

Consultation Response from KC, Conservation and Design
2021/93191 1-22, The Arcade, 14 & 16, Corporation Street, 23 & 25, Market Place, Dewsbury, WF13 1QG
Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations (within a Conservation Area)
Date Responded: 29.9.21 Responding Officer: Sue Brooks Responding Ref:

The Arcade is a Grade II listed shopping arcade dating to around 1899, covered under three separate list entries and located in the centre of town within the Dewsbury Town Centre Conservation Area. The shops on the northern and southern end of the arcade are both three storeys high with well detailed stone facades. The central arcade consists of small shop units which are one and two storeys high, on either side of a central arcade covered with a glazed roof on decorative cast-iron frames.

Most of the shop units have been vacant for some time and this application proposes to adapt these and the upper floors to provide useable space, while refurbishing the building and restoring the historic architectural fabric and detailing.

The Conservation and Design Team support a proposal which will provide a sustainable use for this heritage asset and potentially create a vibrant space within the heart of the town centre and conservation area. The restoration of the building is fully supported, with repairs to historic detailing and the reinstatement of missing details, along with new interventions which will enhance the significance and viability of the arcade and create a more accessible environment.

Observations and comments from the Conservation and Design Team are below:
Physical / structural changes / refurbishment

- New decorative entrance gates with fixed glazed fanlights above are proposed to replace the existing standard roller grilles. These will maintain the security of the central arcade while creating imaginative and high-quality architectural features which will enhancing the building. Details of the proposed decorative gates and fanlights should be submitted by condition and should include the design, colour and fixing methods.
- New stairs are proposed in 14 and 16 Corporation Street (units 23 and 24). A new lift and cleaner's store are also proposed in 16 Corporation Street, with a central metering room in Unit 23. The interiors of these large units have been extensively altered in the past so these interventions will provide access to the first floor without compromising the historic fabric.
- Gates are proposed to the two central arcade stairways and will reflect the design of the new entrance gates of the arcade. This will prevent unauthorised access to the first floor, with the historic staircases remaining visible from the arcade. Details of these gates should be submitted by condition.
- The replacement of the modern shop fronts facing Market Place and Corporation Street is proposed, using guidance in the Dewsbury Design Guide along with historic evidence in the surviving original shop fronts and archive images. Toughened laminated glass is proposed along with internal perforated shutters to provide security without obscuring the architectural detailing or introducing external shutter boxes. Louvred top lights are proposed above the entrance doorways and although they are not a traditional element in these shop fronts they have been justified by the applicants and are acceptable.

- Where existing shop fronts within the arcade have been replaced, the reinstatement of traditional shop fronts is proposed to replicate the surviving historic ones. This will enhance the significance of the building and create a more attractive space.
- An accessible WC is proposed within Unit 16, which is understood to have a surviving historic shop front. The widening of the doorway and a new door is proposed and is necessary to provide an accessible entrance. Details of any alterations to the shop front should be submitted, with the top lights and transom retained.
- Hanging signage within the arcade is supported in principle and details should be submitted by condition.

M&E

The upgrade of M&E services is required, and the M&E document included with this application states that all services will be routed discreetly, concealed and with minimal disturbance of the historic fabric. Electrical supplies are routed beneath the Arcade floor to minimise surface runs, with ducting provided to allow for future alterations.

Details of the M&E installations and fittings, including service ducts, risers, radiators and lighting should be submitted by condition to ensure that no damage occurs to important historic detailing (including decorative floor and wall finishes and external architectural details), and the character and significance of the building are maintained.

- Architectural lighting is proposed within the central arcade and on the prominent external elevations on Market Place and Corporation Street. Well-designed lighting will enhance the building by highlighting architectural details and providing a welcoming environment. The use of small discreetly placed lighting units with carefully routed wiring will minimise the visual impact and minimise clutter.
- Natural ventilation is generally proposed, with mechanical ventilation in kitchen and WC's. Louvres are proposed in upper floor windows facing into the site to provide ventilation for the upper floor WC's and kitchens. Details of the proposed window louvres should be submitted by condition to ensure that this proposal is acceptable.
- The introduction of background ventilation in the existing upper floor timber sash windows is proposed. Details should be submitted by condition to ensure that the intervention is discreet and the impact on the historic fabric is kept to a minimum.

Upper floors

The upper floor layouts require some alteration, particularly with regards to access. New stairs are proposed in areas of low significance, with the loss of original staircases to the second floor as these are steep and do not work with the proposed uses. The insertion of new openings within the rooms is proposed, while retaining the existing doorways so that the historic plan form is maintained.

The upper floors of 25 Market Place retain some interesting historic details. It is proposed to remove the steep narrow staircase to the second floor, which is in unsafe condition and unsuitable as a main access stair and lay a floor above to create useable space. Below, the historic built-in cupboards are to be retained. Details of the conservation of the decorative historic floor finish on the second floor should be submitted by condition.

Accessibility

The floor within the central arcade is gently sloping and laid in stone flags which are understood to be

historic, although re-laid in recent years. The shops within the central arcade are accessed via this area and most units have a single step into the shops, with some decorative tiled thresholds.

The restoration of the arcade provides a good opportunity to achieve permanent level access into the ground floor units, and the proposal to raise the height of the arcade floor at the shop doorways with gentle slopes between these plateaus is an acceptable solution.

Arcade roof

- The restoration of the historic trusses is supported, with the reinstatement of the historic colour scheme if evidence of this can be established. In addition, the replacement of Georgian wired glazing with clear toughened glass is supported as this will replace a detail which detracts from the character of the central arcade. The proposed colour scheme should be submitted by condition.
- The conversion of two existing sash windows into doorways in Units 27 and 28 will provide maintenance access onto the flat roofs. Although this will result in the loss of historic fabric, these elevations are of relatively low significance and can only be viewed through the glazed canopy from inside the arcade. The public benefit of providing safe maintenance access is considered to outweigh the harm.
- A roof walkway with edge protection is proposed and may be visible from within the arcade. This is accepted as a safety measure and therefore details should be submitted by condition to demonstrate that the visual impact has been kept to a minimum. Similarly, perimeter security measures are understood to be required and should be hidden as far as possible, with fixings carefully located to minimise damage to the historic fabric. Details should be submitted by condition.

Summary

The restoration and upgrade of this building, which will bring vacant floor space into use, restore and repair the historic fabric, and create a vibrant use within Dewsbury town centre, is fully supported by the Conservation and Design Team.

It is accepted that some changes will be necessary to provide suitable access within the building, such as the insertion of new staircases and creating a level floor, and adapting shop units to provide first floor access, a meter room and accessible WC. The interventions have been sensitively designed to retain historic fabric as far as possible while ensuring that the building meets modern requirements. Many of the proposals enhance the building, and where there is a level of harm the alterations have been justified. The public benefits of bringing this vacant building back into a viable use, while restoring historic detailing and introducing enhancements, is considered to outweigh the less than substantial harm. Conditions are recommended where further details are required.

The following suggested conditions below relate to heritage, although they do not take into account other planning considerations. To reduce the number of conditions it is recommended that details are submitted prior to determination.

- Details of the proposed decorative gates and fanlights to each end of the arcade, along with the central stairway gates, to include the design, colour and fixing methods.
- Accessible WC shop front alterations and details, showing the doorway and entrance floor

alterations and new door. The top lights and transoms shall be retained.

- Details of hanging signage within the arcade.
- Colour scheme of the central arcade roof including metalwork and joinery.
- Details of the ventilation louvres in the rear upper floor sash windows.
- Details of the M&E installations and fittings, including service ducts, risers, radiators and lighting should be submitted to ensure that no damage occurs to important historic detailing (including decorative floor and wall finishes and external architectural details), and the character and significance of the building are maintained.
- Details of the proposed roof edge protection and perimeter details, including materials, design, scale and fixing methods should be submitted to demonstrate that the visual impact has been kept to a minimum and no damage will be caused to the historic fabric.
- Trickle vent details for the sash windows.
- Details of how the decorative historic floor finish on the second floor will be conserved and retained.