



Heritage Statement:

Proposed Extension 32A
Fitzwilliam St. Elsecar,
Barnsley S74 8EQ

Value Added Design

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Introduction

This Heritage Statement is submitted in support of an application for the proposed demolition of existing single storey projection to the east of 32A Fitzwilliam Street, Elsecar, Barnsley, S74 8EE, facilitating the erection of a larger replacement extension.

The application site is located in the South Yorkshire village of Elsecar, six miles south of Barnsley, which is known for its 18th century transformation from farmland to a thriving village at the centre of the industrial revolution, expanding rapidly around a new colliery, ironworks, and canal. It remains to date a remarkably well-preserved and complete example of a mining village and industrial landscape, with a Heritage Centre of national significance, and as such a small conservation area was designated on the village's historic core in 1974, including the application site, and the Conservation Area has recently been greatly extended following consultation in 2022.

Fitzwilliam St forms the main north south spine of the village, with the comparatively large plot of the application site is situated in an isolated position to the east of Fitzwilliam Street, to the rear of what remains of the terrace row fronting the east side of Fitzwilliam Street, and positioned directly adjacent to the last remaining allotments of the Elsecar Green area of the village. The stone application building of mid to late 19th century construction adjoins and projects from the rear of No. 32, and has a narrow footpath directly to the south connecting Fitzwilliam Street to the Elsecar Green parkland that once served as the inclined plane wagonway, and is considered a Locally Listed structure / area.

The proposals include the demolition of the existing angled single storey garage and study positioned to the east of the dwelling, along with the porch to the front, and propose the erection of a larger replacement extension with perpendicular walls to allow the creation of a new kitchen space and usable single garage.

This Heritage Statement aims to examine the history of the application site, its significance and importance to the surrounding Heritage Assets including Statutory Listed buildings, Locally Listed structures, and include an assessment of the impact of the proposals outlined on the wider setting of the Conservation area.



Site Location Plan

Site History

Elsecar is not thought to be a significantly old settlement, with it likely historically comprising nothing more than a series of farms clustered together, right up until the 18th century. There is little detailed evidence for early prehistoric or Roman settlement in the immediate vicinity of Elsecar, with only an Iron Age roundhouse discovered at Roebuck Hill, Jump, significantly to the north of Elsecar. It is also notable that, Elsecar does not appear in the Domesday Survey of 1086, with the surrounding areas of Hoyland and Wentworth recorded as sparsely settled and much of the landscape was woodland pasture.

Given how close to the surface coal deposits are in this area, it is possible that the small-scale mining of coal, along with iron making, formed one of the earliest landscape activity in the area. However, it is unknown precisely when these activities began, with the earliest surviving document referring to coal working in the area involving the Wentworths, dating from around 1300, and there is evidence through deeds for the leasing of tracts of coal for mining within the grounds of manors in Rotherham by the early 16th century.

The original tiny hamlet settlement developed loosely around a roughly triangular open space close to the area now occupied by Milton Hall, then known as Elsecar Green (now Elscar Park), but the arrival of the eighteenth century saw Elsecar transformed, with major expansion and development during the growth of the mining and iron industry.

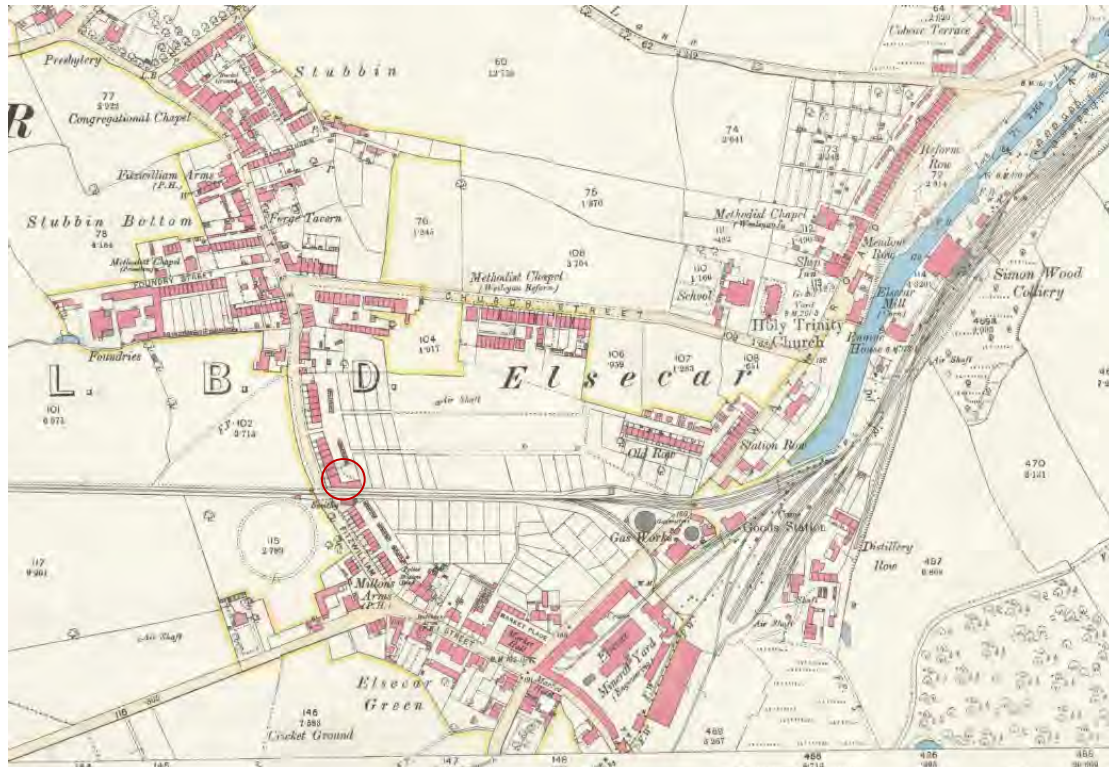
With Elscar standing just a mile from Wentworth Woodhouse (the largest privately-owned house in Britain), the Earls regarded Elsecar as an estate village and took a strong interest in local affairs. Thanks to the patronage, investment, and direction of the Earls Fitzwilliam, the wealthy owners of Wentworth Woodhouse, Elsecar was an early planned industrial village, shaping Elsecar in the later 18th and 19th century with the development of mining and ironworking industries and the construction of associated buildings like the Earl's Workshops (now the Heritage Centre), forges, a distillery, along with the provision of high quality worker's housing, school, church, and allotments, forming much of the present core of the village.

By the publication of the first Ordnance Survey map of 1855, Fitzwilliam Street had been established as one of the principal access roads into the village, yet remained largely undeveloped north of The Milton Arms and Elsecar Green. What appears as a railway line runs straight through the landscape west to east, bisecting Fitzwilliam Street, and is in fact an incline plane wagonway that was laid out in the late 1830s by the Earl Fitzwilliam. This wagonway was created largely to transport raw materials and finished products of the Milton Ironworks and others mines and quarries further to the west, down the hillside to Elsecar railway sidings which lay close the canal head. The application site, which would later be situated at the intersection of Fitzwilliam Street and the incline plane wagonway, remains entirely undeveloped at this time.



Ordnance Survey map of c1855

The east side of Fitzwilliam Street would go on to be developed shortly after, with the mid-19th century building of more rows of terrace housing for workers at the colliery and ironworks, as the population of Elsecar increased from 1,226 in 1822 to 5,352 in 1862. The application building is first illustrated on the Ordnance Survey map of 1892, positioned perpendicular to the rear elevation of the terrace row, and fronted directly to the south by the inclined plane, and to the east by allotments, dictating the form and alignment of the application building.



Ordnance Survey map of c1892



Ordnance Survey map of c1905



Ordnance Survey map of c1931

As is illustrated on the Ordnance Survey map of 1931, the use of the inclined plane wagonway between Milton and Elsecar remained in use until the early 20th century, upon which a footpath was established between the hedgerows of the allotments and out over the rural areas further to the west of Elsecar. It remains a pleasant footpath to modern day, with sections clearly visible as a continuous linear track, and visible traces of the rail bed in a number of locations. However, the course of the trackway is less easy to define within Elsecar Green, and it is notable that the relatively wide trackway has been encroached upon by modern infill development on the east side of Fitzwilliam Street, directly to the south of the application site, leaving only a narrow footpath between buildings.



Ordnance Survey map of c1948

The west side of Fitzwilliam Street was developed comparatively late, throughout the 1930's, with the formation of new housing both fronting Fitzwilliam Street and with the creation of The Croft, first illustrated in the Ordnance Survey map of c1948.



RAF Sortie 13 March 1962

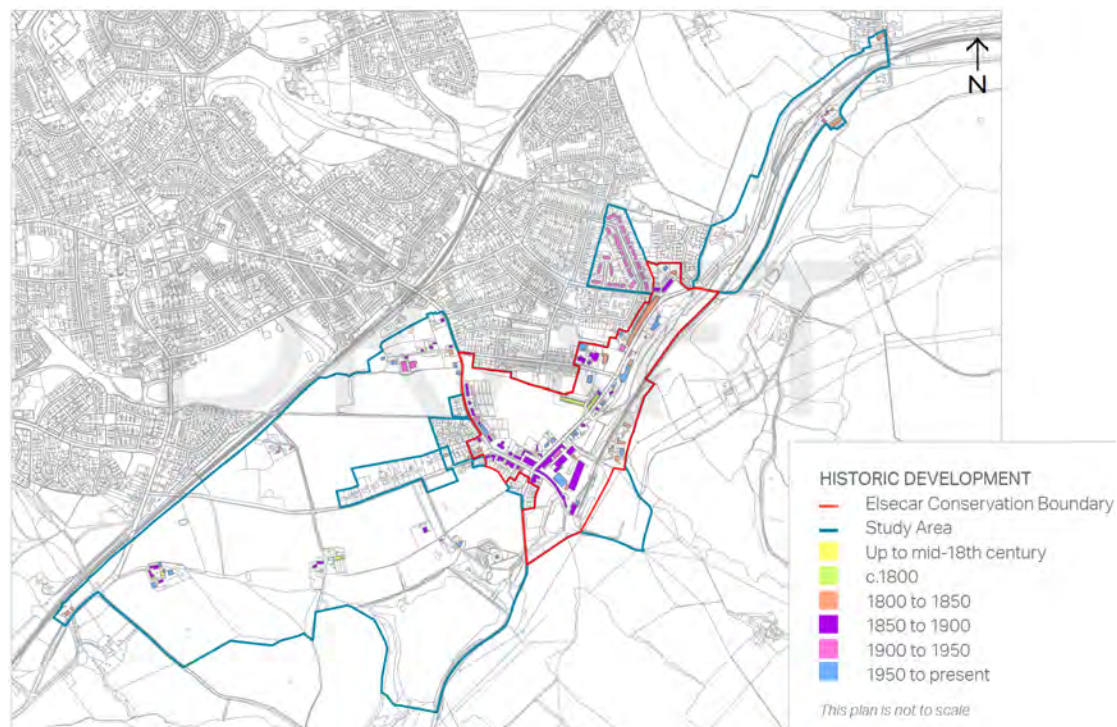
The informal green space of 'New' Elsecar Green, positioned to the east of the application site is a surprisingly recent, late-C20 creation, emerging from the removal of the Gas Works, the incline plane wagonway, and allotments. As can be seen in the historic aerial photography of the area from 1962, the vast majority of this space used to form allotment rows, however, was gradually given over to communal greenspace as the allotment use declined, leaving only a few allotments positioned to the west. As the allotment use waned, the majority of the dividing hedgerows were removed creating large open areas, with only a scattering of mature hawthorn trees that are the remnants of the former allotment hedgerows, and it is noted that there is no visible evidence of the gas works and wagonway within the green.

Elsecar suffered in the 1980's due to the closure of collieries and the uncertainty that followed, with the village falling into decline. The last colliery in Elsecar closed in 1983 and a few months later, just a mile along the canal from the village centre, the Miners' Strike began. Although things have improved in Elsecar since the 1980's, household statistics reveal that there is considerable social deprivation. However, given the remarkably well-preserved condition of much of the early industrial landscape and structures in Elscar, it's historical importance as a complete example of a mining village has been recognised and much of the former works have been refurbished and converted into a Heritage Centre of national significance, with many buildings in the historic core of the village having been recognised with Statutory Listed Building status. As such, Elscar has become a tourist destination, with many people visiting the Heritage Centre, for the craft workshops, artists, antiques as well as exhibitions and events, markets and fairs now occupying the former industrial buildings. This heritage tourism was aided in 2017, when Elsecar and the

surrounding area was one of the first ten locations in the country selected for a 'Heritage Action Zone' (HAZ), to assist with the growth of Elsecar as a heritage destination and identify new development opportunities, in a three-year partnership between Historic England, Barnsley Council, and Barnsley Museums. At this time, Historic England undertook a Historic Area Assessment, which resulted in the proposals to extend the boundary of the conservation area, "to take in new areas of historic, architectural and archaeological importance".

Conservation Area

The village of Elsecar was first designated a Conservation Area in January 1974 by the former West Riding County Council, encapsulating the historic and industrial core, with the oldest structures 1800-1850 located to the northeast of the Conservation Area, and industrial works 1850-1900 located predominantly to the west.



Original 1974 Conservation Area And Study Areas To Extend, As Indicated On The Historic Development Plan Contained Within The Elsecar Conservation Area Appraisal

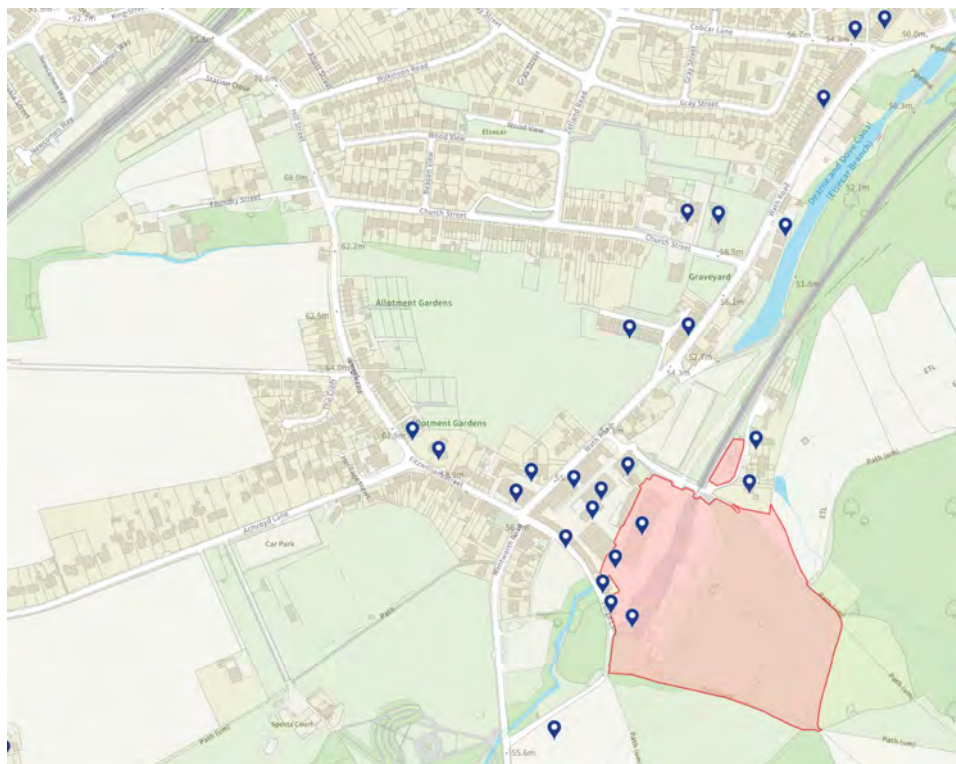
The application site is included within the extents of the original 1974 Conservation Area boundary, and it is considered part of Character Area 1: Elsecar Historic Core, which covers much of the western half of the original 1974 Conservation Area. This Character Area covers the most historical parts of the Village and are key to the understanding of the development of the village and its industrial past.

Despite the isolated position of the application building, set back from road behind other properties, it can be considered to have some moderate degree of contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. Being part of the expansion of the village along Fitzwilliam Street, with the mid to late 19th century building of housing for workers during Elsecar's population increase, the application building's form and positioning are revealing of the former existence of the inclined plane directly to the south. Although entirely blank and adjoining a now far narrower footpath (due to modern encroachment to the south), the southern elevation that defines the course of the inclined plane as it intersects Fitzwilliam Street and connects to Elsecar Green, is the application building's greatest contribution to the understanding of the area's history. To a lesser extent the application site's angled boundary and building alignment to the east provide insight into the amenity spaces former use as part of the wider allotments, and therefore can be considered to have a minor contribution to the overall character of the Conservation Area.

Listing

The village, with many buildings of national historic significance, has 26 statutory Listed Buildings, with a mix of Grade II and Grade II* buildings and structures mostly clustered around the historic core and Heritage Centre, a section of which is also designated as a scheduled monument. It is also the location of the Newcomen Beam Engine, built in 1795 to extract water from Elsecar New Colliery to allow the exploration of deeper coal seams, and the only Newcomen Beam engine in the world that remains in its original location. As such this a nationally significant piece of Elsecar's heritage, and recognised as a Scheduled Monument.

However, all of these buildings are concentrated within the oldest sections of the village, further south and east than the application building, with many located around the Elsecar Heritage Centre. As such, it is noted that none of these form the immediate context to the application building, with the nearest Listed Building being the Grade II 56 Fitzwilliam St, positioned 89m away to the south. Whilst both the application building and the listed No. 56 are located on the eastern side of Fitzwilliam St, and do form part of the wider street scene, there is no direct or visual link to or from the application site.



Listed Buildings In Elsecar

The application building itself is neither nationally or locally listed, or within the curtilage, List Description, or Setting of a neighbouring Listed Building, and as such the proposed development is not subject to additional statutory protections or constraints.

The course of the former inclined plane wagonway between Milton and Elsecar (c1830s), directly to the application sites south as outlined in the site history, is considered a locally listed structure / area. While traces of the rail bed remain in areas, the course of the former inclined plane are primarily defined by the void remaining between buildings and between hedgerows, repurposed into a footpath. As such, the proposals will be considered in relation to their impact on this local heritage asset, in particular, maintaining the defined boundaries of this former track.

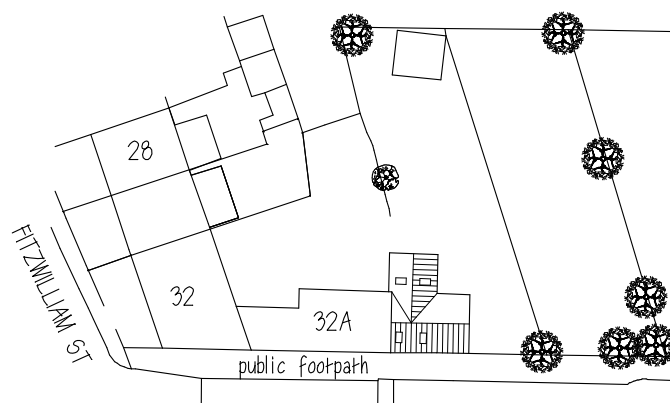
The proposal

The existing building consists of a main two storey element to the west, with a stepped frontage to the north with the building depth narrowing in the west where it connects to the neighbouring 32 Fitzwilliam Street, and a secondary single storey element to the east containing a garage and study. The existing roughly coursed, sandstone building form is relatively simple, with a pitched slate roof spanning front to back (north to south), with the roofline stepping down from the main roof of the dwelling to the lower roof of the study, and again to the garage. The existing garage and study are positioned at an awkward angle to the main body of the building, following the angle of the eastern site boundary, narrowing the internal space significantly to the building frontage. This is likely due to the historic boundary at the same angle being located abutting the building, before receiving a change of use of allotment to form extension to domestic curtilage in 2009 (application reference: 2009/0266).

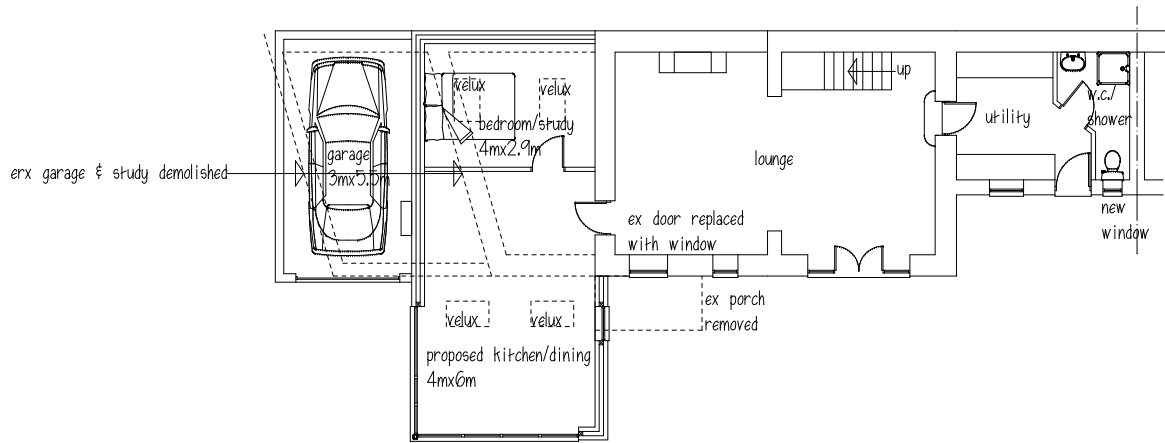


Existing Site Aerial

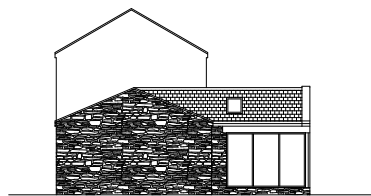
Given the awkward shape of the single storey elements and the resulting reduced usefulness of the internal space, proposals seek approval to demolish these building elements, along with the front porch, and erect a new larger replacement single storey extension. The extension will project east to a similar distance as the rear of the existing building, but will not taper to follow the angle of the boundary, providing a greater and more practical footprint, and will include a projecting gable to the front to extend further the new accommodation provided.



Proposed Site Plan



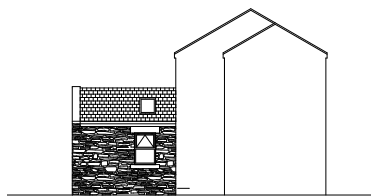
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



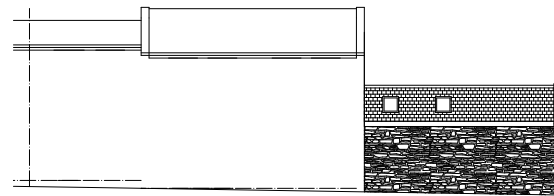
SIDE ELEVATION



FRONT ELEVATION



INTERNAL REAR ELEVATION



REAR ELEVATION

Proposed Elevations

As can be seen on the proposed elevations, the replacement building element sees the garage door and small single window into study, replaced with a projecting gable to the front, that has larger glazed elements to the north and east forming a fully glazed corner. This addition provides the building with a better relationship to, and outlook over, the expanded garden to the east following the change of use in 2009. The proposals retain a single garage door in roughly the same position as that of the existing, however, with the realigned position of the walls perpendicular to the main building element of the dwelling, the replacement structure is practically suited for use with a modern sized car and does not require an awkward manoeuvre to access.

The proposed extension retains a fully blank rear (south) elevation, that abuts the footpath to the south, as it is recognised that this forms part of the historic enclosure of the inclined plane wagonway, a locally Listed structure, and maintaining the clarity and legibility of this course is of greatest consideration to the application. The partial replacement of this rear wall will result in no meaningful impact on the legibility of the former track route, particularly when compared against the modern infill development positioned to the opposite side (south) which was allowed to encroach upon the track itself, diluting the prominence of the formerly uninterrupted line cutting through the landscape.

Given the linear nature of Elsecar, views along Wath Road and Fitzwilliam Street are considered important in capturing the character of the townscape, however, the insulated position of the

application building behind other dwellings with the majority of the alterations only visible from within the secluded rear courtyard or on the footpath, the proposals are considered to have minimal visual impact on the street scene. While it is accepted that the proposals will result in a nominal increase in the footprint and mass of the property, and the addition of modern corner glazing features will alter the buildings appearance, it is still considered a relatively minor change and should not be considered to meaningfully alter the character of the conservation area.

The loss of angled walls to the eastern side of the building will result in some minor loss of historical interpretation of the former historic allotment plot, particularly as the now garden amenity has been opened up to the wider plot losing the historic boundary definition. However, it is noted that this loss is nominal when compared to the mass loss of boundary definition experienced on wider Elsecar Green site, and it is noted that the original angled boundary is retained to the east of the garden where it adjoins the surviving allotments, providing that historic context.

Conclusion

As identified in the site history the application building represents a mid to late 19th century, likely colliery or ironwork worker housing, squeezed into a relatively awkward plot behind the terraces fronting Fitzwilliam Street, and enclosed to the south and east by the Milton - Elsecar inclined plane wagonway and allotments.

The application building enjoys a secluded and insular position, with limited views into the property curtilage, making the existing contribution of the application building on the character of the conservation area relatively limited.

The site itself is not subject to any statutory Listing, nor is it within the wider context of any Listed Building that could be impacted by the proposals. The historically important and locally listed inclined plane wagonway directly to the south of the application site will remain clear, and the character of the footpath unchanged by the proposals.

The proposals do partially alter the form and appearance of the building, however this is minimal, and of a respectful scale to that of the structures it replaces, and it is not believed to be contentious.