

Heritage Statement

Improvements to the
Arts Centre Building and
Landscaping

Our Reference:
S4726

Revision:
P3

Address:
Florence Arts Centre, Florence Mine, Egremont, CA22 2NR



0.0

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
 - 1.1 Background
 - 1.2 Site Overview
- 2.0 Current Use
- 3.0 History
 - 3.1 Site History
 - 3.2 Site History Maps
 - 3.3 Listed Building
 - 3.4 Local Assets
- 4.0 Proposed Scope of Works
 - 4.1 External Renders
 - 4.2 Internal Renders
- 5.0 Design Considerations
- 6.0 Conclusions



Rev	Date	Comment	Iss. by	App. by
P1	21/03/25	Initial issue for comment (EM).	JR	JW
P2	29/10/25	RIBA 3 Planning Issue (EM).	JR	JW
P3	02/11/25	Revised site plan and floor plans added (EM).	JR	JW

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The following Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of : **The Florence Arts Centre**

This statement has been produced to assist a Full Planning application for the Florence Arts Centre.

The proposed development is make substantive improvements to the building and the surrounding landscape. Focusing on the rich mining history on the site, with connections to surrounding grade listed monuments and buildings.

1.2 Site Overview

The existing building is located within the market town of Egremont, Cumbria. The site can be accessed via the A595, connecting west Cumbria's coastal towns, with various public transport routes that enter the town of Egremont. As the site is not located within the town centre, there is potential for connectivity routes to and from the town centre, suggesting potential growth for more accessible routes to the site.



2.0 Current Use

Florence Arts Centre, formerly known for its mining history of haematite iron ore, is now home to a single storey multidisciplinary space. The space offers various activities, from theatre productions to heritage tours, art classes to exhibitions.

Not only does the Florence Arts Centre offer numerous events, it also has a range of niche art materials that are handmade by the Florence Paintmakers.



3.0 History

3.1 Site History

The site around Florence Arts Centre is filled with history on haematite iron ore mining, dating back to the 1900's.

In 1913 the site was first sunk, later leading the mine to becoming the largest iron ore body in West Cumbria in 1923. Due to the site's rich deposits of haematite iron ore, a second shaft was sunk in 1940 by the Millom and Askam Haematite Company.

The 1950's brought a new underground connection between the neighbouring mine, Ullcoats. The iron ore could be found to produce deep red paints, pigments, cosmetics and dyes.

The mine later closed for the first time in 1968, quickly following the closure the site was purchased by the British Steel Corporation in 1969. Connecting the mine with Beckermet, another neighbouring mine to the site.

1980 led to the mine's second closure, as British Steel were cutting cost during this period. Those miners that were made redundant used their redundancy money to buy the property under the name Egremont Mining Company. With help from leading customers, Sellafield (British Nuclear Fuels LTD), who used the water that was pumped out of the mines for its cooling towers.

West Cumbria Mines Research Group opened a heritage centre in 1992 run by volunteers, providing tours down and around the mining area. In 1998, the second shaft was taken out of use due to health and safety concerns with the winder gearbox, which had been deemed unsafe.

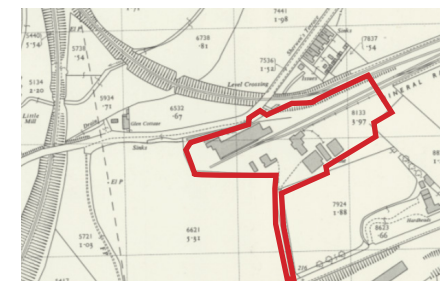
In 2007 the last miners left the iron mine due to Sellafield no longer requiring their services of water, unfortunately only selling iron ore was not an option the mine was able to take. The mine explored alternative uses, including the potential storage of nuclear waste, but none of these options were pursued.

The site was then adopted as an arts centre in 2011, which is currently providing workshop areas, theatre space, storage and an art gallery.

3.2 Site History Maps



1830 - 1880



1944 - 1974



2000



2024

3.0 History

3.3 Listed Building

List Entry Name:

Florence Iron Mining Pithead

Heritage Category:

Listed Building

Grade:

II

List Entry Number:

1449212

Date first listed:

01-Oct-2018

Statutory Address:

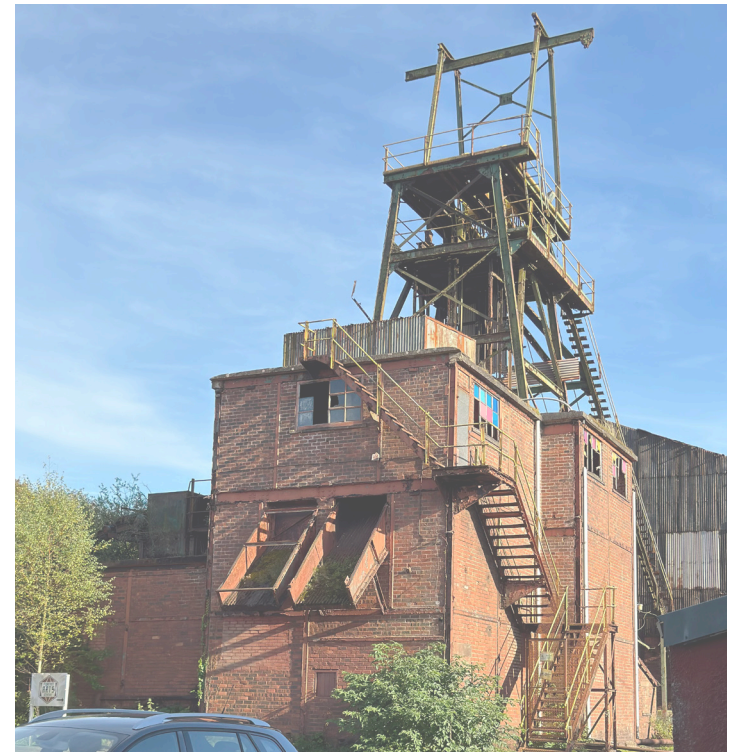
Florence Mine, Egremont, Cumbria, CA22 2NR

NGR:

NY0176210278

Although mining at Florence Mine began earlier in the 20th century, the current pit head opened in 1947. Today, several original structures remain on site, including the headframe and heapstead, winding engine, fan house, compressor, workshops, and ore processing plant.

The mine originally supplied pig iron, a key material in steel production. However, the iron ore extracted from the site also had a range of other uses, creating cosmetics, polished to make jewellery, and even mixed with grease by local shepherds to create ruddle, a red pigment used to mark their sheep. This tradition continues today, with Herdwick sheep still dressed in the distinctive red iron for shows and gatherings.



3.0 History

3.4 Local Assets

Egremont is located to the west of the English Lake District World Heritage Site. The surrounding architectural vernacular shows several periods of built environment, ranging from Grade I and II listed monuments and buildings towards the town of Egremont.

The Florence Arts Centre is approximately 740m from Grade I listed Egremont Castle, constructed during the mid 12th century with further additions in the 13th century. The Norman castle was constructed from locally sourced sandstone, featuring a motte and bailey, over looking the River Ehen. The Egremont Castle shares the grounds with a Grade II listed monument, a sundial located to the west of the castles gatehouse. On the north face of the sundial, it is dated 1762 and was later restored in the 20th century.

There are several red sandstone, Grade II listed buildings constructed during the 19th century throughout the town centre of Egremont. From the Town Hall and adjoining Market Street building, to the Church of St Mary and St Michael, emphasising on the rich heritage present in Egremont.



Florence Arts Centre - Egremont Cumbria

4.0

Proposed Scope of Works

The proposed scope of works is to focus on the existing Arts Centre and surrounding garden space.

The proposed spaces will create views of the existing mine, expressing the culture and historic nature of the site. To compliment these areas, development of the external hardstanding spaces for parking and recreation will be considered. Seating spaces, play areas, garden spaces, social hubs, presenting the opportunity to bring Egremont and the wider community together.

Internally the proposed layout will become more free flowing, as spaces will be opened up. A series of openable walls will connect areas such as the cafe, gallery and shop.

4.1 External Renders



4.1 External Renders



4.2 Internal Renders



4.2 Internal Renders



5.0

Design Consideration

On site the Arts Centre will highlight the importance of the sites history, retaining and not replacing the historic elements of the mine. The proposed scope of works is to include a large heritage space within the building, allowing visitors to learn about the sites history. Not only will there be a dedicated space, artefacts will be placed on display throughout the building.

On site there are various art supplies made from haematite found on site and other minerals from multiple areas within Cumbria. The proposed scope of works is to highlight production of these materials by creating visible spaces for visitors to see. This presents a point of interest and provides educational benefits on the use of the haematite from the mine.

The materials used on the external walls will be cladding and it will reflect the surrounding mine, replicating the haematite red. To ensure the mine is visible from the Arts Centre, larger windows will be placed on the east of the building.

There will be a series of walkways throughout the site, which will provide future access from the town centre of Egremont to the Florence Arts Centre. This will create future scope to connect the Arts Centre to heritage sites throughout Egremont via art trails, cycle paths or greenways.

6.0

Conclusion

This heritage statement has identified the importance of retaining the history on site at the Florence Arts Centre. Carrying out substantive improvements to the building will allow for educational benefits for the surrounding area, connecting the Arts Centre to the town and wider site.

As there has been minimal changes within the building over the years, this presents the need for more work to be carried out on the building overall, to ensure the safety of those utilising the space.

There will be no significant changes to the footprint of the building and the original building will be retained where possible. One small extension will be added to the north side of the Arts Centre, however this will be replacing a storage area and shed. The improvements carried out will benefit the structure and increase the thermal performance, with additional removal of any asbestos present.

The surrounding landscape will provide more walkways between various areas around the site, ensuring staff and public parking are separate, allowing the site to be easily accessed. Presenting future scope for connections between other heritage assets within the town of Egremont. The scope of work would have limited impact on the adjacent listed mine, however the Florence Arts Centre are seeking funds to restore the pithead of the mine, as the mine presents a risk of further decay, which would support the longevity of the listed structure and improve the visitor numbers of the Florence Arts Centre and Egremont.

In conclusion the existing site requires substantive improvements to ensure the building can be retained and not replaced. It is clear that improving the building will ensure the wider area and community are considered, presenting a sustainable future for the Florence Arts Centre and Egremont.

If you have any queries or require any further assistance please do not hesitate to get in touch.



E: hello@bdn ltd.com - T: 0191 535 6189 - W: bdn ltd.com

North East (Head Office)

The Old School, Simpson Street, Sunderland, SR4 6DR

North West

Room 110, Ulverston Business Centre, Ulverston, LA12 7LQ

Established 1983.

Registered in England and Wales, with Registered Office: Kepier House, Belmont Business Park, Durham DH1 1TW, United Kingdom.

Company Number: 1692536.

VAT No.: 391 8288 13.