

# Design and Access Statement

Penistone Town Hall

Penistone

Barnsley

August 2025



**BARNSLEY**  
Metropolitan Borough Council

Revision P3 – 04/09/2025

## Introduction

This design and access statement is intended to explain the rationale behind the planning application for the proposed alteration works at Penistone Town Hall.

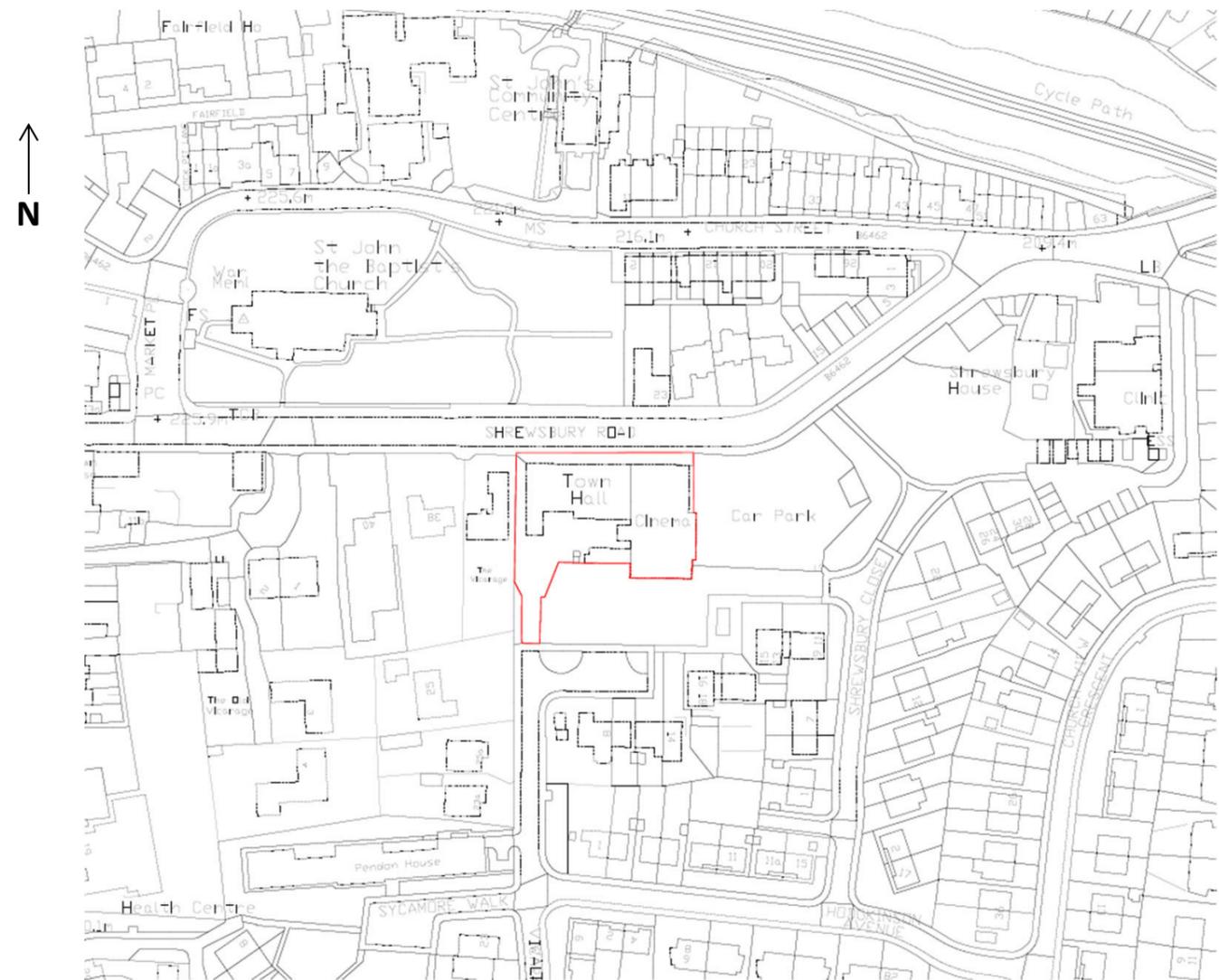
This statement is intended to explain the proposed scheme and contains a written description and justification of the application in design terms and is accompanied by a range of photographs, maps and drawings in order to illustrate and demonstrate the points made.

The statement includes site analysis, commentary on the use, an explanation of layout and details of illustrative external appearance, along a description of the access arrangements.

This statement is considered to be fully in accordance with Government Circular 01/06, 'Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System'.

This statement reflects the following stages as set out in CABE's document 'Design and Access Statements – How to Write, Read and Use Them'.

These are: Assessment, Involvement, Evaluation and Design.



Above: Site location plan

## Context

The building is located on Shrewsbury Road in the Town of Penistone, which sits approximately 7.5 miles west of Barnsley town centre. The building is surrounded by residential properties, a public car park and sits opposite St John's church, which is a Grade I listed building. The building also sits within the Penistone Conservation Area.

The original Library element of the building was funded by Andrew Carnegie and opened in June 1913. The Town Hall was added shortly after in October 1914 and the cinema was officially opened on 19<sup>th</sup> November 1915. At first floor level, to the rear of the building, is the Masonic Lodge, which has been operational since the opening of the building and is still in regular use today.

The building is currently split into four uses which includes the Paramount Cinema, Town Hall, Mason's Lodge and Matthew Rico Fitness, based in the Caretaker's Lodge at the top of the site.

The project is part of the Council's Principal Town's Investment Programme, which is a £35 million project to improve local economies around the borough and help our high streets thrive. To date, Penistone has received 13% of the Stage 1 funding and only 1% of the Phase 3 funding. The successful delivery of this project will increase the Phase 3 funding contribution to 19%.

The Town Hall project will follow the proposed refurbishment of Penistone Library, to upgrade and modernise the current library provision. As part of this project, some of the services that have been based on the Town Hall will relocate to the Library to have one central hub for all local council services. The Town Hall will also be used as a temporary library provision whilst the current library is closed from September 2025 to April 2026.

Following extensive discussions between representatives from both Barnsley MBC and Penistone Town Council, a plan has been agreed for the development of the Town Hall to provide an additional cinema screen and café bar to secure the future of the Paramount Cinema.



*Above: Existing Paramount Cinema*



*Above: Existing Town Hall*

## Proposed Use

The re-development works will increase the cinema offer with the addition of a second 44 seat screen, located in the rear portion of the existing Town Hall. The new screen will enable two films to be shown simultaneously, as well as longer feature showings, which will allow the Paramount to capture more blockbuster films on the same release dates as other national multi-screen operators. It will also give them flexibility to show more live ballet and opera events, as these are currently only shown where there are gaps in the feature film schedule.

In contrast to the traditional cinema experience offer of the existing Paramount, the new screen will provide a more luxury, modern experience with larger comfy seating and an 'at seat' drinks/snacks service. The space will also be multi-functional, providing a venue for other events such as live poetry reads and guest speakers, as well as being available for private hire.

The wider cinema facilities will also be improved as part of the scheme including a new café/bar, box office and concession stand located in the front section of the Town Hall. New toilets will be created in the existing concession space and in the new foyer to serve the additional screen and the café/bar. The existing bar in the main auditorium will be retained for occasional use during live music events.

The Mason's Lodge will be retained at the first floor with access maintained from the upper Town Hall entrance. A separate WC will be provided along with a small kitchen. A new external fire escape will be created to the rear of the building to offset the loss of the current exit via the Town Hall.

The top section of the Town Hall has recently been refurbished in preparation for the temporary library launch. This space will be retained for use by Penistone Town Council upon completion of the main scheme.

Matthew Rico Fitness will also continue to operate in the Caretaker's Lodge, to the rear of the Town Hall.

## Proposed Amount

The re-development works will not alter the overall footprint of the building; however, the internal layout will be extensively reconfigured to suit the proposed use. A large section of the Town Hall floor will be reduced in level to tie in with the current Paramount floor level, which will provide the required height clearance for the new screen.

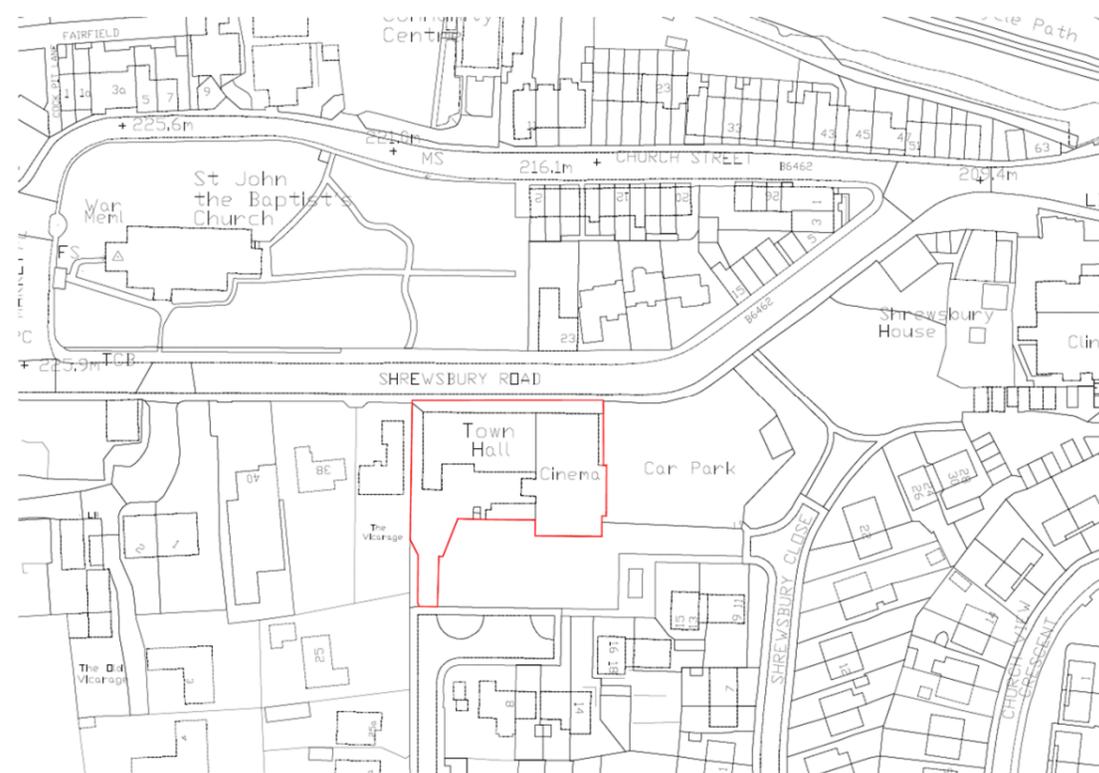
## Site Layout & Access

There will only be minimal changes to the site layout as a result of the proposed works. The new main entrance will have a new landing with both stepped and wheelchair access from Shrewsbury Road.

The rear car park will be retained. Two new fire escape stairs will be created from the new cinema screen and from the Mason's Lodge secondary escape route. The new external plant will also be located on the rear car park and will consist of one larger air handling unit and two smaller air conditioning units. The plant will sit within a timber fenced enclosure, as indicated on the drawings.

The existing wheelchair access to the cinema is via the rear car park and therefore the introduction of the new wheelchair access to the front of the building will make the cinema more inclusive. The reduction in the floor level will also provide level access between the existing and new cinema.

Access to the site itself remains unchanged. There are public transport links within Penistone and from local villages such as Thurlstone, Oxspring and Green Moor. There is an existing free public car park to the East of the site, which also provides accessible parking and EV charging. The site is also accessible to many local residents on foot and by bicycle. The Trans Pennine Trail provides walking and cycling routes from other surrounding areas.



Above: Site Location Plan

## Appearance

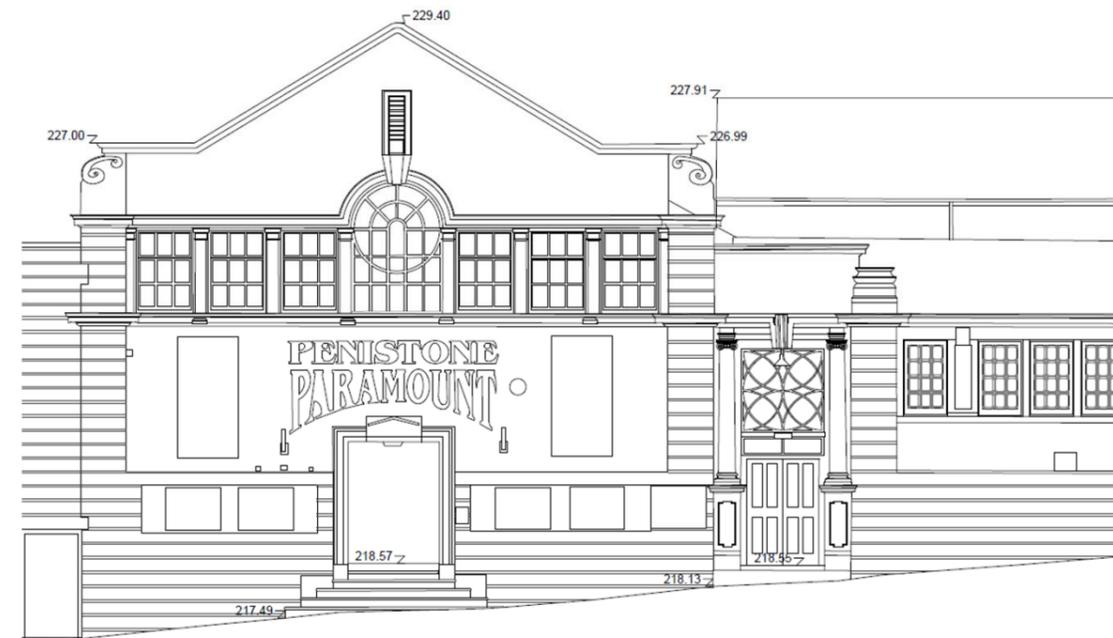
Works to the building fabric will be limited to the new cinema entrance, which utilises the existing Town Hall entrance. The new access will be formed using stone and brick to match the existing façade. As a nod to the existing Paramount access, the step profile and balustrade/handrails will be replicated.

Following consultation with the Conservation Officer, it has been agreed that the existing high level leaded windows will be retained and refurbished. The existing façade will also be steam cleaned to enhance the overall appearance of the building.

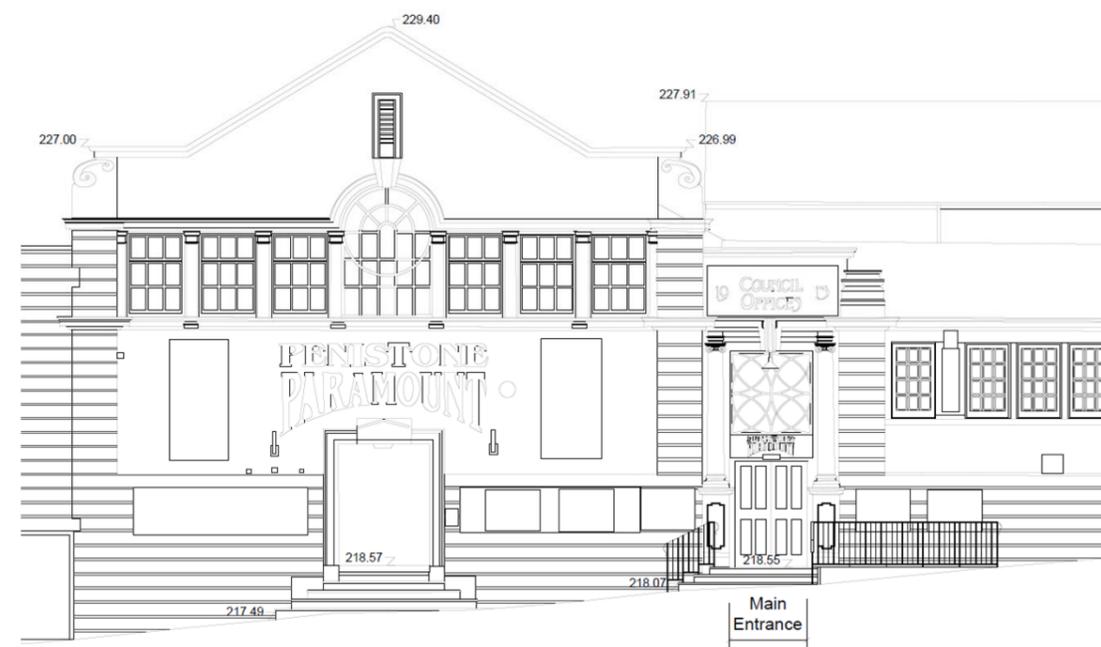
A full roof replacement was carried out in 2024, which was carefully planned and delivered by Barnsley Council's Property Team & MAM Roofing with supervision and input from the Conservation Officer. The re-roofing project was carried out as an enabling phase for the wider refurbishment project to ensure the building was watertight prior to the internal works commencing.



Existing Paramount & Town Hall Entrances



Existing Front Elevation Extract (North)



Proposed Front Elevation Extract (North)

## Introduction

In order to understand the wider impact of the proposed development, we have commissioned specialist external consultants as required to provide advice and mitigation strategies to ensure the development has minimal impact on the surrounding areas. These consultants also advise on how the existing surrounding area would impact on the proposed development and what measures needed to be considered in the design.

## Ecology

An Ecology report was produced for the roof replacement works in 2024. This included a full bat emergence survey. As there are no planned alterations to the building fabric, further ecological surveys are not deemed to be required for this phase of the works.

## Tree Survey

Whilst there are a number of trees on the land adjacent to the site, there are no planned works either involving the trees or close to the trees. On that basis, a tree survey is not deemed to be required

## Noise

We have appointed Acoustic Design Technology (ADT) to undertake a noise impact assessment for the development. The noise surveys looked at both noise leakage to and from the building as well as internal noise transfer between the spaces. The NIA also reviewed the potential impact of the new external plant, which is located on the Town Hall roof and to the rear car park area. The report found that the proposed air conditioning units would need to be contained within an enclosure to mitigate any impact on the neighbouring properties. The proposed plans indicate a close boarded timber fence around the plant to the rear car park. A copy of the NIA has been submitted as part of the application.

This D&A Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the proposed remodelling and refurbishment of Penistone Town Hall.

This statement provides background information regarding the site context as well as a summary of technical reports. The proposals are sympathetic to the historical value of existing building and will have a positive impact on the local economy.

The statement has determined that the development proposals are in accordance with national and local planning policy objectives, and that planning permission should be granted.