Heritage
Impact
Assessment

The Commercial, College St, Wxm.



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HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE COMMERCIAL, COLLEGE STREET, WREXHAM.

Objective:

The application has been submitted for the refurbishment of the front and side elevations and will also include overhauling the roof.

Background:

The building frontage consists painted brick with slate roof. 3 storeys, 3 window range, with entrance to left of centre. 4-panelled doorway in moulded wood architrave with console brackets to entablature, paired windows to its right, and a single window to the left. These were formerly 12-pane sashes, the glazing bars now removed from the lower lights. Round arched passage entry to right. Upper windows are 12-pane sashes with wider 16-pane sash over entrance, and 6 8-pane sashes of less height in upper storey. All windows have painted flat arched stone heads. Plain wood eaves band, and 2 axial stacks in hipped roof.

Wrexham is in the centre of the densely populated industrial North-east Wales, close to the Cheshire border, approximately 8 miles south of Chester. The town is the largest in North Wales and is home to approximately 40% of the total population of the county borough. Often described as the capital of North Wales, Wrexham is an area of commercial and industrial growth.

The Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area includes the main historic and commercial streets of the town centre where the Parish Church of St Giles is the main focal point.

The Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area was designated in March 1974 and its boundary extended in August 1975, June 1985 and April 2007. The Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area Character Assessment and Management Plan was adopted in January 2009.

Wrexham Town Centre Conservation Area encompasses an historic market town with a character largely dominated by the 18th and 19th century architecture of the Georgian and Victorian periods.

St Giles Church is the principal Medieval structure and focal point around which the town has developed. The majority of buildings are two and three storeys high giving the town a human scale and intimate urban character.

Please refer to map showing extent of Conservation Area.

The Commercial falls within the conservation area and lies in close proximity to St. Giles Church. The building dates to c. 1820, and was probably purpose-built to be a public house. The building was first recorded as "The Commercial Hotel" in 1841, and replaced an earlier building on the same site, which had been continually occupied by the late 17th century. College Street is considered part of Wrexham's historic medieval core due to it being adjacent to St Giles' Church. College Street is connected to Temple Row.

The application site has been subject to a change of use planning application from public house to residential units most recently and received full approval.

Reason for listing – A good example of a town public house of C1820.

Group value with The Cambrian Public House.

Justification For the Works Proposed:

The existing front and side façade is currently in a state of disrepair and the client wishes to carry out much needed repairs whilst also improving the aesthetic appearance. The aim is to be sympathetic to the history of the building and not altering/adding any new openings to ensure consistency with the existing.

The existing roof structure is in dire need of repair due to the lack of a roofing membrane, rotten roofing timbers and broken or loose slates.

The front elevation consists of painted brickwork/stone work which is flaking and loose. There is an abundance of the electrical cabling serving the external lighting and alarm system which is both unsightly, and in some cases, redundant.

There are currently downlighters located under eaves level which are of modern design and jar with the old nature of the building.

The sliding sash painted timber windows are original and show sign of rot in some cases. The paint is flaking and has contributed to many of the windows being unable to slide open as originally intended.

The 4 panelled main entrance door has rot to the bottom section that will need replacing and making good.

The rendered side elevations will need repainting.

The brickwork chimney stacks will need to be repointed and any flashings made good/renewed as they are currently showing signs of leaking water into roof space. The degraded haunching will likely need replacing to ensure a watertight seal around any pots.

Impact Upon the Setting of The Conservation Area:

The principal elevation faces north and can be viewed from a public side road and footpath that leads towards the town centre and past St. Giles Church.

The proposed refurbishment of the front and side elevation, will have a beneficial impact upon its settings due to the use of high-quality materials, rigorous preparation work prior to repainting the brickwork, extensive refurbishment of the existing windows to ensure they will be in good working order, the removal of any unused cabling, the replacement of the existing lighting with something more complimentary and replacement of the main central door which will be more akin to the age of the building.

Beneficial Impact Upon the Significance of The Building:

The proposed refurbishment work will enable better use of the building as an apartment building whilst limiting any loss of historic features. The proposals will respect the original form of the frontage and preserve existing openings and features externally.

The design and use of materials will complement the existing building.

Negative Impact Upon the Significance of The Building and Mitigating Factors:

The removal of the public house signage, which although not original, could be seen as the last remnants of the original use of the building.

Materials:

Windows - All the original frames and box units will be restored back to the correct condition, only replacing what timber is essential. This includes all internal framework and mouldings.

Existing sashes will be repaired where possible and made good. If refurbishment is not viable then they will be removed and replaced with new hardwood double glazed sashes using heritage approved 12mm units including new weights, pulleys and cords. Install new traditional staff and parting bead with hidden draft proofing by routing out the beads and sash.
Paint all windows and sills including primer, base coat and top coat. The colour will be white.

Main central door – The client wishes to keep the existing door and have it fully refurbished to maintain the historic value. The door will receive a painted finish in same colour as existing.

Right hand side door to be adequately prepped and repainted in same grey colour as existing.

Left hand side door to be adequately prepped and repainted in same grey colour as existing.

All stone window head and cills will be adequately prepped and repainted in colour as existing.

Painted brickwork walls will be adequately prepped and repainted in white to match existing.

The roof will be stripped back to the original timbers, refelted, battened and the original slates will be refitted where possible. Any new slates will match existing. The chimney stacks will be repointed, haunched and will receive new lead flashings where required. The overall look of the stacks will remain intact.

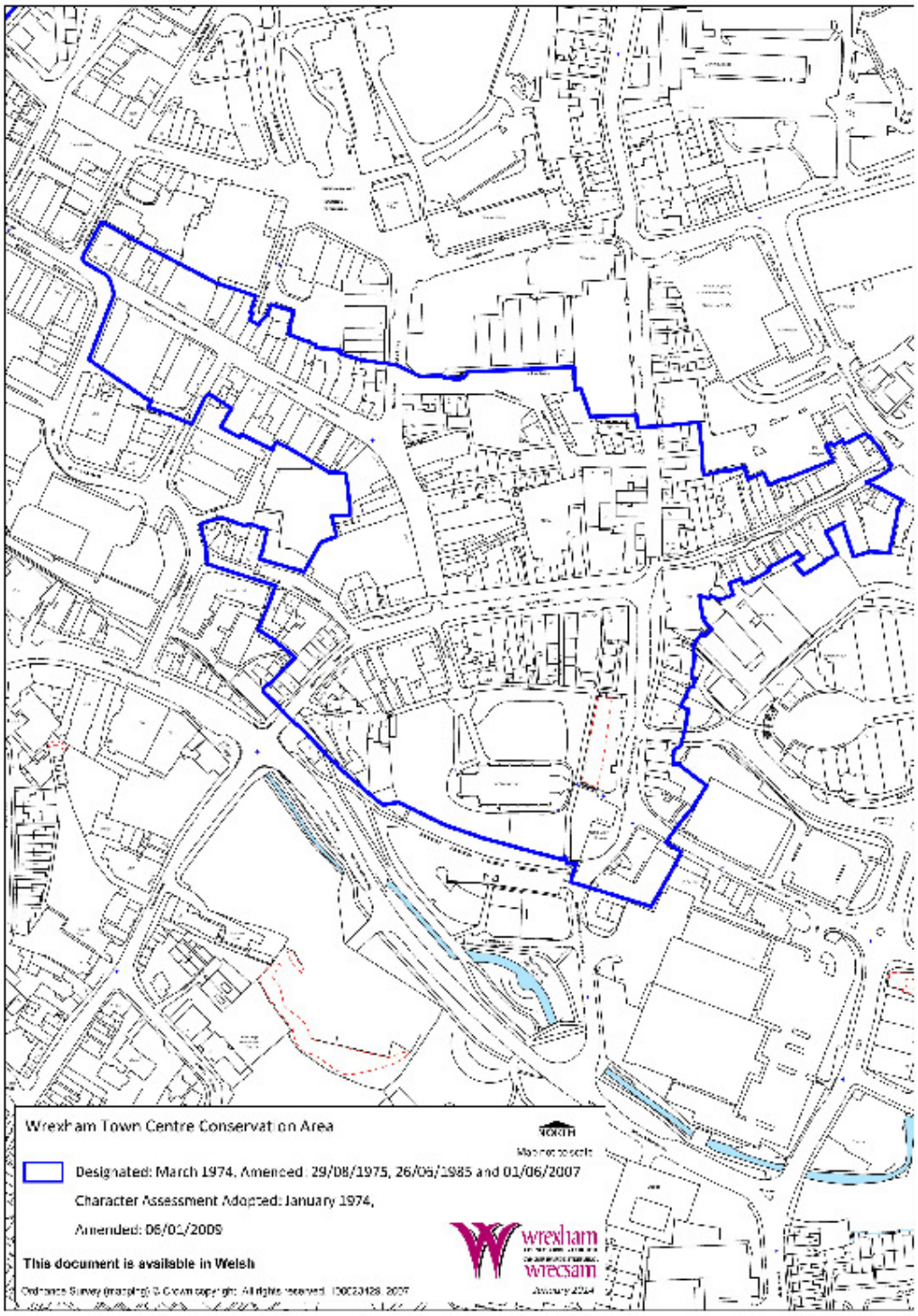
The gable end will be repainted in a colour to match existing and any addled/delaminated sections will be made good.

Conclusion:

The proposed will seek to minimise any loss of historic features and to complement the existing through the use of matching materials where new are required and making good/refurbishment where possible.

The client wishes to maintain the same colour scheme as existing which will have a minimal impact on the surroundings whilst also creating consistency.

In doing so the character of the building will be preserved and improved upon.



Map showing extent of Conservation Area.



Photo of existing door on right hand side of front elevation.



Photo of existing central door to be refurbished and retained.



Photo of signage and lighting.



Photo of door to right hand side.



Sash windows.



Photo of roof.



Light fitting to be used on front of building as indicated on proposed elevation.