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## Ref 2021/1045 Full Planning & 2021/1048 Listed Building Consent Applications

Applicant: Luke Robson (The Civic)

Description: Conversion of vacant building spaces into various uses on all 4 floors including café bar, multipurpose rooms including flexible events space, rehearsal and green rooms, facilities including changing rooms, kitchen, toilets and plant, new office accommodation including booking office, 7no residential apartments and associated external alterations and repairs including new shop fronts on Eldon Street

Site Address: The Civic, Hanson Street, Barnsley, S70 2HZ

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### Site Description and Background

The Grade II listed Barnsley Civic Hall is located within the Regent Street / Church Street / Market Hill Conservation Area. The Civic Hall is one of a number of Barnsley's most prominent buildings located in this area including the Town Hall and St Marys Church. The Civic opened in 1878 and was partly funded by public subscription and partly funded by Henry Harvey, a local industrialist and Quaker who believed in education and social reform. Originally, it was known as the Barnsley Mechanic and Institute Public Hall. The building was grand and the spaces within voluminous. From the beginning the intention was to provide ordinary people with the means to have access to and engage with science, culture, and the arts. The top floor of the Eldon Street block once housed an art school with offices, a reading room, library, and lecture theatres below with shops to the GF frontage. To the rear, was the main auditorium which was a vast and impressive civic space. The building was subsequently gifted to the people of Barnsley and became the Harvey institute. The building became a theatre in the 1960's but remained at the heart of community life in Barnsley. However, a period of decline culminated in 1998 when the building was closed to the public. In 2009 The Civic re-opened following extensive and far-reaching alterations to accommodate the Assembly Room auditorium and art gallery spaces we see today. Unfortunately, these changes represent only part of the total package of works that were planned with three floors within the building remaining unfinished and the Eldon Street frontage looking tired and in need of conservation work. The recession halted the full development of the Civic, the result being that the historic frontage facing Eldon Street is rarely used barring a small entrance for (now vacant) Council offices. The heritage assessment of the building has found its external condition in its areas of historic interest to be considered 'fair' but there are isolated areas which are deteriorating towards poor condition.



## **Proposed Development**

The proposed development seeks to revitalise the Civic and bring all of its internal space fully back into use. The main parts of the proposal involve the following:

### *Eldon Street Facade:*

- Change of use to incorporate a box office and café/bar within the ground floor shopfronts facing onto Eldon St. This will include new shopfronts, proposed between the cast-iron pilasters (to be retained), which will be timber framed with double glazed units. Windows will be slightly recessed behind the existing pilasters and stonework and reflect the proportions of the building. Timber mullions and glazing bars will be used to break up the window into smaller compartments. New stall risers will be provided as a visual and structural base for the shopfront with a moulded projecting cill. The panelled timber riser will be sat on the existing plinth and finished with a sacrificial skirting detail.
- The existing security shutters will be removed and a new timber fascia is to be installed.
- The central entrance canopy will also be removed to reveal hidden details across the main entrance which will also be brought back into use. A separate residential entrance will also be created on Eldon Street with a dedicated internal lift and staircase which requires access off Eldon Street.
- The existing pigeon nettings and fixings shall also be removed to lighten the building and will be replaced with 4no transmitters to deter birds from landing on the Eldon St Façade.
- General repairs and cleaning to the ashlar stonework

### *Mandela Gardens Façade:*

- Installation of windows on the Mandela Gardens elevation at the ground floor to infill the bays below the balcony at the second floor with removal of the external staircase which serves it.

### *Ground Floor & First Floor Internal Alterations:*

- Cleaning and minor repairs to historic tiles on the (re-introduced) main entrance and on the south side of the grand staircase alongside reinstatement of 'Minton's' flooring to include encaustic tiles and patterning for the public access into the Civic's facilities.
- As previously mentioned, the ground floor of the Eldon St façade will involve a change of use to create a café/bar and box office that can be accessed immediately from entry via the main Eldon Street entrance on either side of the main hallway. The ground floor will also have facilities to provide separate access arrangements in the form of lifts and staircases to the residential accommodation and offices above.
- Creation of an indicative 143 seat capacity Studio Theatre across both the Ground Floor and First Floor alongside a studio control room (first floor) to manage event lighting and sound. The studio theatre will be able to be accessed from both the Eldon St and Mandela Garden's entrances and internally via a lift from within the north western part of the building.
- The ground floor will also include the creation of an indicative 77 seat capacity Flexible Events Space adjacent to 2no. dressing rooms and separate male, female and disabled access toilet facilities.
- The first floor will be subject to the creation of a 136sqm rehearsal space, a green room and accessible toilet facilities as well as a 97sqm office space with a separate conference room and kitchen facility and a two bedroom apartment inclusive of an

open living space, double bedroom, en-suite single bedroom, main bathroom, and store (Apartment 01-01 = 69sqm).

#### *Second Floor Internal Alterations:*

- Creation of a combined 629sqm gallery at the second floor with 46sqm classroom, 15sqm preparation room and a large range of toilet facilities.
- 3no. residential units are to be created on the second floor, composed of a 1no. two bedroom apartment and 2no. one bedroom apartments. The two bedroom apartment consists of two double bedrooms one of which is en-suite, a lounge/diner area with a separate kitchen, a main bathroom and a larger entrance hall and store (Apartment 02-03 = 100sqm). Apartment 02-02 shall have a open plan living space with lounge, dining and kitchen facilities alongside 2no. storage spaces, a large double bedroom and a main bathroom (68sqm). Apartment 02-01 consists of the same number and style of rooms as 02-02 but is slightly smaller at 56sqm in internal space.

#### *Third Floor Internal Alterations*

- New displacement units with coverings are to be installed in the Assembly Room (the current main room of the venue) to replace the existing radiators and thereby improve heating, cooling and ventilation.
- Relocation of ornate ceiling with a scaled proportion installed in the Assembly Hall entrance lobby.
- 3no. residential units are to be created on the second floor, with all three being one bedroom apartments. Apartment 03-01 is to be approximately 62sqm in size, 03-02 is to be 48sqm in size and 03-03 is to be 60sqm in size. All three apartments will share a 10sqm external store. 03-01 is composed of a kitchen/diner, lounge, en-suite double bedroom, W.C, entrance hall and two store cupboards. Apartment 03-02 shall have an open living space, en-suite double bedroom and a store cupboard while Apartment 03-03 shall have an entrance hall, en-suite double bedroom, open living space, store cupboard and W.C.

### **History**

2011/0311 – Display of blue plaque to the Civic building (Listed Building Consent) – Approve with Conditions

2010/0132 – Installation of new shopfront and signage (Listed Building Consent) – Approve with Conditions

2006/1407 – Retrospective Application for Removal of Ornate Ceiling to the Lower Library (Listed Building Consent) – Abandoned

B/04/0733/BA & (0734/BA/LB) – Refurbishment, alteration and extension to provide offices, retail, design centre, assembly room, and case and erection of new pavilion (Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent) – Approved with Conditions

### **Policy Context**

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

The new Local Plan was adopted at the full Council meeting held 3rd January 2019 after it was found to be sound by the appointed Planning Inspector following the examination process. This means that it now takes on full weight for decision making process in planning law terms as the development plan for the Borough, superseding the remaining saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted in the year 2000) and the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011). The Council has also adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

Local Plan Allocation – The Lanes Town Centre District, Primary Shopping Area & Frontage (Eldon Street), Conservation Area (Regent St/Church St/Market Hill)

Relevant Local Plan Policies are:-

Policy TC1 - Town Centres

Policy TC2 – Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages

Policy BTC1 – The daytime and evening economies

Policy BTC3 – Public Spaces

Policy BTC5 – Landmark Buildings (Including the Civic)

Policy BTC20 – The Lanes District

Policy HE1 – The Historic Environment

Policy HE3 – Developments affecting Historic Buildings

Policy GD 1 – General Development

Policy T3 – New Development and Sustainable Transport

Policy T4 – New Development and Transport Safety

Policy D1 – High Quality Design and Place Making

Policy Poll1 – Pollution Control and Protection

#### BTC20 Policy Wording and Supporting Text:

All new development within the Lanes District must have an active frontage at ground floor level.

The following uses will normally be allowed at ground floor level:

- Shops.
- Financial and professional services (for example, estate agents, employment agencies and advice bureaus).
- Food and drink for example restaurants, cafés and bars.
- Non residential institutions including museums, art galleries and exhibition space.

New development must conserve or enhance the specialist nature of this area by being of a size, scale, quality and design appropriate to the character of the area. Mandela Gardens must be maintained as public open space and no development that would harm its function and quality will be allowed.

#### NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework

indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Guidance

- Design of Housing Development SPD
- Parking SPD

### Other Material Considerations

- South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide

### **Consultations**

*BMBC Drainage & Yorkshire Water* – No observations or objections

*Highways DC* – No objections subject to conditions.

*Conservation Officer*: No objections subject to conditions with detailed comments set out in the analysis below.

*Historic England*: No objections subject to satisfactory justification of the subdivision of the third floor of the Civic building to enable the creation of three of the residential units.

*Pollution Control* – No objections subject to conditions adhering the development to the recommendations made within the supporting noise assessment and requiring submission of a pre-occupation noise assessment to establish compliance with the original noise survey.

*Superfast South Yorkshire*: No objections subject to condition requiring installation of gigabit capable broadband into the building.

*SY Police ALO* – No objections, the recommendations provided will be attached as an informative and have been sent to the project architect.

*Enterprising Barnsley* – Support the proposal and have provided market based evidence relative to office viability in Barnsley.

*Public Rights of Way* – No objections

### **Representations**

The application was advertised by neighbour notification, by site notice and press notice (Site Notice Consultation Deadline was the 9<sup>th</sup> September and the Press Notice Consultation Deadline was the 3<sup>rd</sup> September). No representations have been received.

### **Assessment**

#### Principle of development and heritage

This proposal has undergone extensive and lengthy pre-application scrutiny with the applicant, BMBC Planning Officers, the Heritage Action Zone team members and Historic England. The works are in part (the Eldon Street frontage conversions)

funded under the Eldon Street Heritage Action Zone. This is the largest element of the grant scheme. Broadly speaking, the proposal can be broken down into two elements which correspond to the two differently orientated parts of the building. The main historic frontage (that fronts Eldon Street) and the spaces immediately behind this constitute one distinct part of the building. To the rear of this, the attached larger Civic spaces that terminate on Hanson Street, but face Mandela Gardens are the other. The Civic is listed at grade II and forms an extremely important landmark on Eldon Street which forms the southern edge of the Regent Street – Church Street – Market Hill Conservation Area. The façade that faces across onto the new Glassworks retail development is also a critical interface between the historic core of the town and the new market and retail area.

The Civic opened in 1878 and was partly funded by public subscription and partly funded by Henry Harvey, a local industrialist and Quaker who believed in education and social reform. Originally, it was known as the Barnsley Mechanic and Institute Public Hall. The building was grand and the spaces within voluminous. From the beginning the intention was to provide ordinary people with the means to have access to and engage with science, culture, and the arts. The top floor of the Eldon Street block once housed an art school with offices, a reading room, library, and lecture theatres below with shops to the GF frontage. To the rear, was the main auditorium which was a vast and impressive civic space. The building was subsequently gifted to the people of Barnsley and became the Harvey institute. The building became a theatre in the 1960's but remained at the heart of community life in Barnsley. However, a period of decline culminated in 1998 when the building was closed to the public. In 2009 The Civic re-opened following extensive and far-reaching alterations to accommodate the Assembly Room auditorium and art gallery spaces we see today. Unfortunately, these changes represent only part of the total package of works that were planned with three floors within the building remaining unfinished and the Eldon Street frontage looking tired and in need of conservation work.

This new proposal seeks to resolve these unfinished spaces and bring the building back into full beneficial use. At an early stage the HAZ Team and BMBC Conservation Officer conceded that many of the spaces within both elements of the building had already been compromised due to earlier interventions. However, this means that original spaces or features that remain with any degree of originality require very sensitive handling to conserve the retained values and significance of the building. As a result, much discussion took place over the best use of the spaces behind the Eldon Street frontage as well as the rest of the building. Discussions focussed on the most effective way to retain the legibility of historic features and rooms and the sympathy of changes to the Eldon Street façade. This has resulted in some late changes to the scheme including moving the bin store and access from the front of the building to the side, changes to the design of the residents' access for the new flats, and agreement over the conservation works to the building envelope. Regrettably, it is noted that the flats at the third floor remain (as opposed to the option of using this space as open plan office) which could have retained better legibility of the original ironwork and roof trusses.

The applicant's market research and correspondence dated 13.09.2021 alongside the consultee response from Enterprising Barnsley (13.09.2021) relating to the current market for office space in Barnsley provide clear justification in respect of the necessity of harm to the trusses in the third floor through creation of residential units, as opposed to open plan (office) space, as highlighted by Historic England in their citation of NPPF para 200. The third floor stands at 220sqm in area which is nearly 2400 sq ft. This is nearly two and half times the 'small' spaces in demand in

Barnsley. Combined with the impending saturation of the market in the town centre through BMBC's vacation of Gateway Plaza, the introduction of an office scheme at the third floor of the Civic would only be viable through the introduction of sub-divided office units, similar to those at the Digital Media Centre. Sub-division for office space would result in the same effect as that of the residential proposal as its likely that an open plan office space encompassing the entire 2400sq ft of the third floor would take a significant amount of time to fill and would likely result in a loss of income for the Civic. On the basis that open plan office space is evidentially unviable in respect of current market demand and potential future supply, the sub-division of the third floor for the purpose of creating residential units is considered to comply with the justification of harm required by NPPF200.

A subsequent response from Historic England (14/09/2021) highlights the potential for a lower intensity of sub-division of the 3no. 1 bedroom flats with a preference for 2no. two bedroom units instead. The LPA consider that this stance in relation to a lower level of harm being achieved in respect of the roof trusses could lead to a situation where these structural elements become less exposed and open than the current layout given the extra compartmentalisation required for 4no. bedrooms instead of the current 3no. bedrooms. To extrapolate this more, the walls which sub-divide the apartments run parallel and in line with the trusses and do not intercede with their lateral direction. It is notable within the existing third floor plans that the installation of bedrooms and bathrooms often creates internal walls that run perpendicular through the trusses. The increased number of bedrooms (which could even exceed 4no. bedrooms) would undoubtedly create more perpendicular walls that would intersect the trusses thereby increasing the harm to the openness of these structural elements above the level of the existing scheme layout.

Irrespective of the above, the LPA are aware of Historic England's designation as a statutory consultee and the requirement of the LPA to take their advice seriously and refer it to the applicant. In doing so, the LPA have received a further response from the applicant (on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021) relating to the business case, the rental yield of the housing mix and the overall financial viability of the Civic as a charitable venue for the arts. Furthermore, Historic England, in a number of their responses, have signalled that the responsibility for deciding whether clear justification for the harm to the heritage significance at the third floor of the Civic rests with the LPA. The LPA is therefore cognisant of the relevance of NPPF paragraph 202 relating to less than substantial harm versus the public benefit. The premises, including the third floor, are currently let by Barnsley MBC at a rate which provides a significant proportion of income to the Trust. The residential scheme has come forward as a result of the Civic's own business case informed by market research with relevant third parties including local Estate Agents and relevant officer's within the Council. The research has evidenced that offices are not a viable use of space within the building in generating income, though it is acknowledged that the new residential space will only recoup 40% of the income lost through the end of the Council's tenancy. The letter received on the 17<sup>th</sup> September responds directly to Historic England's request for decreased subdivision at the third floor of the building with the following comment:

*Through the pre planning process we reduced the proposed number of apartments from eight to seven in response to the advice from officers. We expect seven apartments to give an annual yield of £65,000 less than 40% of the current income generated by the Barnsley MBC lease (£175,000). The remainder of the income lost will be retrieved via the ground floor offer and increased earned income across the venue which is already under tremendous pressure. The loss of an additional apartment will reduce our*

*potential income by a further £6,000 per year. Although we acknowledge that larger dwellings are preferable to one-bedroom apartments for desirability and revenue per apartment, the income will not cover the loss of a further apartment.*

*According to the research conducted by our previous CEO in January 2020 we expect there to be very little difference between the monthly rental of a 1- or 2-bedroom apartment (document sent under separate cover). The difference between each size of apartment is possibly only £50 per month. To make up for the loss of an apartment the larger units will need to cost closer to £250 extra each month, and we know we are unlikely to achieve this level of revenue in Barnsley at present. We strongly believe there is a business case for multiple smaller apartments rather than a few large ones.*

Though the above is not a business case per se, the LPA consider it a logical statement reflecting the financial reality of the alteration to the sub-division at the third floor and how it would impact the viability of the trust into the future. In this vein, the LPA have to form a planning judgement in respect of the balance to be struck between the intensity of sub-division of the third floor and its level of heritage harm to the listed heritage asset balanced against the viability of the scheme and the other benefits the wholesale approval of the development would bring (i.e. other heritage improvements to the façade and other internal features, such as the encaustic tiles). The apartments are proposed in a town centre location where high densities of units are to be expected and the proposal does bring forward 2no. two bedroom units across the other upper floors of the building. There is, therefore, a housing mix for the scheme which complies with LP Policy H6 Housing Mix and Efficient Use of Land. Another positive aspect of the development is the introduction of residential accommodation in what is widely considered to be one of the most sustainable locations within the Borough given the proximity to the Transport Interchange and the other facilities and amenities present within the town centre. Admittedly, one bedroom units are not the most desirable forms of accommodation for the market and this is reflected in the Civic's market research.

The balance is therefore weighted against the scheme in respect of the heritage harm to the third floor through subdivision with units that are not optimal for the market contrasted against the positives of the scheme in that approval would enable renewal of the historic façade (including the shopfronts) and a number of critical internal features as well as provision of residential infrastructure key to meeting the Borough's housing needs in a highly sustainable location. Refusal of the application would result in the latter improvements not coming forward, though preservation of the openness of the trusses and other period features in the third floor would be maintained. Approval of the scheme with the current level of subdivision at the third floor for 3no. one bedroom apartments would harm the heritage of the building but would prevent the other heritage improvements coming forward. It is also unknown to what extent the reduction in the intensity of subdivision at the third floor would result in less harm to the historic structural elements and it is possible that more harm could be imposed through perpendicular wall layouts as previously cited. It should also be noted that Historic England have not cited 'substantial harm' through the intensity of subdivision and have simply cited that the harm incurred needs to be justified. Given the uncertainty in relation to the level of harm, and the other clear public benefits of the renewal to other period features in conjunction with the creation of a significant volume of new residential units in a sustainable location alongside the reintroduction of an active frontage that is otherwise vacant, the LPA consider that the development enables a net benefit to the public in accordance with NPPF 202. The use of the third floor is also considered optimum based upon the evidence provided in respect of

revenue return to the trust through the 3no. one bedroom units at the third floor, not 2no. two bedroom units. It is understood that the one bedroom apartments are not the most highly sought after unit type from a market perspective but this is not interpreted to be contrary to the optimum viable use requirement set out by NPPF 202.

Negotiations over the Mandela Gardens elevation have also resulted in a fundamental change to the design of that elevation. This now includes the retention of the existing balcony with new curtain walling below. The net result of this is positive, infilling areas subject to anti-social behaviour and providing increased internal floorspace at the ground floor.

Overall, the BMBC Conservation Officer and Historic England (barring the third floor sub-division) accept and support the proposed works that have resulted from extensive pre-application discussion. However, there are some critical details that still need resolving which are covered by condition. On this basis the proposal is determined to be in accordance with LP Policies HE1 and HE3 alongside NPPF Paragraphs 199, 200 and 202.

The Eldon St aspect of the Civic has been subject to offices across the first and second floors for a significant period of time and the reduced volume of office space on the first floor is acceptable relative to the surrounding residential units. The offices will also be accessed separately which is an important feature in maintaining acceptable levels of amenity for new residents.

In respect of the proposed café/bar and box office use on Eldon Street, as well as the introduction of intensified day time and night-time Sui Generis uses through the creation of the Studio Theatre, the Flexible Events Space and Rehearsal Area (as well as the supporting ancillary adaptations cited in the development description); all of these alterations are welcomed by the LPA and are considered to be in line with the policy wording set out within LP Policies TC1, TC2, BTC1, BTC3, BTC5 and BTC20. In respect of TC1, the new uses and adaptations will almost certainly aid the vitality and viability of the town centre through increased provision for an under-utilised landmark building while enabling, in accordance with TC2, the re-establishment of active frontages within a Primary Shopping Frontage and Area. As mentioned, the new event and leisure spaces will enable the introduction of a variety of daytime and evening uses that wholly accord with the intent of Policy BTC1. The installation of the windows facing onto Mandela Gardens will take up a minor amount of external space, however this is beneath the second floor balcony and wholly within the footprint of the building, the consequent impact on Mandela Gardens being minimal and likely beneficial given the anti-social behaviour improvements that are anticipated in accordance with BTC3 – Public Spaces and BTC20 – The Lanes. The setting of the building will also not be harmed through development of the above proposals and there are, therefore, no concerns in respect of LP Policy BTC5 – Landmark Buildings.

### Visual amenity

The scope of works will largely seek to maintain or improve the current aesthetic of the Civic and have been subject to close scrutiny by heritage and design experts. The new shopfronts will be to a heritage specification and will seek to emulate (barring the resident's entrance) the symmetry of the Eldon Street frontage.

The placement of the glazing beneath the second floor balcony will also improve the public realm adjacent to Mandela Gardens as it will remove opportunities for

unsanitary and illegal practices which detract from the visual quality of this greenspace.

The removal of the canopy above the Eldon St entrance is acceptable as a canopy was not a part of the original building design and it will reveal hidden features on the Civic's façade while removing unnecessary street furniture/clutter.

The removal of the pigeon/bird netting on Eldon Street is also welcomed and supported with further details of the transmitters and the responsibility for sustaining their use being required by condition.

The design is consequently found to be in accordance with the design principles and requirements set out in Local Plan Policy D1 – High Quality Design and Placemaking.

### Residential Amenity

All of the new residential units meet, and in most cases significantly exceed, the internal space standards set out within the South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide. The apartments have no shared outdoor or private outdoor amenity space, however they are immediately adjacent to the Mandela Gardens Greenspace as well as <100m from the new Glassworks Main Square where there is expected to be a significant number of outdoor spaces and leisure uses at the future occupants' disposal. On this basis the lack of outdoor space is believed to be overcome by the aforementioned factors as well as the lack of feasibility in providing balconies on a historic façade.

Windows serving the residential accommodation on the third floor are smaller than those below, but these units benefit from roof-lights to provide improved light levels internally and outlook from the third floor windows are likely to be better than those below as they will be capable of looking beyond the buildings located on the Southern side of Eldon Street. A new conservation specification rooflight is to be installed to serve the rear of unit 03-01 as this is the only unit without the benefit of an existing rooflight.

The separation distance between the habitable room windows on the Eldon St façade are approximately 16m from 2 Eldon Arcade and 25 Eldon Street opposite which exceeds the 12m minimum over a street for buildings of equivalent height set out within the SPD Design of Housing Development. Mutual levels of privacy should therefore be preserved.

Given the location of the residential units within a busy town centre location immediately adjacent to a main arterial route (Eldon St) alongside the potential for internal sound transfer from the variety of other uses within the Civic (Café/Bar & Events spaces), satisfactory noise levels are important to the viability of the scheme. A noise assessment conducted by Hepworth Acoustics has made recommendations in relation to the sound insulation measures to adequately control external noise ingress to the new apartments as well as outline recommendations with respect to sound insulation performance between the apartments and adjacent commercial spaces. BMBC Pollution Control colleagues have reviewed the noise survey and have recommended that the proposals made within the noise assessment should be conditioned to be adhered to as a part of an approval of planning permission alongside a post installation and pre-occupation noise assessment be conducted to review whether the measures recommended by Hepworth act as expected; the latter of which shall also be conditioned as a part of an approval of planning permission.

In light of the above, Officers' are satisfied that the proposal accords with the principles set out within LP Policies GD1 – General Development and Poll1 – Pollution Control and Protection with respect to residential amenity.

### Transport Matters & Highway safety

Highways Development Control colleagues have reviewed the scheme and have no objections to the proposal subject to the requirements for submission of a travel plan, baffling of lighting to prevent distraction to highway users as well as a construction method statement to minimise disruption to the safe operation of the highway network. The Case Officer has also attached a condition requiring identification of cycle storage within the building for the residential units and the office spaces.

No car parking is proposed with the scheme, however the Civic is less than 100m from the Transport Interchange with good connections to most of Barnsley and the wider South and West Yorkshire regions. The office users and residential occupants will also benefit from a plethora of facilities in the immediate local area which are within walking distance which will further minimise the need for a private motor vehicle.

Overall the development is considered to be acceptable in respect of sustainable transport and highway and is determined to be in accordance with Local Plan Policy T4 – New Development and Transport Safety.

### Conclusion

Overall the proposed development is an important scheme that seeks to build on the success of the adjacent Glassworks development through enablement and full utilisation of an underused cultural space within Barnsley Town Centre. The Civic has lacked an active frontage onto Eldon Street to the detriment of a significant area of public realm. The application seeks to address this through the provision of a modern mixed use development that conserves the historic heritage of the building while also opening it up to greater public viewing. The inclusion of residential accommodation and new events spaces will almost certainly help to revitalise the town centre and the LPA fully support scheme in its entirety. It is appreciated that some finer details in respect of historic conservation, particularly relating to the physical fabric of the building, need to be addressed and that some harm will be incurred to the internal fabric most notably on the third floor. However the public benefits of the scheme coming forward and bringing back into use a largely vacant (though let out) section of a landmark building far outweigh the harm identified by Historic England and the BMBC Conservation Officer. On the basis of the above, the application is assessed to be acceptable subject to the conditions listed in the recommendation and is recommended for approval accordingly.

### **Recommendation**

Grant of planning permission and listed building consent subject to conditions.