Proposed Residential Development

White Horse Inn
Overton

Heritage Impact Statement

The aim of this Heritage Impact Statement is to demonstrate how the proposed residential conversion of the White Horse Inn would respect and respond to the heritage significance of the site and its surroundings. This statement is concise and proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development.

Purpose:

To provide the Local Planning Authority with a clear understanding of:

- The significance of the heritage asset (the White Horse Inn);
- How the proposed residential conversion may affect that significance; and
- Measures that will be taken to preserve and enhance the asset.

1. Introduction

1.1. This Heritage Impact Statement has been prepared to accompany a full planning application submission for the residential conversion of the Grade II listed White Horse Public House in Overton Conservation Area.

1.2. This document is submitted to assess the impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the site. The design concept focuses on the sensitive conversion and preservation of the existing building, with the aim of enhancing the structure in a way that causes the least disruption to its historical character.

2. Heritage Context and Significance

2.1. Current Listing status: Grade II Reference number: 14438.

An early C20 rebuilding of an earlier building, employing a neo-vernacular style. Ruabon brick with stone dressings to lower storey, mock timber framing above, in quatrefoil panels to first floor, and sunk quatrefoil panels to strongly jettied upper storey, the jetty carried on heavy brackets. Red plain tiled roof. Three-storeyed, wide 2-window range dominated by 2 gables and service wing to rear, with hipped roofs stepped down in height from the main range. Arched entrance to courtyard to left, with main entrance to public house alongside. Two paired mullioned and transomed windows to main bar. Bowed oriel windows in upper storey with leaded lights, and 6-light mullioned windows with leaded lights beneath gables in upper storey. Brick and terracotta end-wall stacks.

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Part of a continuous building line on High Street, between No.20 and Metcalfe Building.

A good example of early C20 neo-vernacular building, showing the use of a distinctive architectural style for a commercial building. Part of an important group of buildings on High Street.

(Source: Historic Wales)

2.1. The site is in a run of Listed Buildings on the eastern side of “High Street” in Overton. The property is a three-storey example of early C20 neo-vernacular building, showing the use of a distinctive architectural style for a commercial building. The building is an example of the Black-and-white Revival which was amid-19th-century architectural movement that revived historical vernacular elements with timber framing. The wooden framing is painted black and the panels between the frames are painted white. The style was part of a wider Tudor Revival in 19th-century architecture.



2.2. Nikolaus Pevsner describes the movement as a "Cheshire speciality", but states that it was not created in Cheshire and is not confined to the county. The earliest example noted by Pevsner is the Henry VII Lodge in Woburn Sands, Bedfordshire, built in 1811. The other example he gives is the Court House in Worsley, which was built in 1849. The first Cheshire architect to be involved in the movement was T. M. Penson, who restored the house at No. 22 Eastgate Street, Chester, in 1852 in the black-and-white style. This was followed by his further restorations in Eastgate Street, at Nos. 34–36 in 1856, and No. 26 in 1858. However, Pevsner considers that Penson's works were "moderate in size and not very knowledgeable in detail"

2.3. The movement was improved when John Douglas and T. M. Lockwood "discovered the medium". They were the principal architects of the movement, and they "transformed the street frontages of the city with their black and white buildings". Major examples of their work are Lockwood's building opposite Chester Cross at No. 1 Bridge Street of 1888and the terrace of buildings on the east side of St Werburgh Street of 1895–99 by Douglas. The black-and-white tradition in Chester continued into the 20th century.

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2.4. The site is adjoined by residential units on all sides although there is a small number of commercial units in the locality.

2.5. Overton itself is a small village located in the county of Wrexham, Wales. While it might not be as well- known as some larger towns or cities in Wales, it still possesses its own unique historic character

2.6. Like many Welsh villages, Overton likely has medieval origins. Its history may date back to the medieval period when it was likely a small agricultural settlement.

2.7. Overton is situated in the picturesque Welsh countryside, surrounded by rolling hills, farmland, and scenic landscapes. The rural setting contributes to the village's charm and historic character, offering residents and visitors a glimpse into traditional Welsh rural life.

2.8. Overton likely has a variety of historic buildings, including traditional Welsh cottages, farmhouses, and possibly a historic church or chapel. These buildings provide a tangible link to the village's past and reflect the architectural styles prevalent in Wales over the centuries.

2.9. Overton High Street presents as a pastiche of styles and eras with the historical frontage facing on High Street and dating back to the 18th Century but with the plainer utilitarian domestic units added later in the early 20th Century by their outward appearance.

2.10. As with many small Welsh villages, community life is an essential aspect of Overton's historic character. The close-knit community likely participates in various local events, celebrations, and activities that help preserve and promote Welsh culture and traditions.

2.11. Welsh language and culture are integral parts of the historic character of Overton. While English is widely spoken, Welsh may still be spoken by some residents, and cultural traditions such as music, dance, and folklore may be celebrated within the community.

2.12. To summarise, the White Horse Inn is a significant heritage asset within the Overton Conservation Area, contributing to both the architectural and historical fabric of the village. The building reflects the Black-and-white Revival style, a key part of the Tudor Revival movement that became a notable feature of the Cheshire region. The distinctive black-and-white timber framing with white panels marks the building as a representative example of this style. Positioned among a run of Listed Buildings on Overton's High Street, the White Horse Inn stands as an important part of the streetscape, contributing to the village’s unique historical character. The conservation of this building is vital not only for preserving its architectural integrity but also for maintaining the historical medieval origins and cultural identity of Overton, a village with medieval origins and a rich Welsh heritage.

3. Background to the Proposal

3.1. The decline in pubs in the UK has been a noticeable trend over the past few decades, with several factors contributing to this decline:

3.2. **Changing social habits:** the way people socialise has evolved with many preferring to stay home or engage in different activities rather than going to the pub. Factors such as the rise of online social networking, streaming services, and increased home entertainment options have impacted the frequency of pub visits.

3.3. **Economic Factors:** Economic pressures, such as rising operating costs, including rent, wages, and taxes, have made it challenging for pubs to remain profitable, particularly in rural areas or areas with lower foot traffic. Smoking Ban: The smoking ban introduced in 2007 in England and Wales (earlier in Scotland) prohibited smoking in enclosed public places, including pubs. While this was a positive step for public health, it did lead to a decline in the number of patrons, particularly those who used to visit pubs primarily to smoke.

3.4. **Competition:** Pubs face competition not only from other pubs but also from a wide range of alternative leisure activities, including cafes, restaurants, and bars. Additionally, supermarkets and off-license retailers offering cheaper alcohol for home consumption have further eroded the pub's market share.

3.5. **Changing Demographics:** Changes in demographics, such as an aging population and shifting preferences of younger generations, have also impacted the demand for traditional pub experiences

3.6. When you couple the above with a growing population, as well a need for increased housing due to changes in the social fabric, the change of use of former public houses forms an important element in sustainable residential development.

3.7. The proposal would provide sustainable housing choices and help meet the need identified in the Joint Wrexham and Flintshire Local Housing Market Assessment for smaller 1-3 bed unit accommodation.

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4. Description of the Proposed Development

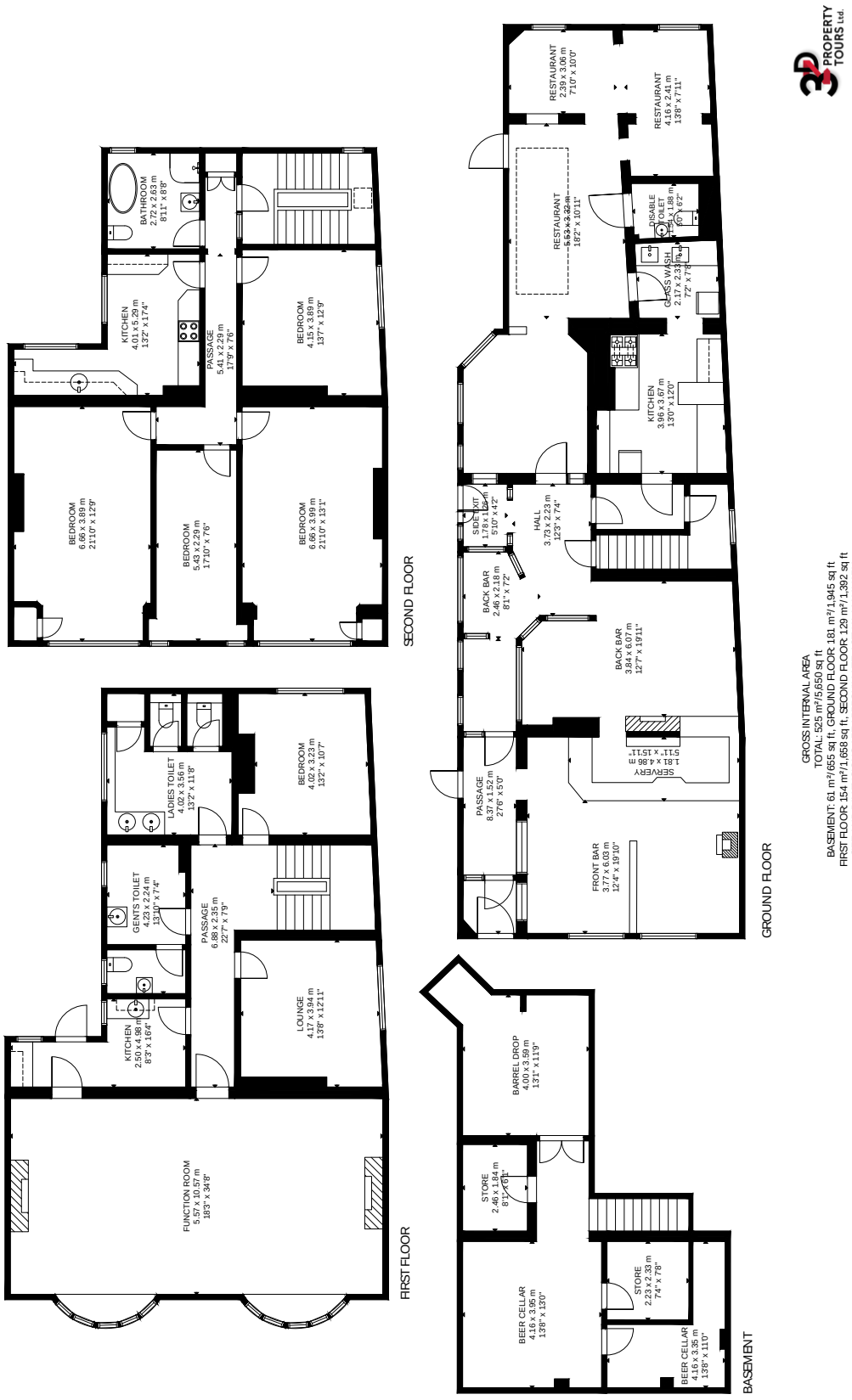
Current layout:

4.1. The current layout follows a traditional public house layout with a public bar to the front, a lounge bar to the rear, with a function room and hotel rooms on the first floor.

4.2. Residential accommodation is on the second floor with four bedrooms, a kitchen, and bathroom.

4.3. At the rear of the property is a large, paved courtyard area.

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SECOND FLOOR
BEDROOM 6.66 x 3.89 m 21'10" x 12'9"
BEDROOM 5.43 x 2.29 m 17'10" x 7'6"
BEDROOM 6.66 x 4.00 m 21'10" x 13'1"
KITCHEN 4.01 x 5.29 m 13'2" x 17'4"
PASSAGE 5.41 x 2.29 m 17'9" x 7'6"
BATHROOM 2.72 x 2.63 m 8'11" x 8'8"
BEDROOM 4.15 x 3.89 m 13'7" x 12'9"
FIRST FLOOR
FUNCTION ROOM 5.57 x 10.57 m 18'3" x 34'8"
KITCHEN 2.50 x 4.98 m 8'3" x 16'4"
LOUNGE 4.17 x 3.94 m 13'8" x 12'11"
PASSAGE 6.88 x 2.35 m 22'7" x 7'9"
GENTS TOILET 4.23 x 2.24 m 13'11" x 7'4"
LADIES TOILET 4.02 x 3.56 m 13'2" x 11'8"
BEDROOM 4.02 x 3.23 m 13'2" x 10'7"
GROUND FLOOR
RESTAURANT 2.39 x 3.06 m 7'10" x 10'0"
RESTAURANT 4.15 x 2.41 m 13'6" x 7'11"
RESTAURANT 5.63 x 3.32 m 18'5" x 10'11"
DISABLE TOILET 1.88 m 6'2"
GLASS WASH 2.17 x 2.33 m 7'2" x 7'8"
KITCHEN 3.96 x 3.67 m 13'0" x 12'0"
SIDE EXIT 1.78 x 1.55 m 5'10" x 4'2"
HALL 3.73 x 2.23 m 12'3" x 7'4"
BACK BAR 2.46 x 2.18 m 8'1" x 7'2"
BACK BAR 3.84 x 6.07 m 12'7" x 19'11"
SERVERY 5.11 x 4.86 m 16'9" x 15'11"
PASSAGE 8.37 x 1.52 m 27'6" x 5'0"
FRONT BAR 3.77 x 6.03 m 12'4" x 19'10"
BASEMENT
BARREL DROP 4.00 x 3.60 m 13'1" x 11'9"
STORE 2.46 x 1.84 m 8'1" x 6'0"
BEER CELLAR 4.16 x 3.95 m 13'8" x 13'0"
STORE 2.23 x 2.33 m 7'4" x 7'8"
BEER CELLAR 4.18 x 3.35 m 13'8" x 11'0"
3D PROPERTY TOURS Ltd.
GROSS INTERNAL AREA
TOTAL: 525 m²/5,650 sq ft
BASEMENT: 61 m²/655 sq ft, GROUND FLOOR: 181 m²/1,945 sq ft
FIRST FLOOR: 154 m²/1,658 sq ft, SECOND FLOOR: 129 m²/1,392 sq ft
SIZE AND DIMENSIONS ARE APPROXIMATE, ACTUAL MAY VARY.

Proposed layout:

4.4. The proposed application consists of the remodelling, adaptation and conversion works of the public house into six private residential apartments (two flats per floor – see plans on **Pages 8 and 9**).

4.5. The renovation would follow the current form of the existing building as much as possible to minimise the impact on the fabric of the building.

4.6. Most of the historic elements are on the exterior of the building.

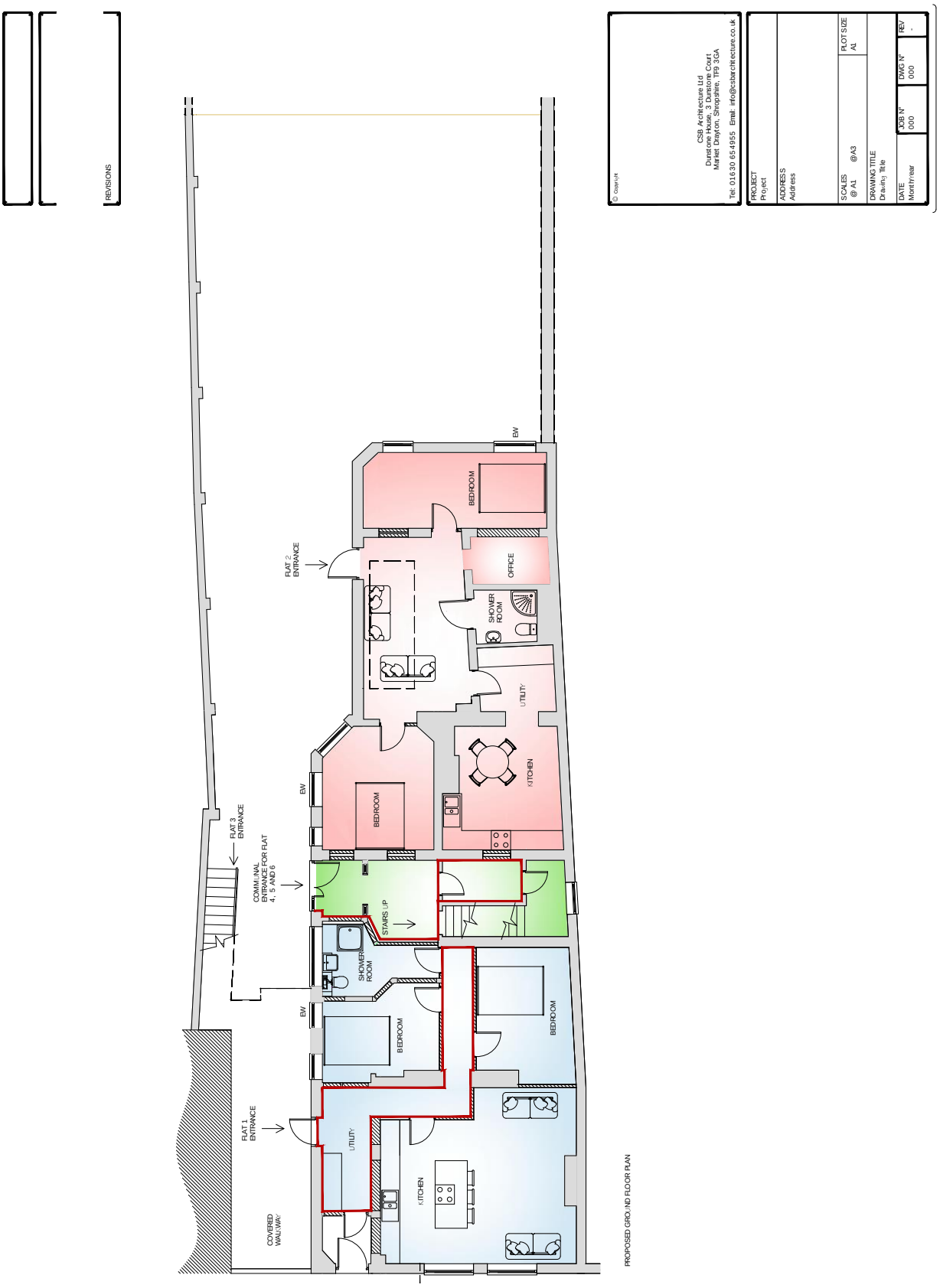
4.7. The rear courtyard offers a valuable opportunity for shared utility spaces (cycle storage, bin area) as well as a communal outdoor space, creating an attractive town centre courtyard (see Green Infrastructure Statement).

4.8. Maintenance works to the existing fabric will be required, notably the external walls and windows. Separating floors and walls and internal remodelling will also be required for the new apartment units.

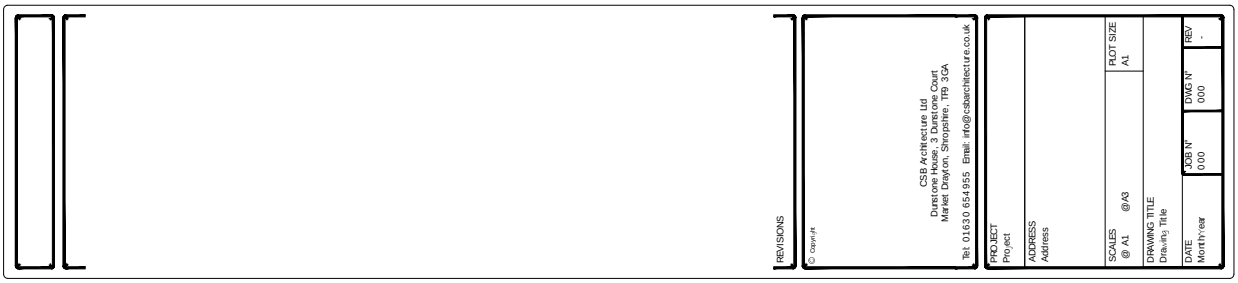
4.9. Close work with the Local Planning Authority and Conservation Officer would ensure that any works would integrate high-quality materials and compliment the Overton Conservation Area, and help to restore and preserve this important heritage asset.

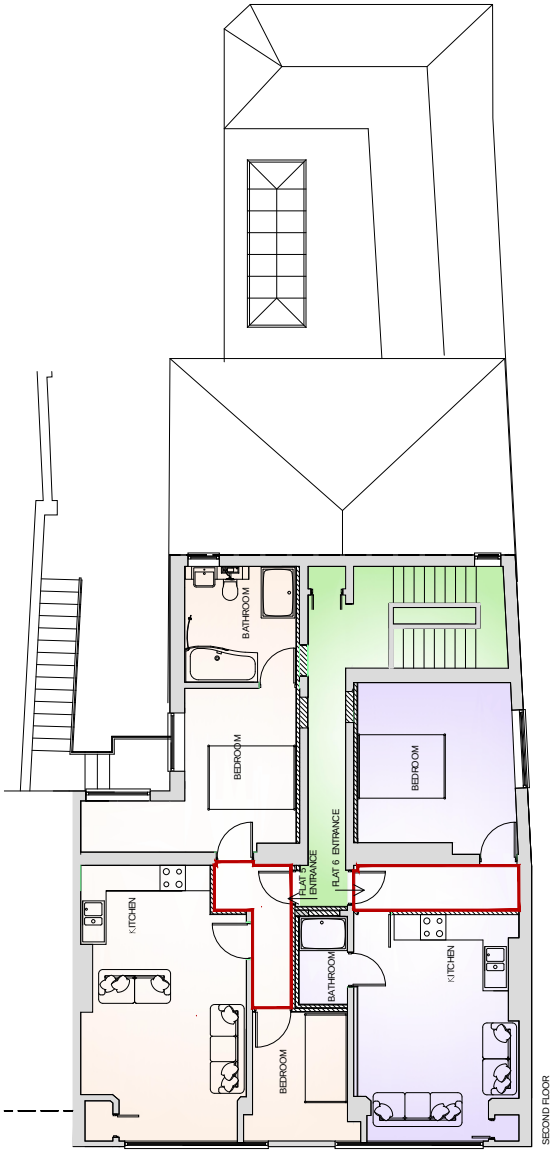
4.10. The table in **Section 5** provides an overview of the mitigation and restoration plan.

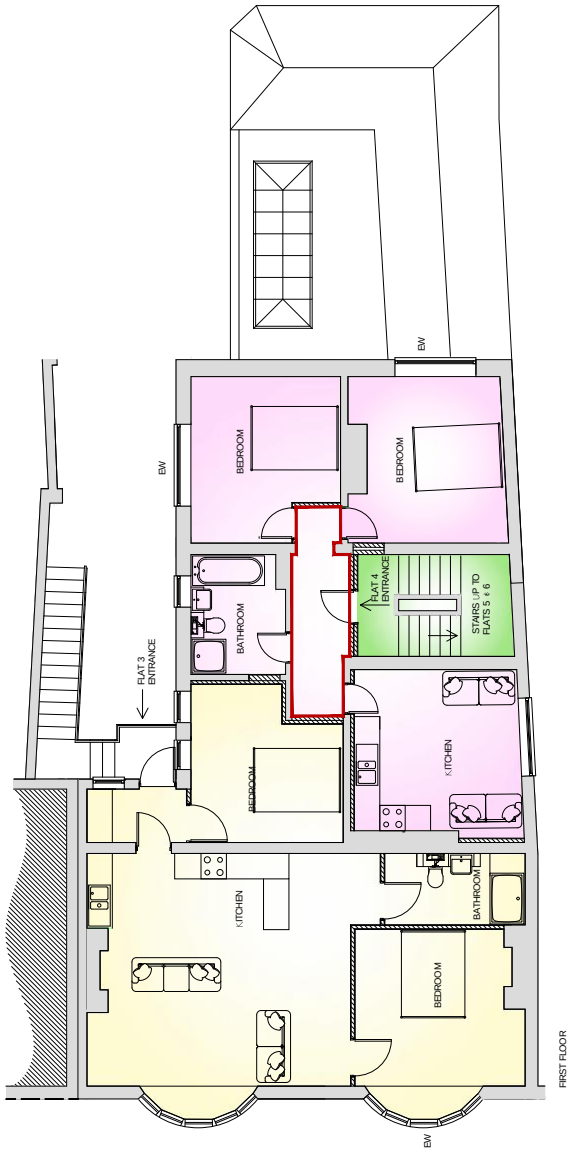
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Drawing Title
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REV
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BATHROOM
BEDROOM
BEDROOM
FLAT 5 ENTRANCE
FLAT 6 ENTRANCE
KITCHEN
BATHROOM
KITCHEN
BEDROOM
SECOND FLOOR


BW
BEDROOM
BEDROOM
BW
BATHROOM
FLAT 4 ENTRANCE
STAIRS UP TO FLATS 5 & 6
FLAT 3 ENTRANCE
BEDROOM
KITCHEN
KITCHEN
BATHROOM
BEDROOM
BW
FIRST FLOOR

5. Mitigation Measures/ Conservation and Restoration Plan

5.1. Converting a listed building requires careful consideration and planning to ensure that its historic and architectural significance is preserved while also accommodating the intended new use. The proposed residential conversion of this building would be carried out sensitively and sustainably, preserving its historic legacy without compromising its heritage value, ensuring that its significance is celebrated within the context of a dynamic and evolving community.

5.2. By documenting the conversion process through detailed records, photographs, and drawings, there would be a comprehensive record of the building's history and evolution. A monitoring program is proposed to track the condition of the building over time and address any maintenance or conservation needs that arise.

5.3. Joules would welcome communication and collaboration with the Conservation Officer and Planning Department at Wrexham Council to ensure a positive outcome that would preserve the structure of this heritage asset.

5.4. To minimise harm and enhance the asset's significance:

- Retention of original features where possible;
- Perseveration (covering/protecting) original features otherwise;
- Use of traditional materials;
- Retention and repairing original architectural elements (facades, windows, doors, decorative details)
- Consultation with the Conservation Officer;
- Preservation of the historical character;

5.5. The table below outlines the building's heritage features, their significance, and how the development would enhance or mitigate any potential negative impacts.

Feature	Description and Significance	Impact of Proposed Development	Mitigation or Enhancement Measures	Outcome
Original brickwork	Key element of the building's historic façade	REPAIRED: No changes proposed to the frontage of the building to necessary repairs and restoration works	Retain original materials; use matching materials for any repairs. The oak beams and colour will remain the same. Any repainting will be completed in the same colour	Preservation of historic character of the building and Conservation Area streetscape
Roof tiles	Key element of the building's historic façade	REPAIRED: Roof tiles will be repaired to stop leaks	Roof tiles will be replaced with matching tiles where necessary	Preservation of features to preserve the historic character
Oak front door	Key element of the building's historic façade	RETAINED No changes proposed to existing front door	Minor maintenance to the door. A residential style lock will be installed	Retention of features to preserve the streetscape
Ironwork	Traditional hanging sign at the front of the building, part of the building's historic identity	RESTORED: Retained as a decorative feature to preserve the building's heritage as a public house	Clean, repair and ensure structural stability of the sign and bracket	Preservation of visual and cultural identity, and retention of historic features to preserve the streetscape
Mock-Tudor lead-lined windows	Original timber-framed mock-Tudor windows contributing to the pub's character and historic façade	REPAIRED: Windows retained and repaired as needed. Internal windows installed	Use matching timber and paint for any repairs to retain original appearance. Any missing or cracked panes will be professionally repaired. Internally, oak secondary glazing will be used to provide the necessary thermal performance whilst retaining all external the features	Preservation of historic façade and streetscape
Etched glass	Ground floor alleyway	RETAINED: Etched glass panels will be fully retained	Beading will be touched up and putty repaired where necessary. Internally oak secondary glazing will provide the necessary thermal performance whilst retaining all the historic external features	Retention of historic features to preserve historic character
Alleyway	Vaulted access side alleyway with iron gate	RETAINED: Unchanged, but a lock will need to be installed at the side access	The gate will need repainting to smarten the frontage	Retention feature to preserve the streetscape
Wooden staircase	Timber staircase with traditional craftmanship,	RETAINED:	During build the staircase will be fully protected to ensure	Preservation of feature

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with ornate banister	central to pub's historic interior design. The staircase is currently carpeted	Staircase retained and incorporated into residential design	original condition is maintained. It may be treated (e.g. individual spindles and balustrades) to ensure longevity	
Coving	Decorative coving in select rooms, characteristic of the period	PRESERVED: Coving will be covered by lowered ceilings	To provide necessary sound- and fireproofing, and to accommodate services for the residential apartments, it is proposed that the ceilings be lowered (boarding and new plasterwork)	Preservation of decorative value – coving will be protected and could be revealed in the future if desired (e.g change of use).
Location	Located within Overton Conservation Area, contributing to the area's historic charm	Increased residential activity may alter usage pattern but would improve visual harmony	Landscape improvements; maintain traditional signage and external details	Enhancement of conservation area setting – preserving the public house building and save it from falling into disrepair
Historic layout	Traditional pub layout with central bar and partitioned rooms; upstairs function rooms and living accommodation	Layout altered to suit residential use and adhere to fire safety regulations	Retain elements of historic layouts in key areas where feasible; photograph and document original layout	Partial preservation of historic spatial characteristics

5.6. Many of the visible aesthetic elements of the building were introduced during the refurbishment carried out by Joules Brewery approximately 15 years ago. The proposal here is to retain and conserve the original features of the building, while certain interior elements which are modern and do not add historic value—such as the fireplaces, pub bar, and flooring, all installed by Joules—may need to be removed or altered due to requirements for insulation, pipework, and other services.

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6. Impact Assessment

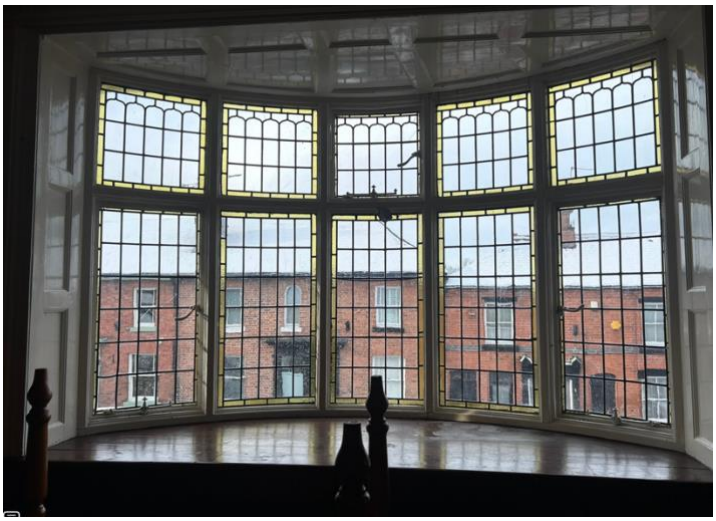
Current Condition:

6.1. The White Horse Inn is at risk of falling into state of significant disrepair, with multiple areas of the building requiring urgent attention. The roof is leaking in several places, and water ingress has caused the ceiling of a third-floor bedroom to collapse, with further rooms at risk of similar damage. Additionally, the ground-floor skylight is leaking and in need of immediate repair. The interior spaces have suffered from neglect, with flooring showing signs of discoloration and damage, and outdated carpets contributing to the overall tired and worn aesthetic. The interior walls are also in poor condition, presenting a dated and uninspiring atmosphere. Outside, the courtyard is bleak and lacks visual appeal, offering little to enhance the overall setting. While the building's front elevation retains some attractive architectural features, it is in need of a refresh to restore its former character. The roof and skylights pose ongoing structural concerns that, if left unaddressed, could exacerbate further deterioration.

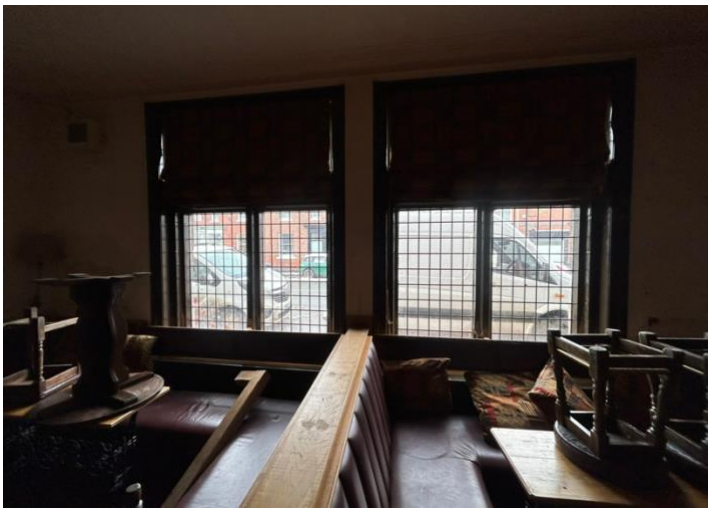








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Impact Assessment:

6.2. Without intervention, the building faces the risk of further decline, which could threaten both its historic fabric and its contribution to the streetscape. Given that the pub has not been a viable business for several years and Joules Brewery has been unable to sell it as a public house, the proposed residential conversion represents a critical opportunity to safeguard the building's future and prevent its continued deterioration.

6.3. The proposed works should have very little impact on the heritage features listed in the table above. The character and appearance of the street-facing façade would be preserved, with any cosmetic or structural works being carefully undertaken to maintain the historic appearance of the building. The windows, doors, brickwork, and side-access gates would remain unchanged. Additionally, features such as paintwork and hanging baskets would be incorporated to retain the visual identity of the former public house. The proposed new use is compatible with the existing structure and historic fabric.

6.4. The courtyard would be significantly enhanced from its current condition. The Green Infrastructure (GI) Statement (Doc ADL-WHO-008/25) includes a landscape scheme and proposed GI measures.

6.5. The proposed programme of works would enhance the heritage asset, preserving its character and setting while ensuring its long-term survival. All works would be carried out in close communication with the Local Planning Authority to maintain the building's structure and purpose for future generations.

6.6. By using high-quality materials, the development will complement the Overton Conservation Area and positively impact both the asset and the wider area. The conversion would secure the continued presence of the former public house, an important focal point on Overton High Street, contributing to the conservation of the building and its setting for years to come.

7. Conclusion

Planning and Listed Building Consent would help ensure the long-term preservation of this valuable heritage asset. The building is no longer viable as a public house, and its conversion into residential units will provide much-needed sustainable housing options. This change will address the demand for smaller 1–3-bedroom units identified in the Joint Wrexham and Flintshire Local Housing Market Assessment. Additionally, the conversion presents an opportunity to undertake essential preservation and enhancement works, improving both the building's significance and the character of the conservation area.

Furthermore, by repurposing an existing building, this proposal aligns with the UK government's ambitions to meet housebuilding targets and address the ongoing housing shortage. It offers an efficient use of land and resources while contributing to the much-needed supply of new homes in the region.

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