

Florence Arts Centre - Egremont, Cumbria

Design and Access Statement



BuildingDesignNorthern

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Client:

Florence Arts Centre

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Address:

Florence Mine, Egremont, Cumbria CA22 2NR



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Rev	Date	Comment	Iss. by	App. by
P1	29/01/25	Initial issue for comment (EM).	JR	JW
P2	12/03/25	Revised issue for comment (EM).	JR	JW
P3	21/03/25	Rendered images added (EM).	JR	JW
P4	29/10/25	RIBA 3 Planning Issue (EM).	JR	JW
P5	02/10/25	Revised site plans and floor plans added (EM).	JR	JW
P6	27/01/26	Revised Proposed Access Road (EM)	JR	JW

1.0 Site Overview

1.1 Site Location

The existing building is located within the market town of Egremont, Cumbria, approximately 750m from the centre of Egremont. The site can be accessed via the A595, connecting west Cumbria's coastal towns, with connections to Little Mill and Vale View.

1.2 Historic Use

The site was formerly known for the production of haematite iron ore, produced within the Florence Mine. Originally the mine was used for pig iron, which was an essential for the production of steel. However, the iron was later used to create deep red paints, pigments, cosmetics, dyes and could be polished off to make jewellery.

Originally the main purpose for the Arts building, was to ensure there was an admin space for those working within the Florence Mine. Including space for office work and shower rooms, ensuring there was no cross contamination.

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.

1.3 Current Use

The Florence Arts Centre is now home to a single storey multidisciplinary space, offering various activities, from theatre productions to heritage tours, art classes to exhibitions. Not only does the site offer numerous events, it also has a range of niche art materials that are handmade by the Florence Paintmakers.

1.4 Proposed Use

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.

1.5 Topography

The site has an approximate 3.5m level change from Little Mill to the base of the east of the building. There is an approximate 1.2m level change from the north of the building to the south of the building. The garden located next to the pump house has an approximate 2.3m level change from the hardstanding to the south of the building.

The site is very accessible to the town, as it is only 10-15 minutes walk away from the centre via Little Mill. However, there is future scope to connect the town centre to the site via pathways.

1.6 Site History



1830 - 1880



1944 - 1974



2000



2024

1.7 Site Photographs



2.0 Access and Layout

2.1 External Access

The site is currently accessed via Little Mill along a narrow two-way country lane, approximately 4.5m wide. From Little Mill, the access road leading up to the car park of the Arts Centre narrows to approximately 3.5m wide.

There is also a level difference of approximately 3 metres between Little Mill and the car park, with may pose challenges for larger vehicles such as delivery trucks and coaches.

As the proposed scope of works is to increase the number of tourists visiting the site, therefore current access will need to be considered.



2.1 External Access

The site offers potential to create a one way system through the site, using the access lane via the south of Little Mill between the farmers fields. The one way system will allow vehicles to enter the site from the south and exit from the north of the Arts Centre.

Current Vehicle Access Route



Proposed Vehicle Entrance



Proposed Vehicle Exit



2.1

External Access

Public transport can be accessed by the A595 and Vale View. Leading from the A595 is Cycle Route 72, joining into the town of Egremont, this is a 72 mile stretch, known as part of the National Cycle Network.

The proposed design works is to ensure the site and surrounding area are more accessible for the community and tourist who visit the Lake District National Park. Future scope suggests connecting the surrounding areas with walkways, cycle paths and art and history trails.



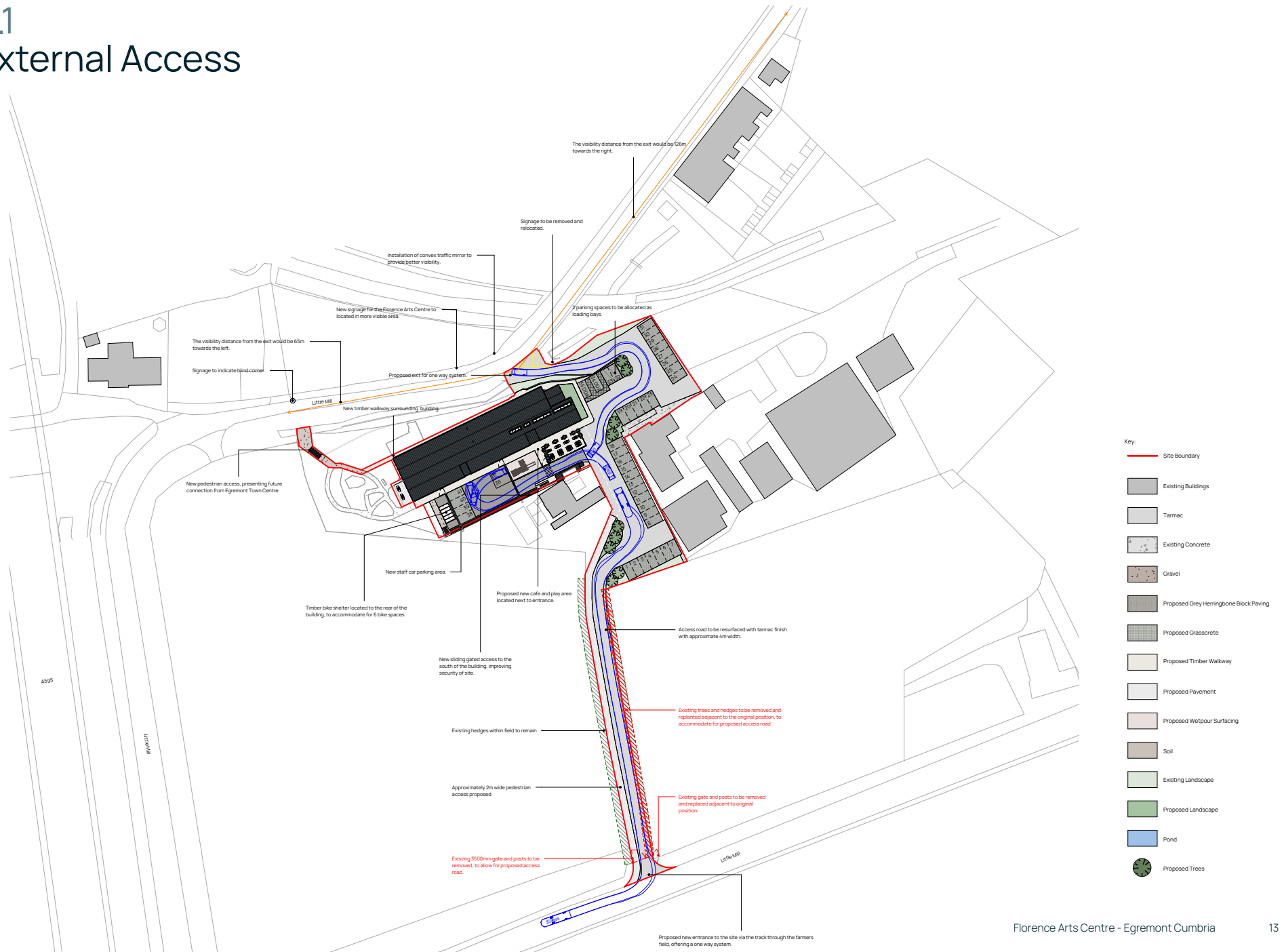
2.1

External Access

The existing car park is to be transformed into a play area space, with cafe seating/amenity. This space will be shared with a staff parking and delivery area, with minimal changes to the existing cribblock wall. There is a proposed turning area for vehicles next to the staff parking.

There will be public car parking provided to the east and south of the building, allowing for a larger number of visitors to access the site. It is proposed that there will be approximately 36 spaces in total for visitors and 6 spaces for staff. The all 36 visitor spaces, the access road to the staff car park and spaces 38-41 will be made from Grasscrete to enhance the BNG improving drainage on site.

2.1 External Access



2.1

Internal Access

A large entrance would be proposed, creating a more obvious direction of entry for visitors. There will be several other entrances for deliveries, staff and participants of any arts and crafts classes.

Internally the proposed layout will become more free flowing, as spaces will be opened up within the building. A series of openable walls and acoustic partition walls will connect spaces such as the cafe, gallery and shop. The presents more adaptable spaces will allow for ease of navigation with the building.

2.1 Internal Access



2.2 Layout

The proposed layout has been organised around the current use of each space within the building. The areas that are utilised more will open up to accommodate for more visitors, with the option to become more adaptable with a series of acoustic partition sliding partition walls and pocket doors. The main focus will be to open up the spaces within the east of the building and rearrange the spaces to the west of the building.

Cafe

The proposed cafe will be situated in the south-east of the building, next to the new proposed main entrance, with the possibility of having a sliding pocket doors and acoustic sliding partition walls within the space and a separate entrance if required. The space will have access to a private entrance for deliveries and storage area, located to the north of the building.

Shop

The proposed shop will stay in the same location, with the main entrance located to the right. Moveable walls and sliding pocket doors will surround the space, allowing for this to become adaptable.

Reception

There is a proposed reception next to the shop to allow for a dedicated area for staff members, ensuring they can greet anyone entering the building.

Performance Space

The proposed performance space will be located to the north-east of the building, with a series of moveable walls and acoustic partition sliding walls. As the performance space is a key area, it is important that this space can become larger and smaller when necessary.

Gallery

The proposed gallery will remain in the same area of the building, with moveable walls surrounding the space. This will allow for the space to connect with the performance space and shop.

Heritage Interpretation Space

To ensure there is a historic element within the building, there will be a proposed heritage interpretation space. Allowing historic artefacts to be placed in the space.

Outdoor Space

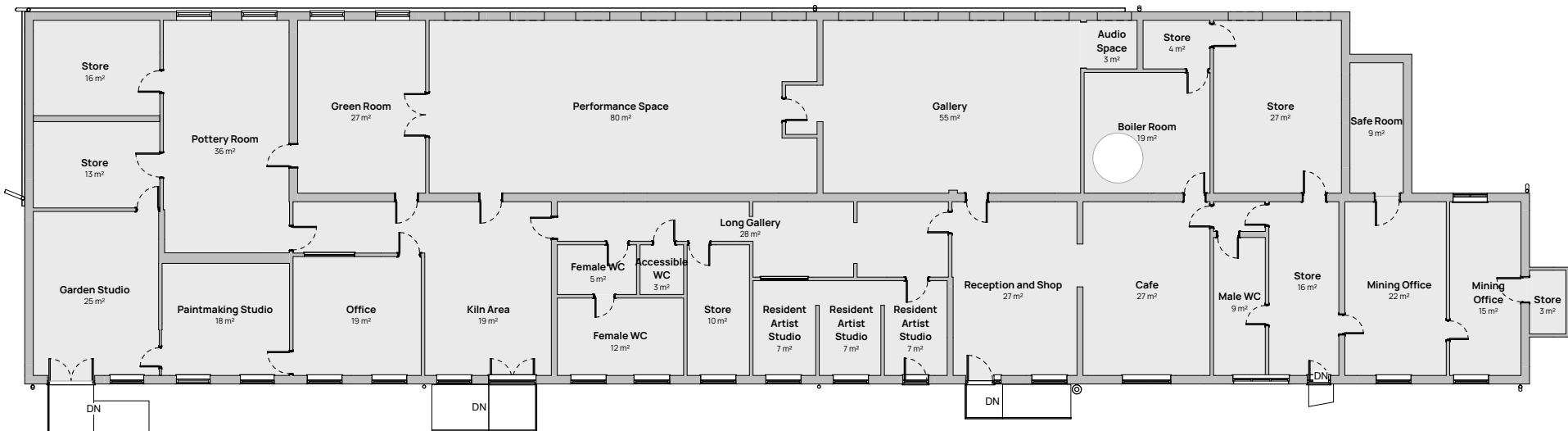
There will be a proposed outdoor seating area to compliment the cafe space, with the addition of play area. There will be visitor and staff parking, with various delivery areas available.

West Area of the Florence Arts Centre

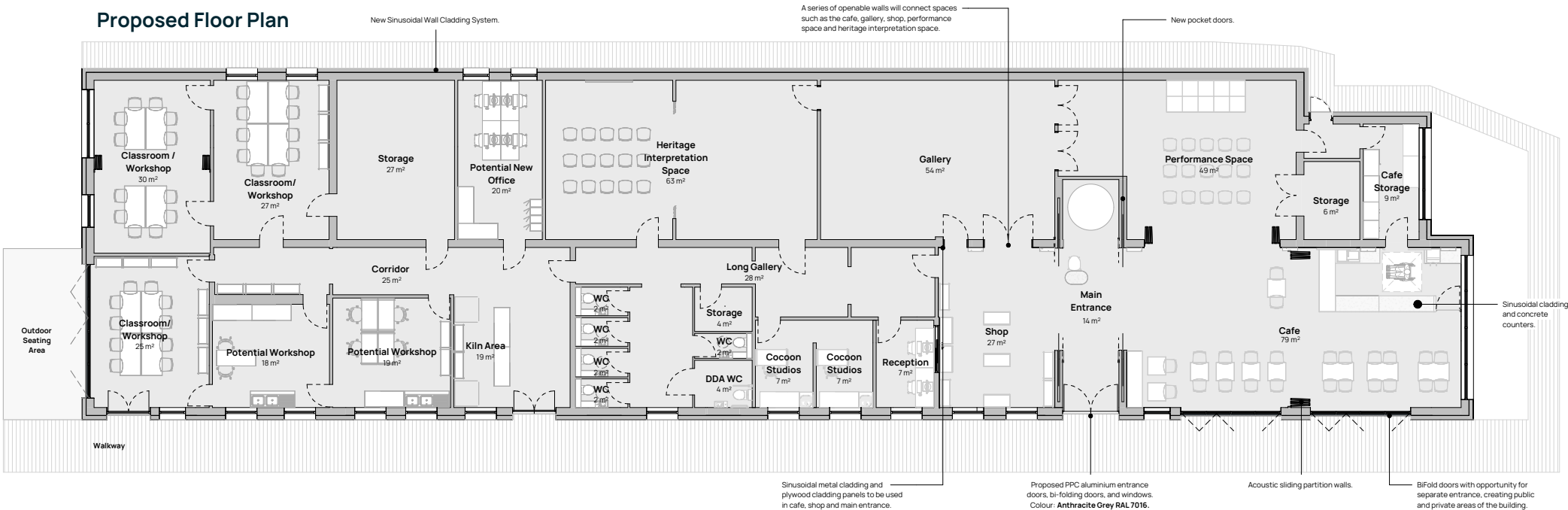
The proposed west side of the building will have various workshop spaces, allowing art classes and paintmaking to take place.

2.2 Layout

Existing Floor Plan



Proposed Floor Plan



3.0 Scale and Appearance

3.1

Scale and Appearance

Scale

The proposed design will remain a single storey building, with minimal changes to the footprint. The eaves will be approximately 4.5m and the ridge height will be approximately 5.6m, depending on the chosen materials used.

To open up the internal spaces, the ceiling tiles will be removed. This will reveal the roof structure, making spaces feel larger, utilising the height of the building.

There will be minimal changes to the surrounding site level change and walkways will be added where necessary, presenting a more even surface that will become more accessible for all.

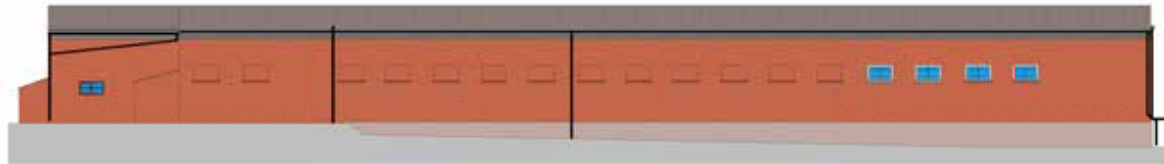
Appearance

The main appearance of the building will be retained. There may be changes to the structure of the building to ensure it is structurally sound. The chosen design will replicate the existing building, ensuring the space is conserved and not replaced.

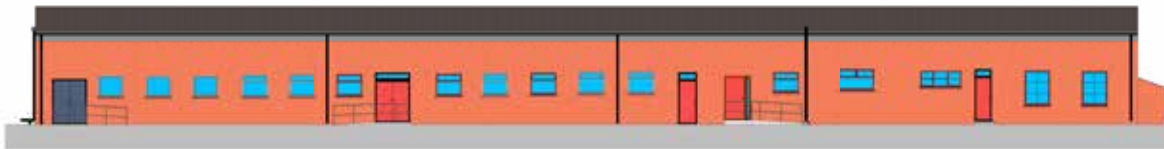
To improve the thermal performance of the building and the appearance, an oxide red sinusoidal wall cladding system and an anthracite grey River-Therm roof cladding system will be used. The oxide red will be used to replicate the haematite iron ore surrounding the Florence Arts Centre.

3.1 Scale and Appearance

Existing Elevations



North Elevation



South Elevation



East Elevation



West Elevation

3.1 Scale and Appearance

Proposed Elevations



North Elevation



South Elevation



East Elevation



West Elevation

4.0 Materiality

4.1 Materiality

The existing building has a masonry wall with a wet-dash red render external finish and the roof has a corrugated metal finish. The window frames and doors are mostly red, with some white window frames and blue doors.

The original wall structure will remain, with the addition of insulative materials where necessary and cladding as the external finish. The roof will also benefit from an insulative roofing system.

CA Group have provided several examples of external insulated cladding system that could be used on both the roof and walls, such as River-Therm on the roof and sinusoidal profiles on the walls. The colour of the wall cladding will be oxide red to replicate the surrounding haematite dust.

The existing fenestration will be removed and larger windows and entrances will be implemented, allowing more light to enter the spaces and views to be created highlighting the surrounding landscape. The proposed window frames and doors will be a modern anthracite grey.

River-Therm Roof System



Sinusoidal Wall Profile



CA Group Cladding Colour Recommendations



5.0 Precedents

5.1 Varde Theatre and Music House - Denmark



6.0 Proposed Design Concept

6.1 External Renders



6.1 External Renders



6.2 Internal Renders



6.2 Internal Renders



7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Conclusion

The designs proposed aim to provide a sustainable future for the Florence Arts Centre, Florence Mine and the surrounding community.

The proposed scope of works will ensure the building is retained where possible. The design will need to highlight the historic assets and heritage elements within the space, whilst considering structure and thermal performance. The materials suggested will aim to support these aspects of the building.

The proposed plans allow for future scope of works to be carried out on the surrounding areas on site and the community, providing funding is available. Seeking funding will reduce 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.



E: hello@bdnltld.com - T: 0191 535 6189 - W: bdnltld.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: The Old School, Simpson Street, Sunderland, SR4 6DR.

Company Number: 1692536.

VAT No.: 391 8288 13.