Ref 2023/1045

Applicant: Barnsley MBC

Proposal: Comprehensive refurbishment of Building 13, Building 20 and Building 21, and development of the public realm (Listed Building Consent)

Address: Elsecar Heritage Centre, Wath Road, Elsecar, Barnsley, S74 8HJ

This application has been made by a Council employee and relates to a Council owned building. The delegation scheme is clear that applications submitted on behalf of the Council for its own development may not be dealt with under delegated powers before members have had an opportunity to determine whether they wish to call in the application to Planning Regulatory Board, or to agree to delegate the decision to the Head of Planning.

Several representations have been received from 1no. resident.

Site Description

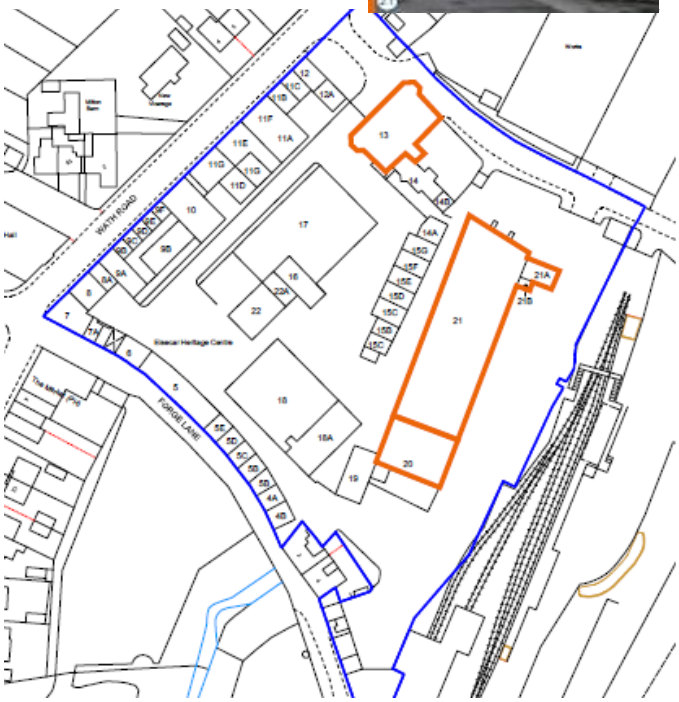
Elsecar was transformed in the late 18th and 19th centuries into a centre of ironmaking and coalmining under the patronage of the Earls Fitzwilliam. Workshops were established at Elsecar to serve the various industries hosted by the Fitzwilliam estate.. Following closure of the last coalmine in 1984, the workshops are now owned by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council who purchased them from British Coal in 1988. The site was re-opened in the early 1990s as the Elsecar Heritage Centre.

This application relates to buildings 13, 20, 21 and 21a with Elsecar Heritage centre. Building 13 is locate to the North of the site and is a 2 storey former railway building which is Grade II* listed. The ground floor of the building is used as a children's nursery and the first floor is storage and studios. Building 20 is to the East of the site adjacent to the railway line and is attached to building 21. It is Grade II* listed and was a former iron works rolling mill. It is currently used for storage. Building 21/21a is located to the East of the site and attached to the north of building 20. The building is Grade II* listed and was a former iron works rolling mill. It is currently used as an events space.








WATH ROAD
FORGE LANE
Mineral Heritage Centre
13
14
17
21
21A
21B
20
19
18
18A
22
22A
16
10
11A
11B
11C
11D
11E
11F
11G
12
12A
9
9A
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7
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5
4
4A
4B
3
2
1

Surrounding the site to the South West is a pub, housing and car parking, to the North is a village hall and housing, to the North East is temporary car parking, housing and businesses and to the East is the railway line and housing with woodland beyond. The Trans Pennine Trail also runs adjacent to the site.

Proposed Works

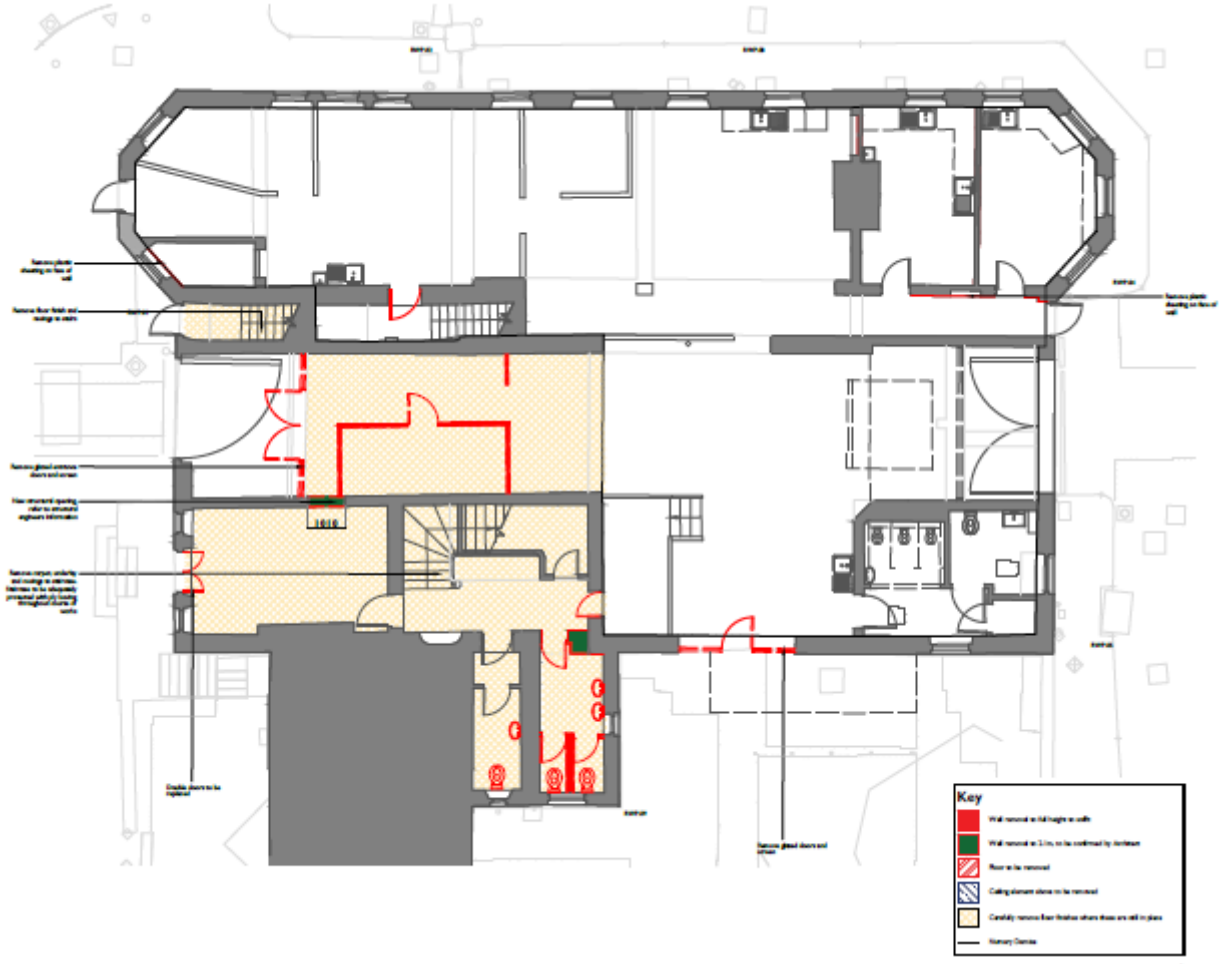
The applicant seeks listed building consent to refurbish buildings 13, 20 and 21 as well as revitalising the public realm.

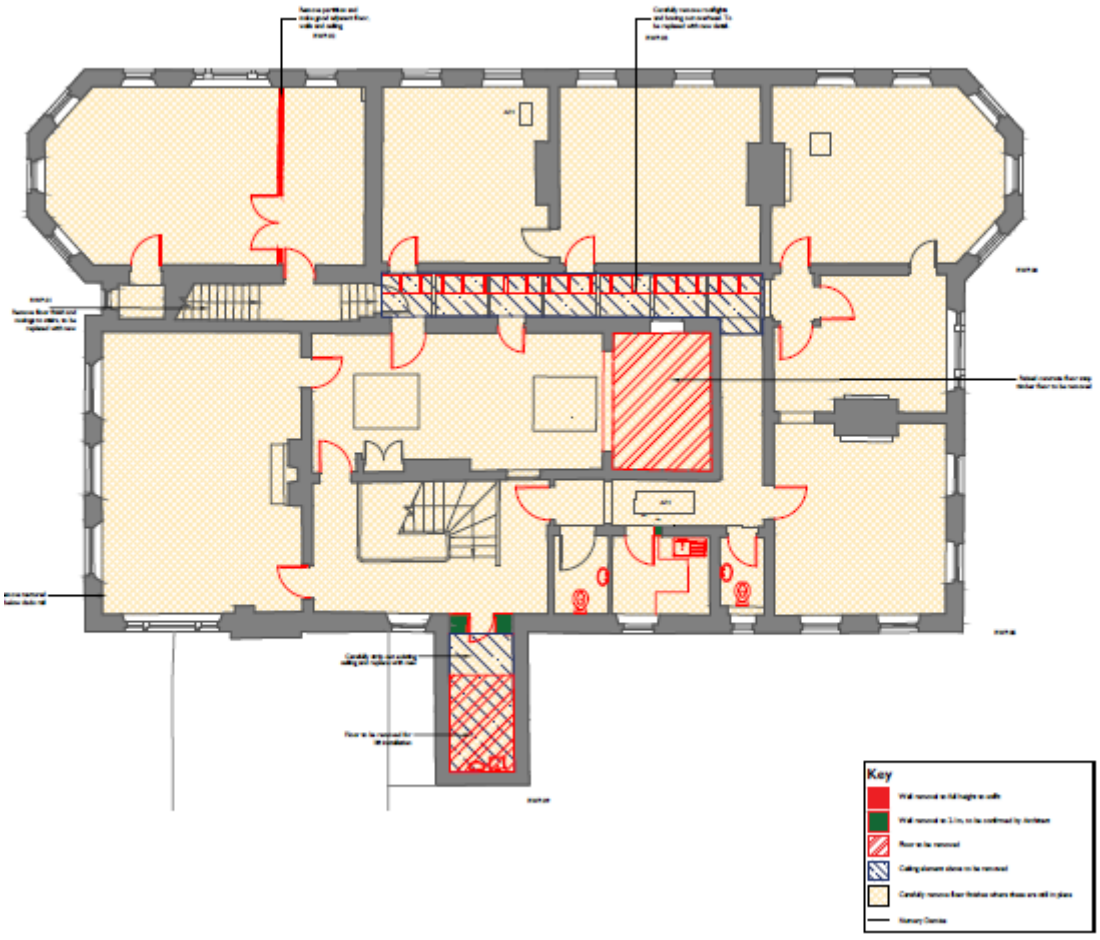
Building 13

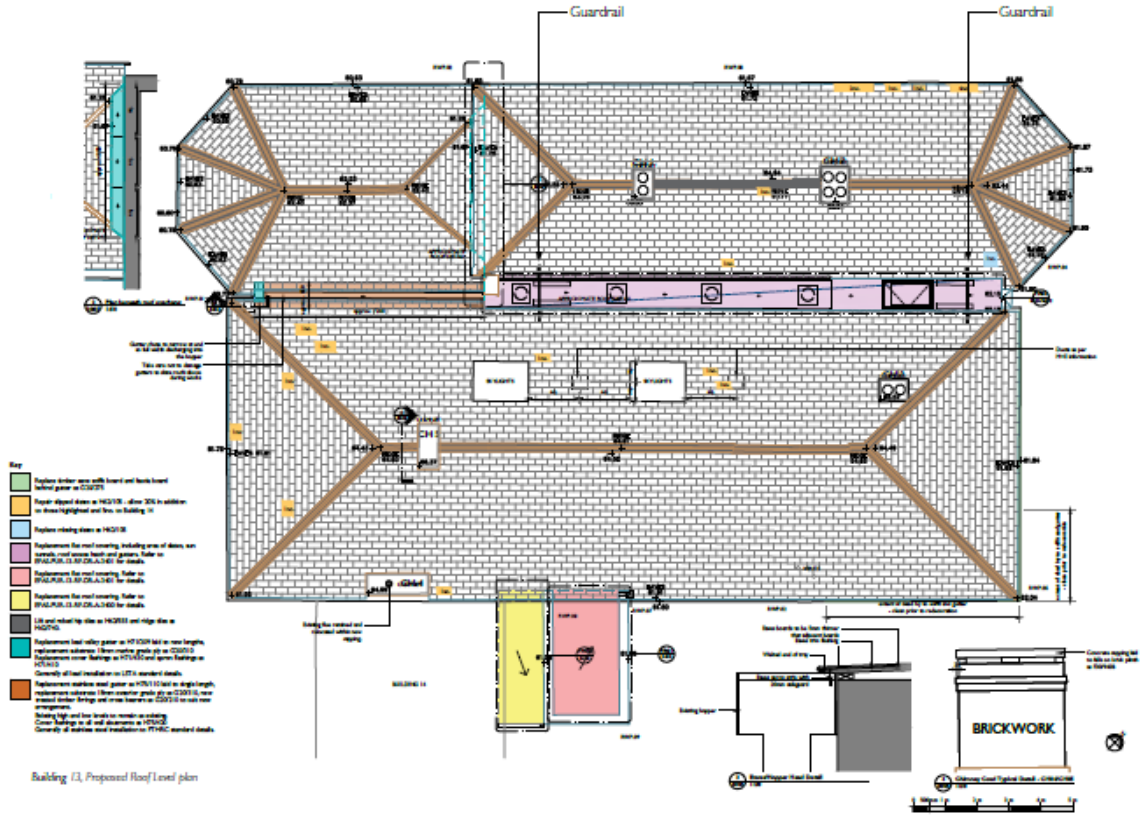
The existing nursery will be retained on the ground floor, with the existing visitor centre also relocated into this space. The first floor will be refurbished to provide creative spaces. Internal alterations include;

- Glazed partitions on the ground floor to create a new entrance space
- A new platform lift to provide access to the upper ground floor
- A new lift located in the existing WC will serve the ground and first floor
- The layout of the first floor will remain similar to the existing with the exeption of the subdivision of the central space to create a shared area and meeting room.
- New firedoors to all rooms

External alterations include extensive conservation and repairs including roof, joinery and stonework repairs.







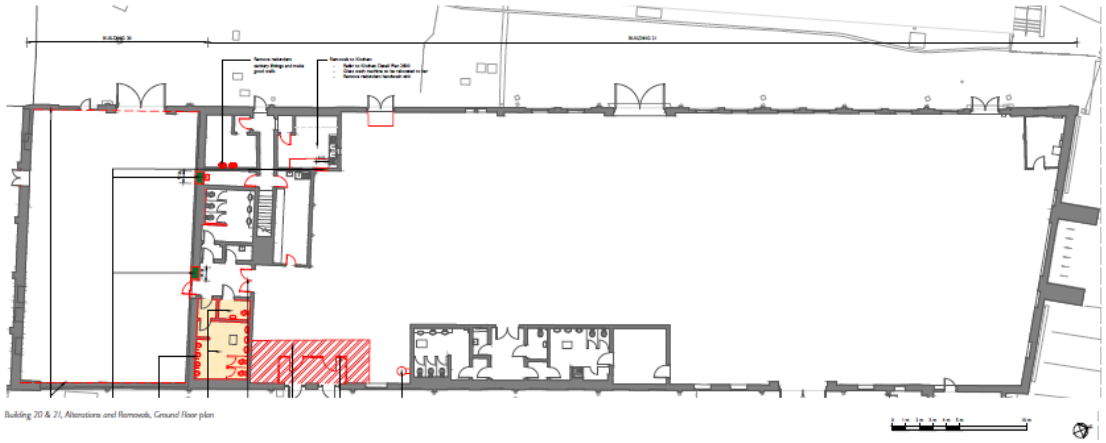
Building 13, Proposed Roof Level plan

Building 20 & 21

These spaces are to be used for event spaces and require the supporting and auxillary spaces to be updated. In terns of internal alterations;

- A new lobbied entrance from te west side of the building.
- Refurbishment of auxillary spaces
- Redecoration and refurbishment including the WC's and Kitchen.

In terms of external works conservation and repairs are required which will be predominantly essential works to building 20.



Public Realm

The works will mainly consist of the resurfacing of two main squares and the small interconnecting thoroughfares resulting in a more user friendly and multi functional space. The works include

- Replacement of current tarmac and concrete surfacing
- Space created for pop up events and dining
- New lighting
- New planters
- Space for public art



Policy Context

Listed building consent applications are not determined under S38/6 presumption in favour of the development plan. However, development plan policies are a material consideration, and will inform consideration of the application.

Local Plan

The Local Plan was adopted by the Council in January 2019.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held on 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances require it.

As well as being part of a Grade II* listed building, the application site is in Elsecar Conservation Area and also within Urban Fabric as designated in the Local Plan. The following policies are relevant:

Policy 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.

Policy 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.

Policy HE1 The Historic Environment – indicates that we will positively encourage developments which will help in the management, conservation, understanding and enjoyment of Barnsley's historic environment and will support proposals which conserve and enhance the significance and setting of the borough's heritage assets.

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.

Policy Poll1 Pollution Control and Protection – sets criteria to ensure that new development does not unacceptably affect or cause nuisance to the natural and built environment or to people; or suffer from unacceptable levels of pollution.

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 the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In respect of this application, the NPPF includes policies in relation to the requirement to identify and assess heritage significance including the setting and the effect of a proposal (paras 200 and 201); the need to give great weight to an asset's conservation, irrespective of the degree of harm (para 205); and that any harm to or loss of significance will require clear and convincing justification (para 207)

Consultations

Historic England – No objections following points of clarification

Conservation – there is some minor harm caused by interventions or areas of minor removal of historic fabric within these buildings to allow the proposal. However, these are truly minor in context and more than justified by the new use.

Ward Councillors – 1no. Cllr states no objections.

Representations

The application was advertised by way of site notices. Several representations have been received from the same objector. The main points of concern are;

- The buildings are adjacent to their property and above DPC
- The proposed plans over commercialise the Heritage Centre
- The larger events space will lead to additional traffic, parking pressure and noise and disturbance
- Building 21 currently generates noise and disturbance
- Only made aware of the works 24 hours before consultee period ended
- Lack of public consultation

Assessment

Principle

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

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. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, should require clear and convincing justification.

In terms of this specific proposal, the principle of improving the fabric of the buildings and increasing access to facilitate visitors fully enjoying these important buildings is supported and will hopefully provide a sustainable future for the Heritage Centre. The potential impact of the proposal will be fully assessed under the headings below;

Visual Amenity and Impact on the Historic Environment

This application covers a variety of refurbishment, development and conservation works to three buildings within Elsecar Heritage Centre (New Yard). The works also include a comprehensive development of the public realm of the main core site.

The works focus on Building 13 (The former Fitzwilliam private station), and Buildings 20 and 21 which were once rolling mills for the former Elsecar Ironworks. All the buildings involved are grade II* listed, with Building

20/21 sitting over the scheduled area of the former ironworks complex with the whole area washed over by the Elsecar Conservation Area designation. The structures and the site overall are recognised as having international heritage significance which is reflected in the grade of listing, and the extensive scheduled area. The works are supported by the Cultural Development Fund which is provided by Arts Council England.

Significant pre-application discussion has taken place with BMBC Conservation, the Museums Service, and Purcell (Conservation Architects / design team) as well as BMBC colleagues in FM and Assets. The submission pack includes a very comprehensive D&A and HIA which covers the site and the buildings, sets out their individual significance and discusses the various impacts and potential harm these might represent. The pack also includes a full set of plans showing the existing arrangement and every element of the proposed elevations, removals plans, proposed plans, finishes, sections, materials and approaches to every aspect of the proposal.

Building 13

The former Fitzwilliam railway station is currently used at the ground floor as a nursery. However, upstairs the building is underutilised and in need of works to repair its fabric and make areas of the roof watertight. The proposal seeks to reconfigure the ground floor to accommodate the new site visitor centre (which is currently housed with building 10). At the ground floor this involves the removal of several modern C20 partition walls that have obscured the original configuration. The current glazed doors and partitioned area within the entrance are also proposed to be replaced by a new lobby arrangement that will also house a platform lift for improved accessibility. A new lift shaft is proposed in the space currently occupied by the W.C's that will connect to the first floor.

To the first floor, the changes will allow the spaces to operate as creative but flexible workspaces. Of note is the lift installation which will be housed in the flat roofed part of the building. Various roof repairs include the removal of the C20 rooflights in the corridor which have failed and are showing signs of water ingress. This area of roof is to be repaired and the rooflights will be replaced with sun tubes. There is some very minor harm posed by the works to remove small areas of fabric (the lift for example). However, there is an overall benefit, better revealing the original layout and facilitating a more flexible and accessible arrangement for a variety of uses. Generally the works are light touch and in the main reversible and pose little other harm.

Building 20 and 21

The Ironworks is a large and well-used function / performance space. Once used as rolling mill, Building 20 is slightly later than Building 21 which was extended in the 1860's with the addition of two bays to the south. The space is largely open within, but a modern bar area, offices, and toilets currently occupy the southern end of B21. There is also a glazed lobby and a breeze block enclosure housing further toilets against the eastern wall.

The proposal seeks to remove the glazed lobby area against the eastern wall (which is visually incongruous) and install a continuous partition wall. This will create a new and larger shared lobby connected to the blockwork toilets (on the eastern wall) that will unify the internal elevations. This will allow both Building 20 and 21 to be used simultaneously for separate events. A small new weather lobby is also proposed to protect the western entrance from the weather in Building 21. A small ramp is proposed within Building 20 to mitigate the change in level between Building 21. This ramp is located over the exposed historic brick floor, thus protecting the area.

Elsewhere in Building 20 the floor is quite uneven, and a levelling screed is required over the areas that are already concrete. On the western internal elevation of Building 20, another weather lobby is proposed with storage areas either side of it against the wall. The roof and timber clad wall directly below the eaves will be clad and insulated as currently this area is un-insulated. Generally, the W.C. areas are to be refurbished throughout.

Overall, the works are light touch and very much focus on the removal of elements that are modern and detract, coupled with wider refurbishment and sensitive repair. In Building 21 the works really only effect modern fabric and the new lobbies (within Building 21) will allow much improved flexibility of use of the two buildings. This will also improve the internal elevations and the appearance of the internal space. The removal of modern paint within Building 20 is welcomed as it is entirely non-breathable and potentially harmful to the fabric. It is noted the widening of the doorway between the two buildings clearly involves the removal of original fabric. However, this is justified to facilitate better access and represents only very minor harm in absolute terms.

Public Realm

Currently, the areas of public realm around the site are a mixture of tarmac, concrete and sets (laid in the 1990's). Various repairs have added to the sense (over time) of a patchwork of mismatching surfaces with all areas believed to be covered by modern materials. They relate poorly to the significance of the site, are confusing in terms of historic legibility and are a hotch-potch of materials that don't enhance the setting.

The proposal seeks to unify the central areas of Powerhouse Square, John Hartop Place and Fitzwilliam Square. It will do this by surfacing the main central squares of the core site (west of B21) with a double layer tar spray and chip finish. The aggregate chip used will be chosen to harmonise with the setting and the stone of the adjacent buildings. The existing York stone paving, granite sets, and a small section or existing tarmac will be retained but will be supplemented with a small area of York Stone. Concrete ring and sleeper planters will complement the existing planters to soften and help focus or delineate specific areas. Overall, this is welcome, allowing a more consistent but appropriate finish to the public realm, further improved by new lighting which together will conserve and enhance the setting.

<u>Residential Amenity</u>

The Heritage Centre is immediately adjacent to a number of existing residential and commercial properties. Objections have been received regarding the potential impact the proposal will have on the amenity of the existing residents and business occupants.

A number of the comments raised relate to existing concerns such as noise and disturbance, traffic congestion and parking provision, especially on events days. The objectors state that the creation of additional events space would add to these existing issues. However, this application does not create any additional floor space but includes the re-purposing of existing floor space to maximise potential. Furthermore, the proposed alterations and amendments are not considered to significantly change the current operations on the site, and therefore not significantly increase noise and disturbance or traffic movements.

As such, although the proposal may increase access to facilitate visitors in order to fully utilise these buildings, and the Heritage centre as a whole, it would not be significantly detrimental to residential amenity to warrant refusal in this case. Therefore, the development accords with Local Plan Policy GD1.

<u>Conclusion</u>

Overall, there is some minor harm caused by interventions or areas of minor removal of historic fabric within these buildings to allow the proposal. However, these are truly minor in context and more than justified by the new use. The repair works within the application are highly beneficial and together the design is well informed and acceptable. Historic England and the Councils Conservation Officer have been consulted on the application and no objections have been raised. Ultimately, the application is consistent with S.16(2) of the Act and, Local Plan HE1, and HE3 and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Grant subject to conditions