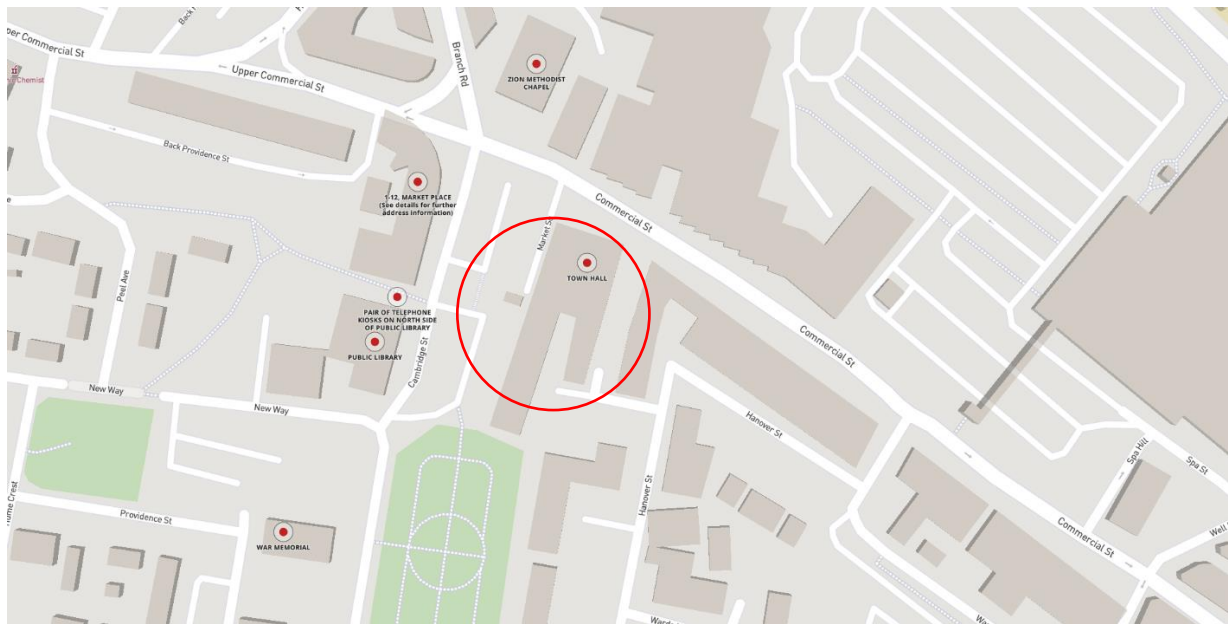


CLA550224 – PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF BATLEY TOWN HALL LINK BRIDGE

Heritage Impact Assessment and Access Statement

The application relates to proposed works at:

Batley Town Hall
Market Place
Batley
West Yorkshire
WF17 5DA



History

The town hall building was designed in the neoclassical style was paid for by public subscription and opened as the local mechanics institute in 1854.

The design involved a symmetrical main frontage with seven bays facing onto Market Place; the central section of three bays, which slightly projected forward, featured a round-headed doorway with a fanlight flanked by engage Ionic order columns; there was a balcony together with a projecting flagpole and three square-headed sash windows flanked by Ionic order pilasters on the first floor and there was a large pediment at roof level.

The building incorporated a public library, and, like other mechanics institutes, it provided adult education, particularly in technical subjects, for workingmen. Its activities led to the formation of the Batley Choral Society which continued to deliver performances into the early 20th century.

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In September 1902, the building was extensively damaged by fire. Plans to build a completely new Town Hall in another part of the Square were dropped in favour of redeveloping the old one and adding an extension which included the council chamber, Mayor's Parlour, and offices for senior personnel.



The renovated building, together with the extension which provided the Town Hall with anew entrance to the Market Square, was opened in July 1905. The architect for the £15,731 project was local businessman Arthur Hanstock.

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Listing, Background and Surroundings

Batley Town Hall is a Grade II listed building located within the Batley Market Place Conservation Area. Batley Town Hall is situated in the heart of Batley overlooking Market Square with the library opposite and the Zion Methodist Church forming the North side of the square. Both buildings were designed by the same architectural practice (Walter Hanstock and Son) as the Town Hall.

The main road running alongside the Town Hall is Commercial Street; this has small shops along the side as well as the Halifax Bank and link bridge to Tesco. The town hall opened in 1905. It incorporates earlier buildings, including the former Mechanic's Institute dating back to 1854. This was previously used as the Town Hall but damaged by fire in 1902.

The Town Hall was designed by local architect Arthur Walter Hanstock, who practiced under his father's name as Walter Hanstock and Son. The Town Hall is classical in style and constructed in sandstone with slate roofs. It was listed in 1984.

The other end of the footbridge links onto Brunswick Building which is not listed but also falls within Batley Market Place Conservation Area.

Existing Bridge Link between Batley Town Hall & Brunswick Building



Photo 1: Link bridge exterior view

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Photo 2: Link bridge connected through former original fenestration opening on Batley Town Hall Elevation



Photo 2: Link bridge connected through former original fenestration opening on Brunswick Building Elevation

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Context of Proposed Works

The proposed works are to demolish the enclosed elevated first floor footbridge link between the two Kirklees Council owned buildings. The Conservation Department has been consulted regularly regarding the proposals from the outset and have been involved in the process.

In line with the long-term Conservation Management Plan prepared by Aedas, following various ongoing invasive structural investigations Kirklees Council Officers have concluded despite repairs the footbridge can no longer be maintained due the extent of building fabric and structural issues.

This will help conserve the building fabric and its features and to improve its aesthetic appearance. Other works have already been carried out over many years with the aim of preserving the historic architectural features whilst improving the usability of the Town Hall for the public.

Proposed Works

Proposed works within this application are both internal and external, including works to both buildings to the following areas:

First Floor

- demolition of entire elevated first floor footbridge
- removal of small staircase/landing leading to bridge link
- removal of modern doors and frames
- reinstatement of original timber fenestration to former design and appearance
- Internally repair works will be undertaken to all surrounding plasterwork within the working areas.
- Externally repair works will be undertaken to reinstate former fenestration openings to their original size and appearance, using matching stonework.

Design Considerations

Corridor / Circulation Areas

The entrance lobby, corridor and the main staircase are areas where the original character and features of the building have well been preserved. These areas formed part of the circulation spaces and the quality of the existing design and detailing is not of a high standard. Alterations will be kept to a minimum in these areas and the historic features will be restored. The existing modern addition of timber doors with side lights within the bridge link lobby areas will be removed as part of the demolition works to both buildings. All disturbed surfaces will be made good using matching materials and finishes blended in to match the surrounding areas.

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Access Statement

The existing access arrangements for both buildings shall remain unaltered and unaffected by the proposed works internally and externally.

A recent new lift exists which complies with current Building Regulation. Although, due to restrictions imposed by the existing building, there remains limitations for larger motorized wheelchairs.

The Town Hall has level access to the first floor to the rear of the stage area, due to the sloping external levels. This route can be used for access, if necessary, but would not be suitable for use on a daily basis from an operational viewpoint and under DDA. This route is also used as a fire exit.

Externally the building is already accessible via a stone flagged ramp.

Conclusion

The proposed works are in no way detrimental to either building and will improve the aesthetic appearance of both buildings in line with original design and materials as shown on accompanying drawings submitted as part of this application.

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APPENDICES - Photos showing extent of external fabric damage to footbridge link.



fascia & guttering beyond economical repair.

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roof covering & glazing damage is evident.

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Photos showing interior of existing foot bridge link.



Modern doors/frames were previously inserted into former fenestration openings in elevations.

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Original fenestration openings were previously modified to suit in order to accept the elevated foot bridge link at first floor levels.