

# J Mahoney Architects

Design & Planning

Heritage Impact Assessment to accompany application for full planning permission at St.John's Community Centre, Church Street, Penistone, Sheffield, S36 6AR.



*Existing East elevation of St John's Community Centre*

## Introduction

This statement has been prepared on behalf of Penistone Town Council and will accompany a Full Planning Application (Ref PP-12795241) for an extension to the existing St John's community centre (SJCC) building involving the demolition of a small outbuilding and reconfiguration of the nearby existing carpark.

## Proposed Works under Consideration

The works will involve two extensions of the community centre one via an infill to the North-East corner (see below behind white container) and the other an infill of a return in the existing building. NB a photo of the site of the second could not be obtained due to overgrown vegetation. The new accommodation will include a new external stepped and ramped fire escape.



*Existing East elevation of St John's Community Centre*

The community centre is currently used as a community space which can be rented from Penistone Town Council (PTC) and hosts many local activity groups. The community centre also houses the administrative offices for PTC's town clerk and hosts PTC meetings.

The extensions will be formed onto the existing Archives Room, utilised by Penistone Archive community group and will provide additional space for the publicly accessible archives. As part of the works, part of the existing façade (see photo below) will be removed to open the existing Archives room up to the new extension.



*Detail of Existing Recessed Rear East elevation of St John's Community Centre*

Other internal spaces will be altered reconfigured to allow better use the existing accommodation and also to ensure compliance with current building regulations for escape in the event of a fire.

## Relevant Legislation / Planning Policy

### **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**

In terms of the impact on the special character and appearance of the listed building, Section 16 (2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, states:

*In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*

### **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

NPPF para 189 and 190: The NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance (heritage) of any heritage asset affected by a proposal including any contribution made by the setting of the asset. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and the degree of intervention the proposal represents. The local Planning Authorities will take the heritage significance of an asset into account and consider any impacts on the asset to avoid conflict with the conservation of the asset.

NPPF para 193: Great weight given to an asset's conservation, irrespective of the degree of harm

NPPF para 194: Any harm to or loss of significance will require clear and convincing justification

### **Barnsley Local Plan Policies**

Barnsley Local Plan Policy HE1: The Historic Environment: Positively encourage developments that help in the management, conservation and understanding of the historic environment

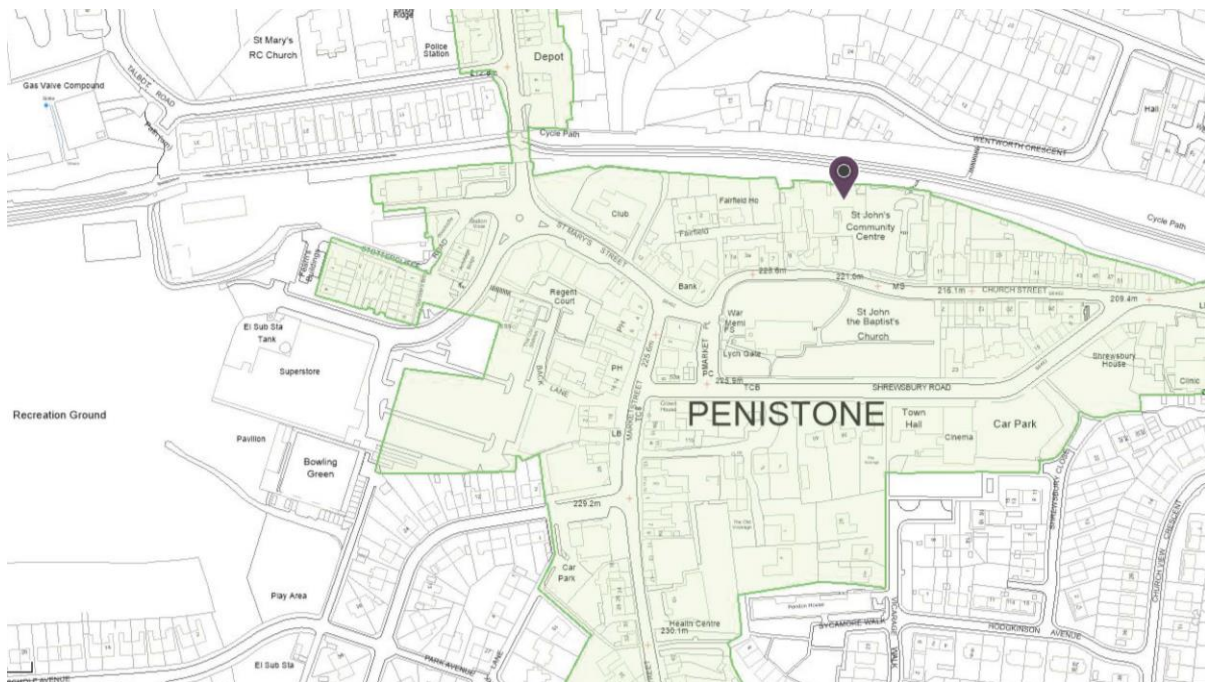
Barnsley Local Plan Policy HE3: Developments affecting Historic Buildings: Proposals involving historic buildings should conserve and where appropriate enhance, respect historic precedents, and capitalise on opportunities to reveal significance.

## Designated Heritage Assets

SJCC itself is unlisted however it sits within the Penistone Conservation Area and is adjacent to the Former Girl's National School a non-designated local heritage asset.

SJCC also sits nearby other local heritage assets, notably;

- Milestone built into north wall of churchyard at se 247033. Grade II listed 27/04/1988 No. 1151032
- Church of St John. Listed Building. Grade I. Listed 23/06/1965. No. 1314709



*Extract of Penistone Conservation Area Map with St John's Community Centre indicated*

Numerous other local heritage assets exist within the Conservation area but the above are the closest and may have views from/to them affected by the proposals.

## History of SJCC

SJCC is late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, however bears a stone plaque inscribed with the date "1987" on the East facing elevation of the Upper Hall. Records indicate that construction work took place between 1850 to 1891. It was originally designed as an addition to the Girl's National School and is typical of municipal buildings of that time featuring smooth red brick and grey slate roof.

From comparison of historic maps, SJCC has undergone a number of historic alterations and extensions with the Lower & Upper Halls having additions to them between 1892 & 1903 and further additions to the rear of the Upper Hall by 1929.



## Heritage Values

The significances and sensitivities of the heritage assets in the affected areas can usefully be identified following the practice and advice provided in the English Heritage Conservation Principles (2008).

### **Evidential Value**

Overall, SJCC has evidential value with respect to what it can tell about past local activities in Penistone and its development over the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The application focuses on an area of the building which has had previous modern alterations (windows bricked up and heads lowered) and additions (external steel security bars) so potential for evidential value in this area is limited.

### **Historical Value**

Overall, the principal historical value here would arise from the association with the adjacent Girl's National School. The illustrative value embodied by the story the place has to offer and the relationship between the spaces contributes. However, the numerous modern internal and external modifications over time to SJCC mean any associative or illustrative value derived from this building is limited.

### **Aesthetic Value**

Overall, there is clearly some designed aesthetic value present, despite the building being functional and municipal in nature. The greatest contributor is the aesthetic value embodied in the arrangement of the site and the historic context of the Girl's National School. However again, externally & internally within SJCC this is much less apparent as any historic fixtures and fittings are no longer present or very limited.

### **Communal/Social Value**

This area of heritage value is concerned with how heritage assets are used and valued by society. Clearly, overall SJCC has a high degree of communal / social value. The building is run by PTC as a community centre and offers activities relating to the community whilst also hosting the Penistone Archives.

## Heritage Impact Assessment

As can be seen above, the external alterations and internal finish of the spaces related in the application are mid to later twentieth century. Therefore, these spaces contribute only marginally to the historic significance of the conservation area and local heritage assets.

Primarily, the outward appearance of SJCC contributes most due to its aesthetic values and to a degree the evidential value embodied by the arrangement adjacent to the Girl's National School

The proposed arrangement to provide additional space to the Penistone Archives and additional level access to the centre contribute to enhancing the function and access of the building. As such, any minor harm the works may cause will be offset by the improved public benefit the proposal will generate.

## Conclusion

Due to the minor contribution of the external aesthetic and evidential value embodied I would conclude the proposed works represent a low degree of harm to the heritage significance of the building and also to the conservation area. The extension will be in keeping with the existing building in both materials, form and function whilst providing additional modern internal facilities which will benefit the community.

Overall, I would suggest the proposal is justified and represents no harm to the conservation area or other local heritage assets and is therefore in accordance with local and national planning policy.