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Architectural Design

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HERITAGE IMPACT & DESIGN STATEMENT
for proposed works at:
31 High Street, Wrexham LL13 8HY



Background, History & Description of the Asset.

The building was listed on 31/01/1994 as Grade II. The reason for listing being it forms part of an important group of commercial buildings on High Street.

Local Historian AN Palmer first noted a building on this site by 1750, but the present building was rebuilt with the Overton Arcade in 1868. It was probably originally intended as a shop with accommodation above, and was previously used as offices with the building now being vacant.

During the 1980s the building was occupied by a branch of the Bank of Wales and the last occupant was Thomas Andrews and Partners Solicitors. The quaint and often overlooked Overton Arcade contains some small shop units and a restaurant and links High Street with Temple Row.

The exterior is brick with painted stone dressings, used slate roof. 3 storeys, 4 window range, incorporating passage entrance to Overton Arcade to the left. Inserted ground floor frontage, the upper windows are 2-pane sashes in stressed architraves with foliate keystones. Continuous sill band to second storey carried on moulded brackets. Moulded string course over second floor then projecting eaves cornice. Stressed angle quoins. End wall stacks (rebuilt).

Introduction

This statement provides written background information which is to be read in conjunction with the drawings which show details of the proposed alterations.

This statement has been prepared by CB Architectural Design to accompany a planning application for this new development at 31 High Street Wrexham.

Accessibility

Accessibility is unaltered and both front and side entrances provide level access to the building. The property is located in High Street Wrexham town centre with bus stops nearby and within easy walking distance of the bus station and Central & General railway stations. Additionally, there is significant public car parking provision in close proximity to the site.

Commercial accommodation is retained at ground floor level, with ancillary space only in the basement and it is anticipated to have limited staff numbers.

Benefitting from transport links it is not intended that parking be provided in association with the new residential accommodation.

Existing access is retained to the main entrance on High Street to private facilities within the office accommodation. The new residential units to the upper floor are accessible the existing rear staircase only. The ground floor is also accessible from the rear entrance forming a fire escape.

Environmental Sustainability

Whilst the proposals are not detrimental to environmental sustainability, the development and nature of the premises offer little opportunity to effect any significant improvement. Insulation to the roofspace will be installed if not already present and new lighting fittings of improved efficacy will be installed. Double glazed removable secondary glazing units are proposed to all windows including the front elevation visible from High Street. Continued use of well-maintained building stock does itself achieve an important degree of sustainability and manages further deterioration.

Character

Non of the proposed works will adversely affect the fabric or appearance of the building. The external aesthetics to High Street will be retained.

Re-roofing works will be required as the box gutter has failed to the front of the building causing the ceiling to collapse in places due to the ingress of water and this will be done in traditional materials using building methods respectful to the era of the building.

Description of Proposed Works

The application is for change of use to the first & second floor to form residential flats.

It is proposed to remove the modern partitioning to the ground floor to create an open plan Office. Part of the ground floor will be partitioned off to form a bin store/bike store serving the proposed new flats at first & second floor. Re-roofing works will be required as the box gutter has failed to the front of the building causing the ceiling to collapse in places due to the ingress of water. The modern partitioning to the first & second floor is to be removed and new timber studwork provided where required.

Schedule of works & Justification

Little remains of the internal features internally following previous modernisation.

Within the works proposed under this application wherever possible existing features and openings are retained. A suspended ceiling to the ground floor has been installed and this is to be carefully removed and the existing ceiling made good as required using traditional materials and building methods.

Internally the external walls are generally in a good condition apart from localised water damage to the second floor frontage due to the leaking box gutter. The walls will only require redecoration and where it is decided to re-finish existing walls a new skim will be applied with an emulsion paint finish. Walls to shower areas and whb splashbacks will have a tiled or sheet finish.

New partitions are to be formed to limit any negative impact on the existing retained features, comprising timber framing faced either side with plasterboard and skim with acoustic quilt within the cavity.

Necessary improvements to the acoustic performance and fire rating of floors will be carried out from above wherever possible to limit the loss or damage to ceiling features which remain only at ground floor level. Existing floor boarding shall be retained for re-use in the same locations. Electrical and plumbing works can be laid between the floor joists and acoustic insulation incorporated prior to re-boarding. Where necessary ceilings will be underdrawn with acoustic and fire rated board between existing cornicing, limiting any effect.

Internally certain historic features remain, for example to the ground floor, the original ceiling is concealed beneath the later suspended ceiling. The full extent of any repairs will need to be assessed and agreed once the ceiling has been exposed. To the upper floor original ceilings and covings remain. As new suspended fire/noise separation ceiling is to be installed the remaining features will be retained and hidden/protected from further damage. New partitions will be formed around these remaining features. Original skirting boards also remain and should provide a template for any reinstatement. Existing windows throughout will be retained and overhauled and removable secondary glazing fitted. Contemporary windows (WS05) will be replaced with windows more in keeping with the age of the building. The modern staircase to the front of the building is to be removed to return the building to its original layout and lose the bulkhead in the first floor room where the staircase penetrates. External facing brick walls are generally in good condition and will be unaffected. Where repointing is required it will be done flush-pointed in lime mortar. Similarly cast iron rwg's will be retained and repaired as required.

New internal drainage will be necessary to service kitchens and bathrooms. Stacks will be encased to maintain fire separation between flats & floors, finished and decorated to match the adjoining walls. Any new internal stacks will terminate with an automatic air admittance valve, avoiding the need to penetrate the roof.

Any new mechanical ventilation will be directly through external rear walls or ducted to the rear elevations.

Schedule of Works

WINDOWS:

External windows require Investigation to determine the state of require required.

Windows to be striped and retained, make good/repair to timber surrounds and main casement/sashes where required. Retain and clean off paint to all ironmongery and replace. Clean all glazing and retain, re-glaze where necessary using traditional methods.

Paint stripping on site, method statement required in respect of the following
Please note- lead based paint probably used on existing windows, frames and side panels.
Method statements on removed and consequential residues will be required.

Should broken panes need to be replaced, replaced using 2mm or 3mm "horticultural – type glass.
Alternatively heated distorted glass may be used to the approval of the C.A. (all to match existing)

WINDOW IRONMONGERY:

Sash windows.

If re-glazing after sash weights to suit the new weight of the sash counterweight pulley wheels. Clean off any paint and ensure that they are running free. Only replace if broken and to the approval of the C.A.
Strip and clean off paint of all ironmongery and replace.

WALLS:

Further site investigation required in respect of this item.

Ceramic wall tiles:

Allow for hacking off/stripping out and cart away.

Where the tiles have been applied to the walls that are to remain the making good of those walls are to be as described elsewhere.

Care to be exercised in removing the tiles from walls to remain as they may cover/be attached to skirting etc. that are to be retained.

Wall removal:

Walls indicated on plans for complete removal must have received the C.A. and structural engineer's consent for removal prior to the works commencing.

Where infill panels are required in existing door opening care should be taken as not to damage existing skirting and architrave. New infill panels to be set back from opening edge as to show an existing opening was present in the past.

Vertical ducts removed:

All timber plasterboard ducts are to be removed and carted away. Take care as not to damage any existing Listed Building items.

New Partitions

Where new partitions are to be placed, care should be taken so that no Listed Building items are removed/damaged.

All new partitions formed against any cornice and skirtings etc should be formed so that they fit around the features with care taken to ensure that items are not damaged. Works must be completed so that partitions can be removed without any implications to the Listed Items.

Movement To, From & Within The Development.

The existing front and side accesses are to be retained.

Intention of Works

By refurbishing the original windows to the frontage and providing more sympathetic windows to the side & rear it is intended that the works will enhance this Grade II listed building and the conservation area and will increase the thermal efficiency of the proposed dwellings and ensure the building is sustained in use. The proposals will keep in use and maintain an important town centre building whilst creating additional residential accommodation in an otherwise vacant building. There will be no adverse effect on neighbouring properties or amenities and there will be an improvement in safety.

The application should therefore be supported.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings forming the application.