SITE OBSERVATION, APPRAISAL, DESIGN, ACCESS & SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION STATEMENTS

(Including Heritage Asset Assessment under PPS5 – HE6).

For

PROPOSED CONVERSION & EXTENSION OF RETAIL UNIT TO PROVIDE GROUND FLOOR RETAIL UNIT AND 8NO. RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS

At

ROBERT GODDARDS SHOP
No. 1 VINE STREET
SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE

For

ROBERT GODDARD LIMITED

PLANNING APPLICATION ISSUE

Oglesby & Limb Ltd
A0941 – Justification statement
April 2018

Site observation and analysis

Location

The site is located approximately 135m due south of the Market Place in Spalding town centre (fig 01). It stands immediately to the west of the junction of Vine Street and Bedford Place. The site extends to the east to the rear edge of the footpath at the junction of these roads. To the south it extends to the rear of the kerb on the north side of Bedford Place. To the west it extends to a boundary fence between it and its neighbour to the west. To the north it abuts the footpath on the south side off Vine Street. The north section of the site contains the existing building which is two to three storeys high. The south section of the site is currently an open, private car park.



Fig. 01 – Site Location Plan

Site description

Taking the site as a whole there is built development on the north half. This comprises a three storey, gabled block that presents it main frontage (with eaves) to the east (fig. 02). To the west of this block is an attached block which stands perpendicular to it. This is of two full storeys with an additional floor within the roofspace (fig. 03). At present the ground and first floor levels are used by Robert Goddards as a menswear shop. The top floor is used for storage in connection with the shop. The top floor also contains staff facilities.

The south section of the site is used as a customer's car park (fig. 04). This is open to Bedford Place throughout its length. The west boundary is formed by steel railings for the most part (fig. 05). The west end of the building forms the boundary line at the north end of this west boundary. The north boundary is the rear of the kerb to the south side of Vine Street (fig. 06).


Fig. 02 – The main frontage to the east.


Fig. 03 – Two storey centre block.


Fig. 04 – The customer car park.


Fig. 05 – The west boundary.



Fig. 06 – The north boundary.

Site history

Planning Law now requires an assessment of all 'Heritage Assets' under PPS5 – HE6. The information below demonstrates the historical research undertaken on the site and attempts to give a 'value' to the building as it now stands.

The site history available is limited. Below is a regressive study recording known development using the town's established documents:

Historical context – regressive map study:

The Grundy Map of 1732

This is the oldest known map showing Spalding town centre (fig. 07). At the time of production of this map the area of this site is shown as being undeveloped. It is included within the grounds of the abbey and as such is likely to have been either orchards or fields.

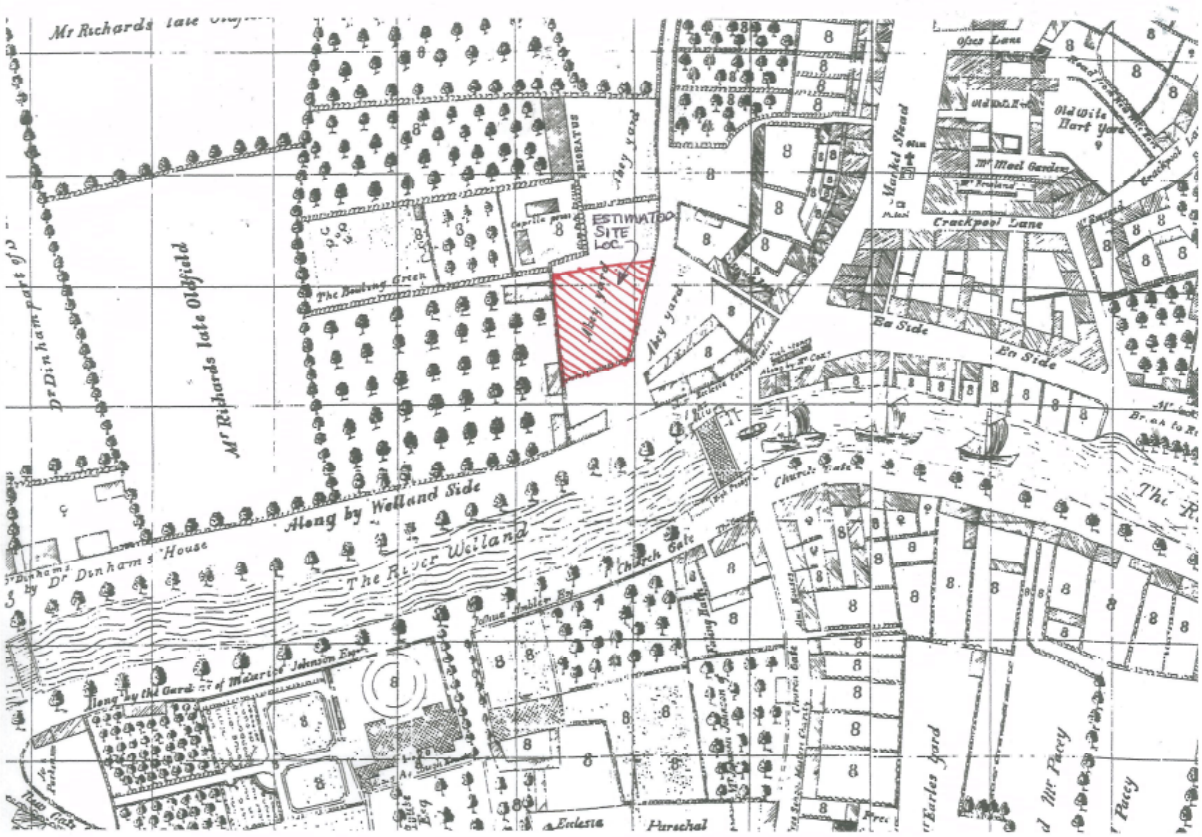


Fig. 07 – Extract from the Grundy Map (north to right of plan)

Map of 1842

This map, which is rather diagrammatic in form, is a 'plan of lands in the abbey yard, Spalding' (fig.08). It indicates land for sale in 1842 at the time when the Crescent was constructed. Although the street layout of Bedford Place and Vine Street appears to exist, there is no built development shown. It is interesting to note at that time that the section of road to the immediate north of the site is known as 'Abbey Yard Road'. This is now known as Vine Street. The site itself is not indicated as being for sale and is not subdivided in any way.

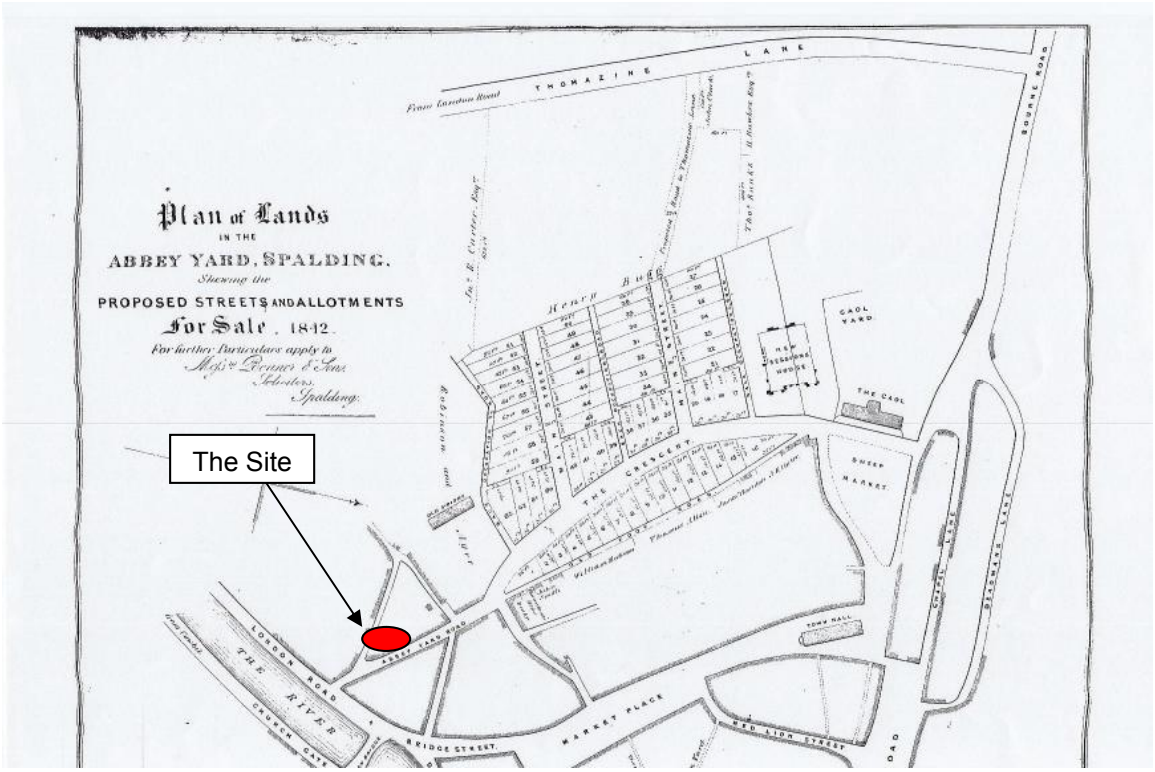


Fig. 08 – Extract from the 'Plan of lands in the abbey yard' of 1842.

Map of 1887

Ordnance Survey produced a plan of the town in 1887 (fig. 09). It is known that between 1842 and 1887 there was significant development in the area of the Crescent and clearly this extended as far as the River Welland. It is worthy of note that this plan now identifies Vine Street by its current name. Development of the site has clearly occurred between 1842 and 1887 and the area occupied by the building in 2011 has already been developed (though that area now occupied by the car park appears to have been part of a semi-formal garden in 1887). The part of the site facing East (towards the river) has a block which appears to be similarly located that that which now exists. The remainder of the site is shown as being developed though the footprint does not correlate with that which exists in 2011 (see figure 11). It is interesting to note that this plan shows a terrace of presumably dwellings facing Vine Street and abutting this site.

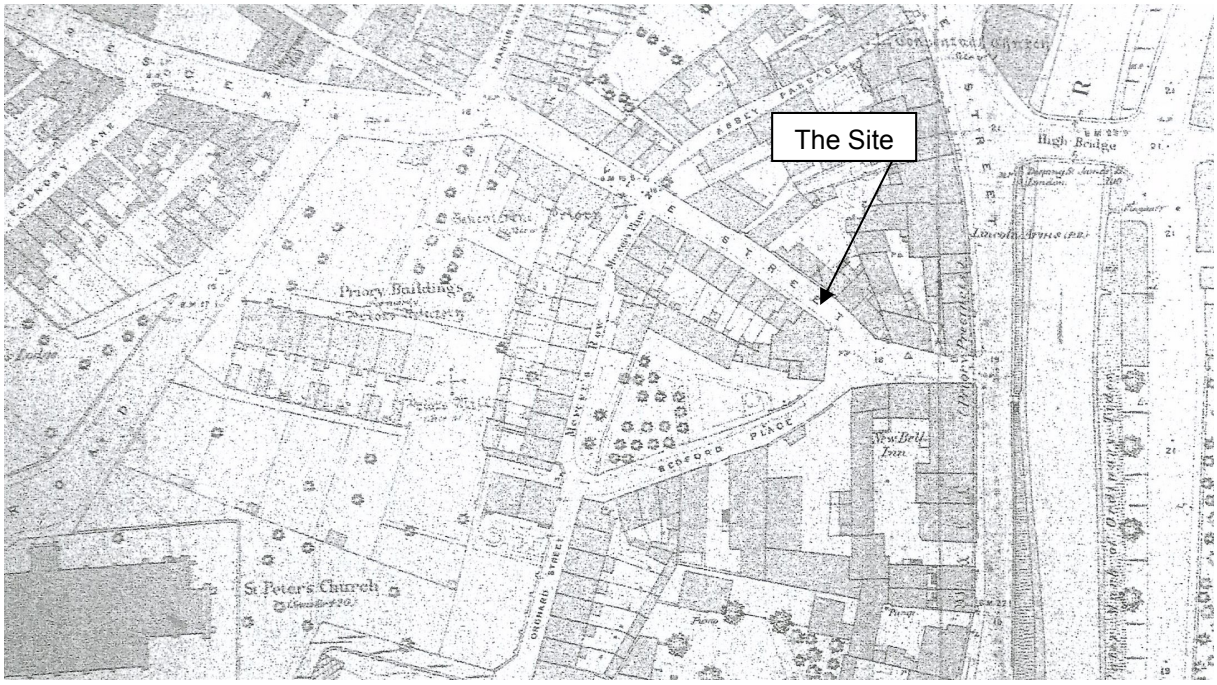


Fig. 09 – Extract from the 'Plan of lands in the abbey yard' of 1842.

Map of 1903

Again an Ordnance Survey plan of the town was produced in 1903. Unfortunately the sheet available at the time of production of this report covered only the north side of the town and extended no further south than the Market Place. No site specific information was therefore available.

L.A. Gornall map – June 1936
Again unfortunately this map gives no significant information for this site.

Historical context – Illustrative evidence:
During the design study period no documentary evidence was found relating to the earlier years following development of the site. Figures 10 and 11 clearly illustrate that the main three storey block of the building was in its current form under the previous ownership. The date of change of ownership is not known although the photograph shows an Austin Metro car and it is known that these were introduced in 1980. Figure 11 clearly shows part of the middle and rear section of the building being demolished and therefore it can be concluded that all development on the site that now exists (with the exception of the main front block) dates from the 1980's or later.



Fig. 10 – The customer car park.


Fig. 11 – The west boundary.

Historic 'Value'

Turning to the historical 'value' of the building only a very limited number of accurate statements can reasonably be made:

1. The building itself is not listed and in isolation does not appear to be of any significant value either nationally or locally.

2. The site has been developed in some form since at least as early as 1887.

3. Overall the building's main historical interest lies in its contribution to the streetscene of Vine Street generally. This streetscene is in general not particularly strong or even consistent but the front section of the building does at least present a formal façade on approach from the East.

4. It is known that the building (particularly the rear sections) have been demolished and rebuilt at some stage in the past and photographic evidence would confirm that this was after 1980. As such the centre and rear sections are of no historic value.

Unfortunately very little documentary evidence is available to indicate the building's appearance when first constructed. The general appearance would suggest that perhaps the three storey block facing the river is original although it is not known how much of the original window and door detailing remains and how much has been added or altered later. The chimneys are of exposed brickwork and it is therefore likely that the building may have also been in exposed brick. It is not known when the render was applied.
The centre block is clearly not as existed in 1887 and from reference to the photographs must have been constructed since 1980. The same is true of the single storey rear block.

This lack of information unfortunately significantly restricts one's ability to attach historic value to the property. It is recognized that the building makes a contribution to the conservation area as a whole but in isolation detailed assessment is much more difficult. It is concluded that the three storey block is of greatest value but beyond this no justification can be offered.

In this case, the proposals do not aim to impact significantly on the three storey block (though the extension does attach to its south gable). The extension is set back from the front (east) elevation to ensure that the latter retains its integrity. The extension has greater impact upon the centre and rear block although it is not considered that this is of particular detriment to the existing fabric.

We now turn to the impact that the proposals will have on the wider environment. The alterations to the existing building will increase the bulk of the rear section as it is here that the roof will be raised. That said, the raised roof will line through with the existing and should therefore be compatible and sympathetic. The increase in height at this location is within the existing footprint and is therefore not considered to be of particular detriment to any neighbouring properties. The proposed extension will largely fill the existing car park and as such is development of a previously used 'open space'. The extension will make a positive contribution to a streetscene that currently lacks cohesion or consistency.

There are no listed buildings immediately adjacent this site and as such it is not anticipated that this development will have a particular impact upon any. It will of course have impact upon the streetscene of Bedford Place and this part of the conservation area, however it is believed that it will make a positive contribution.

Planning History

There has been full planning grated for the part demolition, conversion and extension of shop to provide additional retail floor space and 5 residential units under planning application reference number H16-0486-11. This was approved in September 2011.

In September 2013 planning was grated for the change of use of part of the remaining shop space (as approved under the previous application) to create one additional residential unit.

The most recent application of significance in the immediate vicinity of the site was the conversion of the Granary building to residential apartments (on the opposite side of Bedford Place) approximately 5 years ago (fig. 12).



Fig. 12 – The Granary residential development.

Infrastructure and vehicle movements

The number of vehicles using Vine Street and Bedford Place varies widely depending upon when an observation is made. During the design phase it has been difficult to establish 'average use' as road-works and diversions elsewhere in the town have impacted upon the traffic flow through the Crescent. Both Vine Street and Bedford Place are two directional roads, however the Crescent becomes 'one-way' immediately to the west of this site.

Bedford Place is very short in length and serves only a gym, the Granary residential development, the site, the rear of the adjacent commercial complex and the public car park (which has a second entrance from Vine Street). Vine Street is a through road, linking the river to the Sheep Market on this side of the town. Vine Street is therefore the more frequently used of the two carriageways.

There is significant parking in the area of the site in the form of the pay and display public car park on Vine Street. On-street parking is limited although this does not appear to cause any significant congestion.

The site itself has direct vehicular access from Bedford Place, indeed the boundary between the site and the road is completely open (fig. 13). The north and east sides of the site also have pavements to them. Although the site currently has an area of private parking, this is not considered essential as there is adequate public parking almost directly adjacent. Considering the future use of the site, it is located very close to the centre of the town and so there is excellent access to the town's facilities without the need to use private motor vehicles. In addition, it is a relatively short walk to the town's bus and train stations allowing easy access to places both within and outside the district.

The site is located less than 150m from the town centre and there are footpaths, generally on both sides of the road, between the two.



Fig. 13 – The open boundary access to Bedford Place.

Streetscape / planting

Planting and tree growth to Vine Street is extremely limited. There are a small number of trees in the Vine Street car park but nothing of significance beyond this. In general the streetscene locally is 'urban' with the limits of the street usually being defined by the facades of the buildings. The same is true of Bedford Place. This area of the town is not however as tightly defined as the Market Place or other urban centres. Within the vicinity of the site there are a number of irregular open spaces between buildings.

Amenities

Spalding is the main 'district town' for South Holland and has a full range of amenities. A full list is not provided here, although virtually all facilities fall within 1 mile of the site and are generally accessible on foot.

Context - general development

In general the area around Vine Street and Bedford Place is developed in an urban manner. The site is not in the main 'shopping centre' roughly defined as Market Place, Hall Place, Sheep Market, New Road and Swan Street although it is within easy walking distance. Market Place is approximately 135m to the north of the site. This area of the town provides the transitional strip between the predominantly commercial and retail area to the north and west and the increasingly residential area to the south.

Architectural context

Spalding has examples of buildings constructed during various eras, from medieval to contemporary. In general it does not have a particular consistency linking it with a single style (e.g. Georgian, Victorian etc). The particular context in which this building stands is also inconsistent in terms of built form. There is no predominate style in this vicinity (fig. 14 & 15).



Fig. 14 – Architectural context.


Fig. 15 – Architectural context.

Materials

This area of the town has a mixed palette of building materials. Although the majority of buildings are of traditional construction there is variety in materials used. External walls can be found in facing brickwork, painted brick and both smooth and textured render. Roof finishes visible include natural slate, pantiles, concrete interlocking tiles, asbestos cement sheet and steel claddings. Windows and doors can be found in painted timber, stained timber, uPVC and painted metal.

Architectural Features

As with materials, there is some variation in architectural features. The features seen are often related to date of construction. Development to the north side of Vine Street is characterised by flat roof construction behind parapets generally dating from the latter part of the 20th Century (fig. 15).

Site Appraisal

Details of the site and general context have been recorded and analysed within the site observation and analysis above. From those findings the following statements relative to the site are believed true.

1. The site is very well suited for residential development as it is in an area partly in residential use.

2. Pedestrian access to the site is adequate and there is precedent of this to other properties along Bedford Place. The site does not require parking for the reasons outlined above. The site's close proximity to the town centre is also seen as being of benefit from an environmental viewpoint as it will not be necessary to use motor vehicles to visit it.

3. Alterations to and extension of the building to allow its use for residential development would not be of detriment to the original building. The loss of the private parking area to enable the extension would not be of detriment either to the site or the wider context as there is adequate parking almost immediately adjacent.

4. The alteration and extension of the building would ensure its long-term future and will bring life to the site 24 hours a day. The mixture of uses proposed would appear appropriate with no conflict envisaged.

5. The site area is sufficient to accommodate the extension but also provide appropriate storage and external facilities as expected for such a residential development.

Design Statement

The following statements are given to describe the proposal and relate back the elements of the proposal to the comments made in the foregoing appraisal.

Statement 1.
It is proposed that a three storey extension be constructed in the south parking area. In addition, it is proposed that the roof to the rear block be raised to match the central block and provide additional accommodation. It is proposed that the accommodation subsequently provided on the site be a mix of retail and residential accommodation.

Justification:
The loss of parking appears insignificant given the close proximity of public parking. The erection of a three storey extension would be appropriately accommodated on the site and would have a clear presence within the streetscene and general context without over-powering the existing building. Retail use on the site is established and the extension would provide greater shop-front area and therefore increased interest at pedestrian level. The introduction of residential accommodation on the site would appear contextually appropriate given land and building use within this area of the town. The two uses would appear compatible and not of detriment either to each other, the site or its neighbours.

Statement 2:
It is proposed that the main shop floor at ground floor level be retained and extended to continue to serve its current purpose.

Justification:
Ground floor level retail space is far more productive than that located at higher level and is far easier to access by disabled people. The overall reduction in gross retail floor space reflects changing trends in the market place (the rise of internet sales etc). The increase at ground floor level will provide an improved facility which will assist the business and help to ensure its long term future as both an amenity to the public and also an employer of local people. The retail space will become more accessible as it will be on a single level.

Statement 3:
The existing car parking on site will be lost, however facilities for cycle storage will be provided.

Justification:
The loss of parking is considered insignificant given the close proximity of public parking available (almost immediately adjacent the site). The inclusion of storage space for bicycles is intended to encourage use of this form of transport and this will clearly have an environmental benefit. This also accords with SHDC planning policy in terms of carbon emission reductions.

Statement 4:
The proposal is three storeys in height and has been designed to follow the footprint of the site itself.

Justification:
This height provides a positive contribution to the streetscape and is ‘significant’ whilst not over-powering the existing ‘host’ building. It is believed that this height and size of development achieves a comfortable and appropriate relationship with its surroundings. The

outer face of the extension follows the curve of Bedford Place and as such reinforces this urban route. The space between the façade and the kerb provides a footpath to allow safe access.

Statement 5:
The building has a modern and yet simple appearance. It is intended to be seen as a vertical 'plane' that encloses the previously undeveloped area of the site. It wraps around the interior and provides a clear barrier dividing the site from the streetscape, helping to define the latter in the process. Openings for windows and doors are 'punched through' in a modern, clean, crisp manner. The proportions of the windows reflect those found on the more traditional buildings nearby. In doing this the buildings proportions of solid to void respect the surroundings of the conservation area whilst providing detailing that set the building clearly within its own era.

Justification:
This achieves an aesthetic considered appropriate for this context.

Statement 6:
Glazing has been introduced between the new extension and the existing gable.

Justification:
This allows a degree of separation between the existing and the new. It is believed that this glazed 'void' permits the existing building to retain its identity and integrity whilst remaining 'comfortable' with the new addition. This 'space' also allows the new extension to stand in its own right.

Statement 7:
It is proposed that the materials for the external walls be facing brickwork with upper floors cladded in treaded cedar rainscreen timber classing, fixed horizontally

Justification:
Brickwork is a durable, low-maintenance material that can be detailed in a modern manner whilst still reflecting and respecting its context. The cedar cladding adds a break and some interest to the façade, maintaining its modern appearance and 'softening' the overall look of the extension. Although the host building is rendered, the majority of other buildings around the site are in brick.

Statement 8:
It is proposed that the roof be flat behind a low parapet.

Justification:
The curvilinear footprint of the extension lends itself best to a flat, or very low pitched covering.

Access Statement:

Site Location

The site is located between Vine Street and Bedford Place close to the centre of Spalding. There are shops and general amenities within a few hundred metres of the site. Public transport is available within the area.

Access to the site

Access to the site is immediately from the pavement the circumnavigates it. Pedestrian access to the shop will remain via the existing entrance. Pedestrian access to the residential apartments will be via a new gated entrance from Bedford Place. The outer edge of the building will be set back from the kerb of Bedford Place so as to create a path.

Access to the dwellings and facilities within.
The new dwellings have been designed where possible to ease use by people with some disabilities. It must be acknowledged though that the existing structure imposes some restrictions to access that cannot be readily overcome.

Sustainable Construction Statement:

The following design decisions have been taken with sustainable construction and environmental issues in mind. It must however be acknowledged that the existing site and structure restrict what is reasonably possible on this site.

1. The reuse of an existing building is effectively 'recycling' an underused building.
2. The provision of residential accommodation on site is considered of benefit as the residents will be in walking distance of the town's amenities.
3. Cycle storage is proposed, in an attempt to encourage use of what is a 'green' form of transport.
4. The internal room layout has been designed such that all 'principal' rooms have a view out. This will allow enjoyment of natural light and ventilation.
5. The proposed roof structure has been specifically designed to allow the possible incorporation of solar photo-voltaic cells which would reduce the need for imported energy and hence reduce the carbon footprint in use. Further investigation is in progress regarding the viability of this.

Further decisions will be made during the detailed design process although the following have been discounted due to the location of the site:

1. Wind turbines are not proposed due to the location of the site, the space available and the impact that they could be considered to have upon the setting of the conservation area.

Further options will be considered in due course.