

## Bishopwearmouth Pubs Profile (Listed) – The Rabbit, 1-2 High Street West

Project Pub REF: 004

HER REF: 4472

Location: [Streetview, 2020](#).

NGR: NZ39245701

**Name of Pub:** The Rabbit

**Any previous names?:** 2009 - Factory, Dakota

2012 – Destination, John’s

2014 – Westminster Bar

2018 – present – The Rabbit

### What did it look like in the past?



**Image 1:** Photograph of The Rabbit (then Oxford Auction Rooms) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century [accessed via Heritage Statement for application 22/00713/LBC].

**Image 2:** Photograph of The Rabbit (then an empty unit) in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century [accessed via Heritage Statement for application 22/00713/LBC].

**Image 3:** Photograph of The Rabbit in September 2017, from THS archives

### Current photographs:



© Sam Neale, August 2022. Photograph showing The Rabbit in 2022.

**Historic Environment Record:** Terrace of houses, now shops and offices. Early C19. Painted coursed squared stone with ashlar quoins and painted ashlar dressings. Welsh slate roof with brick chimneys. Two storeys. Rusticated quoins. Ground floor altered. First floor has sash and casement windows. Nos. 4 and 5 have sun-blinds. An important site facing the raised churchyard of the parish of St. Michael, and next to the Empire Theatre.

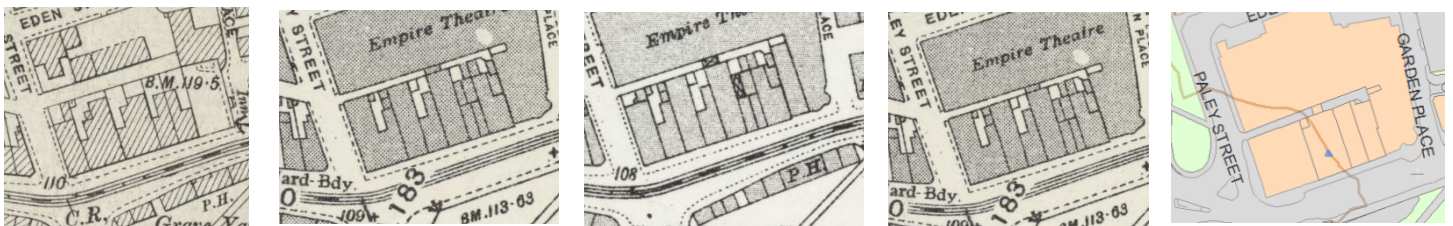
**Historic England Description:** Terrace of houses, now shops and offices. Early C19. Painted coursed squared stone with ashlar quoins and painted ashlar dressings; Welsh slate roof with brick chimneys and stone gable coping. 2 storeys, 3 windows each. Rusticated quoins. Ground floor altered. First floor has 4-paned sashes, except for casements to No.6, in moulded architraves. Windows of Nos 1 and 2 have open pediments; Nos 4 and 5 have hooded sun-blinds attached. Roof hipped at left and stepped up on alternate houses, with ridge and end chimneys. An important site facing the raised churchyard of the parish church of St Michael, Bishopwearmouth, and next to the Empire Theatre (qv).

**Historic Building Recording 2022:** The building comprises three former terrace houses, at the west end of High Street and on its north side, with their western return fronting onto Paley Street. The terrace steps gently downhill to the west, with the slope of the ground; the central and eastern houses are at the same level, the western at a slightly lower level. Although the ground floor has been significantly altered in the 20th century, the building is a good example of an early-19th century terrace, appearing on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey Town Plan of Sunderland c.1858 as two terraced houses, with a later third house extending westwards from the block, visible on the 2nd edition OS map c.1897.

This property comprises three former terrace houses, today a bar, at the west end of High Street and on its north side, with their western return fronting onto Paley Street. The terrace steps gently downhill to the west, with the slope of the ground; the central and eastern houses are at the same level, the western at a slightly lower level. The front wall seems to be of coursed stone, with ashlar dressings (including rusticated quoins to the upper part of the south-west corner), now painted black; the western return (to Paley Street) is of brick, in stretcher bond, again painted black, and the roof is of Welsh slates (on no.3 recently renewed) with a plain brick ridge stack between nos. 1 and 2, and another between 3 and 4

The ground and first floors of the property have been completely remodelled into largely open-plan bar areas, and other than a few sections of former party walls, now encased in modern material, nothing of the original fabric survives. The same is true for the first floor, with the exception of the stairs in the central and eastern sections. The stair in the central section rises from the ground floor, but its lower section at least is a recent reconstruction. It is of dogleg form with shaped tread ends, stop-chamfered stick balusters, a moulded grip handrail and square newels with flat moulded caps; there is a moulded skirting board, and a moulded plaster ceiling cornice to the lower part of the stair well. The stair in the eastern section is rather plainer (with unchamfered balusters, and without newels), and only survives between the first floor and the attic. As quite often happens, it is the second floor/attic that has escaped major alterations, with brick party walls and stud and lath partitioning into smaller rooms. The floors are of boards c 160mm wide. The central and eastern sections have a rear wall that rises to a full three storeys, with windows that have splayed reveals; that in the eastern section has an old boarded shutter with drilled holes for ventilation. The two parallel stairs are accommodated in a shallow projection from the rear wall, and the eastern stair has a stair window, a 9-pane casement with old external iron bars, and a cupboard on the east side of its landing with a door of four fielded panels. The central section stair rises to a lobby with three doors that retain old moulded architraves. The western attic (reached by descending three steps from the central one) has remains of a fireplace on the party wall, and is divided by an axial stud partition, the northern room being unlit. There are further stud partitions to the eaves, and dividing the eastern attic into three rooms (in addition to its stair well). The roof has king-post trusses with raking struts from tie to principals, and one level of purlins, resting on the backs of the principals and held in place by trapezoidal purlin cleats.

#### Map regression



**Map 1** - 1897 Ordnance Survey Map (25") [Accessed via National Library of Scotland].

**Map 2** - 1919 Ordnance Survey Map (25") [Accessed via National Library of Scotland].

**Map 3** - 1946 Ordnance Survey Map (25") [Accessed via National Library of Scotland].

**Map 4** - Modern Ordnance Survey Map (25") [Accessed via Historic England, Search the List].

Historic OS mapping of 1897 shows a row of terraced dwellings arranged west – east. At this point, there was 5 separate units. Between 1897 and 1919, substantial change had occurred following the construction of the Empire Theatre to the rear of the terraces and the buildings had been further sub-divided and altered. There is little overall change to the plan form between 1919 and 1946, though it appears as though the corner building and the adjoining one had merged to become one building. Modern mapping suggests that the rear of the building has been infilled to give the building a more regular plan form.

#### How long has it been a pub?:

The Rabbit did not start life as a public house. According to the Historic England List Description, the building was originally constructed as a row of terraced houses (Historic England, 1978). It was subsequently used as shops, and at some point in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century the building changed use again to a public house/bar. There has been a shift in property numbers along the terrace through the last century, with the former Brumwells Ironmongers listed at No.3 but what is now known as No. 4-5.

**Who worked here?**

**Shields Daily Gazette 27.04.1868**

2 High Street West – advert for M Brown, smallwares

**Sunderland Daily Echo 30.07.1879**

2 and 3 High Street West – advert for Beardall and Yates, Drapers

**Kellys Directory 1888**

1 High Street West – James Clifford, Boot and Shoemaker

2 High Street West - Alexander Hayhurst, Cabinet Maker

**Kellys Directory 1890**

1 High Street West – Mrs Annie Clifford, Boot and Shoemaker

2 High Street West - Alexander Hayhurst, Furniture Broker

**Sunderland Daily Echo 05.08.1092**

1 High Street West – vacancy at Stead and Simpson, Boot and Shoe shop

**Newcastle Daily Chronicle 16.05.1904**

1 High Street West – break in at Stead and Simpson, Boot and Shoe shop

**Kellys Directory 1914**

2 High Street West – Harriet & Co House Furnishers

**Wards Directory 1933**

2 High Street West – Nortons Ltd, House Furnishers

**Who lived here?**

**Census 1891**

2 High Street West – Alexander Hayhurst, Cabinet Maker with wife and three children

**Completed by:**

Caitlin Osborne and Judith Miller

**Date:**