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Structural Appraisal & Conversion Assessment

Of

**Former Golden Ball Inn
Broughton
Preston
PR3 5JA**

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1.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report has been prepared at the request of the owner of the above property.

We understand that it is proposed to convert the property from a restaurant into a ground floor retail units with first floor offices over.

2.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inspect and comment on the overall structural condition of the property and comment on the suitability of the existing structure for conversion.

The report is limited to the structural elements of the building only and is not intended as a general condition report on the property as a whole. We have not inspected the drainage system, electrical or gas installations and are therefore unable to confirm that these are in satisfactory condition.

We advise you that this report is an appraisal only and not full structural survey. We have not inspected woodwork or other parts of the structure

which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and we are therefore unable to report that any such parts of the property are free from defect.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

The former Golden Ball Inn, now the Touch of Spice restaurant, is located in the village of Broughton, at the crossroad junction of the A6 Garstang Road with Woodplumpton Lane to the west and Whittingham Lane to the east.

The building is an L-shaped two-storey structure fronting Garstang Road while to the rear and south are single-storey extensions overlooking a large car park adjoining Woodplumpton Lane.

The main building is built in load bearing brickwork which has been rendered sometime in the past.

There are both solid and suspended timber floor constructions at ground floor level and a suspended timber floor at first floor. The roof is of traditional construction comprising of timber purlins and rafters with a slate roof covering.

The single storey extensions to the rear of the main building are constructed in load bearing cavity wall construction with either flat or slated pitch roofs.

It can be clearly seen that the property has undergone considerable alterations and additions during its life including substantial internal wall removal at ground floor.

4.0 STRUCTURAL APPRAISAL

Our inspection was limited to the exposed areas of the property.

4.1 External Inspection

a. East Facing Side Wall – Two Storey

The east side wall of the main two storey building shows signs of slight settlement of the foundations and long-term effects of heavy traffic passing by.

Vertical levels taken up the face of the wall show the wall has reasonable vertical alignment.

There is evidence of old vertical and zig zag cracks having been infilled on the main elevation in the more recent past. These cracks appear to be of long term origin

b. East Facing Side Wall – Two Storey

The construction of this section appears to be more recent in construction.

No significant movement relevant to the report was noted to this section of the property.

c. Rear Wall – Two Storey and Single Storey Extension

The rear wall of the original building could not be seen at ground floor level as it was covered by the single storey extension along the whole elevation.

No significant movement relevant to the report was noted to this section of the property.

d. Roof

There are signs of minor eaves spread along the east elevation, possibly due to long term creep of the existing timber purlins. This is also reflected by the uneven ridge line.

The roof to the single storey extension was generally noted to have reasonable alignment.

4.2 Internal Inspection

a. Kitchen Area

The original kitchen is situated in the single storey extension to form one large kitchen area.

The roof in this area is a flat roof and at the time of inspection it the condition could not be

Dining Room Area

Our inspection of the south dining room showed cracks which had no major structural significance but do show that the building has moved in recent times. The plasterwork to this area also show signs of damp and would require further inspection.

This area has undergone the most modifications and alterations to the existing load bearing walls. These have been removed and replaced with steel supporting members by the previous owners. The adequacy of these beams to carry the loading will have to be investigated further.

b. First Floor Level

At first floor level there is some slight loss of vertical alignment of the east elevation wall.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The building is generally noted to be in reasonable structural condition with some minor cracking noted throughout which can be attributed to past alterations and traffic vibration.

It is clearly evident that the building has had considerable internal alterations and modifications to its original layout and has had extensive extensions to the south gable end and the rear west facing elevation. These alterations have been carried out to facilitate its current use as a restaurant at ground floor and first floor residential accommodation.

The majority of the main loadbearing internal walls have been removed by installing steel beams supported on masonry piers. These piers are at ad hoc locations throughout the ground floor. The beams have been installed below the existing floor construction leaving a low head room of between 2150mm and 2300mm.

In order to convert the property into retail units and offices the following would need to be taking into consideration:

The existing single storey west/rear extension would have to undergo considerable alterations to enable the ground floor to be split into retail units. There are currently small domestic style windows which would require removing and larger windows and doors installed. This would require the propping of the existing roof and installation of further steelwork.

The existing east elevation facing the A6 has one door which is not currently used as the main entrance. There are also small windows in this elevation which are not conjunctive to a retail use. In order to convert the building to retail use it would be necessary to re-introduce and enlarge the door & window openings on this elevation.

The first floor is currently being used for residential accommodation and would require extensive alterations to enable it to be used for offices. The existing floor construction is also unlikely to be adequate to carry the proposed office loading and would require strengthening or completely replacing.

In addition, the first floor does not have disabled access which would be a requirement for any new office conversion.

In order to provide a practical layout for retail units at ground floor the internal masonry piers will need to be removed. This would entail extensive propping and steelwork installation to ensure the stability of the property is maintained in both the temporary and permanent condition. This type of work is not without risk.

With due consideration to the above we would recommend that the most safe, practical and cost effective solution would be to demolish the building rather than converting the existing property.

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