



DESIGN, ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

Doc Ref: 1415/DOCS/PLANNING/DAS02.
Client: Ecclestone Properties Ltd.
Project: Works to 33 Ecclestone Street, Prescott L34 5QA.
Date: 07/02/22.
Revision: -

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

This Design, Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Eccleston Properties Ltd. in support of a planning application for the re-building of a rear gable at 33 Eccleston Street, Prescott L34 5QA.

1.2 APPLICATION TYPE

Application for Planning Permission and for relevant demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area.

1.3 PROPOSAL OBJECTIVES:

The proposed scheme aims to achieve the following objective:

- Make safe the unstable outrigger gable wall to prevent damage to the existing property;
- Carefully demolish the existing gable;
- And sympathetically re-build the gable to match the existing.

2.0 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT & HERITAGE

2.1 LOCATION

The property is located within Prescott Town Centre, at 33 Eccleston Street, Prescott L34 5QA. The site lies within the Prescott Conservation area.

2.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

No.33 Eccleston Street is in a terrace of individual buildings on the N side of Eccleston Street, in the town centre and sited directly at the back of the pavement/highway. It has most recently been wholly used as a shop at ground floor with storage and offices above.

The plot almost certainly relates to a medieval burgage plot but: the burgage plot was extended forward in the 18th C and; a recent three storey block of apartments has been built behind and a car park has been created beyond it, truncating the rear part of the plot.

No. 33 is a three storey building on the frontage on to Eccleston Street and has a two storey rear wing, which was an earlier cottage.

FRONT:

The ground floor shopfront dates from the late 20th C. It has a door on the LH side and a plate glass shop window with a low, painted timber stall-riser with mouldings in the form of panels. It has: a plain painted timber pilaster on the RH side; a pier on the LH side of 20th C bricks behind a cast iron down pipe, which rakes over from the left above a boarded timber door with a plain fanlight which gives access to a passage between No.s 31 and 33 and; a painted timber fascia sign with a small moulding around the edge. This modern shop front is in the process of being replaced with a traditional shop front forming part of planning application ref: 20/00724/FUL.

At first and second floor, the front wall is constructed of local common hand-made bricks in English Garden Wall Bond and probably dates from an 18th C partial rebuild/forward extension. No. 31 is also constructed of identical bricks but it is in Flemish bond and is slightly taller. The junction between the

buildings (and different bonds) is hidden behind the cast iron down-pipe but, curiously, the courses appear to continue through both buildings, suggesting that they were built at the same time.

On the first floor is a single tall rectangular window of Georgian proportions and a moulded buff sandstone cill but the window head has a more recent red sandstone lintel with a chamfer on the lower outer face and a terracotta drip mould. The window is a three over one painted timber, vertically sliding sash window with horns. The window head and the window itself suggest that an earlier Georgian head and window were replaced around 1900, as terracotta and this form of window were popular around that date.

On the second floor are two square windows which could also be Georgian openings, expressing a vertical hierarchy, and they too have moulded buff sandstone cills, a more recent red sandstone lintel with a chamfer on the lower outer faced three over one window frames but without a terracotta drip mould.

Above the window heads is a 20th C composite gutter fixed directly to the wall. The roofs of the front range and the rear wing have coverings of natural blue slate, laid in diminishing courses.



Front Elevation. (Existing shop front currently being replaced under planning application ref: 20/00724/FUL).

REAR:

At the rear, the earlier two storey wing has a rough-cast cement based rendered rear gable constructed in thin buff sandstone blocks with some hand-made bricks and a timber lintel or relieving pad. The only

opening on the rear gable is a doorway at first floor with a modern security door which gives access on to a 20th C brick and concrete staircase down into a small rear yard.



Rear Outrigger Gable with roughcast cement based render. (Image taken prior to the render removed as part of the works relating to planning application ref: 20/00724/FUL).

The existing rear gable wall was significantly bowed at ground and first floor but has a ledge at eaves level and which was plumb above due to the gable having been rebuilt plumb on top of an earlier wall. The gable and the roof have a simple pointed verge.

The LH (E) return wall of the rear wing is constructed of thin buff sandstone blocks in a roughly coursed bond and it is entirely blind.

The RH (W) return wall of the rear wing is also mostly constructed of thin buff sandstone blocks in roughly coursed bond but it has a straight joint approx 1m from the front range which is constructed in hand-made common bricks which are similar to those on the front elevation and the exposed narrow vertical panel of the rear wall of the front range.

On the ground floor of this RH return wall is an inserted doorway towards the rear with a modern boarded timber door and; a panel of old handmade bricks at the LH reveal above 1metre, suggesting that the doorway may have been created in a wider window opening. This wall also has a previous doorway towards the rear of the main range, which has been blocked with older handmade bricks.

At first floor are two three-light windows with modern stained timber window frames. The passage between the rear wing of No.33 and the rear wing of No. 31 continues between the buildings, under the W side of No. 33 and has lime-washed brick walls and a segmental brick arch partway through. Above the passage on the rear is a blocked window.

The weathered nature of the exposed stone and the bonding of the return walls suggest that the ground and first floor walls are part of an earlier, post-medieval building which was retained and adopted when the front range was rebuilt or extended in the 18th C.



RH rear return stone wall of rear outrigger.

3.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES & HERITAGE

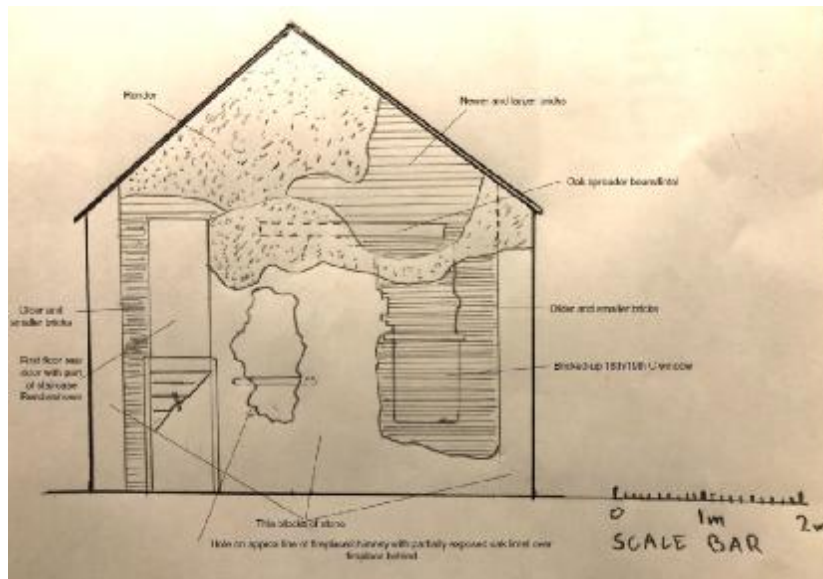
3.1 APPLICATION PROPOSALS

EXISTING REAR GABLE

More recently, as part of the works associated with planning application 20/00724/FUL, the rough cast render has since been removed to reveal the existing building fabric beneath. The removal of the render uncovered some significant structural failings in the wall which resulted in partial collapses of the wall. The collapses were due to varying panels of masonry being insufficiently tied and bonded together. It is suspected that the cement based render was likely installed at some point in the past to bond together the varying panels of masonry.



Exposed rear elevation December 2021.



Drawing of rear gable December 2021.

The partial removal of the render and the partial collapse have revealed some findings which have been recorded in a WSI report produced as part of Application 20/00724/FUL.

Most of the rear elevation has been rebuilt or altered at some point in the past and these works have substantially weakened the structure. The only parts which are in situ and constructed of the same thin stone blocks as the side elevations are: the N ends of the LH and RH side walls of the cottage; a central pier varying from 300mm-50mm wide and; plinths in the bottom RH and LH corners.

A doorway has been created at first floor level on the LH side and lined with bricks. The outer wall of the former chimney has collapsed for a width of approx 800mm from approx 1000mm above ground level to approx 2500mm above ground level, to the R of the modern external brick staircase. A panel of bricks extends from ground level up to approx 4m above ground level adjacent to the RH (W) side wall.

In the centre of this brick panel is a timber lintel and behind the brickwork below the lintel is a blocked up window. Only small parts of the upper corners of the surviving window frame can be seen but it appears to be a vertically sliding sash window with: the weight box set back behind an outer skim of bricks; a rounded and tapered fillet on the RH side and; internal iron security bars. The details of the windows suggest that it was inserted in the 18th or 19th C.

The very limited width of wall in stone at the RH and LH edges suggests that perhaps the side walls originally continued further towards the N and that this gable wall was originally a cross wall, although there is no proof of this.

The removal of the render from the top RH part of the gable has exposed the RH end of a timber baulk which appears to be oak and is approx 800mm deep. The wall at the top of the gable, over the baulk, is built in large mid-20th C common bricks. This confirms the top of the gable has been fully rebuilt at some point, without the chimney.

There was a fireplace and a chimney inside the rear gable wall, but as the sides were constructed in bricks, rather than stone, it was a later addition or replacement, probably in the 18th C.

The Chimney is inadequately tied in to the external stonework and has partially collapsed on the outer face. At some point previously, the chimney was truncated below eaves level, capped off, infilled and partially encased internally by a new lining of bricks.

A structural engineer attended site and confirmed that the gable wall was in a precarious state and was unstable. Emergency temporary propping and support works were set in place by the building contractor to protect the fabric of the building and prevent further deterioration of the gable and surrounding structure.

PROPOSED WORKS:

The proposals, as indicated on the application drawings, are to carefully demolish the existing rear gable masonry structure down to external ground level, setting aside any re-usable masonry and re-building the gable to match the existing. The gable is to be re-built in solid brickwork construction, 9" thick. Handmade reclaimed brickwork on the outer face is to be used along with common brick to the inner leaf brickwork. Masonry to be constructed in a lime based mortar. The new masonry is to be fully tied into the existing fabric and the internal breast is to be tied back into this new gable wall to ensure full stability of the old and new structures. Please refer to the application drawings for brick and mortar specifications.

3.2 USE

The use is to maintain as existing.

3.3 LAYOUT AND SCALE

The layout and scale are not affected by the new proposals as the building is retained in its present form.

3.4 APPEARANCE

The new replacement gable will enhance the building's appearance by removing the unstable concrete rendered wall and replacing it with a sympathetic brickwork wall of traditional appearance. The proposals will have a positive effect on the character of the Conservation Area.

3.5 LANDSCAPING

There is no hard or soft landscaping proposed.

4.0 ACCESS

Access will remain unchanged by the application proposals.

4.1 ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is not affected by the application proposals.

4.2 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS:

Pedestrian access is not affected by the application proposals.

4.3 HIGHWAYS:

There is no highways access into the site.

4.5 PARKING & SERVICING:

There are no parking facilities within the site.

4.6 DRAINAGE:

The drainage is unaffected by the proposals.

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY

The applicant fully supports the principles of sustainable development and will re-use suitable material from the demolition where appropriate.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In summary, the re-building of the gable was deemed necessary on stability/safety grounds and the proposals to re-build the gable in a sympathetic manner preserve and enhance the building and the wider Conservation Area. The application proposals make a positive contribution to the Town Centre regeneration proposals and should be welcomed by the Council.