

PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT AT THE GOLDEN BALL

BROUGHTON, CITY OF PRESTON

SUPPLEMENTARY HERITAGE STATEMENT

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1. *The proposal/designation*

This report supports proposed redevelopment of the former Golden Ball Inn, now the Touch of Spice restaurant, which is located in the village of Broughton within the City of Preston, Lancashire. The building has been selected for local listing by Preston City Council. Proposals have been submitted to the City Council for demolition of the existing building and replacement by a new mixed-use development incorporating four ground floor retail units and a high-quality B1 first floor office unit, along with an adjoining residential retirement complex residential.

2. *Heritage issue*

The heritage issue arising is the proposal's impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the locally-listed building. The scope and purpose of this report is to identify this significance and assess how it will be affected by the proposal.

3. *Purpose of this statement*

This statement is to be regarded as a supplement to the original Heritage Assessment produced by Garry Miller Historic Building Consultancy in July 2018 in support of the proposal. Its purpose is to respond to comments by Preston's conservation officer, who has disagreed with the assessment's analysis of the significance of the locally-listed building, and also to assess the impact of revised designs of the replacement building.

4. *Summary of significance*

The significance of The Golden Ball was described as follows in the original heritage assessment:

The evidence presented in this report, along with the assessment above, demonstrates that the building is of interest primarily for historical reasons. However, these associations do not relate to the present building but to its predecessors – an important distinction to which considerable weight must be given in making a balanced planning judgement on the demolition proposal. Although a predecessor of the Golden Ball is recorded in the early 17th century, the site has experienced a long sequence of rebuilding. The present structure is a post-1925 remodelling of a late 19th century building that now bears little resemblance to its original appearance and has no architectural distinctiveness. Furthermore there are substantial modern additions to the rear and the interior has been opened up and extensively altered, making the building effectively a modernised shell. The group value the building once shared with its former stables has been lost as a result of their demolition in the early 20th century. When combined, these factors underline how the building is significant for its historical role within the local community rather than its architectural interest.

The impact of the building's loss was summarised as follows:

The proposal will result in the total loss of the locally-listed building. This report has demonstrated however that the significance of the former Golden Ball lies not in the interest and value of its fabric but in its historical associations within the local community. In addition to the low heritage value of its fabric, a structural appraisal and conversion assessment undertaken by Partington and Associates has shown that the most safe, practical and cost-effective solution would be to demolish rather than converting the property. Although the building will be lost, owing to the fact that its significance lies primarily in its historical role, the harm of its loss cannot therefore be considered substantial as its history and associations will continue to be recorded by documentary sources.

5. Conservation officer comments

The conservation officer's response reads as follows:

The Touch of Spice building, recently a restaurant, formerly an inn and public house has several elements to it with the principle building almost to back of pavement with a secondary element set back from the roadside. The primarily block is a two-storey, three bay building with a hipped roof with eaves overhanging and three large chimney stacks. Windows are timber framed sliding sashes set in stone arched headers, stone cills and jambs and are likely to be mid-to late 19th century.

The heritage statement accompanying the application refers to the former Touch of Spice building as a much altered version of the original building and that the current structure primarily dates from 1925. I am not convinced of this as an accurate description given the photographic evidence would show the building to be on the same footprint, fenestration pattern is identical and the principle entrance door is in the same place. From the Garstang Road elevation the differences are the parapet wall feature, the removal of a chimney stack and the rendering of the brickwork.

The statement goes on to describe the building as having no interest from an architectural point of view and that its only historic merit is communal. I would disagree with this assessment;

- 1) *the building has landmark qualities within the local scene on the corner of Broughton crossroads;*
- 2) *the building is constructed of traditional materials, proportions, scale and appearance similar to those of nearby buildings contributing to local distinctive characteristics;*
- 3) *The building has group value contributing to the street scene and the cluster of buildings at the crossroads which together forms part of an identifiable sense of place with a clear visual relationship.*

the building has an attractive and well-proportioned frontage.

6. Response to conservation officer's comments

The conservation officer states she disagrees with the heritage assessment's analysis that the structure is a much-altered version of the original building that is largely post-1925. However it is maintained that this analysis is entirely correct, and clearly borne out by the photographic and mapping evidence presented in the report. The images below, reproduced from the report, demonstrate how the building has been successively altered and that its present-day appearance clearly dates from after 1925. The report (in particular plates 12-15) also shows how the interior has been substantially altered, and now has no historic character. All this entirely justifies my description of the building as a modernised shell. The conservation officer has presented her own interpretation of the building, but this does not appear to have been based upon a site visit, unlike the findings of the heritage assessment, which resulted from a fabric survey. She states for example that the cills and jambs of the windows are likely to be mid-late 19th century, but it is clear from both architectural and photographic evidence that they belong to the post-1925 remodelling. The extensive 20th century alterations and additions that have swamped the rear of the building are not mentioned in her response, and the scale of these extensions entirely justifies the description that the building is much-altered. Given these alterations, it is maintained that the assessment's conclusion that the significance of the building resides more in its historical associations rather than its architectural interest is fair and correct.



Plain original appearance of the building as shown in photograph probably of circa 1900



The building subsequently underwent alteration, with addition of a parapet and render



Circa 1925 image of the building, on display in the premises, confirms its present appearance post-dates this period



The present look of the building therefore dates from major alterations made after 1925

7. Proposed buildings

- a. Mixed-use building.** The proposed new mixed use building has been designed to be a landmark contemporary structure within the village delivering the public benefits of facilities and services, and thus becoming the focal point of the local community. The original design for the development was not supported by Preston City Council. This design has now been revised to take the planners' comments on board, and now features a more emphatic corner treatment, while the facades have been broken up vertically to give the impression of a series of smaller units, reflecting the small-scale architecture of the village. The proposed development is now more in accordance with its surroundings, and will therefore enhance the village streetscene.
- b. Residential development.** The design approach for the retirement complex is more traditional, making use of elements such as pitched roofs, brick walling and a consistent window rhythm. Although a substantial structure, it is sufficiently set back from the village centre so as not to detract from the character of the village centre with its small-scale properties. The site is now in use as a car park and hence is of little value within the village streetscene. The proposed development will enhance the appearance of the site and deliver the public benefit of additional housing to meet the city's needs.



The original design for the mixed use building



The revised design (Garstang Road elevation), breaking up the elevations into smaller units



The proposed residential development

8. Conclusion

The original heritage assessment drew the following conclusion on the impact of the scheme:

As the former Golden Ball is primarily of historical significance only, its loss is not considered to represent substantial harm. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF (N.B. now superseded by paragraph 196 of the Revised NPPF, July 2018) therefore requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposal would bring substantial benefits to the local community by providing a high-quality development offering facilities and services in a sustainable location, along with employment opportunities for Broughton and the wider City area. In delivering these benefits, the proposal is in accordance with the aims of the emerging Broughton Neighbourhood Local Plan, whose prime objective is to secure a significantly-enhanced range and quality of local services and community facilities, including a vibrant local centre within the heart of the village. These benefits are considered to outweigh the harm of the building's loss and hence the proposal conforms to relevant national guidance and regional and local planning policy. Consent for the proposal should therefore be granted.

It is maintained that this is a fair summary of the proposal's impact and given the significant public benefits it will deliver, the scheme should be approved without delay.