHOTOS (EXISTING) - CLARK'S YARD ALLEYWAY ENTRANCE FROM HIGH ROW

7.4 Rear of 14 High Row

In addition to forming part of the entrance/alleyway, a section of 14 High Row also contains a section of what is known as 1 Clarks Yard (Falafel Fella). Wrought iron trelliswork is to be affixed to the walls of this building, in order to provide support for planting that is to be introduced as part of the overall scheme of improvement works to the Yards. Details of these works are illustrated on drawing no's 1233_311 and 1233_700.



7.5 12(a) High Row - Sawasdee Thai Massage

This building effectively joins the buildings in Group 1 to those in Group 2. Wrought iron trelliswork is also to be affixed to the walls of this building, in order to provide support for planting that is to be introduced as part of the overall scheme of improvement works to the Yards. In addition, an anchor point for catenary lighting is also to be installed at first floor level. Details of these works are illustrated on drawing no's 1233_310 and 1233_700.



7.6 15-16 High Row

In addition to the above elements which are contained within Clarks Yard, the side of 15-16 High Row is also included in the Group 1 listing. This element forms part of the wall that can be seen on the left when entering Buckton's Yard via its entrance from High Row.



PHOTO (EXISTING) - ENTRANCE FROM HIGH ROW TO BUCKTONS YARD - BUCKTONS YARD

7.8 An old smoking bin that is affixed to this wall will be removed and wrought iron trelliswork is to be installed, in a similar manner to that which has previously been described. Details of these works are illustrated on drawing no's 1233_305 and 1233_700.

7.9 Works to Group 2

7.10 This group of buildings takes the form of a long block of shop units that adjoins the rear of the High Row (12(a)). It runs along the south eastern corner of Clarks Yard. It has the appearance of an early industrial/warehouse type building and at one point was owned by the Herald newspaper. A hoist still remains, which was used to haul the heavy newsprint rolls.

7.11 On the listing this group of buildings is referred to as 13 High Row. However, the listing acknowledges that the ground floor has been much altered and its now sub-divided nature has resulted in it having now been given a number of separate addresses which comprise:

- Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (Luck and Love Tattoo)
- 4 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Cheese and Wine Shop)
- 6 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Barber Shop)

7.12 4 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (Luck and Love Tattoo)

This property is to have its existing non-original front door replaced with one that is more appropriate to its heritage context. A number of other doors to non-listed buildings throughout the overall project are also to be replaced to help further improve and enhance the appearance of the area. Details of these works are provided on drawing no's 1233_310 and 2020_023_121



7.13 4 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Cheese and Wine Shop)

Wrought iron trelliswork is to be installed to this property, in a similar manner to that which has previously been described. In addition, an anchor point for catenary lighting is also to be installed at first floor level. Details of these works are illustrated on drawing no's 1233_309 and 1233_700.



PHOTO (EXISTING) - THE CHEESE AND WINE SHOP - CLARKS YARD

7.14 6 Clarks Yard, DL3 7QH (The Barber Shop)

Wrought iron trelliswork is also to be affixed to the walls of this building, in a similar manner to that which has previously been described. Details of these works are illustrated on drawing no's 1233_310 and 1233_700.



7.15 **Works to Group 3**

As per the listing for Group 1, the listing for group 3 also focuses largely upon the main frontages of the Listed Buildings which front onto High Row. These frontages are unaffected by the proposals. However, the entrance/alleyway to Buckton's Yard can be found in the centre.

7.16 Bucktons Yard Entrance/Alleyway

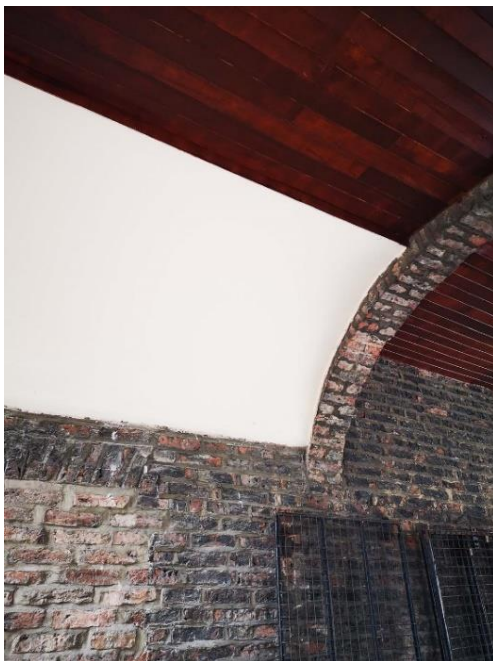
In this area, as per the entrance/alleyway to Clarks Yard, localised repairs to the rendered walls are proposed, along with the removal of a plastic bulk-head light. All render repairs are to be undertaken using conservation-specific render. The replacement bulk-head lights will be carefully affixed to the wall in a manner to be agreed with the Conservation Officer. Details of these works are illustrated on drawing no 1233_313. Technical specifications are also included separately.



PHOTOS (EXISTING) - BUCKTON'S YARD ALLEYWAY ENTRANCE FROM HIGH ROW

7.17 **Works to Group 4** - 78 and 79, Skinnergate.
The space in-between these two buildings includes a central elliptical archway to Clark's yard,

7.18 The inside of this archway has been clad at some point with timber. It is proposed that this timberwork is painted to brighten and enhance this entranceway into Clarks Yard. A section of the arch remains unclad and it is proposed to also clad this in matching materials to provide a more uniform appearance. Fixing details of this additional cladding are to be agreed with the Councils Conservation Officer.



8 CONCLUSION

Clearly, the proposals to the Yards areas and the Listed Buildings have arisen as a direct result of the Council having a suitable strategy in place to help conserve the historic environment. Such measures are advocated by paragraph 185 of the Framework.

- 8.1 As set out in this statement, it has been demonstrated that the works would not result in any harm arising to the Listed Buildings and would assist in enhancing their appearance. As a result, the proposals would fit sensitively into the context of the surrounding area would make a positive contribution to its distinctive character, whilst also assisting in delivering much needed social, and economic benefits.
- 8.2 The submission effectively demonstrates that the works to the Listed Buildings are minor in nature and acceptable in all respects and accord with the relevant development plan policy and the aims of the Framework.
- 8.3 As a result, Listed Building Consent for the works should be granted without delay, subject to the imposition of conditions deemed reasonable or necessary.