

HERITAGE STATEMENT
in connection with
Proposed Alterations to
ACKROYD'S
(FORMERLY THE ROYAL OAK)
2 WATER STREET
SKIPTON
NORTH YORKSHIRE
BD23 1PB

Prepared by:

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Introduction

1.1 - Purpose and Format

This heritage statement has been prepared to assess and inform proposals to alter the parts of the lower ground floor of Ackroyd's. The building is Grade II listed (a designated heritage asset) and sits within a conservation area. Therefore, as prescribed under planning law and policy, care is required to ensure that the heritage significance is not unduly harmed by any future works to the building.

This statement should be used to inform and guide any future works to the building, including the current application. The report will enable those who undertake and/or oversee that work to preserve and enhance the historic significance of the building, by placing that significance at the centre of the planning process and subsequent building works.

The report has been prepared in accordance with the Historic England publication 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' and responds to Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2019. Legal context is provided by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990.

The local planning policy guidance is set by the Craven District Council (Outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park) Local Plan, 1999. It should be noted that Craven District Council have submitted a revised plan with the Secretary of State and anticipate that the new plan will be adopted in 2019. Local policy context is provided by Skipton Conservation Areas Appraisal, 2008.

1.2 - The Author

Chris Clark, the author, is a Building Conservation and Adaptation MSc student and a practising Building Surveyor, with a background in undertaking Condition Surveys of and project managing building works on heritage buildings.

1.3 - Methods of Research and Investigation

Inspection of the site was undertaken in March 2019 to assess the physical nature of the building, its setting and location within Skipton. A further site inspection was undertaken in November 2019 to respond to the Heritage Advice document, dated 21.10.19. In addition to this, a desk top survey and background research was undertaken to fully investigate all matters relating to the building and its setting.

General Description

2.1 - Location

Ackroyd's is situated at the junction of Water Street and Grassington Road. Ordnance Survey grid reference: SD 98931 51931

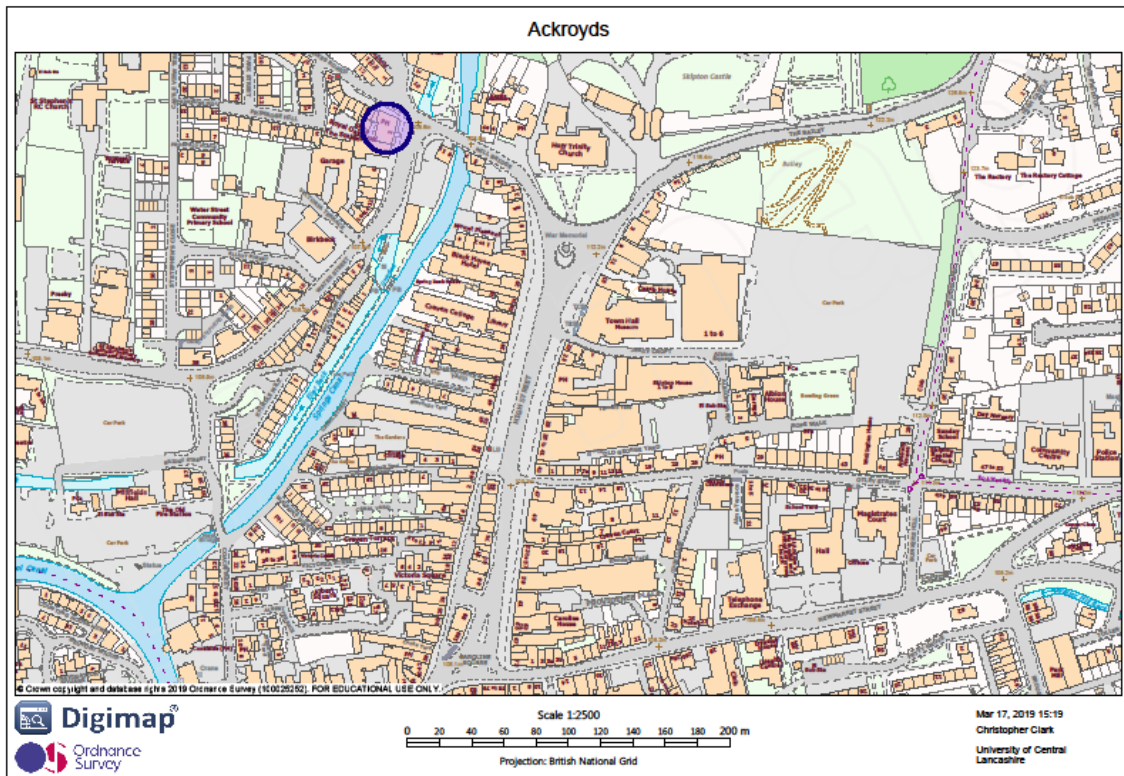


Figure 1: Site location plan showing Ackroyd's in relation to Skipton town centre.

2.2 - Setting

The site consists of 1no building. Ackroyd's is sited to the north-west edge of Skipton town centre, approximately 100 metres from the top of the town's High Street. The building is sited within the town's Skipton Central Conservation Area (CAC1), as set out in the Skipton Conservation Areas Appraisal, 2008, which is deemed in the appraisal to be the town's 'historic core'. However, though numerous inns and pubic houses are specifically cited in the appraisal as buildings of importance, Ackroyd's is not. The appraisal states that the building is set in an 'architecturally varied and significant setting' and that 'the relationship between water and built environment here is very important in the urban scene'. The building sits on the junction of the two roads that link Skipton to the Yorkshire Dales National Park and are the main routes into town from the north and west - Water Street and Raikes Road - and adjacent to the Leeds -Liverpool Canal, Eller Beck and High Corn Mill. In close proximity to the building are numerous listed buildings and structures, the most notable being the Grade I listed Holy Trinity Church and Skipton Castle, which are listed below:

Ackroyd's (formerly The Royal Oak), Skipton

- HIGH CORN MILL, Grade: II, List UID: 1316983
- 1, CHAPEL HILL Grade: II, List UID: 1131865
- BRIDGE HOUSE, Grade: II, List UID: 1131866
- THE CHAPEL, Grade: II, List UID: 1131867
- ELLER BECK BRIDGE, Grade: II, List UID: 1131849
- BRIDGE OVER SPRINGS CANAL, Grade: II, List UID: 1316975
- 6, MILL BRIDGE, Grade: II, List UID: 1131851
- 4 AND 4A, MILL BRIDGE, Grade: II, List UID: 1316976
- CASTLE INN, Grade: II, List UID: 1131850
- CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, Grade: I, List UID: 1131877
- SKIPTON CASTLE, Grade: I, List UID: 1316962
- OUTER GATEHOUSE TO SKIPTON CASTLE (PUBLIC ENTRANCE), Grade: I, List UID: 1131901
- THE BLACK HORSE PUBLIC HOUSE, Grade: II, List UID: 1301619
- THE RED LION PUBLIC HOUSE, Grade: II, List UID: 1131885

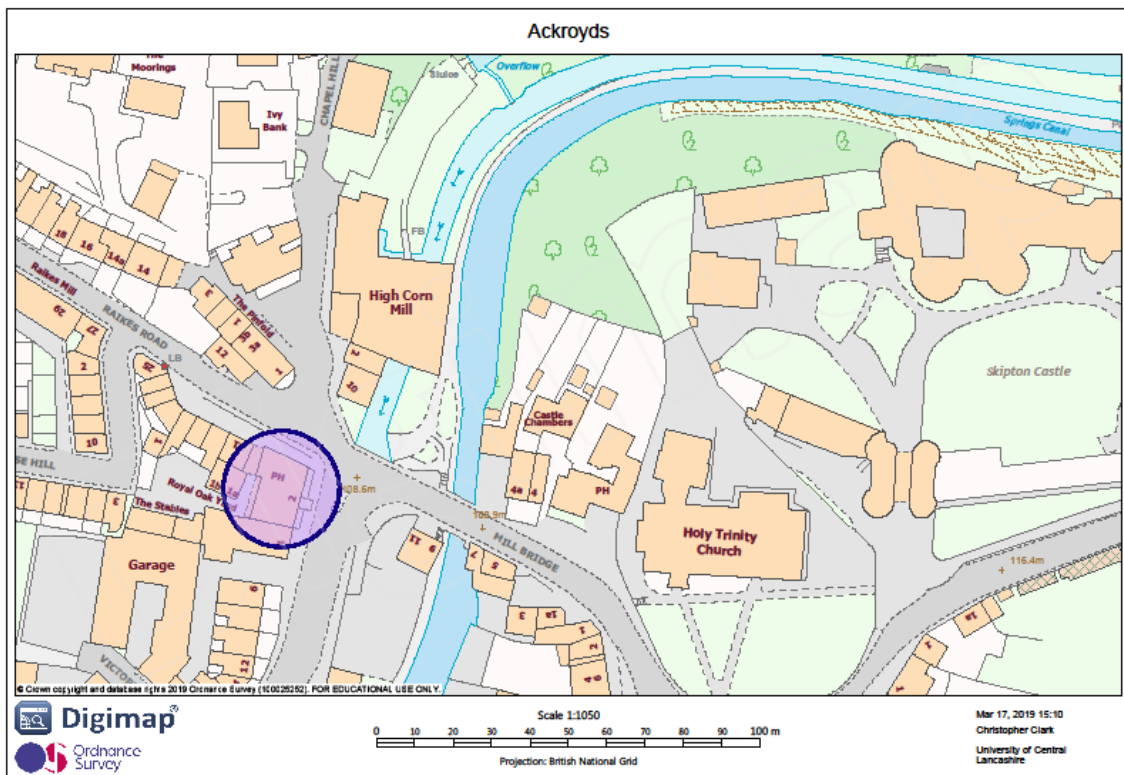


Figure 2: Site location plan showing Ackroyd's in context of other buildings with heritage significance within close proximity.

2.3 - Outline Description and Historical Background

Ackroyd's is a public house with guest rooms, as it was when first constructed, and has not been subject to any extensions or substantial external alterations. The Grade II listed building is believed to have been constructed in the early 18th century just before the start of a building boom in Skipton. It is assumed that the building was sited in its location as it sits adjacent to the two main roads in to Skipton from the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The town served as the sheep market for

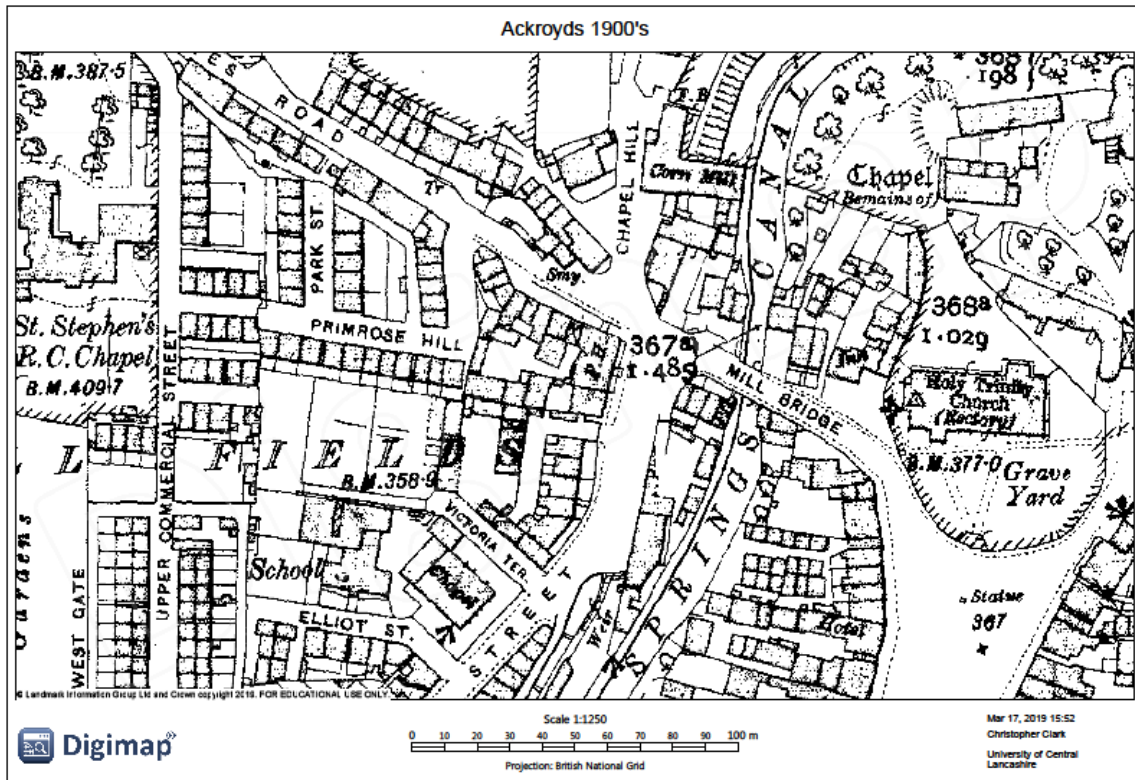


Figure 4: Plan showing the area surrounding Ackroyds at the start of the 1900's

The building is broadly rectangular in plan, though the two gable ends are just off parallel, with main entrances to two elevations – the north gable end and the east elevation. The building is three bay and double pile, and is arranged over four storeys – lower ground floor, ground floor, first floor and accommodation in the roof space - and is constructed in the vernacular style with sandstone elevations and gable roof. The architectural styling of the building is typically Georgian. The elevations that front on to the roads follow classical Georgian architectural principles. Both are well proportioned, the openings are set within a grid formation, with the only exception being the doorway to the east elevation, and follow the principle of window sizes diminishing from the main floor up to the first floor.

Though no substantial external alterations have been made, there is evidence that the building has been subject to minor alterations. Rooflights have been added to provide natural light sources to the rooms in the roof space and the 4no chimney stacks – one to each gable end plus two equally spaced along the ridgeline – have been reduced down to 2no. To the rear elevation, the 2no windows to the toilets on the ground floor have been partially blocked up, and an entrance and metal staircase for a fire escape has been added to the first floor.

Internally, the building has undergone more extensive changes, particularly to the ground floor. The public areas are now open plan, probably leading to the need to remove one of the central chimney stacks. However, the sense of the original layout is still apparent with sections of the original walls still remaining for structural reasons. To the first floor the original layout is still predominantly in place. However, alterations have been made with the insertion of ensuite shower/bath rooms, with timber stud partition walls, and the removal of a small portion of structural wall to create a fire

Ackroyd's (formerly The Royal Oak), Skipton

escape route compliant with Building Regulations. The layout to the roof space, as with the first floor, is predominantly in place with only the insertion of timber stud walls to create ensuite rooms changing the floor plan. However, a small number of the roof timber sections have been modified to create greater headroom. To all floors the original plan form of the building – three bay, double pile is still apparent.



Figure 5: Picture marked as taken in 1875 (source: Old Skipton Pics – Facebook) showing the original 4no chimney stacks and no rooflights

Built over four storeys, the building would have had various uses to each separate floor. The lower ground floor was used as stables, accommodation for grooms and as stores. The ground floor housed the public rooms, the first floor housed the guest rooms and, it is presumed, the accommodation in the roof space was the residence of the landlord and landlady. The Royal Oak would have therefore functioned as an inn in its formative years; serving commercial travellers, market traders and the new tourist industry that began to flourish in the town in the late 19th century.

There are two types of inns commonly identified - the 'block' or 'gatehouse' design and the courtyard design. The block inn is constructed with the largest elevation fronting on to the main road containing the public rooms to the ground floor and the guest rooms to the upper floors. The main elevation is served by a gateway, large enough for horse and carriage, which allows for access to the rear of the building where ancillary buildings, including stables, are sited. The courtyard design provides similar provision but set around a central courtyard. There are a number of examples of the block design inns within Skipton town centre, most notably The Black Horse and The Red Lion.

The Royal Oak does not conform to either of the two commonly identified inn designs, for two reasons. The primary reason is that the ancillary rooms and stables are housed in the lower ground floor. The secondary reason is that the building has two main elevations. For these two reasons the Royal Oak is unique in Skipton and will represent a construction and design that is not prevalent

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throughout the rest of the county. Further, due to the stables being constructed below the habitable floors, the building also takes on a slightly elevated position above road level and is also set back from the road side. This again makes it unique amongst pubs and inns in the town centre, all of which are accessed at road level and the majority of which are sited directly on to the pavement.

2.4 – Heritage Asset Designations

The listed description of the building is as below:

'List Entry Number: 1157532

Date first listed: 02-Mar-1978

Statutory Address: ROYAL OAK PUBLIC HOUSE, 2, WATER STREET

Early C19. Ashlar, 2 storeys, attic and basement. Gabled front on Raikes Road has centre door (approached by steps bridging an area) with round head and engaged Tuscan columns supporting an entablature; 2 sash windows on ground floor and 3 on upper floor, and a round-headed window in the gable. The Water Street front has 3 windows on ground floor, and door to the left of the centre window, again approached by steps over an area; entablature over the door is supported by pilasters. Stone rubble stable and coach-house adjoin on Raikes Road front.

Listing NGR: SD9892251927'

2.5 - Photographic Survey

Here follows a selection of photographs that best show the pertinent features of the building.

Ackroyd's (formerly The Royal Oak), Skipton



Figure 6: Elevation facing on to Water Street showing the grid formation of the openings typical of the Georgian period. Note the 2no chimney stacks and 4no roof lights.



Figure 7: Gable end elevation facing on to Raikes Road, showing the grid formation of the openings typical of the Georgian period and the, presumed, original sash windows. Note the building set back and up from the roadside

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Figure 8: Access to the stables from Raikes Road



Figure 9: Archway for access to stables



Figure 10: Building set back and up from roadside to enable horse and carriage entrance from Water Street. Access to the first floor is via stone steps and stone walkway. Note chamfered stone detailing at base of elevation by the archway



Figure 10: rear elevation showing 2no partially blocked up windows and new fire escape. Note the irregular pattern of the door and window opening in contrast to the road facing elevations.

Assessment of Significance

3.1 – Introduction

The following assessment adheres to the guidance published by English Heritage (2008), and Chapter 16 paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2018) as per below:

'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.'

The assessment will identify the heritage values and significance of the building, both as an individual building and within its setting, and will then evaluate these values within a statement of significance. This report will enable those who undertake and/or oversee building work to preserve and enhance the historic significance of the building.

3.2 – Heritage Values

As provided for in Historic England (2008) the heritage values are categorised under four headings: evidential value, historic value, communal value and aesthetic value. The following will evaluate the heritage significance of the building under these four categories.

3.2.1 – Evidential Value

Historic England (2008) provides that evidential value is 'the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity'.

The primary evidential value to the exterior of Ackroyd's is the location of the stables under the building. As noted previously this is not a common or noted layout for a traditional British inn, and is unique within the town.

Of secondary evidential value is the traditional Georgian construction of the building. The absence of major or substantial alteration gives strong evidential value of the building as it was when first constructed, including details such as the timber frame sash windows and the iron railings. The iron railings are of particular importance. Iron railings across the country were removed from their buildings as part of the war effort and, due to cost, were rarely replaced.

Internally, the visible roof timbers within the accommodation in the roof space are of primary evidential value showing clear evidence of construction techniques of the Georgian era. Of particular importance in this regard is the queen post truss to the bedroom over looking Raikes Road.

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Of secondary evidential importance is the still evident original plan form of the building. Though alterations have been made to the ground floor, a sense of the original layout can still be gained. This sense of original layout is even stronger to the lower ground floor, first floor and roof space where little alteration has taken place to the structural walls.

3.2.2 – Historical Value

Historic England (2008) provides that historical value is 'the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present – it tends to be illustrative or associative'.

The historical value of the building is of an illustrative nature. Due to Ackroyd's continued use as public house with hotel rooms above, the building retains a similar nature to its use throughout its lifetime. As noted previously, the inn was used by commercial travellers, market traders and the new tourist industry, and this is still the case today. The roads on which the building sits are still the major thoroughfares into the town from the north and west, and Skipton is still a town that is centred on its High Street market and tourist industry. The building's location within the town's '*historic core*' and its close proximity to the market, major tourist attractions and Grade I listed buildings serve to underscore its historical value.

3.2.3 – Aesthetic Value

Historic England (2008) provides that aesthetic value is 'the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place'.

The aesthetic value of the building is predominantly associated with the two elevations facing the roadway. Set back and up from the road, and of greater height than its surrounding buildings, the building is the most imposing building in its immediate vicinity and this is reinforced by its location as the only building sited directly on the junction.

The siting of the stables and ancillary rooms below the building is of intellectual interest due to the contrast to the common configuration of inns, as detailed previously. This is further enhanced by the cobbled access route past the front of the adjoining terraced houses.

Internally, the property is of limited aesthetic value due to the changes and modernisations that have been made. However, there are notable exceptions such as the stain glass windows to the bar area, the tiled floors to the entrance lobbies, the half-turn, winder staircase and the archways that create the openings in the structural walls that demarcate the bays of the building.

3.2.4 – Communal Value

Historic England (2008) provides that communal value is 'the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory'.

The building is of notable communal heritage value having served as a public building since its construction. This is further enhanced by its siting on the junction of the two major thoroughfares in to town from the north and west, making the building a notable landmark for those living and visiting the town.

3.3 – Statement of Significance

Having undertaken a detailed study of the heritage values of the building and its place in its setting, it is now possible to give consideration to the conservation priorities in the event of the proposed building works or changes to the building and/or its setting.

Ackroyd's is a relatively well conserved example of Georgian architecture, retaining strong evidential value of the architectural style of the period, particular the elevations that over look the roadside. There have been no extensions or major alterations to the exterior of the building and important details such as the timber sash windows, iron railings and stone slate roof covering remain. However, the primary evidential value of the building is the siting of the stables in the undercroft.

Internally, more intrusive alterations have been undertaken but the each floor is still used for its original purpose and the original plan form can still be derived, even to the now open plan ground floor bar area, thus retaining its communal, evidential, historical and communal. Significantly, important details such as the visible roof timbers, stained glass and tiled floors to the lobby have been retained.

In summary, to conserve the significance of the building as a heritage asset the following principles should be followed:

- The conservation of the evidence pointing to the location of the stables should be a priority. Of particular note are the cobbled access routes to the archway, the archway itself, the size and arrangement of the openings to the undercroft, and the prominent stones stairs and walkways that serve to highlight the access routes.
- Conserve the two main elevations and roof in their current form. Of particular note are the position and sizes of the openings, the timber sash windows, iron railings and the stone slate roof cover.
- Conserve the plan form of the inside of the building as well as the original detailings noted previously.
- Preserve the use of the building as a public house with letting rooms above.
- Retain the building's dominance of its immediate vicinity.

ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSALS

4.1 – General Principles

Guidance on assessing proposed changes to heritage assets is given in chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The NPPF requires that an applicant should describe the significance of the heritage asset including any contribution to their setting and section 3 of this appraisal has fulfilled this requirement. In this section, section 4, follows an objective view of the proposals to inform to what extent conservation of the significance has been secured or compromised.

4.2 – Summary of the Proposals

The proposals comprise the following:

- Refurbishment of sections of the lower ground floor to provide 1no accommodation unit and 1no commercial unit.
- Alterations to a 3no doors facilitate the above

Drawings 03, 06 and 10 within the application show both the existing and proposed floor plans and relevant openings to the building's elevations. The works impact on parts of both the interior of the lower ground floor and the exterior elevations fronting on to the main roads, and are intended to enhance and diversify the commercial viability of the business and improve the economic sustainability of the site.

4.3 – Analysis of the Proposals: National Planning Policy Framework

As noted above, section 16 of the NPPF (2019) identifies the following three key issues by which applications should be determined:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability; and
- The desirability of the new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

4.3.1 - The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation

The heritage significance of the building is predominantly unaffected by the proposals. The principles, as set out in the Statement of Significance, would be adhered to by the alterations proposed. The alterations are predominantly internal and will retain the sense of the plan form of the affected area. However, retention of the original beams and retaining them on show along with

partial retention of timbers delineating the separate stalls should be incorporated within the scheme. The beams to the 'function room' are not original and do not contribute to the heritage significance of the building. The flag stone floor to the 'function room' is believed to be an original feature and should be retained. The internal face of the stone walls are of poor quality and their retention would not serve to help conserve the significance of the building as a heritage asset. Externally, the alterations are solely aesthetic rather than structural and therefore do not affect the significance of the architectural details noted in the Statement of Significance. However, design changes should be made to better reflect the original use, as noted previously, of the lower ground floor. As provided for in the Statement of Significance, conserving the evidential value of the location of the stables should be a priority. The timber stable door to the north elevation is in a poor condition and it is believed that little of the original timber has survived. The replacement door should be of timber and better retain the appearance of a stable door whilst allowing for the natural light requirements of the bedroom. The timber door to the east elevation is believed to be original and should be retained, if practicable. The replacement doors to the proposed living space should be timber and better reflect the original use of the opening whilst allowing for the natural light requirements of the living space. As with all schemes there are elements of compromise but subject to satisfaction of the points above the impact on the heritage value of the building is negligible.

4.3.2 - The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability

As explained previously, the building represents a significant and prominent feature in the Skipton Central Conservation Area (CAC1) and plays an important role in the story of Skipton as a town. The proposed works would bring the affected parts of the lower ground floor back in to use whilst providing business opportunities within the community and helping to improve the economic sustainability of the building.

4.3.3 - The desirability of the new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

Subject to the minor alterations noted in 4.3.1, the proposals seek to further secure the active use of the building as a whole in a manner in keeping with the current positive contribution to the Skipton Central Conservation Area (CAC1) and in keeping with the building's listed status, whilst further enhancing the communal value of the building.

4.3.4 - NPPF Policy

Policy 193 of the NPPF states:

'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of the designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the

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asset the greater the weight should be). This irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'

In this instance, and as demonstrated through the appraisal of heritage values and critical assessment of the proposed scheme, the works, subject to alterations noted previously, do not impart harm upon the significance of the building and the primary heritage values are conserved.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

As shown throughout, the proposed works, subject to the minor alterations proposed in section 4, acknowledge the heritage significance of the building and the importance of the building within the town and the Skipton Central Conservation Area (CAC1) as well as the listed status of the building. Further, the proposed alterations to the building will enhance the sustainability and economic viability of the building as well as the local community. In essence, and subject to the alterations noted, the proposals satisfy local and national heritage planning policies and the requirements of the NPPF (2019), notably chapter 16. Listed building consent is therefore wholly supportable.