Aldrock

AR12
Heritage Statement

The Old Printworks
4a and 6a Back York Street
Clitheroe
BB7 1LT

(Revision A)



Prepared by Aldrock
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CONTENTS

CONTENTS 2
INTRODUCTION 3
LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT 3
ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE 3
IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS 4
CONCLUSION 7
APPENDIX 8

INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the conversion of the former Printworks building at Back York Street, Clitheroe, to two duplex residential units.

The site lies within the Clitheroe Conservation Area (see Appendix A). The building is identified on the Clitheroe Conservation Area Townscape Appraisal Map as a Building of Townscape Merit (see Appendix B), confirming that it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The building is physically linked via a small outbuilding to No. 8 York Street, a Grade II Listed Building.

This statement assesses the significance of the heritage asset and evaluates the impact of the proposed works in accordance with national and local heritage policy.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

As the site lies within the Clitheroe Conservation Area and is identified as a Building of Townscape Merit, proposals are required to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

National policy is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), which confirms that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Where a proposal would result in less than substantial harm, this must be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme.

At a local level, Key Statement EN5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy establishes a presumption in favour of conserving and enhancing heritage assets and recognises that securing a viable use is often the best means of ensuring their long-term protection. Policy DME4 requires development within conservation areas to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance their character and appearance.

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

BUILDING OVERVIEW

The application property comprises a former printworks located within Character Area 3 (York Street and Well Terrace) of the Clitheroe Conservation Area. It is identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal as a Building of Townscape Merit and forms part of the historic industrial back-land associated with York Street.

The building has developed in two principal phases. The earliest and most significant element is the three-storey limestone structure, constructed in locally quarried rubble limestone with sandstone dressings beneath a natural slate roof. The south-west elevation retains vertically proportioned openings reflective of its industrial origins, together with

the surviving jib crane. This limestone core forms the principal heritage interest of the building (see appendix E1/3/4/6/8/9).

Adjoining the limestone block is a later brick extension, comprising a two-storey section connected to a three-storey brick portion (see Appendix E1/2/7). Historic photography and Ordnance Survey mapping indicate that this brick phase post-dates the original structure and represents a subsequent expansion of the site (see Appendix C1/C2 & D).

A Structural Report (Taylor Partington Design, July 2023) confirms that the most significant structural issues are confined to the later two-storey brick section. The report identifies structural movement and deterioration within this element and concludes that it is no longer structurally sound (See Appendix F and E7).

The building is presently vacant and continues to deteriorate. In heritage terms, the limestone core represents the primary contributor to the building's significance. The later brick extension forms a secondary phase of lesser significance and is demonstrably affected by structural failure.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONSERVATION AREA

This part of the Conservation Area is characterised by a mix of historic commercial, residential and former industrial buildings, including back-land workshops and service yards located behind primary street frontages.

The application building forms part of this secondary back-land pattern. Although not positioned on a principal street frontage, it contributes to the historic layering of development behind York Street (see Appendix E4).

The retained limestone principal block makes a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area through its scale, materiality and industrial detailing. The vertically proportioned openings and surviving jib crane reflect the nineteenth-century industrial function of the site.

The later brick extension represents a subsequent phase of development associated with the building's continued industrial use.

The building is currently vacant and in declining condition. The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies vacant properties within Back York Street as a negative feature and as sites for enhancement.

Overall, the building's contribution derives primarily from the limestone core, its industrial character and its presence within the established back-land grain of development.

IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS

DEMOLITION OF THE TWO-STOREY BRICK SECTION

The proposal includes the demolition of the later two-storey brick projection attached to the three-storey brick phase of the building.

The retained structure comprises the original three-storey limestone block together with the connected three-storey brick phase. The two-storey brick section projects beyond this and is the element identified as structurally compromised.

As previously mentioned, the Structural Report confirms that the most significant structural issues are concentrated within this two-storey brick element. The principal limestone core and the retained three-storey brick section are not subject to the same level of deterioration.

The brick extension represents a later addition within the building's industrial evolution. Its removal will reduce built mass within the back-land area and simplify the overall form of the building.

Under the previous planning permission, demolition and rebuilding of this projection was accepted in principle. The current proposal adopts a simplified approach by removing the structurally compromised element without reconstruction, resulting in a reduction of built form when compared to the extant approval.

In heritage terms, the proposal results in the loss of a later phase of development. However, this must be considered in the context of its secondary status within the building's evolution, its confirmed structural failure, and the wider objective of securing the long-term viable reuse of the principal historic fabric.

ALTERATIONS TO WINDOW OPENINGS

The building currently exhibits a mix of window types and proportions resulting from incremental alteration and infilling over time. Several openings on the principal south-west elevation have been reduced in size, with later insertions disrupting the original vertical rhythm of the facade.

The proposal seeks to rationalise and reinstate openings within the existing structural apertures. On the south-west elevation, vertically proportioned windows are reinstated within the visible stone heads to restore coherence to the façade. At first and second floor levels, the proportions reflect the existing structural openings. At ground floor level, a full-height opening is introduced within the existing stone head to align with the established vertical rhythm of the elevation.

Windows are proposed in a conservation-style design appropriate to the character of the building. Lower panes to the principal elevation will incorporate obscured or solid treatment to provide internal privacy while maintaining the external proportion and hierarchy of the openings.

To the south-east elevation, the existing six openings within the limestone wall are retained. Replacement windows are proposed to achieve consistency of detailing. All but one opening (serving circulation space) will incorporate obscured glazing. Two openings will be designed to function as emergency escape windows in accordance with Building Regulations requirements.

To the north-east elevation, the existing first floor opening is retained and replaced. A new ground floor opening is introduced at a modest scale to serve a bathroom. A larger opening at this level was previously approved under the extant permission; the current proposal therefore represents a reduced intervention when compared to that fallback position.

Overall, the proposed window alterations remove unsympathetic later insertions, restore consistent proportions and reinforce the industrial character of the building.

MATERIALS AND EXTERNAL TREATMENT

The principal south-west elevation of the limestone block is currently rendered. The proposal includes renewal of this render to provide a consistent and durable external finish. This approach aligns with the treatment previously accepted under the extant planning permission.

The retained three-storey brick phase is also proposed to be rendered. The brickwork is of solid construction and will benefit from improved weather protection. Rendering this elevation will simplify and unify the overall composition of the building, particularly following the removal of the two-storey brick projection. The treatment will ensure a coherent relationship between the retained elements while maintaining the building's established massing and form.

The natural slate roof covering is retained. The existing chimney stack is also retained without alteration.

The demolition of the two-storey brick projection reduces built mass within the back-land area and opens up the site, improving spatial relationships to neighbouring properties. The area created by the removal of this structure will accommodate a modest parking space and a bin store, both positioned within the existing site footprint.

A dedicated bin store is proposed, incorporating simple timber cladding and soft landscaping to soften its appearance. A revised boundary wall treatment is proposed between the site and No. 8A Back York Street, finished in render to match the building and capped with limestone rubble coping to reflect the local material character.

Overall, the material strategy simplifies the building, removes deteriorated fabric and provides a cohesive external finish while retaining the primary historic structure.

IMPACT ON SIGNIFICANCE

The proposal includes the removal of the later two storey brick projection together with alterations to window openings and external finishes.

The element to be removed represents a subsequent addition to the original nineteenth century limestone structure and is confirmed to be structurally compromised. The principal limestone core, which defines the building's character and contribution to the Conservation Area, is retained and repaired.

The principle of demolishing this projection has already been accepted under the previous planning permission, where its removal and rebuilding were approved. The current proposal does not extend that principle but instead adopts a simplified approach by removing the structurally unsound element without reconstruction.

The decision not to rebuild the projection is informed by viability and deliverability. Reconstructing this element would add significant cost and complexity without enhancing the building's significance or improving functionality. A simpler scheme materially increases the likelihood of the building being brought back into use and properly maintained.

The proposal retains the defining historic fabric, reduces overall built mass when compared to the extant approval and removes a deteriorating later addition. In this context, the impact on the building's significance is limited.

Taken as a whole, the scheme secures the long-term use of a vacant building and preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

CONCLUSION

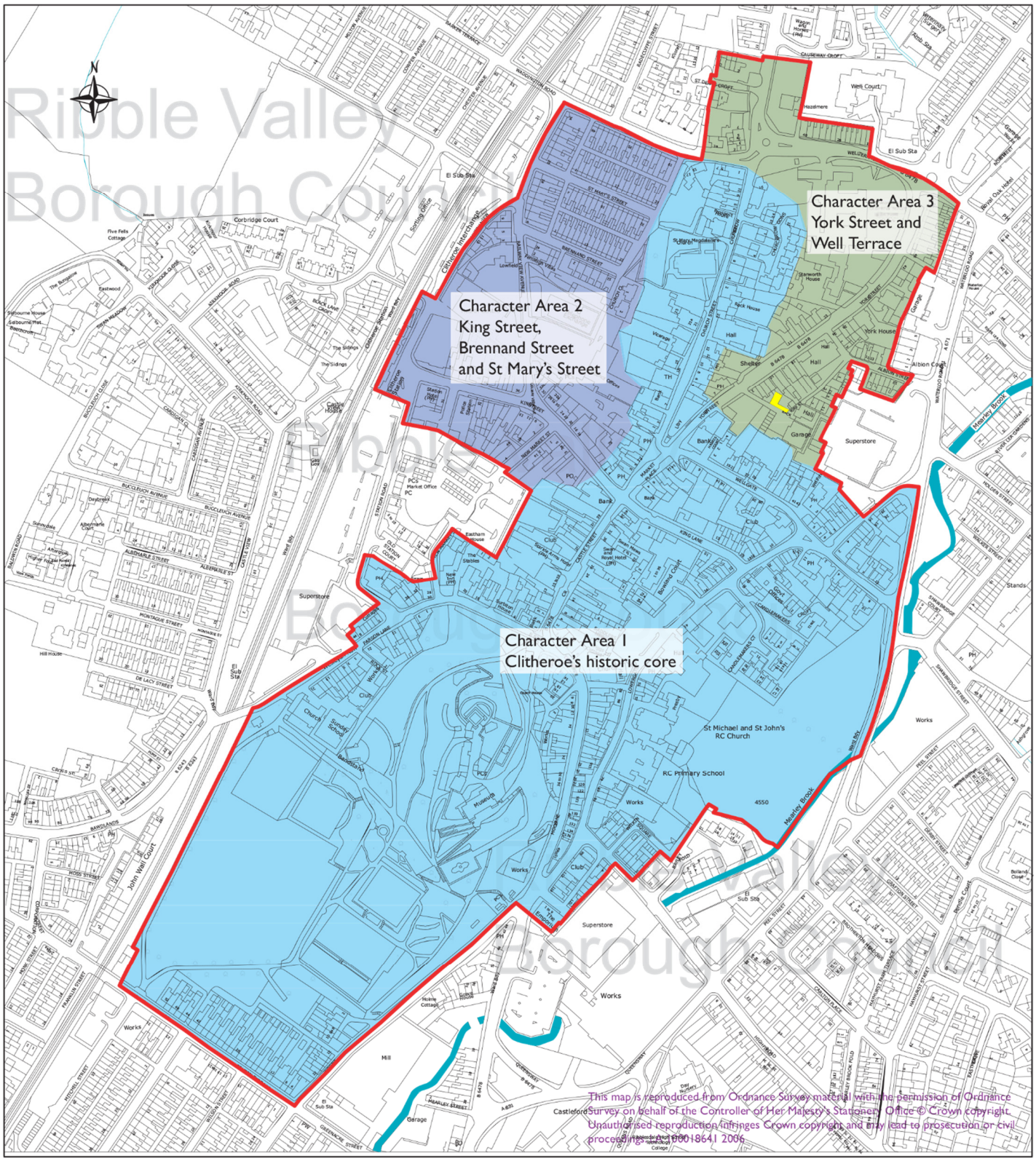
The building is a nineteenth century former printworks that makes a positive contribution to the Clitheroe Conservation Area. Its primary significance lies in the retained three storey limestone structure and its industrial character. The property is currently vacant and deteriorating, with confirmed structural issues affecting the later two storey brick projection.

The principle of demolition of that projection and alteration to the window openings has already been accepted under the previous planning permission. The current proposal follows that established direction but removes the requirement to rebuild the extension, which would be costly and unnecessary in heritage terms. The simplified approach is driven by viability and deliverability and increases the likelihood of the building being restored and occupied.

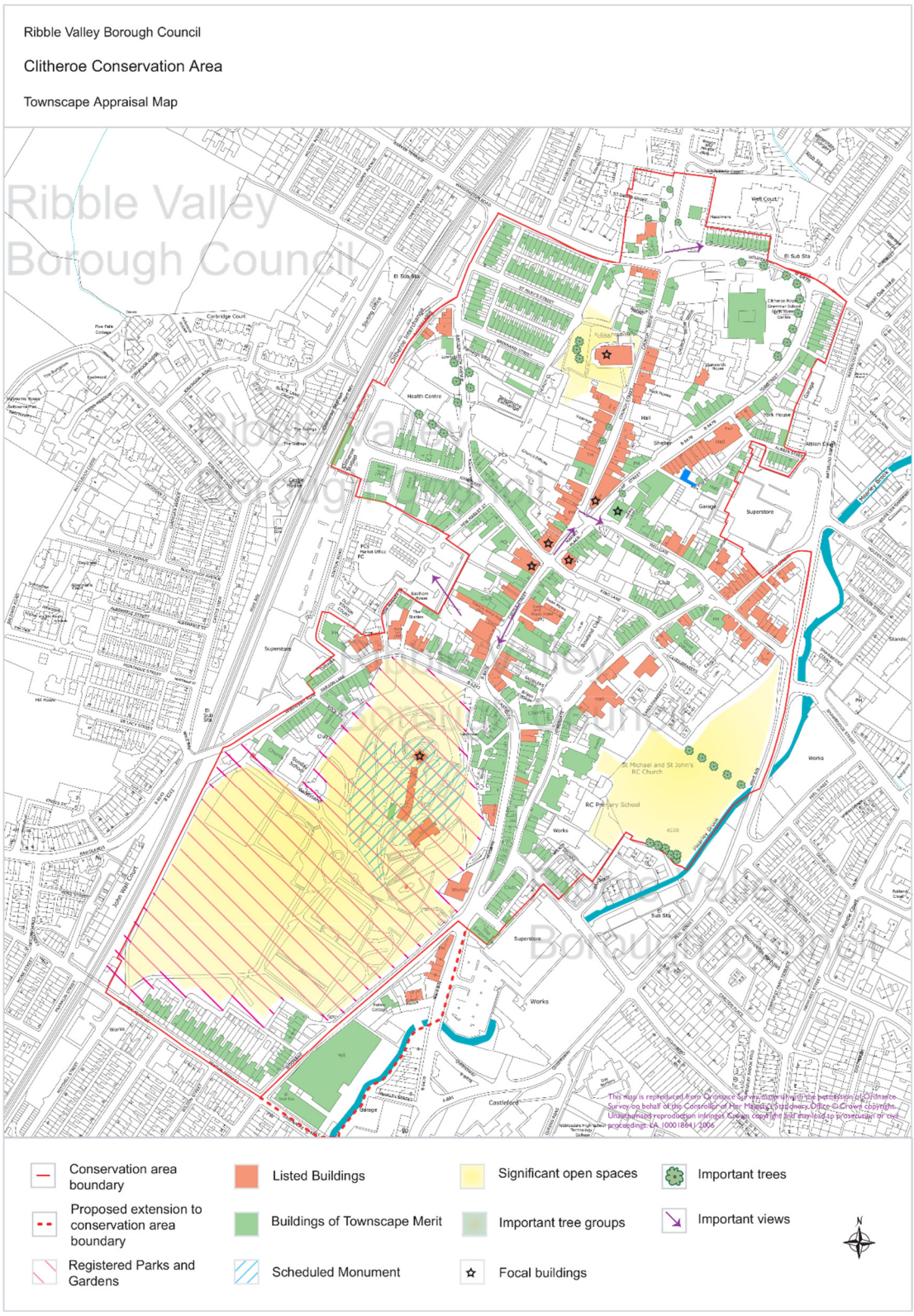
The scheme retains the defining historic fabric, reduces overall built mass and addresses unsympathetic alterations. It provides a practical route to bringing a deteriorating heritage asset back into active use while preserving the character that gives it significance.

APPENDIX

Appendix A – Clitheroe Character Areas Map (Site Highlighted in Yellow)


Character Area 3
York Street and
Well Terrace
Character Area 2
King Street,
Brennand Street
and St Mary's Street
Character Area 1
Clitheroe's historic core
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Appendix B – Clitheroe Townscape Appraisal Map (Site Highlighted in Blue & designated as Building of Townscape Merit)



Appendix C1 – 1880s OS map showing the site without the brick extension.



Appendix C2 – 1910s OS map showing the site with the brick extension.



Appendix D – Photograph of the site highlighted in Yellow - Clitheroe from the Castle, 1895. Source: The Francis Frith Collection (www.francisfrith.com), reproduced for planning purposes.



Appendix E – Existing Photographs



E1 – Existing Front Elevation (SW).



E2 – Relationship to 8a Back York St.



E3 – Existing Side Elevation (NE).



E4 – View from NE showing relationship with the rear of the existing York St properties.



E5 – View of the site from York St.



E6 – View of the NW Side Elevation and SW Front Elevation.



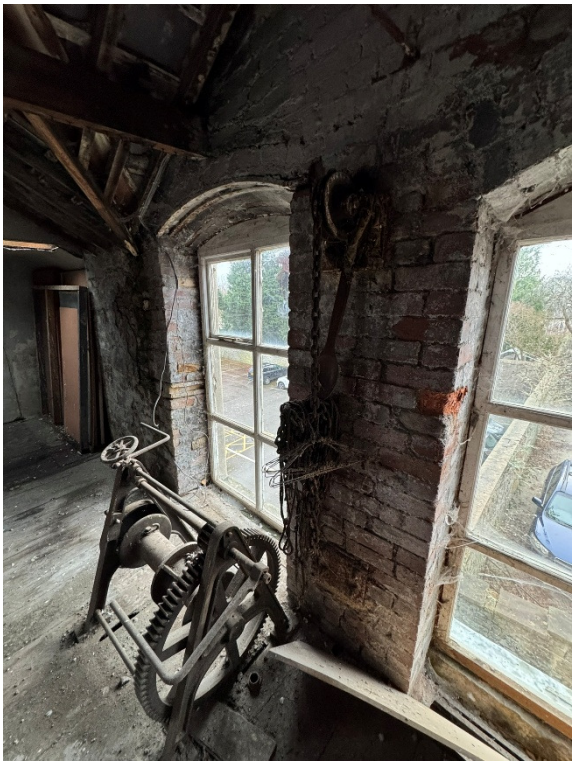
E7 – Brick Extension showing visible signs of deterioration.



E8 – Principal Elevation showing infilled openings, render, and jib crane.



E9 – Jib crane to be restored/ retained.



E10 – Internal Pulley and chain to be restored/ retained.

3.0 Problem Description

Our inspection revealed that the primary structural movement is mainly limited to the two-story section of the building. Severe corrosion was observed on the existing lintels above all the openings, leading to displacement of the brickwork and cracks caused by the expansion of rusting steelwork. Please refer to Appendix A for photographs documenting these issues. Additionally, localized roof spread resulting from creep in the existing roof timbers has further contributed to structural cracks. The corrosion has significantly progressed and is now beyond a point where easy treatment is feasible.

4.0 Assessment and Findings

Based on our assessment, the following observations and findings have been made:

The structural movement is primarily caused by the corrosion of the existing steel lintels, which extend over all the windows along the entire elevation. These lintels need to be replaced.
Sections of cracked brickwork will require removal and rebuilding.

5.0 Recommendations/Conclusion

Considering our assessment and findings, we recommend the following course of action:

Due to the extensive amount of brickwork that needs to be removed and rebuilt, coupled with concerns about the stability of the structure during these works, we suggest demolishing and rebuilding this section of the building using cavity wall construction. The project should include a new slate or tile roof, as well as new roof trusses. The new floors should be tied into the new wall to enhance stability. It is advisable to assess the suitability of the existing wall foundations; however, new foundations may be necessary.

Yours sincerely,

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