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Our ref: PRA/GH/HN/LE11068/001  
Your ref:

Date: 25 February 2011

Mr Andrew Laing  
Hollins Strategic Land  
4th Floor  
Old Colony House  
6 South King Street  
Manchester  
M2 6DQ

Dear Andrew

**The Becconsall Public House, Station Road, Hesketh Bank**

### Introduction

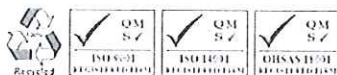
In accordance with the instructions received from Hollins Strategic Land, a condition survey of the above site was undertaken on 9 February 2011. This report is a summary of the results of the survey. The findings of the report are limited to the extent that no obtrusive inspections, investigation or tests were carried out.

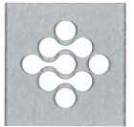
The survey was carried out by one of Wardell Armstrong's Senior Structural Engineers, Gary Hand BSc (Hons). A walkthrough inspection was undertaken to assess the overall condition of the building, to identify any significant structural defects present and to comment on the implications of any defects found in relation to the proposal to convert the building into flats, or refurbish the building bringing it back to a habitable condition. All accessible areas of the building were made available for inspection.

Weather conditions at the time of the inspection were overcast.

During the inspection, a number of photographs were taken, a selection of which have been provided in the enclosed survey record sheets. The remaining photos are available for perusal if required.

In the following descriptions and throughout this report, the terms 'front', 'rear', 'left' and 'right' are from the perspective of an observer viewing the building from Station Road.





## **Site Description**

The site is almost rectangular on plan with the eastern boundary running adjacent to Station Road. The Beconsall pub and its car parks are situated on the northern half of the site.

### **The Beconsall Pub**

#### ***Description***

The original building is rectangular on plan with a large two storey extension attached to the rear and several other single storey extensions to the rear and side of the building. The pub is currently laid out over two storeys - a ground and first floor, with a cellar below.

It has been suggested that originally the pub was constructed with three storeys and following a fire was reduced to two storeys. There is evidence in the roof space of old rooms that seem to substantiate this.

The original building is of traditional construction with brick walls and a tiled roof. The internal floors are suspended timber, with the roof of tiled construction on traditional timber purlins and rafters.

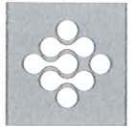
There are various extensions to the building which are also all traditionally built, with timber roofs and brickwork walls. The roof construction does vary across the extensions, with one having a monopitch corrugated cement sheet roof, another having a timber flat roof and the remainder having traditional tiled, timber pitched roofs.

## **Observations**

### ***External Observations***

The following defects were noted.

- The pitched roof to the original two storey section of the building had sagged significantly.
- The pitched roof to the single storey extension on the left hand side of the rear elevation of the building was in poor condition and had sagged considerably. The sagging roof had pushed the walls out at eaves level and there was pronounced bulging to the brickwork.
- The pitched roof over the internal quadrant between the rear extensions had partially collapsed.



- The corrugated cement sheet roof to one of the rear single storey extensions may contain asbestos and should be tested.
- The existing timber fascias (at ground floor and roof levels), soffits and front elevation canopy at ground floor were rotten and were generally in poor condition.
- The exposed steel lintels above most windows showed signs of corrosion, many of which had begun to delaminate (ie split apart due to corrosion).
- The bay window to the right-hand side of the front elevation had begun to collapse, and the brickwork above had moved.
- There were large areas of brickwork that have been damaged through frost attack. Many of the brickwork faces had spalled, particularly the single storey pitched roof extension to the rear left-hand corner of the building.
- The brickwork to the single storey extension built onto the end of the large two storey extension to the rear of the building was cracked and sloping towards the rear corner. The rear corner in this location appeared to have been subject to settlement which appeared to be the cause of the cracking.

### ***Internal Observations***

The following defects were noted.

- There was approximately 600mm of standing water in the cellar, making it inaccessible at the time of inspection. It is likely that the water has had a detrimental effect on the condition of the brickwork in the cellar. The cellar walls are almost certainly constructed from common brick and therefore susceptible to damage from frost/frozen water and long term submersion in water.
- The building has been derelict for some time and has suffered from the effects of significant damp ingress, with the suspended timber ground floor and first floors being clearly distorted. There was also mould on the ground floor carpets and wall plaster, with the worst affected area being in the ground floor toilets (due to a water leak), suggesting that water and damp ingress has been ongoing for some time.
- The wall areas around external doors, windows and vents were visibly damp, and water ingress through these openings had also affected the floor and wall plaster adjacent.
- There were some isolated areas of rising damp evident in the ground floor walls.



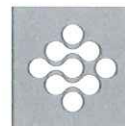
- Large areas of ceiling plaster had begun to come away from the (original construction) timber laths, and had sagged and cracked extensively in most areas. Isolated areas at first floor had collapsed.
- Cracks were noted in brickwork above the ground floor bay windows to the front elevation, and the right hand side bay had clearly deformed due to subsidence.
- Cracking was noted above most of the window lintels, almost certainly caused by corrosion of the lintels.
- Two water leaks were noted. One, in the downstairs toilet, had caused the room to become extremely damp, and the door frames to rot. The second leak was from within the first floor bathroom which had leaked into the first floor ceiling void and damaged the ceiling and floors on the ground floor.
- There were several large holes through the roof of the single storey, pitched roofed extension at the rear of the property. These holes appeared to have been caused by the existing tiles falling out of position.
- The roof over the original area of the building was in poor condition, with daylight showing through most of the joints between roof tiles, caused by the loss of mortar and parging.
- The existing first floor ceiling joists appeared to be the floor joists from the original third storey of the building. Several of these were charred due to fire damage.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The building is in poor condition, mainly due to the ingress of water through the roof and in the cellar.

The following repairs and remedial works are recommended to restore the building to a habitable condition.

- i) The pitched roof to the main building, the rear extension and the internal quadrants are all in very poor condition and need to be completely replaced, which will also include replacement of all the fascias, soffits and gutters.
- ii) High level brickwork that has been pushed out by the spread of the roof to the rear single storey extension needs to be taken down and rebuilt.
- iii) All brickwork damaged through frost attack should be cut out and replaced. This applies particularly to the single storey extension (with a pitched roof) to the rear left-



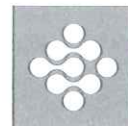
hand corner of the building, which may prove less expensive to demolish and rebuild rather than to repair, due to the extent of brickwork requiring replacement.

- iv) Ground and first floors need to be completely replaced due to their poor condition.
- v) The cellar needs to be tanked (possibly using a proprietary render system such as Sika Damp Proofing Slurry) to prevent the ingress of ground water.
- vi) The timber canopy to the front elevation needs to be replaced.
- vii) All walls need to have a suitable remedial damp proof course installed.
- viii) All wall plaster should be removed and replaced due to damp and water ingress.

With regard specifically to the proposal to convert the building into residential flats, we have the following additional comments.

- ix) Almost all of the internal walls are structural, ie loadbearing. Significant structural modifications would therefore be required to remove/reposition internal walls to suit a residential layout. As the roof and floors need to be replaced, the design of these new elements should be 'sympathetic' to existing wall loads, whilst also taking account of any proposed internal wall layout. This may require the use of a number of steel beams and possibly steel frames to distribute loads to existing walls, or the introduction of new internal walls/foundations to ensure that the existing structure remains stable and does not become overloaded (which could also, in turn, lead to settlement of the foundations).
- x) The two low rise single storey extensions to the rear right-hand corner of the building have been built as outhouses (ie not suitable for habitation) and previously used for storage. These outhouses are extremely damp, and it is unlikely that their construction would be suitable for conversion to habitable dwellings, meaning it may be more economical to demolish them and rebuild as required.

The items above are an indication of the minimum **structural** requirements considered necessary to restore the building and convert it to habitable dwellings. They do not include any additional items required to bring the building up to current Building Regulations, or NHBC standards. It is likely that additional modifications to comply with these Regulations, in terms of insulation, passage of sound and fire spread alone could add quite significantly to the work required in conversion of the building.



Although a full cost analysis has not been undertaken, it is likely that the extensive level of repairs that are required to return the pub back to a habitable standard alone, are likely to exceed the cost of a complete rebuild. This level of cost does not take account of all the additional modifications required to convert the building to dwellings in complying with current building regulations, these modifications will have a significant impact on the cost of the conversion.

We trust that the above information is sufficient for your present purposes, but please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further commentary or clarification of any point.

Yours sincerely  
for Wardell Armstrong LLP

**P R AINSWORTH**  
Director

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