

'Sunset' neon artwork, Eldon Street alley, January 2022

Description of works and heritage impact

Works

The works are a large neon sign consisting of the words 'Sunset totters down Eldon Street trailing its wedding dress' in white and pink, and 6 multi-coloured LED lights that have been installed in an alleyway between Eldon Street and Mandela Gardens.

Location

The alley runs between Eldon Street and Mandela Gardens, with the entrance from Eldon Street being in-between 58 Eldon Street (Lesley Francis) and 60 Eldon Street (Globe Travel). The neon artwork has been installed on the side wall of the Parkway Cinema and the 6 coloured lights on the side wall of 60 Eldon Street.

Background context

The artwork has been installed as part of the Eldon Street High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ). It is a collaboration between local artist Patrick Murphy and poet laureate Simon Armitage. It is part of a high-profile residency that Simon is doing with the HSHAZ, which will culminate in a public performance weekend in September 2022.

The HSHAZ is a 4-year partnership between Barnsley Council and Historic England. The aims of the HSHAZ are to:

- Improve the physical condition of one of Barnsley's most important historic high streets and improve visitor flow and connectivity in the town.
- Create a new social and cultural hub around the historic entrance to the Civic and reconnect with local communities.
- Contribute to a sustainable model for future growth and development of the high street and wider town centre
- Involve local communities, stakeholders and young people in the programme.

The artwork is intended to be a temporary intervention to improve a disused historic space within the conservation area and encourage more public interaction, whilst at the same time discouraging anti-social behaviour. The words of the neon draw on the stories of Eldon Street and are intended to contribute towards developing a new sense of place for Eldon Street through creative intervention.

Heritage impact

The site is located within the Regent Street/Church Street/Market Hill conservation area. One of the neighbouring properties is grade 2 listed – the Barnsley Civic (formerly the Barnsley Mechanics Institute and Public Hall). The other neighbouring properties are all unlisted. Two of these (58 and 60 Eldon Street) are considered to have historic merit, and were both built in the second half of the 19th century. The Parkway Cinema was built in 1957. The side elevation is plain and is not considered to have any historic merit. The alley itself retains sections of stone flags and contributes to the historic character of the conservation area. However, it is currently in poor condition.

The wiring for the LED neon is internal and not visible externally. The wiring for the LED coloured lights is externally mounted, but is coloured black and follows the mortar joints (with minimal fixings into the mortar joints where required) to minimise the visual and physical impact of the installation to the historic fabric of the building. The coloured lights have been positioned to minimise light spill

into the windows of the neighbouring property. The colours have been set to create a wash of colour that picks out the historic fabric and features of the building, whilst also linking to the sunset theme and not being too intrusive. They are set to come on at 2pm and go off automatically at 12 midnight. The neon provides a significant amount of light to the yard at the rear of 58 and 60 Eldon Street.

Prior to the installation the alley (and particularly the yard area) was noted as a hotspot for antisocial behaviour. It was very dark at night, particularly at the rear of the Eldon Street properties. The artwork was designed to illuminate the alley, focus attention on the historic environment, encourage more positive use of the alley by the general public, and discourage the anti-social behaviour. Anecdotal evidence from the neighbouring businesses and town centre team suggests that it has so far been successful in doing this.

It is considered that the installation has had an overall positive effect on the conservation area and the setting of the grade 2 Listed Barnsley Civic.

Specification

Parkway Cinema (62 Eldon Street, external side wall)

LED Neon

Wired into the Cinema electrics (wiring hidden externally)

Power: 9 Watts/Metre

Power Factor: 0.97

Light Source: SMD2835

Number of LEDs: 120/m

Size: 8x16 mm

Material: Silicone

Dimmable: Yes

Diffuser: Frost

Certifications: CE & RoHS

Voltage: AC 220-240V

Beam Angle: 180°

Life Span: 80,000 Hours

IP Protection: IP65

Frequency: 50-60 Hz

Protection Class: II

Installation fully waterproof

Globe Travel (60 Eldon Street, external side wall)

6 external LED Lights

Wired into the Globe Travel circuit via a timer unit. This can be accessed and set for the lights to turn on and off at any time. Currently set for 2pm on time and midnight off time. The wiring located on the external brickwork is fully encased in black plastic tubing and has been wall mounted with fixings drilled into the mortar joints. These are fully reversible.

External case: Aluminium (painted black) with tempered glass

Watt: 50W per light

Colour: Dimmable 16 Million RGB Colors (2700K~6500K White light for)

Group control: Yes

Timing function: Yes

Memory function: Yes

Waterproof rating: IP66

Working Voltage: US - AC100-120V / UK & EU - AC220-240V

Working Temperature: -25~40°C

Antenna for wireless network enhancement, stable connection, working distance is up to 80-85ft.



Image 1: neon artwork ('sunset') in the daylight



Image 2: coloured lights in the daylight (c.2pm) showing alley between 58 and 60 Eldon Street

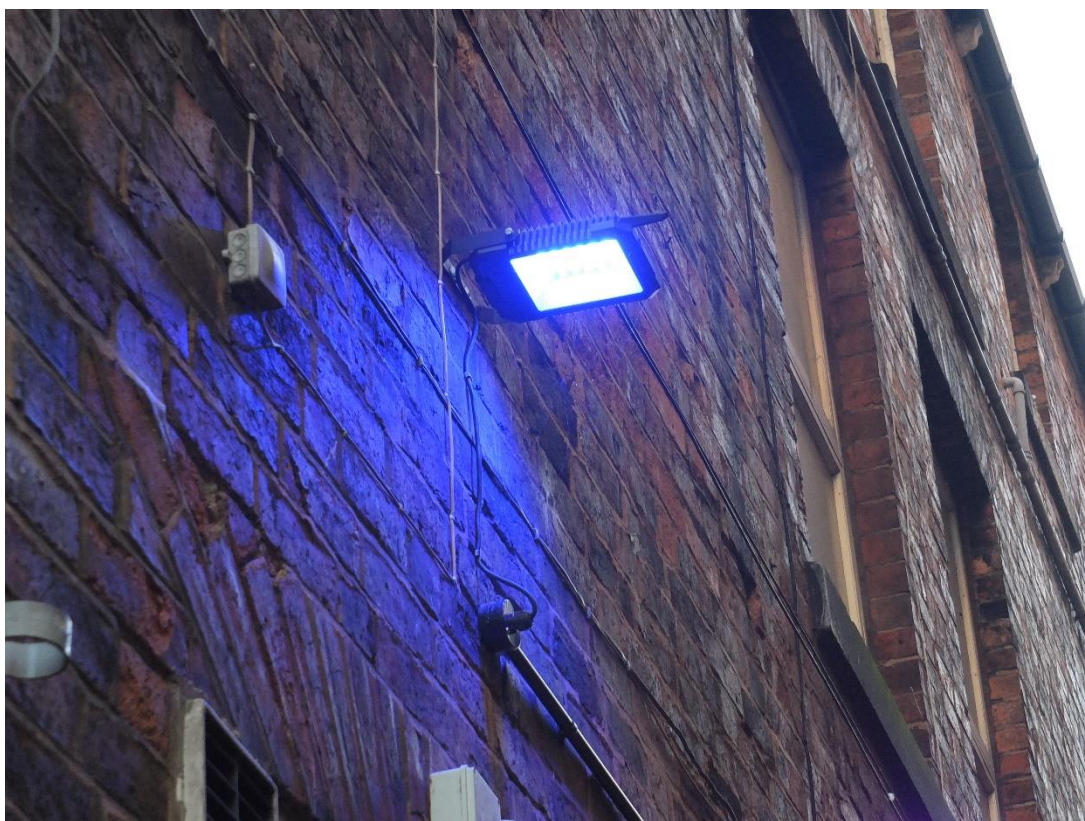


Image 3: detail of light fitting (external wall of 60 Eldon Street)

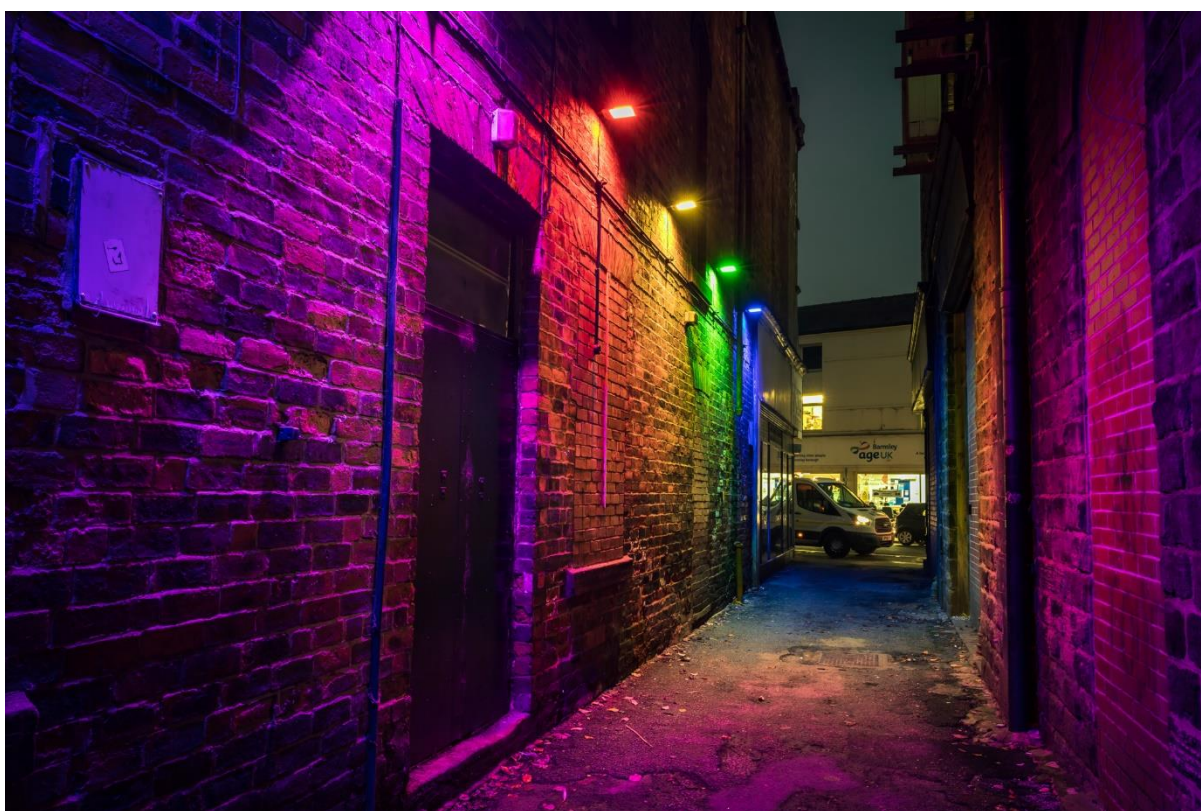


Image 4: coloured lights at night (external wall of 60 Eldon Street)



Image 5: Neon artwork at night (external wall of Parkway Cinema, 62 Eldon Street)