
2022/0688

Applicant: Mrs Claire Mellor

Internal alterations consisting of removal of grey breeze blocks from internal window recesses, reinstating of red heritage bricks and formation of timber space partition to separate the unit in two areas (Listed Building Consent)

Unit 22a, Elsecar Heritage Centre, Wath Road, Elsecar, Barnsley, S74 8HJ

Site Description

The application site relates to unit 22a which is the upper floor of Building 22 within the Elsecar Heritage Centre complex, which is currently vacant but is soon to be occupied by a bridal shop/boutique. Building 22 is located centrally within the Heritage Centre and is the former Joiner's Shop.

Elsecar Heritage Centre is the former Elsecar Ironworks site which contains numerous individually-listed buildings, several of which have recently been upgraded from Grade-II to Grade-II* listings due to the heritage centre recently being named a Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). As part of the HAZ, there have been 6 new listings on the site and 9 existing grade-II listings (including unit 22a) have been upgraded to grade-II* status, which puts them into the top 10% of England's most important historic buildings. The heritage centre is characterised by stone and red brick buildings with slate roofs, which are split into individual units within the buildings.

Several buildings and areas within the Heritage Centre were partially and fully rebuilt in the 1990s, which is somewhat reflected in the Planning History. The site also falls within the Elsecar Conservation Area.



Relevant Planning History

B/77/1798/HN – Erection of an electrical sub-station (Historic)

B/82/1700/HN – Use of land for storage of coal mining face supports (Historic)

B/91/1492/HN – Use of buildings and site for a heritage/tourism centre, including craft workshops and offices (Historic)

B/91/1556/HN/C – Conservation Area Consent granted by the department of the Environment for the demolition of sections of buildings 17 and 22 (Historic)

B/91/1580/HN/LA – Planning permission granted by the Secretary of State for the Environment for the demolition of the gable to Building 14A (Historic)

B/94/1110/HN – Alterations and refurbishment to existing building (Historic)

B/96/1171/HN/LB – New doors, internal storm porch, heating, stage lighting rig (Listed Building) (Historic)

B/97/0656/HN/LB – Display of 20 wooden hanging signs (Historic)

B/02/0553/HN – Change of use of store for use as antiques centre/specialist auctions/publishing/national bottle museum (Historic)

B/04/1710/HN – Change of use from brewery to childrens indoor adventure play area and activities (Historic)

B/05/1320/H – Change of use from retail to indoor children's adventure play area and part venue (Approved with conditions)

2009/0898 – Repairs and alterations to building fabric (Listed Building Consent) (Approved with conditions)

2010/0480 – Internal alterations including the removal of partition walls and the creation of a new stairwell to facilitate improvements to visitors centre (Listed Building Consent) (Approved with conditions)

2011/0746 – Change of use from retail (Class A1) to café/shop (Class A3/A1) (Approved with conditions)

2012/1359 – Demolition and rebuilding of wall and widening of gates to railway yard (Approved with conditions)

2014/0756 – Alterations to form individual units including provision of a platform lift, staircase and access WC (Approved with conditions)

2014/0763 - Alterations to form individual units including provision of a platform lift, staircase and access WC (Listed Building Consent) (Approved with conditions)

2021/1087 – Replacement roof and rainwater goods (Approved with conditions)

2021/1088 – Replacement roof and rainwater goods (Listed Building Consent) (Approved with conditions)

2022/0294 – Replacement boilers and new condensate drain (Listed Building Consent) (Approved with conditions)

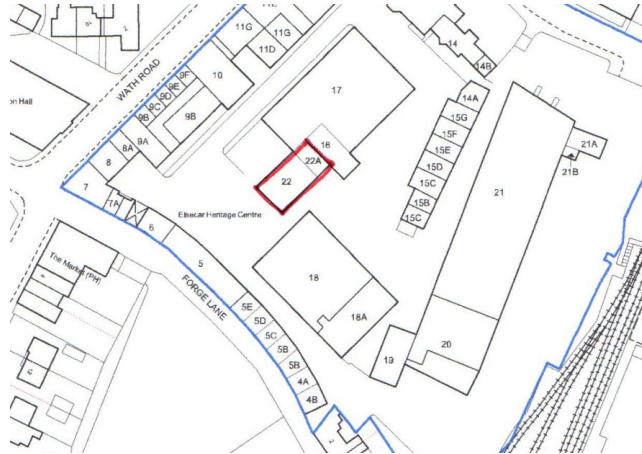
2022/0441 – Installation of internal and external wifi access points and network equipment (Approved with conditions)

Proposed Development

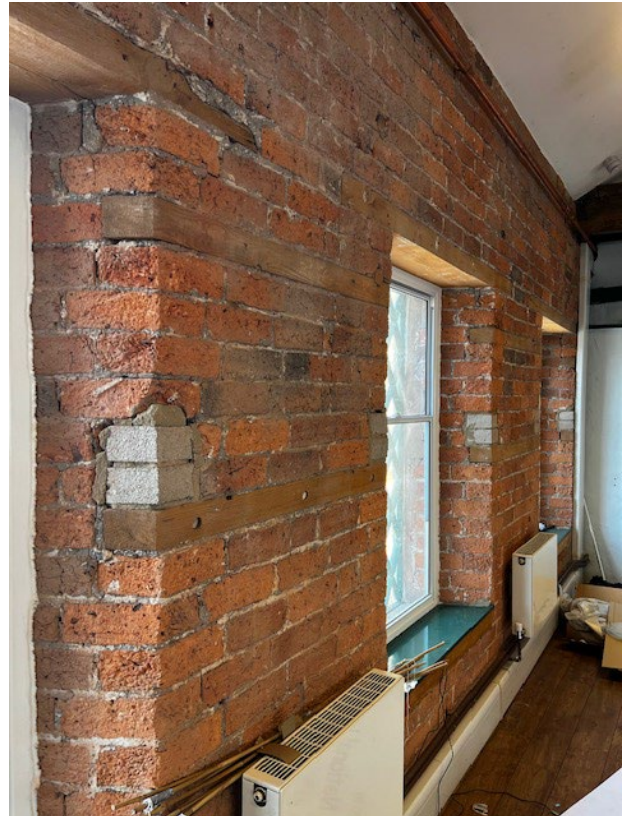
The proposed development is due to a change in tenancy for one of the BMBC-owned units within the Heritage Centre. The proposed works are restricted to the first floor of the building only and can be split into two elements:

1. The replacement of a limited number of breeze block infill 'bricks' within the internal window chambers of some of the windows with bricks to match the remainder of the internal wall.
2. The installation of a lightweight partition to subdivide the space so that two businesses can operate from the single space. The applicant has confirmed that this is not a formal sub-division but will serve two slightly different but interlinked family businesses for the applicant and her husband. Both uses fall within Use Class E.

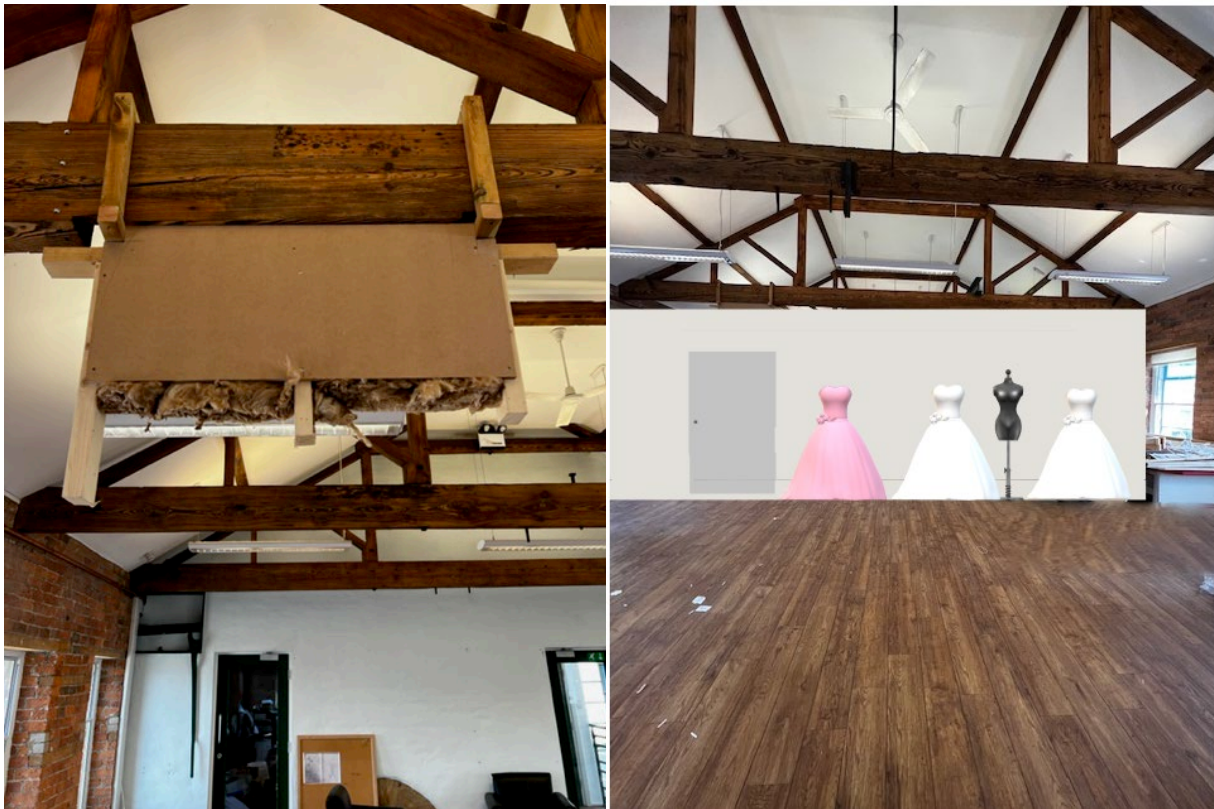
Location plan showing building 22 within the Heritage Centre Complex:



Proposed blockwork removal and brick restoration location (on Southern elevation):



Proposed sub-division of unit with example on site and mock up:



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 Local Plan (adopted January 2019), alongside the Joint Waste Plan and relevant neighbourhood plans, form the statutory development plan for Barnsley. It establishes policies and proposals for the development and use of land up to the year 2033 and will be used when considering planning applications and to coordinate investment decisions that affect the towns, villages and countryside of Barnsley. The Local Plan supersedes the remaining saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan (adopted in the year 2000) and the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011).

Local Plan

The site is located within the Elsecar Conservation Area and is designated as Urban Fabric Land in the Local Plan.

In reference to this application, the following policies are relevant:

Relevant Local Plan policies include:

GD1: General Development – Development will be approved if there will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents.

D1: High Quality Design and Place Making – Development is expected to be of a high quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and other features of Barnsley.

HE1: The Historic Environment – we will positively encourage developments which will help in the management, conservation, understanding and enjoyment of Barnsley's Historic environment, especially of those assets which are at risk.

HE2: Heritage Statements and general application procedures – Proposals that are likely to affect known heritage assets or sites where it comes to light there is potential for the discovery of unrecorded heritage assets will be expected to include a description of the site and its setting.

HE3: Developments affecting Historic Buildings – Proposals involving additions or alterations to listed buildings or buildings of evident historic significance such as locally listed buildings (or their setting) should seek to conserve and where appropriate enhance that building's significance.

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 an up to date development plan should be approved without delay. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

General design principles in the NPPF are specified from paragraph 126 onwards with specific reference to how applications should be decided on by Local Authorities outline in paragraph 130 (general design considerations) and paragraph 134, which state that 'permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions'.

Paragraph 199 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.

Paragraph 202 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.

Supplementary Planning Documents/SPGs

Heritage Impact Assessments

Elsecar Conservation Area Design and Maintenance Guide

Consultations

Conservation Officer – This proposal has come about due to a change of tenant within Building 22 (upper level) that is the upper floor of <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1315025>. This is one of the buildings re-assessed at the New Yard as part of partnership work with Historic England during the Elsecar Heritage Action Zone that resulted in an upgrade from grade II to II*. Consequently, the building is of exceptional historic significance and change will require an appropriately sympathetic approach. For context, the building which dates from 1859 was originally a joinery at GF level with a saddlery on the first floor. The northern end of the building housed a steam engine that powered elements of both operations. Within the northern partition wall remains a low arched opening that once facilitated a belt drive connection to the steam engine to the north. Higher up within the wall to the left is an intriguing lever arm which is thought to have been associated with disconnecting the belt drive from the engine when required. These features can be seen in the background of the right-hand image below. The roof trusses are exposed and are impressive queen post trusses with various fixings and hooks still in situ. Overall, it is worth noting that upstairs in Building 22 is a single open office space with no subdivision. The floor covering is modern and looks like a semi floating structure as can be seen in the area of the steps down to the external door that serves the external stair on the southern elevation. As such it is likely that these modern interventions (including radiators and secondary glazing) were likely to have been carried out as part of B/99/0525/HN and B/99/0526/HN/LB to convert a previous first floor storage area of B22 into office space. I have met the chosen contractor on site to discuss and understand the works more fully which are restricted to the first floor only. These include two simple elements:

- The first involves the replacement of a limited number of breeze block infill 'bricks' within the internal window chamfers of some of the windows. The blockwork is clearly modern. In fact, it is quite

unsightly and was likely to have been inserted during various works that took place in the 1990's probably to replace damaged or missing bricks.

- The second element of the proposal involves the installation of a lightweight partition to subdivide the space so that two businesses can operate from the single space. Essentially an unfixed collar is proposed to support a stud wall below the tie beam that will sit on the modern floor surface below.

In terms of the works, I see no harm in implementing a repair of the incongruent and modern blockwork in the window chamfers. Clearly this will require care in removal, a carefully chosen brick, and a mortar mix that is a pure lime mix to match the adjacent lime mortar. To ensure this I've suggested a condition below. The second element (the partition) also raises no concerns. In fact, I discussed this approach with the contractor on site as I was keen to ensure no physical intervention to historic fabric and 100% reversibility. Clearly the partition will impose itself in term of an appreciation of the currently open single space. However, the method of subdivision means no fixings are required into the truss or the walls. The weight and position of the partition (which is minimal as it is a timber stud) will be restrained by minimal fixings into the modern floor which will secure the divider in place. This means the installation will have no physical impacts on any historic fabric and can be totally removed once it is no longer required. As such, despite the physical change in the appearance of the room, I feel this will not be harmful and will allow the space to be fully utilised by two tenants and their business. No objection is raised subject to relevant conditions.

Historic England – No comment

Ward Councillors – No comments

Representations

Neighbour notification letters were sent to neighbouring properties and a site notice was placed nearby; no comments have been received.

Assessment

Principle of Development

The proposed development is in relation to numerous (both listed and non-listed) buildings within the Elsecar Heritage Centre complex, which can somewhat be described as a group listing in any case. As such, the proposed developments affect the listed buildings as well as the setting of the wider Heritage Centre complex, and the numerous other listed assets which are not included within the proposed development. The application seeks to partially sub-divide the building into two separate areas serving the applicant's and her husband's separate but interlinked businesses. The uses both fall under Use Class E and it is not considered that a formal sub-division has occurred which would warrant a separate application for change of use or the creation of two separate individual units.

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle but is in a sensitive location which places a greater emphasis on high quality design and compliance with Local Plan Policies HE2 and HE3. Subject to relevant Local and National Planning Policies being complied with, the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in principle.

Visual Amenity and Impact on the Historic Environment

The proposed works are entirely internal and will partially involve the installation of a partition wall which separates the upper floor of the building. The Conservation Officer has been consulted on the proposal and has also been involved in directing the scheme at pre-application stage including having a meeting on site with the contractor who is undertaking the works. No objection has been raised from the Conservation Officer who stated that there is no harm in implementing either of the proposed elements. The Conservation Officer has further assessed both elements in detail by stating there is no harm in implementing the repair of the incongruent and modern blockwork in the window chambers but clearly this will require care in removal. A carefully chosen brick and a mortar mix is essential to ensure that the historic fabric of the building is protected and retained. This can be suitably covered with a planning condition, as suggested by the Conservation Officer.

The second element also raised no concerns as there is no physical intervention to the historic fabric of the building and the works are 100% reversible. A mock-up of the partition has been installed on site with the Conservation Officer assessing during a site visit and the method of the subdivision will mean that no fixings

are required into the truss or the walls. This results in the proposed alterations having no physical impacts on any historic fabric and can be totally removed once it is no longer required. As such, despite physical change to the appearance of the room, it is felt by the Conservation Officer that this will not be harmful and will allow the space to be fully utilised by two tenants and their businesses.

Overall, the LPA fully agrees with the above comments and considerations made by the Conservation Officer. Both elements are considered to present little harm to the historic fabric of the listed building and seek to improve the modern blockwork element and sub-divide the building with a method which is 100% reversible. Both elements of the development only seek to alter the internals of the building and therefore there is little impact to the setting of other listed buildings or the Heritage complex as a whole. The proposed development is in compliance with Local Plan Policies HE1, HE3 and D1 and is considered to be acceptable in terms of visual amenity and its impact on the historic environment.

Residential Amenity

All of the development is internal and whilst it seeks to partially sub-divide the upper floor of the building into two separate areas, this will be to serve two separate but interlinked family businesses – both of which fall under Use Class E. The site is located within a well-established complex which is host to a wide range of businesses. There are residential properties in close proximity to the Heritage Centre, but the proposed alterations do not significantly change how the Heritage Centre will interact with the surrounding area and do not change the use of the building itself. As such, the proposed development is considered to have little impact on the residential amenity enjoyed by neighbouring properties and is in compliance with Local Plan Policy GD1. The development is considered to be acceptable in terms of residential amenity.

Highway Safety

The proposed development effectively includes the sub-division of the upper floor of the building to allow for an additional lettable space within the building and heritage centre as a whole. However, this is to serve two separate but interlinked family businesses is not a formal sub-division where there would be two separate accesses into the site, it is just an internal separation allowing two businesses to operate at one time. This may bring a slight increase in the amount of traffic and vehicular movements to the site, but this will be modest with several public car parks in very close proximity serving the Heritage Centre as a whole.

Conclusion

The proposed development is for internal alterations to Building 22 located within the Elsecar Heritage Centre complex. The building in question is grade-II* listed, situated in the Conservation Area of Elsecar, with numerous other listed buildings within the heritage centre complex. The proposed development comprises internal alterations which can be split into the following elements:

1. Removal of blockwork and replacement with brickwork to match the existing (internal wall on the Northern elevation).
2. Partial sub-division of the building with the installation of a lightweight partition wall to allow two business to operate in the building. This is 100% reversible and is not physically attached to the internal walls.

The Conservation Officer has been involved with directing the project at an early stage and has not objected in any way to the proposed development but has recommended appropriate conditions to ensure that the works will protect the historic fabric of the building. Whilst the proposed seeks to partially sub-divide the upper floor of the building, both uses fall within Use Class E and therefore a formal change of use or sub-division of the building will not occur. There is little impact on residential amenity or highways safety given that the use of the building is not being changed, and the development is not likely to lead to a significant increase in the number of vehicular movements to the site – with numerous public car parks nearby.

The proposed development is in compliance with relevant Local and National Planning Policies and is recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Grant listed building consent subject to the following conditions: -