Heritage Statement

St Hilda's Colliery Head Stock, South Shields

MAWSONKERR

Architecture & Sustainability

1.0 Introduction:

On behalf of Tyne and Wear Building Preservation Trust (TWBPT) MawsonKerr Architects are submitting an application for the refurbishment of St Hilda Colliery Head Stocks in South Shields. This Heritage Statement forms part of the planning application and is to be read in conjunction with the Design & Access Statement and the drawings.

The head stocks built in the mid 19th Century is an important building in the history of South Shields and also mining safety reform.

The building is currently underused with only a handfull of open days to the public each year. A partial refurbishment was carried out in the 1980s however the main roof is structurally failing and this proposal allows for the protection of this heritage asset and brings it back into use for the community and promotes job creation.

The refurbishment of the building provides start up units for Small Medium Enterprises and areas for community use and exhibition space for the history of the head stocks to be displayed and accessible to all.

This statement has been compiled with reference to the Conservation Plan for St Hilda's Colliery Headstock by Douglas Pigg and Cliff Ayton; St Hilda's Structural Appraisal 2014 from Conservation Structural Engineer, Blackett Ord Conservation Consultant. Meetings with TWBPT, Richard Barber Arts & Heritage officer of South Tyneside and Lucy Routledge Historic Environment Officer of South Tyneside have also influence the design and inputted into this statement.

1.1 Heritage Listing

St Hilda's Colliery Head Stocks: Grade II

"Details

The following item shall be added: 1. 5102 STATION ROAD (north east side) NZ 36 NE 12/90 St Hilda's Colliery Head Stocks II

2. Colliery head stocks. Mid C19, restored C1985. Red brick with ashlar dressings 3 storey. Main south front has to the left a round headed entrance arch with iron gates. To the right 3 tall round headed windows with ornate iron glazing, all blind, with ashlar impost blocks and keystones. Above a moulded ashlar band, and then a moulded ashlar cill band, with a pair of glazing bar sashes to the right and a single similar sash to the left. Above another sash to the left, and to the right a large round headed window with ornate iron glazing, all blind, with ashlar impost blocks and keystone. Above an open ashlar pediment and a raised brick parapet with ashlar coping. To the rear a single iron headstock over the mining shaft."[1]

[1]Historic England [https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1277144] Accessed 24/05/2016

1.2 Brief History

St Hilda Colliery in South Shields began in the 1820's and was an active mine for over a century. After mining stopped it became a ventilation shaft for Westoe Colliery which closed in 1993. The mine itself went to a depth of 859ft 4inches and at its peak it employed over 2000 people.

The colliery is an important monument in the history of mining due to a significant disaster in 1839 which killed 51miners, the youngest being 9 years of age. The tragedy is a prominent event in mining history as the disaster affected every family in the town. From this disaster came a series of reforms which changed mining safety forever. One major reform was the introduction of a government inspection act, which sought to enforce mining safety laws across the country. The disaster also led to the establishment of the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineering which developed knowledge and research to facilitate safer practice.

Another notable aspect from the mines history is the remarkable career of St Hilda Colliery Band who became national champions five times between 1912-26, they also played at Buckingham Palace.

The colliery currently sits vacant. It is without heating, water and utilities. The old mine shaft has been capped with a concrete slab that protrudes nearly 2m above ground level, the first and second floor can only be accessed by ladder. The original winding gear still remains and sits on the roof of the building.

The building is both historically and architecturally significant and this has led to it being Grade II listed. Work has been carried out to preserve the building, it was partially renovated in 1989 and 2000, but the colliery requires further work to bring it back into viable use and secure its future for the generations to come.

Image courtesy of Tyne and Wear Preservation trust

OS Town Plan: Tynemouth (Inc North and South Shields), NORTHUMBERLAND 1:528 1857

St Hilda's Colliery 1857

OS Town Plan: Tynemouth (Inc North & South Shields), NORTHUMBERLAND 1:500 1896

St Hilda's Colliery 1896

1.3 Significance and Context

From the Conservation Plan for St Hilda's Colliery Head Stocks:

"The importance of the surviving early twentieth century structures at St. Hilda's is reflected in their listed status. The significance is confirmed in the report prepared for English heritage as part of the Monuments Protection Programme which states 'although the building has been heavily modified, it is a rare example of a component that was once common in the North East' and points to the need for a sympathetic management scheme from the site once it had fallen out of operational use – this now being the case. The site is also recorded in 'A Guide to Industrial Archaeology of Tyne and Wear' (Ayris/Linsley 1994).

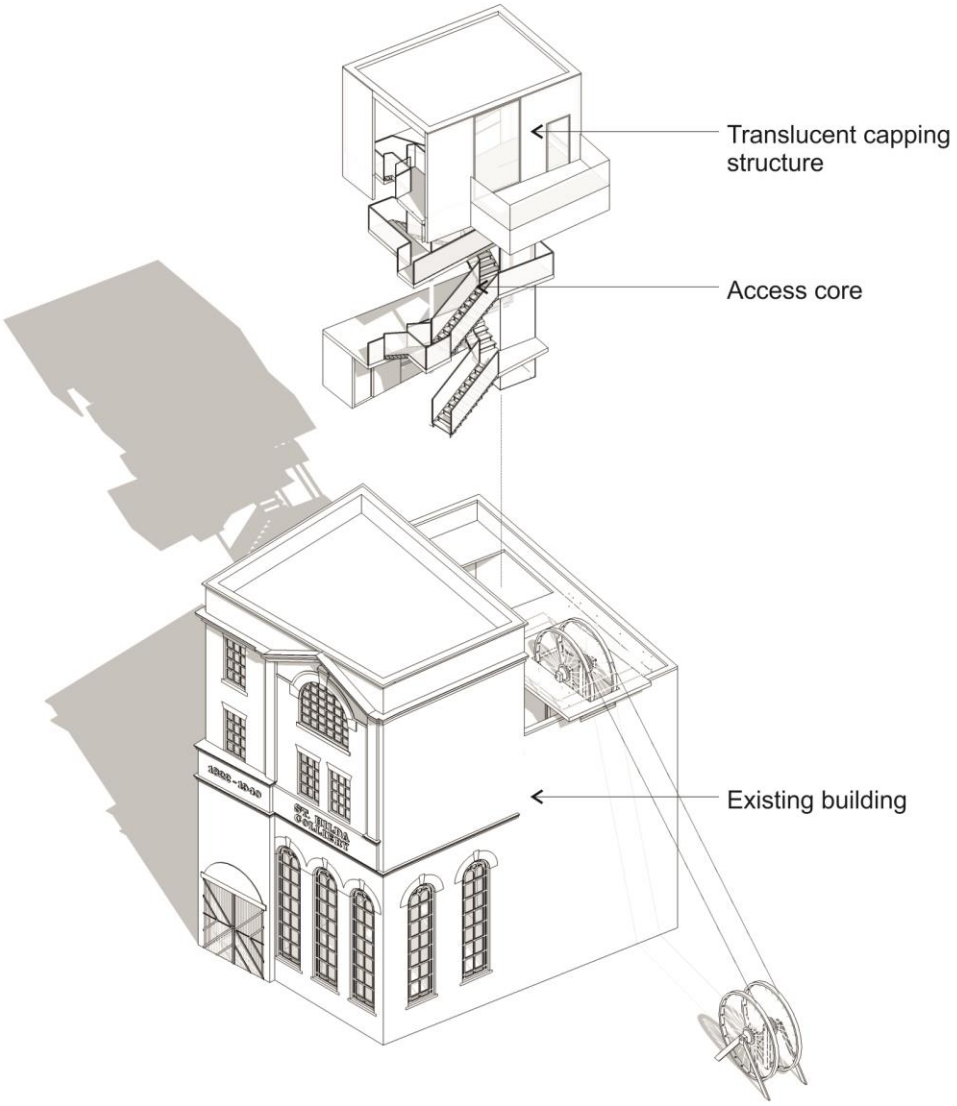
The importance of the site also rests in the context of surviving coal mining related structures in the region, which given the importance and size of the former industry, are now rare. Such has been the speed and thoroughness of reclamation scheme at former colliery sites that few buildings survive to mark or commemorate the role and significance of the industry. In the Tyne and Wear area only one other colliery pumping enginer house – the partial remains of the masonry walls of the Friars Goose engine house in Gateshead – and one other colliery winding engine house – Washing F Pit – survive. It is in this context that the Monuments Protection Programme refers to the former engine house at St. Hilda's as a 'rare example'."[2]

[2] Pigg, Ayton(1999), Conservation Plan For St Hilda's Colliery Headstock, Station Road, South Shields, South Tyneside: The Tyne and Wear Specialist Conservation Team p4

2.0 Proposed work to asset

The proposal is for a new staircase and lift core to be inserted into the building. This enables access to the floors previously only accessible by ladder. This new access core will be capped in a translucent structure which will allow light into triple height space on the ground floor. This glazed cap will provide panoramic views around South Shields and will also be a place to view the historic winding gear which remains on the roof. This access core will facilitate the installation of interpretation which will explain the history of the building and mining, existing artefacts such as the lift cage will also be displayed within the building. Parts of the building will be used as studios, a small kitchenette will be provided for use of the occupants within the building. Accessible toilet facilities will be provided for both the visiting public and resident artists. Additional artist pods will be located within the grounds of the pithead, these will also have access to the internal facilities.

As part of the design process the existing structure has been structurally appraised. This process has highlighted areas which are in need of repair or replacement for the building to continue to be usable. The roof to the structure has been condemned and will be replaced as part of the works.



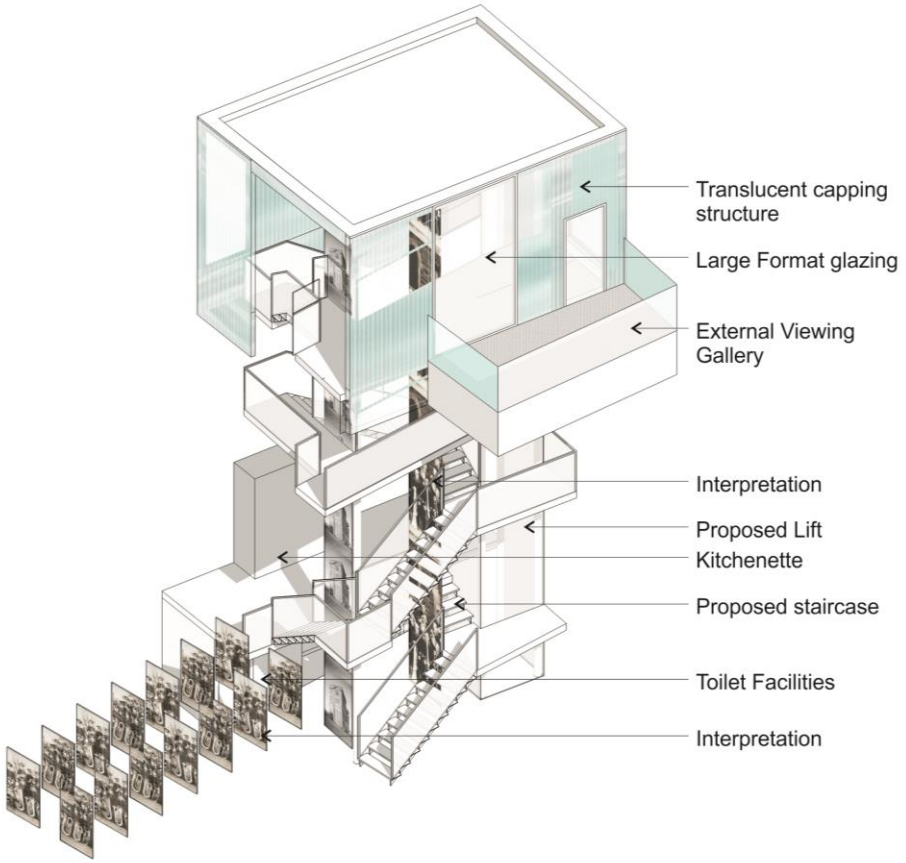
Axonometric of Proposal

2.1 New construction

The nature of the works is to facilitate the long term use of the building. The new additions proposed for the scheme will be clearly delignated from the existing by the contemporary materials. For this reason the new roof structure is to be clad using glass and translucent cladding with a minimal aesthetic.

The new insertions into the existing, the staircase, the lift core and the new landings will all be constructed in materials which won't be read as part of the existing- a lightweight industrial aesthetic rather than the heavyweight of the existing. The location of the vertical core is influenced by the need to replace part of the existing roof and it is located where the roof is to be replaced due to structural failure.

This approach will ensure that new additions won't detract from the heritage asset by mimicking or overtly referencing elements of the existing. The differing materials and detailing will allow the new elements to be read as such, with the new access core reading as a tool for navigating the existing building rather than an extension of it.



Axonometric of the stair and lift core

2.2 Works to existing structure

To be read in conjunction with photos and plan overleaf.
The existing structure is to have the following alterations to it,

1. The renewal of the roof to winding house
2. Raising the floor level to Studio/Public Space
3. Lobby doors inserted in front entrance
4. Fire escape door inserted beside lift entrance
5. Renewal of polycarbonate windows
6. Removal of internal stair
7. Blocked up opening reopened

1. <u>The renewal of the roof to winding house</u>
   This work is necessary due to corrosion in the steel work supporting the concrete slab forming roof. This is highlighted in Blackett-Ord Conservation Engineer's report. The proposed roof would be renewed and a single ply membrane would be used instead of bitumen felt as it has far better long term performance, the preferred finish can be discussed during the application process.

2. <u>Raising the floor level to Studio/Public Space</u>
   In order to facilitate level access this floor will need to be raised, the new floor will be stepped away from the windows with shadow gap details from the existing walls in order to be distinguished from the existing building.

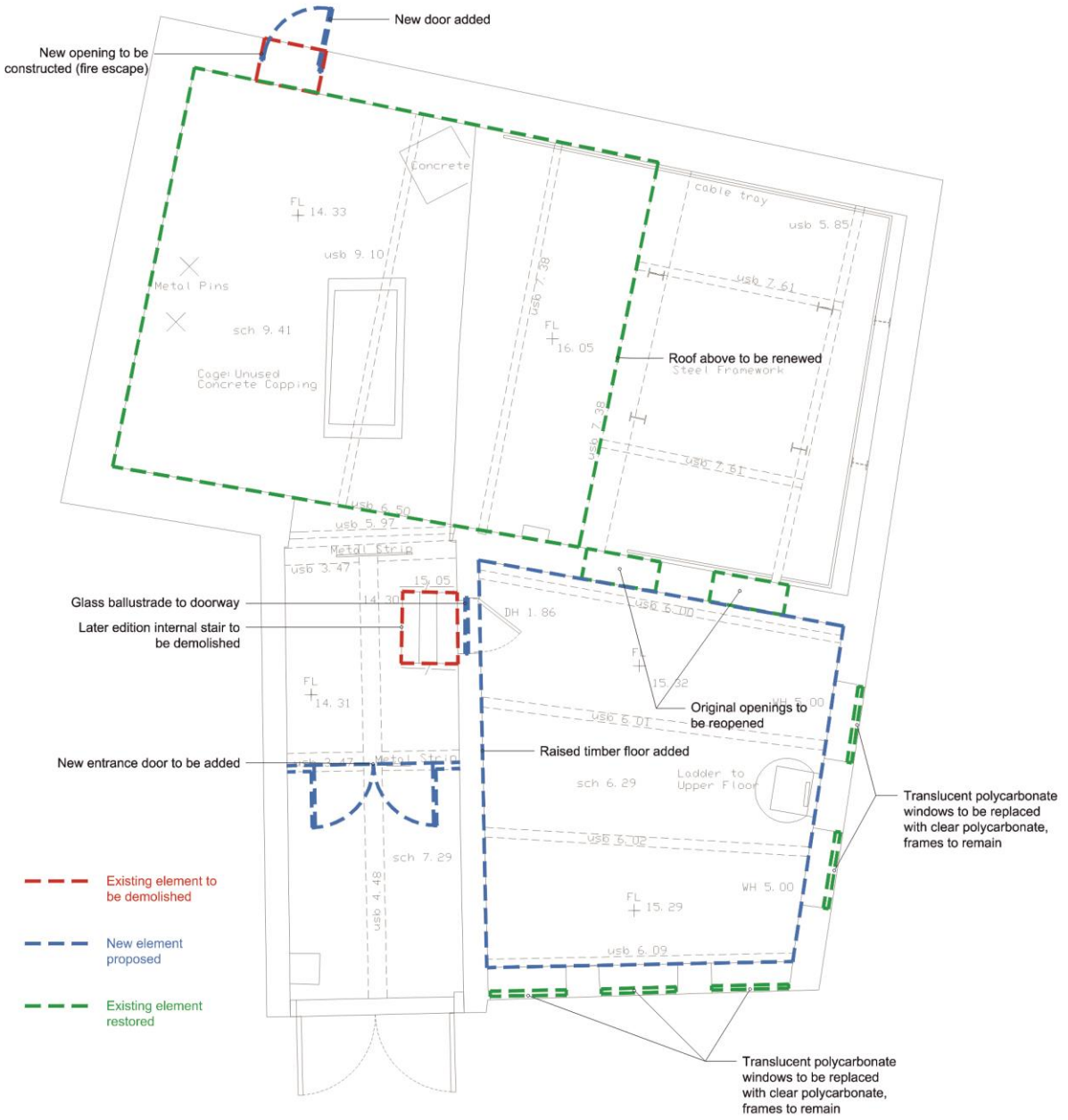
3. <u>Lobby doors inserted in front entrance</u>
   Lobby doors are proposed to the entrance hall of the building. This is in order to seal the building to reduce the heat loss through the front entrance and allow security and amenity. In keeping with design approach on the rest of the building these doors will be constructed in a contemporary aesthetic using aluminium and glass.

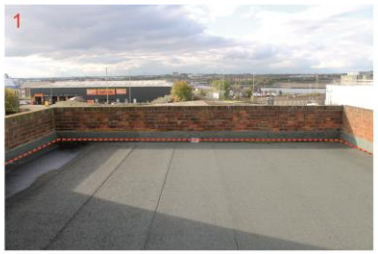
4. <u>Fire Escape door inserted beside lift entrance</u>
   In order to facilitate safe escape from the building in the event of a fire a new door will be required in the north façade on the ground floor. This door will be a coated metal door.

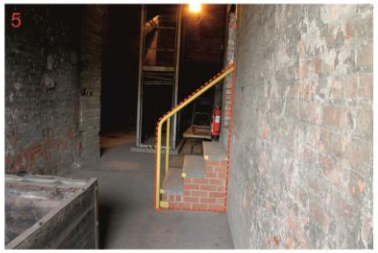
5. <u>Renewal of polycarbonate windows</u>
   The polycarbonate infills to the windows on the ground floor which are currently translucent will be replaced by transparent panels. The existing frames will be retained.

6. <u>Removal of internal stair</u>
   The internal stair in the entrance area is a non-original feature which is to be removed.

7. <u>Blocked up openings reopened</u>
   Blocked up openings to be reopened and used for access. Between the upper ground floor rooms







Demolition plan

2.3 Impact of work on the asset

As outlined the alterations to the existing structure are relatively small in terms of the overall scale of the building, the major structural work will be to the roof which requires re-roofing. A new roof utilizing up to date flat roof technology will provide far better waterproofing and will reduce the likelihood of further damage to the historic steel work which shows signs of corrosion. The new roof will be detailed to ensure the building doesn't suffer from moisture build-up which may have led to deterioration of the steelwork.

The new doors in the entrance area will reduce exposed of the existing structure which is currently open to the elements. This will both improve the conditions for the visitors and occupants and also protect the building from the worst of the conditions.

Another aspect of huge benefit for the long term maintenance of the building is bringing it back into use. The studios within the building will bring a day to day use back to the building, this will hugely assist the buildings general up keep and is a crucial part of the sustainability of the structure.

Work to the existing and new proposed work has been designed to be light touch and reversible further enhancing and protecting this heritage asset.