

**19/02095/LB**  
**The Old Malthouse, St Johns Road, Banbury**  
**Formation of internal office space**

### **Understanding the heritage assets affected**

The Old Malthouse is a grade II listed building which lies within Banbury Conservation Area.

The building has had a number of uses including maltings, hosiery manufactory, engineering works, special libraries book service and latterly offices. The building is currently standing empty. The building has been altered for the varying uses.

### **Significance**

The core significance of the building lies in its roof structure and the 'surprisingly grand design' of the façade of the building. The design is unusual for a maltings in having just 2 floors, a large number of windows and an elaborate façade. There is minimal surviving visible evidence of the functional operation of the building.

A Heritage Statement which accompanied an earlier application on the site states '*As a result of the several phases of quite radical internal changes to the building, its key elements in heritage terms of the building are the external shell – particularly the façade to St John's Road – and the broad roof structure with its very unusual and ambitious trusses. The rest of the interior is not considered to be of any great heritage value*'. This assessment is considered to be broadly correct.

### **Proposals**

To provide an internal office layout including a suspended timber floor. Provision of additional insulation and vents to the roof. Removal of paint and varnish from existing trusses.

### **Appraisal of issues**

**There are a number of issues which are covered in this application and each one will be dealt with separately**

### **The addition of timber stud and glass partitions to form the required accommodation.**

There are no objections to this proposal, which will assist in creating a new use for the building. The alterations will be reversible.

### **The creation of a ceiling over the central office pod with access to plant and services (see the submitted structural details provided by Wellan Consulting Engineers).**

There are no objections to the principle of this in order to allow the building to function as offices. Structural engineer has confirmed that there will be no structural issues in relation to element of the development.

### **The stripping back of the existing black paint finish and varnish on the trusses to reveal the timber.**

There are no objections to the principle of this. A site visit took place to view a sample and no damage to historic fabric was taking place through the method employed.

**Patch repairs to the existing internal wall surfaces where necessary.**

There are no objections in principle to this. Further details in the form of a method statement are required.

**The installation of an insulated timber floating floor (with under floor heating system) over the existing concrete floor structure.**

There are no objections to this proposal which is not considered to damaged historic fabric and helps to create a new use for the building.

**The insulation of the roof with a wood fibre solution, instead of the previously approved Kingspan PIR product.**

There are no objections to this element of the proposals. The principle of a form of insulation that would cover the rafters was agreed in a former application 19/01091/LB was agreed. The alternative form of wood fibre insulation does not cause additional harm and there are therefore no objections to the use of this alternative product.

**The installation of vents for extractor fans and boiler flues.**

Product details to be submitted as part of the application.

**There are no objections to the proposal to install further extractor fans , but further details are required prior to the commencement of work. This can be dealt with by condition if necessary.**

**There is some concern with the proposed boiler flue to the front elevation, but it is understood that this will be located behind the existing parapet. Further information required to verify this.**

**There are some concerns with the proposed extractors, boiler flue and gas meter box on the side elevation of the building. A discussion took place on site and due to the requirements of the heating system the only other option would be for these features to be located on the frontage of the building. The side elevation is clearly less visible and sensitive than the front elevation. Various mitigation methods were discussed including removing some of the other clutter from this elevation and the colour of the proposed gas meter box.**

**Level of harm**

Less than Substantial outweighed by public benefits.

**Recommendation**

No objection

**Jenny Ballinger 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019**