

Condition Report and Schedule of Repairs



The Odd Fellows Arms
25 Main Street
Higham-on-the-Hill
Leicestershire
CV13 6AE

for

STOP Steering Group/Higham
CBS and A R Cartwright Ltd

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CT21-361/RE/JSm

1.0 Introduction

We were instructed by Kate Philips of the STOP Steering Group/Higham CBS and Nicola Lea of A R Cartwright Ltd. to visit the Odd Fellows Arms in Higham-on-the-Hill to carry out an inspection and produce a condition report along with a schedule of repairs.

2.0 Inspection

The inspection was carried out by Rosanne Eardley MRICS IHBC and James Smith BSc Hons of James Slater and Company on Tuesday 7th December 2021. The weather was very cold and stormy. Access was provided by a representative of A R Cartwright Ltd.

3.0 Limitations and Assumptions

Although access to all areas was possible, the inspection was limited due a significant number of stored items on the ground floor. The lack of electricity and the boarded windows also meant that much of the property was inspected by torchlight. All the windows (with the exception of the attic windows), and all external doors (except the rear access door) were boarded so we could not check their operation properly.

We did not carry out testing of any of the services and we advise that you consult suitably qualified electricians, plumbers and heating engineers to confirm to what extent any of the services or bathroom fittings are salvageable and suitable for re-use. We also recommend that you obtain specialist advice on drainage.

For the purposes of the report, we have assumed all rooms will retain their existing use. We have not included fittings such as furniture or equipment

The Schedule of Repairs appended to this report sets out in detail the works we believe need to be carried out to bring the building back into use. The method of calculation for the following works is taken from BCIS cost data, day rates, and similarly costed projects. Please note that the cost of building materials is extremely volatile in today's market owing to the pandemic and Brexit. The figures given are based on current figures on the date of preparing this report.

In compiling this report, we have referred to the following documents:

- Archaeological Desk Based Assessment compiled by Archaeological Building Recording Services in September 2020.
- Asbestos Survey Report by Midland EPC, August 2019.
- Higham on the Hill Conservation Area Appraisal, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, 2009.
- Measured Survey Drawings (layout and elevation), David Grainger Architectural Design Ltd., October 2019.

4.0 Description

It is understood that The Odd Fellows Arms building dates from 1791 and was originally built as two cottages. It was converted into one building in 1872 but did not open as a pub until 1874, after which it continued to thrive for well over 100 years until it eventually closed in 2018, lying empty ever since. The building occupies a prominent position, in the centre of the village, fronting onto the main street.

The oldest part of the building is a three-storey structure with the attic rooms built into the roof space, and a basement. It has a pitched roof with a ridge chimney to each gable end. It is constructed in red brick, although the front and side elevations have cement render, probably added during the second part of the 20th century. The original timber windows to the ground and first floor on the front elevation have been replaced with uPVC and were

boarded at the time of the inspection. The attic windows are replacement softwood timber framed casements. According to the Conservation Area Appraisal, windows in the village were traditionally Yorkshire (i.e. horizontal) sliding sashes or casements.

There is a two-storey flat roofed extension immediately to the rear of the older structure, with further single-storey flat-roofed extensions around the side and rear. These appear to be brick/block cavity wall construction with a built-up felt roof. There are uPVC rainwater goods to all elevations, which have replaced the original cast-iron gutters and downpipes that would have served the older part of the building originally.

Internally, the older section houses a bar and restaurant area either side of the central main entrance. A staircase would originally have risen up from what is now the bar server area to the first floor where there are two bedrooms. The original staircase remains from the first floor up to the attic where there are two further bedrooms in the eaves. The original basement stairs are still in place although they have been blocked off at ground floor level.

The two-storey extension added a kitchen, bathroom, separate WC and living room to the first-floor accommodation, with a new staircase created for access. A doorway has been cut through the original external wall at first floor level to connect the original upper storeys to the new living accommodation. The ground floor of the two-storey extension houses the main commercial kitchen and the bar area. Further single storey extensions provide a large restaurant area to the rear, storage areas to the side off the commercial kitchen, and customer WCs to the other side.

Externally the car park extends around the back of the building. Immediately to the rear of the restaurant is an area that was previously decked to provide an outside seating area. Beyond the car park is a large, grassed area.

5.0 Setting and Location

Higham-on-the-Hill is a small village located between Nuneaton and Hinkley, not far from the A5, a historic route known as Watling Street, which dates back to Roman times and links London and Holyhead. Set in a predominantly rural location, there is easy access to the towns of Nuneaton and Hinckley, with Coventry and Leicester equidistant in opposite directions.

The Odd Fellows Arms lies within the Higham-on-the-Hill Conservation Area, designated by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council in 1995. The pub is mentioned in the Conservation Area Appraisal as one of the important local buildings remaining in the village. The Appraisal also notes that many other notable village buildings have been lost in recent times to residential development, including two other pubs, the railway station and the post office.

6.0 Condition

Considering the building has been boarded up and disused since 2018, it is in surprisingly good condition. It suffered a further set back recently when much of the heating system and pipework was stolen, leaving the building without a means of heating and with some water damage to the upper floors. The lack of heating, and poor ventilation due to the windows being boarded up, is contributing to condensation and associated mould growth on walls and ceilings. The condition of the building on an element-by-element basis is given below:

Roofs and Chimneys

The main pitched roof of the old building is in reasonable condition, having been replaced relatively recently, and no leaks were seen internally indicating any issues. However, the tiles have been identified in the asbestos report as asbestos cement. No immediate work

has been identified to this roof. However, you should be aware that any future work carried out to the tiles will not need to be done by a Licenced Contractor, but it will need to be done under controlled conditions in accordance with HSE guidance and any waste material will need to be disposed of as hazardous waste at a designated asbestos waste facility which will incur extra costs.

The two brick chimneys to the gable ends of the main house also appeared in reasonable condition, although it should be checked that they are properly capped off and ventilated to avoid a build up of condensation internally. The chimney on the rear flat roof has some mechanical damage with loose bricks to the top. There is also evidence of a leak in the bathroom below indicating that the flashing around the base of the chimney needs to be repaired.

The built-up felt flat roofs to the rear are generally in good condition, although there is some build-up of moss which should be cleared. The exception is above the rear door from the restaurant where the wall and roof have been damaged. This is causing significant water damage internally which needs to be addressed urgently.

Rainwater goods

There are some missing and mis-aligned rainwater goods. All fittings should be cleaned, overhauled and repairs carried out as soon as possible to reduce the risk of water ingress in the building.

Windows

The original windows to the older part of the house have been replaced – with uPVC to the ground and first floors, and softwood timber to the second floor. The modern sections of the building all have uPVC casements, some of which have been removed, presumably to allow the windows to be boarded externally. Most of the removed casements are still in the building, and there are some damaged glazing panels and seals. However, it is considered that the windows could be largely retained and overhauled in the short term until funds allow for the reinstatement of traditional timber windows.

Doors

While some internal doors are missing and others are in poor condition, some could be reused in the short term. Fully compliant fire doors are likely to be required in some locations (e.g., between the ground the first floors, and between the commercial kitchen and the customer-facing areas) in order to re-open the building to the public.

It was difficult to assess the external doors as all, except the one through the rear WC area, were boarded up. An inspection from the inside suggested that they could be brought back into use in the short term, but this would need to be checked once the boarding is removed.

Walls

With the exception of the damaged brick wall to the rear of the restaurant, the external walls are generally in good condition. The cement render to the front and side elevations of the original building is in poor condition and should be removed, although this does not necessarily need to be done immediately. You should note that the solid brick walls to the original part of the building will not have been constructed with a damp proof course, and retrospectively installing a chemical damp proof course is not recommended for buildings of traditional construction.

The internal walls are generally in reasonable condition, although some plaster repairs are needed, particularly on the upper floors of the original building. Mould is also an issue in the commercial kitchen and stores due to lack of ventilation.

The boarding to both fireplaces in the second-floor bedrooms has been identified in the asbestos report as containing asbestos. This is damaged and will need to be removed by a licenced contractor and disposed of as hazardous waste.

Floors

Due to the significant number of stored items on the ground floor, it was not possible to assess the floor condition in detail. The rear restaurant floor is very uneven and would need to be levelled and screeded before a new floor covering could be installed. The quarry tiles to the bar area look to be in reasonable condition, although these were covered by some stored steel beams which may well be causing damage. The vinyl flooring in the commercial kitchen and store are likely to require wholesale replacement for hygiene reasons. This area is badly ventilated and there is a mould problem on all surfaces.

There are some coverings to the upper floors which are showing signs of mould and damp. These should be removed as soon as possible to allow the timber floors to dry out and to minimise further damage. Some isolated timber repairs are required, but the upper floors are generally in good condition.

Ceilings

The ceilings are also generally in good condition, with the following exceptions. There is damage to the ceilings in the rear restaurant (where the roof and wall are damaged externally), in the first-floor bathroom (where there is a leak around the chimney stack) and on the first-floor landing of the old part of the house (where water damaged due to theft of pipework). The ceilings in the commercial kitchen are also badly affected by mould. This could probably be cleaned off in the short term, but may need to be replaced prior to any statutory hygiene inspections prior to reopening this area as a commercial kitchen.

Basement

The only access to the basement is via the original external hatch, now in the commercial kitchen, down steep stone stairs set within a barrel ramp. It is recommended that the basement is cleared of all stored items and debris and cleaned. All services should be isolated, capped off and/or removed. Lighting and ventilation should be installed to keep damp levels to a minimum.

Kitchen and Bathroom Fittings

The first-floor bathroom is fitted out as a domestic bathroom with separate WC. It may be possible to refurbish the sink and WC although it may prove more cost effective to replace them. The urinal system in the male customer WC has been removed entirely so will need replacement. There are three WCs in the female WC and one in the male WC, which may be reusable if cleaned up, but this needs to be confirmed by a plumber.

There is little equipment remaining in the commercial kitchen, and the amount of grease and mould in this area has led us to recommend wholesale strip out and replacement. It may be that a full commercial kitchen is not required, at least initially. It is also considered that the first-floor kitchen would need renewing completely. It should be noted that if the first-floor kitchen is to remain where it is currently, fire stopping would need to be installed as it currently opens (with no door) onto the only escape route from the 2nd floor.

Services

It is considered that upgrading the services is the most important, and probably the most costly work that needs to be carried out. It is likely that a complete rewire of the building is required, along with replacement of all light fittings. The plumbing will also need a complete overhaul as it is understood that much of the pipework has been stolen. We believe that some of the radiators may be reusable, although new boilers and pipework will be needed, and it may be cheaper to replace everything wholesale rather than refurbish some

radiators. Mechanical ventilation systems will also need a complete overhaul, and possibly complete replacement. Specialist advice should be sought from heating engineers/plumbers. A drainage survey is also recommended to understand where the drain runs go and what condition they are in.

The asbestos report notes that the boiler and fittings in the first-floor bathroom could not be tested for asbestos as it had not been isolated at the time of the inspection. This will need to be checked before the boiler is removed.

External Areas

The most urgent work required is removal of the plant growth around the edge of the building. This will be contributing to damp issues at low level and there is a danger that the roots could damage the base of the walls. Vegetation should be cut off flush with the wall and treated with herbicide rather than being ripped out, as this can damage the masonry.

The car park needs resurfacing, but this could be phased, rather than doing it all immediately. The decking has been removed from the rear seating area, so this will need to be reinstated before this area can be brought back into use. A retaining fence will be required around the edge to guard the drop to the car park.

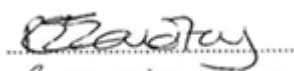
7.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

It is our opinion that the structure and fabric of the building are generally sound, and provided that some essential remedial work and maintenance is carried out in the short term, there is no reason why the building could not be brought back into use.

The following should be carried out urgently to prevent further deterioration:

- Remove all stored items.
- Clear vegetation from around the outside of the building.
- Remove all damaged/damp floor coverings.
- Improve ventilation by removing window boards, repairing windows and reinstalling a heating system.
- Carry out fabric repairs to include overhauling the rainwater goods and repairing roof leaks.

The costs of the schedule of repairs are set out in two columns: items required immediately, and items that will be required in the long term or are desirable but not essential. Some items in the second column supersede the items in the first column. The total project cost for the work required to the building has been calculated as £183,985.78 including contractor's overheads and profit, consultant's fees for design and supervision, and a £20,000 contingency. All figures exclude VAT.



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Rosanne Eardley MRICS IHBC

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Appendix A: Schedule of Repairs