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CONDITION SURVEY AND REPORT: JUNE' 2017

CONVERSION OF FORMER WHITE LION PUBLIC HOUSE AND ASSOCIATED OUTBUILDINGS TO REAR TO FORM 13 APARTMENTS.

This report relates to findings following a detailed condition survey of the building and related outbuildings in its current form as of June 2017.

The purpose of the application relates to the conversion of the existing building and related outbuildings to form open market domestic accommodation in the form of a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom apartments. The building has stood empty for nearly a year now following an unsuccessful attempt to convert part of the building into an ARTISAN Market. Prior to this, it is understood the building had remained empty for several years following the closure of the previous public house in the mid to late part of the last decade.

HISTORY AND BUILDING SIGNIFICANCE:

The origins of the building we see today are understood to date back to 1650 (or maybe earlier) when the structure stood as a small one up one down with a vaulted cellar below, adjacent to this stood a single storey cow shed and hayloft to the rear, forming what was in effect an original small holding. This agricultural building later formed the Smithy building that can still be seen today in the corner of the site to the rear courtyard.

Being at what was then the entrance into Buxton and sitting the other side of a road track (adjacent to the main River Wye) – that later became known as Spring Gardens, the prominence of this building soon became of a greater use as a small coaching inn. The building soon became of importance as a Coaching Inn in the 18-19th Century, handling over 4 horse coaches a week and grew as popular working mans stop over point through the town. The building became known as The White Lion Inn during this period.

For over 200 years the building grew in stature and size, with what was originally a small holding growing to 3storeys in height throughout with a central area of 4 storey. At the same time a Smithy cottage was added in front of the original cottage that we now see as the white painted building.

Behind the main pub, additional stables grew up to form what was by then a complete courtyard with the building to the side of the original Smithy. This courtyard serving its

purpose for stabling in association with the busy boarding house Inn throughout the period of horse drawn carriages coming into the town. With the arrival of the railway into the town and the decline of such use, this building was eventually demolished in 1895-97 to be replaced with a function hall to run alongside the road that had then been formed up the hill to the side of the pub – Holker Road. This building having been used for a variety of uses over the century including indoor Skittles, private parties, discos and snooker room. During the 1900's the importance of the public house diminished significantly as Spring Gardens grew up in front of the main building and its previous prominence was lost behind newer built structures. It's use as a pub kept going until the early 2000's but by then the writing was on the wall for this establishment, like many others as the market for traditional town centre public houses was in serious decline. Despite many failed attempts to sell as a going concern, the building eventually closed its doors for good more or less a decade ago.

The building lay empty for a significant period of time until roughly 6 years ago when it was purchased as a pretty derelict shell by its current owners, Jon Baigent and Lyn Broadbent. Over the years they have considered various options for the building and a variety of uses, with discussions having taken place with several third parties but none of these have come to fruition. Until late last year they, themselves had been trying to make a go of part of the building as an Artisan Market, but once again this attempt at a commercial use for the building failed. As has long since become evident, the setting of the building now behind Spring Gardens has meant that any restaurant/commercial or retail use for this building has come to an end, over a decade of trying has now made this obvious. Over the last few years various discussions have taken place with HPBC conservation area officers with regard to the use of the building and potential planning applications. Until recently there had been a desire to retain a mixed use of residential and commercial for the building, but over the last couple of years this position has changed to an acceptance that the only viable future for the building is for a pure domestic use as apartments.

The group of buildings sit within the town centre conservation area and are also listed. The listing dates back to 1997. HPBC themselves have on several occasions mentioned that they see no specific reason why the building should be listed but the British Listed building register makes reference to the original position of the building, the window styles to the front, the stone corner corbels and the irregular placing of windows throughout the building. It should be noted that the listing has never made reference to any part of the interior and indeed it is understood that no inspection as ever been made thereof as there are no remains of any specific character within.

CONDITION SURVEY AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR:



The ground floor of the building is to provide 2 ground floor apartments and the lower part of 2 maisonettes to the rear – former function room. In general the conversion of the building in this area requires little in the way of structural alteration to the front part of the building with the building up of two doorways, which will be recessed to retain the original opening form. Floor levels will also be altered adjacent to the cellar to aid the relationship between rooms, but these works relate to floor changes that have clearly taken place over the decades anyway. In other areas new studwork is to be used to create the defined domestic spaces within each apartment.

The existing front part of this building is in general in relatively good condition. These rooms have of course been the main part of the pub for the bulk of the life of the building and have thus always been maintained to a reasonable basic standard, the upshot of this has however meant that almost all original features have been removed during the course of the buildings life.

The refurbishment works in these spaces will relate to the requirement of Building Regulations and in the main, thermal upgrade works to both the walls, floors and ceilings. The base floor is a later addition concrete screed construction – dating back only a few decades and certainly of no character in context of the listing, with this in mind, the intention will be to break up the floor and upgrade to meet the basic requirements of Building Regulations with a new dpm, insulation and screed to the same base level we see today. The walls and ceilings to the ground floor have been plasterboarded over the last few years and thus retain no original features. Once again the need to meet Building Regulations would not be outweighed by the requirement to retain original features throughout this space (as there are none) and hence these elements will be upgraded to meet both Part L and Part E

To the rear part of the ground floor is what was the original function room, this area has, within the last couple of years seen new structure applied to allow for the activities of the Artisan Market. This has been in the form of an independent mezzanine level with timber supports at ground floor – these structures are to be removed to take the building back to an open shell up to roof level to allow for the conversion to 2 maisonette apartments. This room has once again been modernised over the years in terms of fabric – walls and floors etc but still retains the original window openings (although this part of the building is in itself a much later addition). These windows are to be retained as part of the conversion with making good as required, where new doors are to be inserted they are to be done so as to retain the original opening in an increased depth.



To upper part of this room a new first floor construction will be on hangers against the existing structural walls so as not to disrupt the original built form. The floors, walls and ceilings in this area are again later additions and thus the need to meet Building Regulations will be met both in terms of Part L upgrades to the floor as elsewhere, dry lining to the walls (they are modern plasterboard finishes) and insulation and membrane works to the roofline – the panelling and detailing to be carefully removed (other than the faced mirror finishes) to be reinstated as /if required. All new structure will be with new compliant studwork and will not disrupt the original structure

To the rear of this building is a later addition toilet block and store above, this structure is to be removed and will be covered elsewhere in this document.

CONDITION SURVEY AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR:



Over the last few decades major works have had to take place to the front left hand side room at first floor. These have included the patch repair of various areas of external and party wall structure where movement has clearly caused historical structural issues, these do now largely seem to be rectified although there is still an area for concern where elevational movement is evident around the front first floor windows. This movement may well be historical but the use of angle irons to strap front elevation wall back to the side elevation are suggested and further structural engineer recommendation should be sought in this area as no responsibility can be accepted for issues going forward. The two original windows to the rear of the room will be removed and blocked up to retain the profile of the original opening.

The ceiling structure over this room has been substantially upgraded several decades ago to both allow for greater loadings as the use of the public house changed and also to take into account the diminished structural integrity of original timbers thereto. Although now something of a mix of new and old timbers this ceiling appears to have very little movement in and its continued use seems acceptable for the domestic use. The use of a structural engineer to clarify same should be sought however as no responsibility can be accepted for issues going forward.

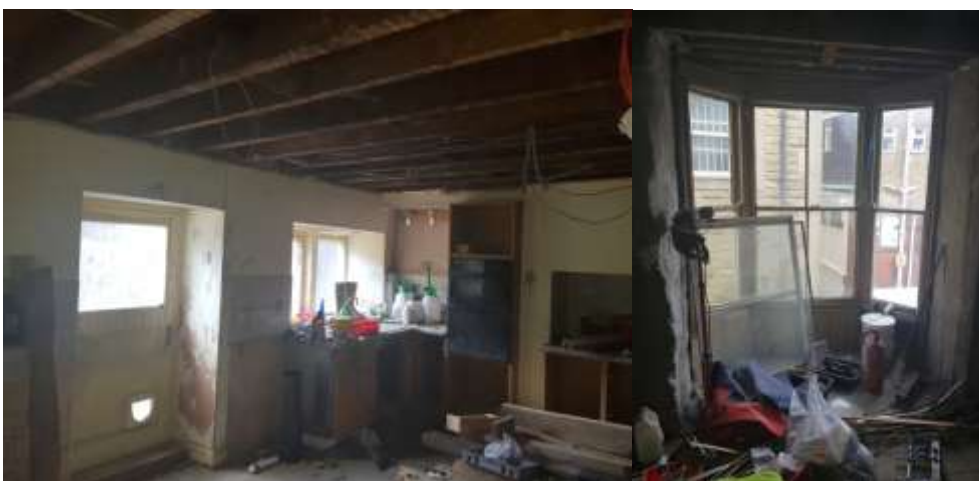
All plasterboard finishes have been removed in this room and once again there is no remaining original character that will be required to retain and thus the requirements of building control should be met both in terms of Part L, Part B and also Part E.

New structure to form the apartments indicated in this area will have no impact on the original building with the use of new compliant studwork without required structural support. The issues of windows and lintels etc will be covered elsewhere in this document.



The middle room at first floor has suffered from considerable structural issues in terms of the original timber ceiling joists over resulting in the need for the original oak supporting beam to have broken its back with a significant fracture thereto which is currently requiring the support from an Acrow. This beam is now beyond any retention either for support or character and must be replaced to provide structural purpose back to the ceiling in question. The replacement of the original with a new oak cross beam would seem to be acceptable if supported by structural calculations thereto. Not with standing this, much of the original ceiling structure has been backed up with later addition ceiling/floor joists (seen within the relevant pictures) to take away the structural use of the original structure meaning this has become largely redundant. There is a clear case for the replacement of the existing floor structure or at the very least, the treatment of all areas against any continued dry rot and wood worm thereto.

To the walls, original wallpaper finishes dating back to the 60's are still in place but these are clearly of no retainable character and should be removed to ascertain the condition of plasterboard finished below. It is known that these will be plaster finish back to the original stonework. The wall is of no real significance and again it is argued that the requirements of Building Regulations should be met in these areas.



To the right side of building at first floor are the remains of what was clearly the domestic use of the building – the kitchen areas still being evident in part to the rear. The structural condition of this part of the room is again relatively sound.

This part of the building is to form two maisonettes to front and rear with new interconnecting staircases within the footprint of the respective apartments. To the rear existing furnishings are still in place but clearly represent latter additions to the building – likely dating back to the 1970's. The removal of these elements will allow for compliant structure as elsewhere without impact to the building as a whole. The ceilings to both the front and rear rooms have been removed as they have throughout the building and indicate that the existing timber structure appears to be adequate for the purpose of the conversion with the doubling up of every other joist suggested to add back strength to the floors in question.

The only required structural alteration to allow for the conversion in this area is building up of the connecting door between the two rooms front and rear. This door is unlikely to be original to the building due to the significant change of level between these spaces and the restricted head height within the opening between the two.

The front room is again of reasonable condition with some structural works already having taken place to allow for movement within the gable wall thereto. These works seem to have prevented further structural problems thereto. The staircase to the floor above, which will form the upper part of the maisonette, is clearly only a make shift addition rather than any permanent provision to provide access thereto and as such will be replaced with a new purpose made unit. This will also allow for remedial works to take place to the floor structure thereto. Although the timber joists are of reasonable condition they are clearly not of sufficient depth to allow for any permanent domestic use over and certain joists appear to have broken their back, hence the works suggest on doubling up of the floor with new joists either side to allow for the intended use. As before, the fact that all ceiling and wall finishes have been removed will allow for the Building Regulation compliant works to take place without any detriment to the listed status thereto.



CONDITION SURVEY AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR:

The left hand side at first floor will once again form a one bedroom apartment using the original area thereto. These rooms currently open up into the roof space and the timber structure thereto as all ceilings have been removed to allow for remedial works some years ago. This has allowed all timber to be revealed to show a structure that is of relatively good condition. Main feature purlins are in place throughout this space and these are intended to be exposed as feature areas within the proposed layout. All timbers are to be treated accordingly and the rake of the ceiling insulated to comply with Building Regulations. There are several issues with support structure in this room sitting directly over poor condition timber lintols but this item will be covered elsewhere.

The main problem in this space, as throughout the second and third floors, is the existing secret valley. This valley clearly has certain structural and weather tight issues which require addressing. It is intending to replace the full length of the valleys with new insulated and damp proofed lay boards to take plyboard and leaded valleys over. These works are to be undertaken in accordance with the general re-roof of the property which is intended, and will be covered as an item elsewhere in this document.



The central part of this unit has significant issues in terms of the floor structure that is to form the dividing floor to the maisonette unit it creates upto the third floor space over. The floor is both rotten and also inadequate in terms of timber depth to span the room. It is currently not safe to walk on this dividing floor over and its replacement is the only way to ensure this part of the building can be fit for purpose. This can of course be allowed for by doubling up with new joists adjacent to the existing but as trimming is required for the new staircase within the apartment between the two levels, a more sensible approach leans towards the removal of the floor structure thereto and the replacement with new throughout.

The roof structure over at third floor is once again of a relatively sound nature if somewhat haphazard in form. Existing purlins thereto are worthy of retention as exposed feature following the remedial treatment of all existing timbers.

Building Regulation compliant works will again be undertaken without disruption to the building fabric as all surface finishes have been removed some time ago.

To the right hand side of the second floor, once again all roof timbers are exposed. This clearly indicates that although the roof timber layouts are somewhat haphazard, they are relatively sound in nature and all original timber may be retained (it is clear that the building has been re-roofed in this area over the decades). Original purlins and king post trusses are in place in these areas and again following remedial timber treatment they are worthy of retention.

Once again a significant area of fabric finishes have been removed meaning that no areas are retained as character relating to the listing. New fabric finishes will thus once again comply with Building Regulations thereto.



CONDITION SURVEY AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROPOSED EXISTING STAIRCASE:

An existing staircase is in place within the centre of the building but over the decades this has become structurally unsafe, to the point where in places no supporting structure is even in place to hold the structure up.

The retention of this stairs is clearly not a desirable or viable option in terms of the layout of the proposed domestic use. The proposed does however retain the area encompassing the landing and staircase as the zone for the proposed new provision. All windows thereto will be retained relating to existing with a new access point from the rear courtyard level following the proposed removal of the later addition lean-to seen today.

New works are to retain the detailing of the existing staircase seen today but in a new compliant structure.



CONDITION SURVEY AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROPOSED OUTBUILDINGS:

The original outbuildings to the courtyard currently provide garage and storage areas, having originally related to stabling and smithy for the original Coaching Inn from the 18th century.

Several discussions have taken place over the years relating to the demolition of these buildings and the replacement with new town houses, a proposed rendering even having been discussed with HPBC conservation officers. A general consensus of opinion seemingly indicating that this may have been acceptable. The proposal put forward as part of the scheme however intends to retain what are strong characterful buildings all be it in a lifted form.

The stable buildings are in general of sound structure other than the internal facing elevation to the rear of Boots, which requires major making good or a rebuild as existing. In order to allow for a good standard of accommodation within the roof space it is intended to lift the roof by some 500mm or so. This can easily be achieved without detriment to the original building and in many ways will act as the catalyst for much needed enhancement of the building in question. Roof coverings that are completely out of character sit to the rear of the buildings throughout and it is evident that there is some movement to the roof structure in place. The new works will allow for the removal of same and the increase in height through the use of attic roof trusses. These works will allow for a new roofline in natural blue/grey slate to match with cast guttering on rise and fall brackets.

All new stonework is to match existing in random limestone with gritstone detailing with all existing pointing raked out to allow for bag/brush pointing throughout.



**CONDITION SURVEY AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROPOSED
ELEVATION WORKS, ROOF AND JOINERY:**



In the main the front elevation of the building consists of single glazed softwood sliding sash windows. A good percentage of these could be refurbished, stripped down, treated and redecorated to an acceptable standard, this doesn't however address the desire of the client to offer good quality accommodation that meets the needs of Building Regulations in thermal efficiency and compliance. The suggestion is to replace all joinery items with new narrow casement hardwood double glazed sliding sash units that are designed to meet the requirement of conservation and listed building standards. These windows will allow for a significantly improved elevation appearance that still respects the requirements of the listing and also the desired thermal improvements.

Numerous companies now make narrow casement double glazed units that allow for glazing bars and frame thicknesses to meet the requirements of Conservation and Listed Building standards and be accepted by same, samples will be provided by condition.

Internally all existing windows have timber lintels over that in many cases are either rotten or providing substantially inadequate support over. The retention of these units is however respected due to the general requirements of the building as a listed structure. With this in mind, the intention is to treat all existing lintels but provide steel plate support below to allow their retained use without the concerns of structural integrity.



To the rear many windows are poor quality softwood plain casement units that are without doubt not original in either style or form to the original building. Their retention does not to enhance the appearance of the building or to respect its listing, thus all windows to the rear will be replaced with new sliding sash hardwood units as outlined above.

The function room building will retain the original windows that are in place to the side elevations. These units will be refurbished, treated and made good as required. Internally all units will be thermally upgraded through the use of secondary glazing.



CONDITION SURVEY AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROPOSED ROOF WORKS:



In general, the roof coverings and structure within are of a reasonable condition, they do not however in any way meet the requirements of Building Control in order to meet the proposed desire to expose character purlin and rafter features within by opening up rooms to the rake of the roofline. No roofing membranes are in place within the building (other than one very small area to the rear) and this requires rectifying to allow for both insulation and damp separation needs. In order to achieve the required standard thereto, all roof coverings are to be carefully removed and retained to be re-laid. The exposed roof structure is then to receive new timber battens with any remedial works required to be undertaken at the same time and a new Tyvek breathable membranes – at this time the secret valleys will also be replaced with all new lead work in code 5. Existing natural slate roof coverings will then be put back to the roof structure with any replacement in reclaim to match. New cast guttering will be put in place on rise and fall brackets to replace the plastic in place to date. In order to meet the requirements of Building Regulations and allow for exposed roof structure features within, the existing roofline will be insulated with either kingspan or Superquilt and under drawn with new plasterboard and skim to the rake.

GENERAL NOTE:

The findings of this survey clearly indicate the existing listed building can be converted into the proposed domestic accommodation use without detrimental impact and in many ways they show that conversion of same is desperately required in order to ensure the building doesn't fall into further decay. The works proposed and the remedial aspects therein will entail considerable expense to the client and as such it is advised that the only real way to achieve this is through a conversion to allow open market sale of the apartments of a good quality. The listed building status means that any social housing requirements cannot guarantee the future viability of this building and would ultimately have a negative impact on the refurbishment as a whole. Cost will without doubt be very significant due to the size and scope of the conversion and the limitations that social housing will impose on this mean the project would not be viable or safeguard the future listing.

NB:

The comments within this report relate to structural works in several cases and it must be noted that where relevant all structural reports and calculations must be provided. This report in no way provides structural guarantees and makes recommendations only, no responsibility can be taken relating to same and all relevant detail information must be sought as/if required.