

## Clipping Bulletin 76, Spring 2014

The winner of the Trust's Architectural Award for 2013 has been awarded for the redesign and restoration of **57-59 Crossgate**. The challenge lay in two premises erected in the first half of the twentieth century which, although doubtless more functionally efficient than the properties replaced, could hardly be said to add attraction or interest to this important city centre street. Without resorting to another re-build, the architect has taken advantage of the steeply sloping street to add an additional storey to each building, bringing them in conformity with the adjoining premises higher up the street, and to render the lower property to further indicate its 'belonging'. Different colour renders continue the pattern set by the higher properties, Nos 53-56, all of which have had what the architect calls 'a lick of paint' so that a harmonious piece of streetscape has been created.

Items which contribute to the interest and attractiveness are the provision of strong window surrounds on the lower property and attachment of bays in the upper, the retention of the flagpole, indicating past use (as a RAF Club), and the insertion of a coffee shop, 'The North East's First Comic Book Shop.' The dramatic change that has been brought about can be seen in the two photos.

The architect responsible for the design was Gary Hodgson (who, by coincidence, was connected with Eshwin Hall, which won last year's award). The developer, Michael Williams, had a special interest in the project, since he lives opposite.

Of the other properties considered, the most ambitious and complex development concerned the University Business School, off Millhill Lane (designer, David Allsop of Gotch, Saunders and Surridge; contractor, Miller Construction). Sir William Whitfield's original building, running north-south, is now the front elevation of a complex running at right angles, eastwards. There have been several earlier extensions, but this one has produced a coherent layout, with a new central west-east spine which, beyond Whitfield's rear facade, separates open quadrangles to both left and right.

Besides offices and lecture rooms, residential quarters and catering facilities are included in a complex which provides a highly attractive working environment. The new entrance vestibule is stunning, with a ceiling of stretched membrane giving the appearance of daylight, while what was the rear face of the original building has been covered by angled, glazed curtaining falling over two floors and giving the new internal axis a gracious, open feeling. Unfortunately, from the open quadrangle the glazing feature is seen to be topped by prominent ventilation shafts (and a railing). The addition of high pressure laminate tiles on two sides of a residential wing is also questionable.

Byland Court, at the end of Hawthorn Terrace, is a highly commendable piece of townscape (architects Gray, Fawdon and Riddle). Prefabricated units of the former council offices, together with the car park, have gone, Byland Lodge has been restored and two rows of terracing erected, one lining Hawthorn Terrace, the other at right angles at the back of the rising ground. Between the latter and the Lodge is a wide landscaped area giving a pleasant open appearance to the area. One unfortunate feature of the upper terrace is the placing of each of the front doors on the first floor, reached by thirteen steps.

Finally, mention may be made to the small, humble and suitably named building, 'Avenue Corner' which is highly conspicuous as it bends round into Sutton Street, Here humour has given way to decorum, with the replacement of 'EbGb' a pop music shop which announced itself in yellow, to 'Abbeywood', interior designers with a suitably refined grey and cream facade.