

Application Number:	21/00786/LBC
Proposal (& explanation if needed)	Part removal of right hand staircase outer wall and integration to a levelled access (Listed Building Consent)
Location	Hughes Corporation 31 Square Road Halifax Calderdale HX1 1QG
Representations & summary of issues raised (also identify any which are ward councillor/MP comments)	
Parish Comments: N/A	
The development is not located within a parished area.	
Relevant consultee comments:	<p>Historic England Historic England has provided pre-application advice on these proposals due to the potential impact on the grade II listed building, the setting of the adjacent listed buildings and the character of the conservation area. We welcome the revised proposals for this area, which retain the former Hughes Corporation building and will enhance the appearance and function of the surrounding public realm. The proposals that form the current application have been considered to have a minimal impact on the listed building, both physically and visually. We therefore support the proposals in the context of the wider scheme and facilitating a new use for the listed building.</p> <p>Recommendation Historic England supports the application on heritage grounds.</p>
Relevant History 21/00217/FUL- Proposed development of A629 Phase 2 Halifax Town Centre Scheme	
Replacement Unitary Development Plan	BE14 Alteration and Extension of Listed Building BE18 Development within Conservation Area
National Planning Policy Framework	16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
RCUDP Designation	Halifax Town Centre Conservation Area

Principle of Development Acceptable

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that in exercising functions with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Decision makers must give importance and weight to the desirability of avoiding any harm to designated heritage assets, to give effect to the LPA's statutory duties under sections 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The finding of harm to a heritage asset gives rise to a strong presumption against planning permission being granted.

The requirements of Sections 72 are set out legislation and as such they are legal duties rather than policy requirements that the Council can choose to attach limited weight to. This is reflected in paragraph 199 of the NPPF, which states:

“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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”

Also, in considering the impact of development on a heritage asset regard must be had to the significance of that heritage asset, in accordance with paragraph 195 of the NPPF:

“Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.”

The building is a pair of wool warehouses dated 1864 listed Grade II as a good example of an 1860s commercial warehouse, which is highly decorative and quite unusual for Halifax; * designed by John Hogg, architect of several listed buildings; * with a good degree of survival including most of the original external decorative detailing, the cast-iron structural elements and much of the spine wall. Historic interest: * for its association with John Crossley as owner and occupier, and a prominent industrialist and philanthropist. Group value: * for its strong visual and functional relationship with nearby buildings, including Square Chapel (Grade II*, listed as Congregational Sunday School, the Steeple of Square Congregational Church (Grade II*), the Piece Hall (Grade I,), India Buildings (Grade II, listed as 37 to 41 Church Street,) and numbers 1 to 5 Deal Street (Grade II,)

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In addition, paragraph 197 of the NPPF states that:-

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness”

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF states:

“Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

(a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

(b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional”*

In addition, paragraph 202 of the NPPF states:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate,

securing its optimum viable use.”

Policy BE18 states,

The character or appearance of Conservation Areas, defined on the Proposals Map, will be preserved or enhanced. New development and proposals involving the alteration or extension of a building in or within the setting of a Conservation Area will only be permitted if all the following criteria are met:-

- i. **the form, design, scale, methods of construction and materials respect the characteristics of the buildings in the area, the townscape and landscape setting;**
- ii. **the siting of proposals respects existing open spaces, nature conservation, trees and townscape/roofscape features;**
- iii. **it does not result in the loss of any open space which makes an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area or features of historic value such as boundary walls and street furniture; and**
- iv. **important views within, into and out of the area are preserved or enhanced.**

The Halifax Town Centre Conservation Area covers the original medieval core and a wide area of surrounding historic buildings and spaces. The boundary of the conservation area has been drawn to include the principal civic and commercial buildings of the town centre and other buildings adjoining it which reflects its historic development

The proposals are:

The existing stone steps, added to the building in the 1970s or 1980s, will be retained with the exception of the parapet and coping on the west side which will be removed. The parapet is not tied into the north elevation of the building but butts up against it. The parapet and coping will be removed using hand tools and any remaining mortar will be cleaned from the elevation; care will be taken to protect historic fabric throughout the process.

The flat surface at the top of the steps will be extended westwards to join Square Road. This will require earthen infill next to the building to raise and grade the ground level. The new ground level will require two of the windows to the semi-basement level to be blocked up. This will be carried out using blockwork to the lower portions (below the new ground level) and cut stone to the upper portions that will be exposed. The lintels and sills of the windows will be retained, and the blocking will be recessed so that the window reveal can still be read. A buried retaining wall will also be constructed to ensure that the earthen infill does not put additional load onto the listed building. Drainage will be provided via a French drain constructed between the new ramp and the building. This will be connected by carrier drain into the existing wider draining system. This carrier drain will also pick up the existing rainwater downpipe to the west of the entrance. These features are to be installed to ensure that the new ramp does not add to the existing damp issues within the listed building. Finally, tactile paving will be installed at the top

and bottom of the steps for accessibility and individual steps will be extended westward to tie into the newly landscaped area of the Eastern Gateway which will fall to the north and west.

The Conservation Officer has raised no heritage concerns.

The proposed works will not alter the identified heritage significance of the building. The steps to the northern elevation of the building will be retained, with the exception of the western parapet and coping. The features of the existing basement windows will be articulated in the revised scheme and the lintels and sills will be retained such that the scheme can be reversed at a later date, if required. The scheme will provide step-free access to the building, while tying the existing steps into the new landscaping. This step-free access is intended to be a beneficial feature to assist in securing a sustainable re-use of the building in the future. The works form part of a wider landscaping design scheme that will improve the amenity value of the building's setting. And are considered to provide wider public benefits in association with the Eastern Gateway development.

No harm to the significance of the building will occur as a result of the development and the proposal is considered acceptable in relation to Section 16 of NPPF.

Recommendation:	Grant LBC
Case Officer:	Anita Seymour
Date of report:	15.10.2021

Agree Grant LBC. LC 15/10/2021