

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES



Report on the Quinquennial Survey

Revision A - September 2018

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

Listed Grade II*



Range of timber framed buildings located on Church Lane in central Ledbury, combined to provide accommodation for the Town Council. The earliest part is fifteenth century, with sixteenth century and eighteenth century additions and alterations. Timber frame walls with render infill panels and some brickwork at low level, clay tile roof coverings, mixture of timber sash and leaded light windows

Report on the Quinquennial Survey for 2018

Survey by Jane Chamberlain AABC and Robert Lister RIBA SCA & AABC

17 September 2018

34-36 Church Street, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, GL20 5SN

PART ONE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report on the quinquennial survey of Ledbury Town Council Offices on Church Lane, Ledbury, was carried out over several days, with the exterior inspected on 29th November 2017 and the interiors inspected on 22nd March and 11th April 2018. The survey was instructed by Karen Mitchell of Ledbury Town Council and was undertaken jointly by Jane Chamberlain, Partner, and Robert Lister, Senior Architect, of Caroe & Partners Architects, both of whom are AABC accredited. The previous inspection was carried out on 1 September 2008 by Ian Stainburn.

2. Limitations of Survey

- 2.1 We have therefore made a thorough general survey of the buildings as instructed. Our inspection was visual, and such as could readily be made from ground level, ladders, and any accessible roofs, or voids. No part of the fabric was opened-up for inspection, and the report does not therefore include any part of the building which was covered up, unexposed or inaccessible; and no guarantee can therefore be given of the absence of rot or beetle or of any other defect.
- 2.2 In describing the buildings, this report assumes them to be orientated to true polar axis'.

3. Recommendations for Further Surveys

- 3.1 Bore dust and exit holes are apparent top several timber sole plates on the south elevation. These areas should be closely monitored for wasps and/or beetle activity. Bore dust should be regularly cleared away so any fresh activity can be identified. Particular attention should be given in March-June when adult death watch beetles typically emerge.
- 3.2 There are several areas where specialist input is advised for the timber frame, including the item above. A survey of specific areas by a timber decay consultant should therefore be arranged.
- 3.3 This survey was undertaken from the ground only, other than very limited inspection from ladders. High level inspection of roof coverings, flashings, eaves and chimneys from a cherry picker would provide further clarification on any defects and required repairs, with some minor repairs also undertaken from the cherry picker.
- 3.4 An asbestos survey should be undertaken for the building if not already in place, including the roof felt which is starting to break down in places.

- 3.5 A visual inspection during heavy rain would be beneficial to clarify how the rainwater disposal system is working, including roof coverings, gutters, downpipes, gullies and hard landscaping.
- 3.6 The modern impermeable floor finish in room G4, with quarry tiles presumed to be on a concrete slab, combined with boxing in of the base of internal walls presents the risk of concealed decay. It would be sensible to expose wall feet locally, and possibly also to lift a small area of floor to confirm the construction if records aren't available.
- 3.7 An archaeological assessment of the cellars is desirable rather than urgent, however, this historic space seems to be little understood and in relatively poor condition. As it is unsuitable for storage in its current state, it would need to be better understood prior to any alterations.

4. Recent Structural History

- 4.1 An assessment of the timbers to the cellar was undertaken by Demaus Building Diagnostics Ltd in March 2009. Whilst this found no serious issues, it did note generally high moisture content to timbers and recommended improved ventilation to the space.
- 4.2 Decay was found to a primary beam over the painted room in June 2009. A steel plate repair was designed by Martyn Peters Consulting Structural Engineers.
- 4.3 An assessment of wasp activity at the building was undertaken by Ridout Associates in November 2011. The report identified the species as Crossocerus wasps, which are 'harmless solitary wasps' and noted that they use existing rot pockets rather than causing damage themselves.
- 4.4 A leak was reported to the ceiling of the 'Pink Room' in September 2012 and the roof above subsequently inspected by Town and Country, a local contractor. It was found that the dormers above had no lead flashings at the main roof junctions, these were introduced as part of repairs.
- 4.5 As far as we are aware no further works have been carried out other than minor/routine maintenance items.

5. Summary of Structural Condition

- 5.1 This group of historic timber framed buildings are in good overall condition, with routine maintenance generally undertaken and no serious areas of dilapidation as a result.
- 5.2 No serious issues were noted with the roof coverings or rainwater disposal systems. It is advised that the building is re-inspected during heavy rain to confirm this, otherwise only localised spot items such as slipped tiles or failed mortar haunchings were identified. The hard landscaping at wall feet also requires repair to ensure water is directed away from the building.

- 5.3 As is typical for timber framed buildings, there is staining internally suggestive of water ingress at joints in the timber frame and infill panel perimeters. A programme of repairs is required to re-caulk joints to the timber frame and repair render panels. Active insect attack was also identified, particularly to sole plates on the south elevation, and it is likely timber repairs will be required.
- 5.4 Internally, the finishes are in generally good order with only localised cracking to plaster and staining from water ingress. The rooms with modern solid floors are a concern, as these may be causing issues in the timber framed walls. The painted room should also be inspected by a conservator to ensure there has been no decay since they were conserved some 25 years ago.
- 5.5 The dampness in the cellar is a concern, where water appears to be penetrating through both the walls and floor. The space does not seem suitable for storage, with rotting items currently stored causing problems. If water ingress cannot be stopped fully then alternative use of the space should be considered.

6. Description and Historical Summary

- 6.1 The current Town Council offices, which are the subject of this report, are formed from several adjoining buildings which have been combined. All are historic timber framed structures.
- 6.2 The buildings are Grade II* listed (3 Church Lane, Historic England list entry 1082903) and described in the listing as follows:

‘The earliest part on the south is C15 and extended eastwards circa 1600. A double gabled wing to the north (rear) was added also circa 1600. C18 alterations. Exposed timber framing. Two storeys and dormers. On the earliest part facing Church Lane the timber framing is close set and the first floor projects along the whole south front on a moulded bressumer and corbels. Three and five light casement windows in projecting frames with old wooden mullions and transoms. The ground floor has three small early C19 canted bays with glazing bars. The west end has a high brick base. The north (Rear) is timber framed and the wide panels are plastered. Interior south: dragon ceiling beam, late C16 or early C17 panelling with cornice and fluted freize, under the ceiling beam are pilasters with panels of carved foliage.’

PART TWO

Condition of Structure

EXTERIOR

7. Roofs

SOUTH PITCHES FACING CHURCH LANE

- 7.1 Roof coverings are as inspected from ground level with the limited visibility afforded from the narrow street. Inspection for loose tiles and other defects is, therefore, not comprehensive and all roof pitches should be inspected when roof repairs are next carried out.
- 7.2 Machine-made, clay half-round ridge tiles and plain tiles appear generally in good order. Ridge tiles appear to have cementitious or strong mortar bedding, which appears relatively intact. Tiles are dark in colour suffering superficial dirt, though, on those tiles which are visible, I saw no signs of active decay and no action is, therefore, required.
- 7.3 Junctions between the tiles of the two gable dormers, with the purpose-made, laced valley tiles, are slightly uneven. This detail may date from when the roofs were last tiled, but is worthy of note.
- 7.4 Cementitious mortar pointing to the east verge of the south pitch is beginning to fracture in places, and has recently been patch repaired close to the eaves. No further action is advised unless there are signs of active leaks.
- 7.5 Natural slate appears to have been used from the underside of the verge overhang.
- 7.6 The mortar fillet at the abutment of the east verge with the east chimney stack appears to have fractured away from the stack slightly. This should be inspected and repaired if necessary. Some fracturing is inevitable, where there is differential movement in the different elements of building fabric.
- 7.7 There might be a fracture in one of the ridge tiles, probably above the painted room. High level access inspection is advised but, as the roof is felted, a balance must be drawn between repairing very minor defects in roof coverings and the potential damage that might be caused in obtaining access.
- 7.8 Mortar fillets and tile bedding to the south pitch at the west gable are just beginning to fracture in places. Repair will be required in the medium term.
- 7.9 The central chimney stacks appear well pointed and lead flashings appear in good order. Brickwork seems stable. Nevertheless, the upper three or four courses in

particular, and the capping support moss and algal growth. Chimney stacks should be inspected close to and, if necessary, cementitious haunching renewed or repaired. It would be useful to note whether there is any dampness within the building. Stacks might be capped on top of slate protection, particularly those to the north. All should be inspected, including flashings to hidden faces.

- 7.10 Lead flashings are installed at very minor steps in roof coverings between the original three buildings. These should all be inspected close to.
- 7.11 The east stack is well pointed and capped chimney pots appear in good order, as inspected from ground level. Mortar is slowly eroding to the upper courses of the stack, cement haunching could not be inspected. I would expect only minor repair to be required, but inspection would be beneficial.
- 7.12 Where visible, eaves tiles are to line but this should, again, be inspected close to.
- 7.13 All roofs have been felted using bituminous felt, which is slowly decaying and bulging in places, behind the eaves fillets. This may not be of any consequence but, again, should be inspected just in case dampness might be trapped. The bituminous felt is decaying slowly along the dripping eaves of all dormers. The felt might contain asbestos. Samples should be taken whenever roof repairs are next carried out for future information. The use of this type of felt was standard best practice some decades ago.

SOUTH DORMERS

- 7.14 All dormers have dripping eaves, sensible on these small structures.

EASTERNMOST GABLE DORMER

- 7.15 I saw no obvious defects to the matt black, painted roof frame and presumed plywood infill panel to the gable. The plywood panel leans outwards slightly, which may well be correct, but this should be checked. It is not, otherwise, out of alignment. Notes about cement mortar fillets and decaying bituminous felt apply as for the main roofs.
- 7.16 Lead cladding to the cheeks, corner posts and beneath the cill appears sound though marked, where sagging leadwork to the cheeks has been re-secured.
- 7.17 Only the east-facing cheeks of the dormers were visible from ground level.
- 7.18 The window frame and cill would benefit from re-decoration and overhaul of putty; ideally within 18 months. It should be assumed that putty to glazing will require repair, if not renewal.
- 7.19 Allowance should be made for reforming mastic joints around the whole of the window frame and all abutments with the leadwork at the same time.

CENTRAL GABLE DORMER

- 7.20 Leadwork to the east-facing cheek is more bulged than that to the eastern dormer. It should be assumed that west-facing cheeks, not visible from ground level, are in worse condition. Whilst the notion of 'it's not broken don't fix it' is appropriate, and there are no signs of active leaks, repair could sensibly be deferred, but provision for re-leading the cheeks in heavier gauge leadwork with more fixing points, should be allowed for within five years. Re-decoration of all the plywood panels and the external timber framing complete to the gable, should be allowed for within 18 months; with localised re-leading, perhaps within five. All work could be postponed to the dormers for a five-year period to enable cost effective use of scaffolding and access to be made unless, of course, there are active leaks in the meantime.

WESTERNMOST CATSLIDE DORMER

- 7.21 Leaded lights onto this iron casement would benefit from localised re-puttying and the ironwork re-decorating, within 18 months; again, perhaps, postponed for five. The iron frame, and any timber sub-frame that I couldn't see whether anything is visible along with the roof structure, should be repaired and overhauled and re-decorated, ideally within 18 months as for the other dormers. Whilst I saw no reason to suspect this, localised piecing-in of joinery repair should, of course, be allowed for.
- 7.22 South facing cheeks are just visible and appear in similar condition.

NORTH FACING PITCHES

- 7.23 Limited inspection only is possible from street level.
- 7.24 Verge pointing to the north pitch, west gable appears sound as to the south pitch.
- 7.25 Considerable care has been exercised in the past to install lead upstand flashings, as and where needed, to help to redirect rainwater away from the bottom of the frame. It would be useful and would propose to return during rain to inspect to see how these are functioning, and to see whether there are any areas where rainwater run-off is concentrated against the fabric and further improvements could be made.
- 7.26 Daylight is visible between a couple of the ridge tiles to the main ridge. The roof is, no doubt, protected by bituminous felt, but repointing should be carried out; again, taking care to ensure that carrying out repair in this inaccessible area does not lead to further damage to the tiles elsewhere.
- 7.27 One tile has slipped and moss accumulates on the tiles to the catslide to the north elevation, between the Council Offices and the Royal British Legion building and above the ground floor kitchen. Clearance of moss and re-securing of the slipped tile should be carried out within 18 months.
- 7.28 A sapling grows either from the back of the gutter junction or from a mortar joint in the brickwork of the Royal British Legion building. This should be removed to help

keep the gutter clear of leaves and to prevent problems being caused in the immediately adjacent structure. I am sure that this would sensibly be carried out when repairs are next carried out to either building at low cost.

- 7.29 Verge pointing to all the pitches of the two north gables appears sound, with only minor fracturing.
- 7.30 Moss has built up at the junction of the east chimney stack with the north pitch of the main roof, and along ledges in the brick stack. Moss should be removed and these areas repointed and re-haunched to make sure that water penetration doesn't become a problem in the future. Lead flashings might be introduced into the stack if these are areas of significant repair.
- 7.31 The complex junction of roofs and carpentry at the base of the timber frame, along with rainwater goods at the north-east corner of the Town Council buildings, should be inspected from the yard and close to. Chicken mesh has been installed, presumably to keep pigeons out; closer inspection is needed.

NORTH ELEVATION DORMER

- 7.32 This retains its rendered cheeks and is in slightly better condition than dormers to the south. The opening window light, nevertheless, requires redecoration; ideally, within 18 months, but perhaps within five.

EAVES CARPENTRY

SOUTH ELEVATION

- 7.33 Bituminous felt is visible between the rafters as previously described. Chicken mesh is installed above the wallplates to prevent access by birds. Whilst I saw no evidence of this being dislodged, only closer inspection would reveal whether there are any problems, though I am sure that it would be evident if birds used the roof spaces.
- 7.34 All eaves carpentry appears very well decorated.
- 7.35 The barge board at the south-east corner is not protected by the slowly decaying felt, but no action is currently advised. The Town Council should be congratulated on keeping the building in such excellent order.
- 7.36 Stained oak weather boards to the west gable would benefit from re-staining.
- 7.37 Eaves, sprocketed rafters and boards to the outshot roof over the curved north-west corner appear in good order. Re-staining would be beneficial in the longer term.
- 7.38 Barge boards to the north elevation gables again appear in good order, though re-staining would be beneficial in the medium term; I would say within five to ten years to these more sheltered elevations. Gable dropped finials and the adjacent timber frame would also be beneficially repaired in the same manner. I would put this work

as being required within five years, though of lesser importance than the work to the dormers.

8. Rainwater Disposal System

- 8.1 Aluminium and cast iron(?) rainwater gutters and downpipes are very well painted throughout. The downpipe to the centre of the south elevation discharges straight into below-ground drainage. The only concern is that this single downpipe takes rainwater from the whole of the south elevation; it should be inspected during heavy rain just to make sure that there is no risk of overflowing. It is very difficult to gauge falls on the undulating, timber-framed building, and I think that falls are good but this should nevertheless be checked. Redecoration of rainwater goods should be planned for five plus years' time.
- 8.2 The three downpipes to the north elevation drain into back inlet gulleys, which were clear at the time of the survey. I saw no evidence of rainwater by-passing the system of downpipes and hoppers to the valleys but, again, inspection during heavy rain might help to identify any blockages, though I am sure that they are unlikely.
- 8.3 The gutter at the north-west corner of the main roof is cut short of the end of the tile so that it fits behind the barge board. The same applies to the south-west corner. Whilst I saw no particular signs of decay, lead flashings could be installed if rainwater does run back onto the timber frame in these locations.
- 8.4 The ground along the south elevation banks back up from the cobble pavement, where ground level rises at the foot of the building. A line of stone sets marks the low point in the pavement, which carries the rainwater run-off from the lane. Hard mortar pointing between the stone cobbles is eroding in places, encouraging rainwater to percolate through the ground adjacent to the building feet, as opposed to running away into the grating and below-ground drainage at the south-west corner of the building. Grass grows in the open joints along the drain and appears to have been treated and is now dying back. This channel should, nevertheless, be very regularly kept clear of vegetation and repaired, to make sure that water does not percolate causing dampness close to the wall feet and, also, very localised settlement and soft footings in the longer term. Maintenance to remove vegetation should commence in the Spring. A longer term plan of repair should be planned.
- 8.5 An area of brick-set paving to the west elevation might pitch towards the low level opening at the wall feet. This should be inspected during heavy rain. Moss grows in the decaying, cementitious mortar pointing to the cobbles. Repointing is desirable, though of lower importance to the brick-faced elevation here.
- 8.6 The iron grating, which collects rainwater at the foot of the back door to the north elevation has sagged, causing a minor trip hazard. Some of the mortar joints to the adjacent engineering brick paving have washed open, including joints around the back inlet gulley and should be repointed to keep this area in good order. The importance of this is brought forward by the trip hazard, caused by the grating, which might be

able to be re-bent and reset. Bedding beneath may well have caused its collapse. The grating appears to be blocked with leaves and should be cleared as well. Whilst this work is being undertaken, cobblestones around the adjacent back inlet gulley and joints in the brickwork plinth to the outshot building beyond, could usefully be repointed, along with cobblestones along the length of the outshot building. The back inlet gulley, adjacent to the Royal British Legion property, should be cleared of debris and soft vegetation treated throughout the whole of this area. This should, ideally, be carried out within two years. Repointing of the cobbles, more generally, in the medium term. Localised repair is needed sooner adjacent to the wall feet.

- 8.7 An overflow in the kitchen is dripping and should be investigated.

9. External Walls

TIMBER FRAME AND INFILL PANELS – SOUTH ELEVATION

- 9.1 Generally, the timber frame and infill panels are extremely well maintained following significant repair. Most of the significant shakes and other damage to the timber frame has been infilled with daub, open joints have been infilled with daub and black stain applied and maintained over the years. Defects throughout are minor and will be addressed by continued regular maintenance. Stain to the timber frame is beginning to wear away, revealing the silvered oak behind. Dark brown caulking is falling away to some joints and should be reapplied as part of repairs. Each element of timber warrants some careful inspection, preparation, renewal of caulking locally and redecoration to bring back up to a high standard. I suggest that this is carried out within five years.
- 9.2 Some of the infill panels, not surprisingly, feel stringy and have shrunk away from adjoining timbers and are damaged at arrises. Looking at the first panel at low level in particular, I would suggest that half of the panels have fractures or damaged edges. Where cracked these should be opened and patch repaired and, where loose sections of plastering, should be opened up for repair and the substrate being checked before repair is carried out. Redecoration, again, will be required.
- 9.3 I saw nothing to indicate ongoing decay of the timber frame, other than inevitable slight softening of joints.
- 9.4 Patch repairs have been carried out to the southern post to the central building, adjacent to the downpipe. Observation during heavy rain would be useful. There is also staining and fracturing to the uppermost infill panel to the south of the downpipe, which should be checked. The paint finish to the infill panels is disturbed by salt damage in this area too. There is very minor decay to the edge of the south-west post to the central building.
- 9.5 Joints of infill panels and posts are remarkably tight throughout, but careful filling before redecoration should be allowed for. Redecoration would need to allow for careful working around the many cables and fittings on the building.

- 9.6 The joint between the timber frame and brickwork, above first floor level at the south-east corner, has been filled with mastic. The frame has, again, moved away. The lead flashing to the adjacent lean-to roof is chased and fixed into the return end of the corner post; not surprisingly an area of old water penetration. Mortar joints have opened up, or have been left open for ventilation, around the timber corbel supporting this corner. Ventilation around the end of the timber frame is advantageous but, if water penetration is the problem, then further repointing and other localised repairs will be needed to this corner.
- 9.7 I saw very little evidence of shakes or weathering that runs deeply into the timber frame and might cause water traps. Each timber element should, nevertheless, be inspected in case there are any slowly worsening shakes, where additional daub would be of advantage.
- 9.8 The timber frame to the ground floor obviously suffers from dampness and subsequent decay as well as possible insect attack. Frass and other material is visible on the ground adjacent to the sole plate, beneath the eastern end of the eastern bay window to the reception. A similar brown dust can be seen on the top of the sole plate, beneath the infill panel. Wasps have been observed emerging from these areas, but would not be responsible for the bore dust themselves. These areas should be opened up for inspection or micro bore analysis undertaken, ideally within 12 months. There is minor fracturing of the plaster to the infill panels in this area, one beneath the bay having already been repaired. Peg holes to at least some of the mortice and tenon joints in this area have been filled with daub or other material. More extensive localised re-opening to investigate the state of the sole plates is advised in this location. Daub over the base of the posts is quite extensive and warrants investigation, provisionally to five posts, and the sole plate beneath.
- 9.9 The underside of the sole plate between the two doors of the timber frame has been much patched, and relatively recently re-patched with daub; investigate records of this. The shallow stone plinth, visible where stonework has been inserted to build up the lost height of the sole plate, and also visible emerging from the cobblestones, appears soundly pointed. Rainwater wash, though, is a concern in this area.
- 9.10 Similar frass is falling from the underside of the sole plate to the west of the west door. Again, opening up and investigations are required. It must be assumed that similar attack is visible in places throughout the length of this sole plate. There are, what look like, wasp or other emergence holes in this area as well.
- 9.11 Sandstone and mortar is very slightly friable in places, which forms the plinth beneath the timber sole plate, though this is of very low concern.
- 9.12 The ashlar plinth blocks close to the south-west have been recently repointed.
- 9.13 A modern, timber hinged cover has been installed over the opening into the cellar to reduce the amount of rainwater entering. This might have been made to suit the dimensions of an earlier hatch cover, but could ideally be longer to reduce water

penetration. If water penetration is a problem then a lead upstand flashing behind might be considered.

- 9.14 The plinth to the westernmost bay of the timber frame has been relatively recently repointed, but there still appears to be evidence of the fine dust being caused by beetle, wasp or other attack to the base of the sole plate, even here.
- 9.15 Joints of posts onto the sole plate remain remarkably stable, though there has previously been old crushing, where facing timber can be seen to spread over the face of the sole plate in places. It is assumed that this is historic. I saw no other evidence of any significant movement that might indicate otherwise. Fracturing in the infill panels, which would give away structural movement, is very limited.
- 9.16 It is very difficult to inspect the panels at first floor level from ground level, but there might be the very slightest of outward bulging in the frame adjacent to the cill rail in the westernmost bay, where one of the lower infill panels might just be popping out from the structure. This might benefit from re-securing as it is quite springy. At least one of the panels close to the south-west corner to the lower level is also slightly springy. Some movement must, of course, be expected. I would suggest that these two panels are opened up to just investigate the condition of the timber frame throughout its thickness. Panels have clearly received several campaigns of repair in the past, having slightly different paint and plaster textures.

BRICKWORK TO WESTERN END OF SOUTH ELEVATION

- 9.17 Brickwork, painted beneath the easternmost bay window, is pointed throughout in several campaigns of largely cementitious mortar. Some brickwork could not be inspected where shutters are fixed permanently back to the brickwork. A small area of old lime mortar pointing contains a small number of voids, which could be filled if there is any evidence of damp in the wall beyond. Otherwise, only a very occasional brick is friable, eroding faster than the adjacent pointing. Unless there is evidence of active leaks, no work is currently advised.
- 9.18 There are a few open joints in the brickwork above and below the lead clad plinth, which would beneficially be repointed in the medium term, say, eight years' time. Mortar joints immediately beneath the level of the cobblestones should be investigated and repointed as necessary, too.
- 9.19 The lead apron flashings over the plinth, relatively recently installed, appear in good order. A small amount of debris accumulates and should be brushed away if necessary. It would be useful to know whether these aprons have been effective in controlling water penetration.
- 9.20 Some of the sandstone blocks, forming the gate piers, are slowly decaying. Ivy growing over the top of the stonework and the brick wall, to the east, is getting root and prising apart brickwork and stonework at its joints. Ivy should, ideally, be removed and the wall caps repaired and repointed. Roots which cannot be readily

removed from the wall should be treated before repointing. The ivy may well be holding loose stonework in position and I recommend that it is left in situ until such time as full repair can be afforded. Ivy just beginning to appear at the base of the stonework should be cut back and roots treated.

- 9.21 Open joints at ground level, in the brick wall and the base of the eastern pier should, ideally, be packed out with stone slips and repointed, including building of the brick plinth if these are the responsibility of the Council.
- 9.22 The inspection of the east-facing lean-to is still required. There is a void through the box cladding, which conceals the wall plate, perhaps used by a bird, which should be investigated and repaired.

WEST GABLE

- 9.23 Much of the framing to the east gable is relatively modern, with horizontal joints protected by pentice boards. This elevation catches the weather; re-staining and repair of panels, as described for the south elevation, would be beneficial to be carried out within five years.
- 9.24 Purlin ends, pegged joints at high level and joints, significantly concealed by daub, appeared stable when viewed from ground level.
- 9.25 A very small amount of mortar pointing, above the lead apron which caps the brick base to this wall, has fallen away. It would be worth checking that the same insect attack, which might be present to the sole plate, isn't also occurring in this location. Otherwise, all appears stable. Redecoration should be allowed for within five to ten years. These periods of time are only guidelines; the Town Council might wish to bring forward repairs, if desired, to keep the building in particularly good decorative order.
- 9.26 Brickwork to the ground storey is pointed in hard cementitious mortar, with some bricks slightly friable and eroding faster than the surrounding mortar. Patch repair to weather water traps is suggested, though this is currently of low priority.
- 9.27 There is very slight fracturing in the brickwork above the lintel to the southern opening to the cellar. The timber lintel has clearly settled very slightly causing minor movement, which is currently of low concern, but will need attention in the longer term. The sandstone plinth on which this lintel bears, is severely laminating. It has previously been patch repaired with cement and painted over. No action is currently advised but in the longer term, say, 15 years, packing up of the lintel to ensure that its bearing remains sound, and possibly brick or stone piecing-in will need to be considered. Damp penetration into the cellar should be considered.
- 9.28 Recent repointing over the lead apron at the head of the brickwork, has been spread to cut into two spliced in repairs to the timber frame. Repointing appears quite recent. This weak joint in the structure will obviously require regular attention. A

lap on the lead apron over the window head is limited; it would be beneficial to inspect internally to make sure that this detail is effective.

NORTH ELEVATION

- 9.29 Infill panels and frames are generally as reported for the south. The inward leaning timber panels benefit from being on the sheltered north elevation.
- 9.30 The infill panel beneath the first floor window to the stairwell on the curve of the building is fractured, and appears to have been patch repaired. This panel is quite large and further patch repair might be necessary. Several campaigns of localised repair can be seen throughout the elevation. Repair and redecoration of the north elevation are of far lower priority than those to the south.
- 9.31 The corbelled bracket, beneath eaves level at the main north-west corner of the main range, not surprisingly appears to catch the weather and would warrant closer inspection.
- 9.32 Mortar fill between the westernmost stud of the north curved elevation and the north elevation of the main range has fallen away. Minor differential structural movement is hardly surprising in this location. This open gap unfortunately traps debris and, no doubt, moisture and should be raked out and very carefully deep filled with daub and redecorated. This should be carried out within 18 months, but I am sure it has been like this for some time.
- 9.33 Re-applied mortar between the curved section of wall and the frame at the north-west corner of the north block, shows a fine fracture, inevitable where there has been structural movement from day to night and through the seasons. Repointing will be required at the same time as redecoration.
- 9.34 The repaired post to the north-east corner of the northern gable and the post to the adjacent oak door frame, are all rotting where rainwater runs back onto the timber from the adjacent rainwater channel. Joints in the engineering brickwork encourage debris to gather at the feet of these elements of fabric. The brickwork should be removed and, if possible, slate slips or another detail built up to give a very slight lip beneath these timber elements to help to keep debris and dampness at bay. The joint in the adjacent timber frame and brick plinth has opened and been re-patched. Further re-patching is necessary. This work really should be carried out within five years, to ensure the stability of the fabric.
- 9.35 What appears to be masonry paint, but might be KEIM or similar, applied over the brickwork and render panels to this elevation, all appears in good order; being discoloured and flaking away only at low level and close to ground level, where there is rainwater splashback from the cobbles. Redecoration is required in five to ten years; sooner if there is concern about the overall appearance of the building.

- 9.36 Clay pantiles over the brick outshot are black with algal growth. Lichen and moss could be cleaned as they are close to ground level, but no action is otherwise advised. Cleaning may well not be necessary on this rear elevation.

INTERIOR

10. Second Floor

ROOM S1 (STORE AT EAST END OF BUILDING)

- 10.1 The room is located within the roof space, with the ceilings partially sloping down to the eaves. The timber frame is exposed within the space, with truss and purlins all painted in a black paint. Ceilings and walls are painted lath and plaster finish.
- 10.2 Plaster is cracked in multiple locations to both ceilings and walls and generally detached from the substrate, with several sections movable with limited force. In the short term, cracked plaster should be carefully cleaned back and filled, redecorated and monitored. Longer term works may be required to reattach to laths behind if possible or to renew locally. Additionally, there are areas of water staining adjacent to dormer windows on the north and south elevations. These are highly likely to be due to issues with lead flashings externally which should be inspected from ladders or with a cherry picker. The cill of the south dormer window has no paint finish remaining and requires redecorating urgently to prevent decay and the requirement for repairs.
- 10.3 There are two small access hatches below the dormer windows, giving access to voids at eaves level. One of these was accessible during the survey, where rafter ends were visible bearing onto a timber wall plate, with roofing felt visible above the rafters. There were no issues noted within the void. Timber boarded floorboards, not original to the building, appears to be in good condition. Minor staining adjacent to areas of wall staining. There is a single timber door out on to the stair lobby, with painted finish in good order. Seals noted to the frame, presumed to be draft seals rather than intumescent.

ROOM S2 (LOBBY TO TOP OF THE EAST STAIRS)

- 10.4 Construction is generally as per the previous space, with exposed timber frame, plastered ceiling and walls with sloping section of ceiling down to eaves level.
- 10.5 Similar condition with minor cracking and loose sections of plaster. Again, there are areas of damp visible around the dormer window to the north elevation, where lead flashings should be inspected externally. Modern floor finishes within this area are in sound condition. Two doors off this space, both sound. There is a modern banister to the top of the staircase which is in good condition.

ROOM S3 (STORE)

- 10.6 Construction is generally as per previous spaces. Exposed timber frame with lath and plastered ceiling and walls.
- 10.7 Areas of flaking paint and possibly loose plaster to walls and ceilings. Generally, condition is better than previous spaces though there are still some areas of cracking. Again, the floor is modern timber boarding. There is a painted brick fire place at the west end of the room which opens on to a large flue from below, with a stone hearth set into the timber floor. The section of timber framing to the wall behind this has not received the painted finish as elsewhere.
- 10.8 Recess to the north wall of the room which appears to be a blocked up dormer. All is in reasonable condition for the age of the building.
- 10.9 There are two dormer windows to the south roof slope. One is fixed, with a projecting external cill which has no paint finish and requires urgent decoration. Internal glazing beads to this window have distorted and putty has cracked, requiring remedial works. Also, there are potentially some fruiting bodies to the surround of this window. The other dormer has an opening iron casement - there are large gaps around the opening of this and the fixed light which will allow water ingress. Decay noted to the base of mullion where water looks to be pooling. Allowance should be made to overhaul both casements and for localised repairs to the timber surround.

ROOM S4 (STORE AT WEST END OF BUILDING)

- 10.10 Timber frame fully exposed, with trusses, purlins and rafters all visible and ceiling following roof pitch up to apex. Modern infill boards between rafters fixed from above. Walls are only visible to the gable where there is also timber frame with plaster panels between.
- 10.11 Repairs are visible to sections of timber frame, all left exposed without painted finish. It generally appears to be in good order, other than water staining visible where water has penetrated between joints to timber frame and plaster. This is most concentrated below the small leaded light to the gable. Evidence of woodworm to multiple timbers is presumed to be historic, though spaces should be regularly monitored for live beetle activity with floors kept clean to assist with identifying fresh bore dust. Shake noted along the upper of the south slope purlins. Check previous reports for mention of this and allow to monitor moving forwards. Some areas of plaster infill to shakes suggests historic movement.
- 10.12 Two modern Velux roof lights to north slope, both still operational at time of survey. Missing section of infill between rafters below eastern most rooflight where client advises of a previous wasps' nest, should now be reinstated. Section of historic floorboarding of eastern end of room. One loose board which requires re-fixing. Elsewhere the floor has been replaced with later boards. Recent iron plates within floor to west end as part of support to structure below.

- 10.13 Chimney stacks to east end of room, plastered up to circa 2m height; exposed brickwork above which looks to have been rebuilt relatively recently, all in good order.

ROOM S5 (LOBBY ABOVE WESTERN STAIRCASE)

- 10.14 Exposed structure above with truss, purlins and rafters. Rafters are all modern replacements as are the purlins.
- 10.15 All joinery appears to be in sound condition where visible. Modern infill panels between rafters, evidence of water staining in one location, otherwise sound. Walls are a mixture of plaster infill between timber framing and areas of modern dry lining. All is generally in good order.
- 10.16 Timber staircase with open balustrade detail stained to upper section and painted to lower half; anti-slip nosings to all treads showing signs of age but generally in fair order.

ROOM S6 (STORE OFF HALF LANDING TO STAIRS)

- 10.17 Again, the timber frame is exposed with truss to gable, purlins and rafters with infill panels between. The majority of rafters are later repairs.
- 10.18 All generally appears to be sound. There is a shake running through the centre of the lower purlin to the east slope. It is not clear if it is ongoing movement, allow to monitor, similarly, to the horizontal timber within the west wall. Monitor this.
- 10.19 There are multiple water stains on timbers in the north gable, the majority of which appear to be water ingress to gaps between plaster panels and timber framing. No evidence of serious decay caused by these – aim to fill gaps where possible and monitor water ingress.
- 10.20 A hatch has been formed in the east wall onto a separate room below. Could only partially open hatch due to items stored within the room, evidence of groove for staves from the original wattle and daub infill panel.
- 10.21 The floor can only be partially inspected due to stored items within the space. A mix of historic and modern boards, with multiple repairs to the older boards, is in good condition where visible.

11. First Floor

ROOM F1A (AT WESTERN END OF BUILDING)

- 11.1 Timber frame exposed to walls, close studding with plaster infill panels. Floor joists and beams exposed above, with modern infill board between. Ends of roof rafters from above visible in certain locations.

- 11.2 There have clearly been some large scale structural works previously, believed to have been in the 1980s. The majority of floor joists above have been replaced and some have steel shoes to ends at connections to the wall plate. A steel plate is also visible to the underside of one beam, which was also visible in the floor above. There is no evidence of deterioration or further movement since these structural repairs, and it should be assumed the structure is now stable.
- 11.3 The timber frame to walls has had comparatively minor repairs. There are multiple areas of water staining, generally apparent at junctions between plaster and timber framing and at timber pegs to joints. There is no evidence of serious decay as a result of this, though some paintings and artefacts are wall hung and consideration should be given to spacing these off the walls if the water ingress cannot be fully resolved.
- 11.4 Floor of exposed timber boards with only a small area of loose carpet in centre of room. Floorboards are extremely wide and possibly original in some areas, replaced to match elsewhere. The floor is not level and boards are uneven in areas, but nothing that would not be expected of a floor this age.
- 11.5 A large window to the west is fully covered by a fixed blind so could not be inspected. This blind is heavily stained and detracts from the otherwise impressive space. Consideration should be given to removing it and replacing with specialist film to glazing instead, though this is only a desirable improvement.

ROOM FIB (THE PAINTED ROOM)

- 11.6 Broadly speaking as per the previous room in terms of construction and set out, with a notable difference that the majority of the walls are covered with highly significant 16th century wall paintings to both the timber and plaster. Conservation work was carried out to these wall paintings in 1990 when they were uncovered and they appear to be stable since this date. Environmental conditions in the room should be closely monitored and inspection by a specialist conservator should be considered due to the importance of these paintings.
- 11.7 Several of the plaster panels project forwards from and almost appear to be detached from the surrounding timber frame, though this could be historic movement. These panels should be monitored and compared against historic photographs to clarify if there is any ongoing movement.
- 11.8 The floor is a later timber floor than that to the adjoining room, with much narrower boards. The majority is covered with a loose carpet but appears to be in a reasonable condition.
- 11.9 There is also a fireplace to the east wall, with stone jams and a timber lintel above. There is no evidence of any movement or deterioration to this.
- 11.10 The window was again fully obscured by a fixed blind and could not be inspected.

ROOM F2 (LANDING OFF CENTRAL STAIRCASE)

- 11.11 Painted timber stairs rising up to second floor and going down to ground floor. The ceiling is the soffit to the stair landing above, plastered and painted as per walls.
- 11.12 Timber floor boarding to stair landing, one area has a metal plate on the boards presumed to be covering a decayed area below. The plate is currently a trip hazard and should ideally be removed and the floorboard below repaired with inserted timber to match. Decay noted to several timbers but appears to be historic and no ongoing decay.
- 11.13 Large void noted below skirting board and wall – either remove and re-fix skirting to wall or pack out void behind and fill to the top. Paint is peeling from wall directly above – this should be addressed at the same time. There is also a void between the floorboard and skirting which requires a timber insert.

ROOMS F3 & F4

There was no access at time of survey.

ROOM F5 (MAIN STAIR LANDING)

- 11.14 Located on the north west corner of the building at the top of the north west staircase. What appears to be the original external wall is to the south of the space, where there is exposed timber framing including rafter feet above. A later curved external wall has then been added to the north of this with an additional roof bearing onto the original wall, creating an enclosed space between. Timber beams span between the two, supported on face fixed timber brackets, and later steel connections. The roof structure above the space has largely been replaced with later timbers, with the majority of rafters new and only the purlins and external wall frame original.
- 11.15 There is staining suggesting water ingress through roof in some locations, particularly to the west of the space and in the south west corner particularly where there is water streak marks running down the wall below. This should be inspected further, externally. Some more minor areas of water staining to the outer wall generally, including areas of flaking paint and soft plaster work. Inspect timber frame at high level externally at these locations and fill any gaps between plaster and timber frame.
- 11.16 Leaded lights to gable on north elevation at high level – unable to access up close for detailed inspection but appeared in stable condition when viewed remotely. Note: historic graffiti, possibly by glazer, on one glass quarry to lower of the two windows. Later windows lower down the elevation, with fixed timber lights to eastern most and single opening encasement to western, most appear sound where visible.
- 11.17 Floor to spaces covered with a fitted carpet so presume boards below could not be inspected. Balustrading to staircase is of modern construction.

ROOM F6 (LANDING ABOVE STAIRCASE)

- 11.18 Again, exposed timber frame to walls with plaster infill panels. Ceiling is fully plastered.
- 11.19 Very minor cracking to ceiling, generally appears stable.
- 11.20 There is water staining, cracked paint and soft plaster to the north wall. Elsewhere the walls appear to be stable. Again, allow any gaps to be filled between plaster and timber frame internally and externally to prevent water ingress. Redundant notice board fixed to south wall, section of wall not visible behind this.
- 11.21 Floor is modern timber boarding. Also, modern staircase with modern balustrades, all appear sound.
- 11.22 Door onto stair landing from room two is missing screw fixings to hinge. Also frame section is loose at bottom and requires remedial work.

ROOM F7

- 11.23 Timber framing to walls with plaster panels between, plastered ceiling above.
- 11.24 Ceiling appears to have been relatively recently lined out and redecorated and has a Velux window within the east roof slope.
- 11.25 External walls also appear to have been dry-lined. All in very good condition, although there is small area of staining to the north wall where water is presumably trapped behind the recent dry lining. This staining lines up externally with the junction between a timber framed or rendered section and brick section of wall and the joint between the two should be investigated for gaps.
- 11.26 The floor throughout the space is carpeted meaning that the boards below could not be inspected. Steps up to a raised area to the west.

ROOM F8 (WC)

- 11.27 The walls are drylined plaster boarded and appear in good condition, with a vinyl floor. Signs of wear, is tired but in reasonable order.

ROOM F9 (LANDING TO EAST STAIRCASE)

- 11.28 Sections of timber framing exposed to both walls and ceiling; painted black to ceiling and painted or limewashed to match wall plasterwork to walls.
- 11.29 Multiple undulations to wall plaster with several areas of cracking also evident. Cracking should be filled, redecorated and then monitored to identify if any ongoing movement. South wall is lined with timber boarding aligned to the angle of the stairs. Whilst boarding is generally warped and has moved away from the wall, it appears to

be stable and should be monitored for any ongoing movement. Landing has timber boarding to stairs with historic boards in fair condition.

ROOM F10 (OFFICE TO SOUTH)

- 11.30 Plastered wall and ceiling, with only a single beam with a stop chamfer detail exposed to the ceiling.
- 11.31 Small area of low level ceiling where staircase passes through the space, plaster work to ceiling generally sound. There is an open shake through the ceiling beam which is evident due to black finished beam and white plaster within the crack which clarifies it has been previously filled and since reopened. It does not look to be a structural concern.
- 11.32 To the walls, there are several areas where the plaster has detached from the substrate and in some areas, this has become damaged due to furniture. Carefully repair in isolated locations and consider arrangement of furniture in room.
- 11.33 Presumed timber floorboards are not visible due to fitted carpets throughout.
- 11.34 Timber transomed and mullioned window to the south elevation generally in good order, however, the lower eastern most mullion is loose in its connection to the transom at the top and requires fixing.

ROOM F11 (PINK ROOM)

- 11.35 Large space at the east end, spanning the full width of the building. Timber frame exposed to walls with plaster panels between. The walls have all been covered with what appears to be a pink limewash. Central beam running north-south, otherwise fully plastered ceiling
- 11.36 The limewash finish is flaking in all locations, seemingly due to incorrect preparation of the substraight which may have previous emulsion coatings. All should be redecorated, with modern finishes fully removed first if it is to be limewashed again.
- 11.37 Large mullioned and transomed window to the south elevation appears to be sound. Window to the north has been blocked up but retains the timber window, now opens onto a narrow void between the adjoining property.
- 11.38 The bearing for the beam at the south end appears to have been cut, however, there are no apparent structural issues or movement so it should be presumed there must be additional support above in the form of a steel strap or similar. However, if documents confirming this cannot be found it should be investigated further as it looks unstable.

12. **Ground Floor**

ROOM G1 (OFFICE AND RECEPTION FOR PAINTED ROOM)

- 12.1 The space consists of exposed timber framing to all walls and, as per room F5 above, what appears to be the original outer wall to the building to the south with a later but still early timber frame wall to the north. There are sockets within horizontal timbers indicative of the original floor level. This has been removed and a modern staircase inserted to one side and a later first floor added at a slightly higher level elsewhere.
- 12.2 The walls generally appear to be in sound condition. There is evidence of water staining to timber framing generally, this appears to be small gaps between plaster panels and the timber frame with water penetration. There are no serious areas of decay as a result of this, however, it should be closely monitored and gaps infilled where noted. Some evidence of wall paintings as per the first floor, though generally less well preserved other than one panel which has a Perspex sheet to protect it.
- 12.3 There is a large amount of M&E equipment and cabling within this space, much of which is fixed to the historic timber framing. Any redundant equipment or cabling should be removed, and consideration given to simplifying the remaining installation with cables and equipment fixed to the modern ceiling rather than walls, where possible.
- 12.4 There are multiple redundant screws and fixings in the timber frame which should ideally be removed and there are multiple adhesive strips to the ceiling and walls, which should ideally also be removed.
- 12.5 Gaps noted between plaster panels and timber frames to the east partition. It should be clarified if this partition is serving as a fire wall. If so, these gaps require infilling.
- 12.6 The flooring is timber boards and the majority is not original but of some age, these appear to be in sound condition.
- 12.7 To the east end of the room is a small flight of stairs down connecting into room G5. At the south edge of this lower section, the timber sole plate is exposed with a section of masonry wall below. The bottom edge of this sole plate is soft in areas as are areas of mortar to the wall below. This should be monitored during wet weather to see of any signs of rising moisture. This wall backs onto the staircase down to the cellar and is therefore exposed on both sides and any damp is rising from the ground below.
- 12.8 The external door is a six panel painted timber door and generally in good overall condition. The latch is not quite catching to the main lock and should be readjusted. The 2 no. internal doors are both modern and are of oak construction – no issues noted with these.

ROOM G2 (COUNCIL CHAMBER)

- 12.9 There is historic timber panelling to all walls, possibly 17th century, including fluted frieze to top and pilasters with carved foliage where ceiling beams bear onto the walls.
- 12.10 There is some movement in this panelling as is to be expected, with some areas warped and sitting slightly off the substrate behind as well as splits to panels. There is no evidence of ongoing movement or recent deterioration and these should be monitored with no immediate works required.
- 12.11 Timber beams are exposed to the ceiling with plastered panels between. Five timber beams run to a central point, with a dragon beam running in a south-west direction, at which there is a later timber post in place. There are no signs of deflection or any other issues with these beams and junctions and joints at the central post are tight and in their correct positions.
- 12.12 The space has a fitted carpet and the floor could therefore not be inspected. When this carpet reaches the end of its lifespan consideration should be given to either a full exposure of the presumed timber floor below or a non-fitted carpet at least allowing inspection when required. Note, some areas of this floor can be inspected from the basement below (refer to separate section). It should also be noted that a general fall was observed in the floor running from west to east.
- 12.13 There is a fireplace at the east end of the room with a modern surround. It is not apparent if this is concealing an earlier surround behind or, perhaps more likely, the original has been lost. Within this surround is a brick and stone reveal with an iron lower section. There is no sign of movement in either of these elements. There are three iron plates forming the lintel to the fireplace, the undersides of which can be seen and have surface rust. These should be de-rusted in situ and redecorated.
- 12.14 There are three sash windows, two to the west and one to the south. All appear to have been painted shut and should ideally be eased to allow some ventilation to the space.
- 12.15 As a note, a thermometer in the room at the time of survey recorded a temperature of 16.5 degrees Celsius.
- 12.16 Within a cupboard the north-east corner of the room the external wall is plastered. In several areas here, the plaster is detached from the wall and friable. Also, some areas of brickwork can be seen which appear to be relatively damp – this should be checked against the external wall to look for areas of water ingress. Due to its location within the cupboard, repair of this plaster is of low priority.

ROOM G3 (LOBBY OFF CHURCH LANE)

- 12.17 Walls and ceilings are plastered and in reasonable order. Some redundant cable clips to the north wall at high level should be removed and the wall made good. This room requires redecoration within the quinquennium.

- 12.18 Three timber panelled doors of varying details, all sound.
- 12.19 Timber boarded floor of some age, at least one board is loose and requires fixing, adjacent to the door into room G4.
- 12.20 ROOM G4 (RECEPTION SPACE)
- 12.21 Timber frame exposed to the north wall and plastered elsewhere.
- 12.22 To the south wall, sections to the timber frame appears to have been papered over then re-papered. Ideally this paper would be removed to allow the timber frame behind to fully breath and be inspected for any ongoing issues. Suggest next time, decoration is required this is removed.
- 12.23 To the east wall is a large display board concealing the wall behind, ideally this wall would be accessible for inspection. I suggest that when this display is at the end of its life, a smaller or free-standing design is considered.
- 12.24 The floor has been covered with modern quarry tiles, perhaps thirty years old. There were no signs of defects to these, however, it is presumed to be an impermeable floor possibly with a concrete slab which is not advisable in a timber framed building. It is not clear what impact these are having on the walls but risks pushing any ground water into the wall feet. Boxed-out timber skirtings have been provided to the base of the walls, so any signs of decay would be concealed. It is advised to expose the base of the walls in isolated areas, to look for any signs of associated issues.
- 12.25 There is a very large fireplace to the west wall – no signs of movement here. The chimney flue can be accessed due to its size and appeared stable where visible. A small flue rising from the basement connects into the chimney where a section of the dividing wall has been opened, not thought to be of concern.
- 12.26 The external door is catching on the floor when opened. This is a stable door arrangement and the hinges to the lower half of the door have been packed up on multiple washers, presumably to try and overcome this issue over a prolonged period. Suggest the washers are removed and the door re-hung on the original hinges rehung to open correctly – this may require re-setting the height of the hinges in the frame.

ROOM G5 (LOBBY OFF CHURCH STREET)

- 12.27 Timber frame exposed to all walls. Large areas have been repaired or replaced with modern oak sections and many of the render infill panels are also a replacement.
- 12.28 There are multiple areas of staining from water penetration between timber frame and plaster, but no serious signs of decay as a result. As previously, junctions should be properly filled externally and internally.

12.29 The floor level appears to have been reduced, possibly to provide level access to the street. A modern quarry tile floor has been provided to the majority where the floor appears to have been dropped, to match the previous room. The timber sole plate is exposed to the walls and sections of rubble masonry walling below this. There is evidence of damp to both the timber sole plate and the masonry below in these locations. It is likely that the modern flooring is forcing moisture up the walls. There is a cementitious mortar boarder to the quarry tile flooring and consideration should be given to removing this and replacing with a sacrificial lime mortar and with a movement joint if required, such as cork strips. Within the south wall masonry below the soul plate is the end of a beam. This is rotten, and sections can be removed by hand. Urgent work required to clarify if this is still performing a structural role, with repairs required either way.

12.30 As with other rooms there is a vast amount of surface fixed cabling and the majority of this seems to be linked to alarms and telephones, again it should be checked if any of this equipment is redundant and, if so, it should be stripped out. That which is required should ideally be rationalised and where possible fixed to modern fabric rather than historic.

ROOM G6 (MALE WC)

12.31 A small section of timber framing is exposed to the walls, the rest is modern plasterboard. Plastered ceilings and quarry tile floor, all in fair condition. Between the timber framing and more historic beam above is a large gap to the adjacent stair landing which has been crudely filled with newspaper only. This should be properly infilled with a timber insert, especially due to the use of the room. There is a general smaller gap to the underside of this historic beam which should be filled with lime mortar.

ROOM G7 (FEMALE WC)

12.32 Similar in detail to the previous, all in fair order other than some miner areas of failed plaster which should be hacked back and replaced to match. The source of dampness for this failed plaster, particularly to the hand dryer, is not immediately apparent and should be investigated following removal of the failed plaster.

ROOM G8 (KITCHEN)

12.33 Generally plastered walls and ceilings, exposed brick wall to east with an arched window opening. Brickwork has been painted with a modern emulsion which is not breathable, although there are no signs of this causing damage to the brickwork at present it is likely to become a maintenance issue. A small damp patch to the top corner of this wall should be reviewed externally, otherwise kitchen units are tired but functional. The door is currently kept open using a brick offcut which is a less than ideal arrangement. There is the eye for a retaining hook to the back of the door which requires the replacement hook to the wall.

ROOM G9 (CORRIDOR TO EAST COURTYARD)

- 12.34 Exposed timber frame wall to the north with sections of brick and render infill. This wall generally appears to be stable with no signs of water ingress despite the fact the eastern half of the wall is effectively an external wall.
- 12.35 Elsewhere the walls are plastered, though clearly historic plasterwork which is bowing and cracking in various locations. This wall appears to have been redecorated relatively recently, though of a low quality with sections of detached plaster and paint, painted over and trapped within the paint. When next in need of decoration, it should be more properly repaired, and the cracks or detached plaster dealt with then.
- 12.36 Again, there are a large number of surface fixed cables. Ideally, if any of these are redundant these should be stripped out of walls and made good. The floor covering is historic brick pavers which whilst well-worn are stable. A section has been cut away and replaced in mortar, possibly relating to surfaces below.
- 12.37 The external door is a fire exit with a push handle, recently redecorated and in good order generally.

ROOM G10 (OFFICE ONTO CHURCH LANE)

- 12.38 Plastered wall and ceiling, with a single beam to the ceiling and timber framing to the south wall. Plaster is detached from walls in several locations and cracking to face including damage from a door closer. These should carefully be cut back and replaced to match, and areas redecorated. Door closer detail requires review.
- 12.39 The floor is fully carpeted and therefore could not be inspected, but appeared to be of solid construction as elsewhere. The external door has been fixed shut due to issues with previous water ingress. There appear to be no ongoing issues.

ROOM G11 (ADJOINING OFFICE)

- 12.40 This is similar to the previous, but with panelling up to dado height on some walls. Evidence of previous water ingress around the fireplace on the east wall, with areas of replacement plaster. A bookcase sat within the former fireplace prevented further inspection of the chimney. Ideally this should be permanently moved to allow greater airflow through this redundant chimney.

ROOM G12 (ADJOINING STORE & WC)

- 12.41 Quarry tiled floors and plastered walls, generally sound. Similar issues with water ingress around the chimney. Also, there is evidence of water ingress in the ceiling with water tracking in and along the plaster board joints, suggesting water ingress from above rather than rising from the ground. The chimney should be inspected externally in terms of flashings and pots for any obvious areas of water ingress.

13. Cellar

- 13.1 A single space to the west of the building, effectively occupying a space below the Council Chamber above. The walls have exposed masonry, generally rubble stone, with some stone window surrounds and areas of brick infill. The ceiling is essentially the exposed structure to the floor above, which consists of a single timber post at the centre of the space supporting a large primary beam running north-south. Off this span a number of large secondary beams running east-west and bearing onto the masonry walls. Between these, is modern insulation supported on batons, it's presumed timber floor boards run directly between these secondary beams. Note, the timber post is set slightly off the main floor on a stone plinth. The floor throughout consists of stone flags of random sizes, including some cobbled areas.
- 13.2 The entire space is very damp. It appears that moisture both rises through the floor in wet weather and also comes in through the walls which are below pavement level. There are shelves to the perimeter of the room, however, some items are stored on the floor. I would recommend all items are raised off the floor onto the shelves to allow clear inspection of the floor and better circulation of air. Anything which is not fully resistant to moisture should not be stored in this space. There are several what appears to have once been cardboard boxes on the floor, which are severely decayed and now have fruiting bodies growing off them. These and any other decaying items should be removed and tipped and the space swept of all debris, as funguses established on these could migrate to timbers and result in serious issues.
- 13.3 The top courses of stone to the north wall are loose in several locations. These should be re-bedded in their original locations. There are a number of open joints to the east wall, including the main wall and the return wall up the staircase. These should be checked against previous records of the space to see if these are associated with any structural movement. If not, they should be repointed with any large joints packed out with stone slips. If suggestive of structural movement, then a structural engineer should be requested to review the space.
- 13.4 The primary beam supporting the floor above bears directly onto the masonry walls. To the north, where it can be accessed, the end was slightly soft but with no evidence of rot. To the south, this was difficult to access due to shelving in front. This is of no immediate concern, but this should certainly be monitored due to the dampness in the walls and the amount of structure this beam is supporting. If issues become apparent consideration should be given to exposing the ends and providing slate packers below, possibly with a DPM also.
- 13.5 There are a number of interesting window openings which are largely blocked. Starting on the east wall, the small round headed lancet window which appears to be very early in origin, possibly reset from elsewhere or possibly originally a niche rather than a window. The condition is sound. Ideally the material stored in front of the window should be pulled away to allow more air movement to this potentially significant early stonework. On the adjacent south wall, there are two window

openings. One is entirely below pavement level and fully infilled, with simple stone surround of single blocks to each jam, single cill stone and a single stone lintel above, all appears in good order. Adjacent to this is a window opening of similar appearance though this has a slightly higher head which is now above pavement level. There is an ironwork grille which is set within the opening, in extremely poor condition. The age of the ironwork is not clear due to lack of access, but it should be presumed to be of an early date and therefore should be conserved. Clear debris from within this opening and de-rust and repaint the ironwork. To the west there is a modern timber light with mesh infill above this, of less significance. The righthand-side jam stone of this window appears to be a single block of circa one by two metres, which is of interest, but again concealed behind storage.

13.6 To the west wall, there are two openings. Firstly, a wide and deep opening with timber lintel above and set within this what appears to be the start of a flight of stairs up to pavement level. This has been filled with modern brick on the external wall, again all in reasonable condition. Adjacent to this is a small pavement level light, with a timber frame with pegged joints and seemingly of some age, with iron bars set within it. There are possibly two further window frames set to the outside of this, with brickwork jams as well. There is much debris within the opening, which would ideally be removed and the historic window elements further inspected. The wall immediately to the north of this reopening appears to have several loose stones at the top, which also require resetting.

13.7 This space is clearly very historic and contains a number of original or early features, though at present is difficult to inspect or fully analyse. Whilst not urgent, it would be of much interest to instruct an archaeological appraisal of the room. It is clearly of limited use for storage due to the damp conditions, but it could be an interesting addition to the 'painted room' visitor attraction, as directly below and therefore part of the same original building.

PART THREE

Recommendations in Order of Priority

NOTE: the budget costs are for each item as briefly described, without specification or detailed investigation and are to give a broad indication only of likely costs. Costs exclude contractors' preliminaries, high level scaffolding, professional fees and VAT.

I4.	Items for Immediate Attention	Ref.	£
14.1	Tree sapling growing from either the gutter to the council offices or brickwork to the Royal British Legion building should be removed next time work is being undertaken to either building	7.28	250
14.2	Grass and vegetation growing from open joints to the hard surfacing at the foot of all external walls should be regularly cleared as part of an ongoing maintenance programme	8.4, 8.5, 8.6	250
14.3	Survey of decay to sole plates on south elevation by timber specialist, to include micro bore analysis if required	9.8, 9.10	750
14.4	Ceiling beam to the 'Pink Room' looks to have been cut at its bearing, locate details of possible previous structural repairs	11.38	-
14.5	Clarify if the wall between rooms G1 and G5 should be providing fire separation. If so, all gaps to be fully filled	12.5	100
14.6	Decayed timber end within wall to room G5, should be assessed by timber specialist as part of 14.3. Allowance for repair only	12.29	500
I5.	Items for Attention within Eighteen Months		
15.1	Re-decorate timber cills to east and central dormer windows on south slope as well as to north dormer	7.18, 7.20, 7.32, 10.9	500
15.2	Repair or renew glazing putty to all four dormer windows and decorate including casements	7.18, 7.20, 7.21, 7.32	1,000
15.3	Renew mastic seal between lead cladding and window casement to east and central dormer windows on south slope as well as to north dormer	7.19, 7.20, 7.21	250
15.4	Redecorate joinery elements to dormer windows, including timber framing and presumed plywood infill panels	7.15, 7.20	750
15.5	Re-fix single slipped tile to roof on north slope, above kitchen	7.27	100
15.6	Clear moss to roof on north slope below gable eaves	7.27	100
15.7	Clear moss from east chimney at ledges and abutment to roof. Either renew mortar haunching or replace with lead flashings	7.30	250
15.8	Re-point all open joints to the hard surfacing at the foot of all external walls	8.4, 8.5, 8.6	1,000

15.9	Re-set grating to north door to sit flush with adjacent paving, currently causing a trip hazard	8.6	250
15.10	Re-pointing of open joints at abutment of lean-to-roof with main elevation at south-east corner	9.6	250
15.11	Allow for timber repairs to decayed sole plates and adjacent post bases on south elevation, subject to findings of timber specialist	9.8, 9.9, 9.10	3,000
15.12	Remove ivy from sandstone gate post to east of building, allow to repair and repoint masonry behind	9.20	500
15.13	Rake out joint between curved north elevation and return wall to west gable, deep fill with daub and decorate	9.32, 9.33	500
15.14	Remove brickwork paving to base of timber posts at north elevation door, provide packing below posts to provide slight upstand and reinstate paving. Allow for timber repairs to base of posts if found to be decayed	9.34	500
15.15	Undertake high-level inspection of roof coverings, flashings, chimneys and eaves joinery using cherry picker		1,000
15.16	Remove steel plate to stairs in room F2 and piece in timber board	11.12	100
15.17	Provide 2no. missing screws to door off room F6	11.22	50
15.18	Rake out friable mortar to low level masonry wall at east end of room G1 and re-point. Remove mortar fill between wall and boarded floor and provide cork expansion strips	12.7	250
15.19	Fill gaps around timber framing between room G6 and corridor	12.31	100
15.20	Any items stored within the cellar which could decay (wood, card, fabric) should be moved elsewhere. Anything remaining should be moved off the floor onto shelves. Clear floor of all debris	13.2, 13.6	100
15.21	Re-bed loose masonry and point open joints to walls within cellar	13.3, 13.6	250
16.	Items for Attention within the Five years		
16.1	Repair or renew mortar fillet at the abutment between the east verge and east chimney stack	7.6	100
16.2	Repair or renew haunchings to chimneys and patch point top courses of brickwork	7.9, 7.11	250
16.3	Roof felt to be inspected at eaves. Allow for renewing bottom section to all eaves if decayed, dressed into gutters	7.13	1,000
16.4	Renew lead cheeks to central and west dormer windows, in higher code leadwork and with additional fixing points	7.20, 7.22	1,000
16.5	Re-point open joints between ridge tiles to main roof	7.26	100
16.6	Re-stain oak bargeboards to the west and north gables and eaves joinery generally to curved north-west corner	7.36, 7.37, 7.38	1,500
16.7	Localised renewal of caulking to joints/junctions at timber frame and re-staining of adjacent timbers following this	9.1, 9.23	2,500

16.8	Localised repairs to edges of plaster infill panels, with cracks cleared out and filled and loose sections cut back and patched, with substrates inspected where opened up	9.2, 9.23	2,500
16.9	Where render infill panels to the south-west corner have moved out from the structure, open up to investigate the condition of the substrate and timber frame. Patch repair following opening up	9.16	500
16.10	Re-point open joints to brickwork at east of south elevation, particularly to plinth above and below the lead weathering	9.18	250
16.11	Re-point open joint above lead weathering to brickwork ground floor of west elevation	9.25	100
16.12	Clean out cracks to plastered walls and ceilings internally, fill and decorate	10.2, 10.5, 10.7, 11.19, 11.29	1,000
16.13	Repair timber frame/surround to windows internally	10.9, 11.34	500
16.14	Repair plaster ceiling to room S4 where damaged by removal of wasp nest	10.12	100
16.15	Re-fix loose floor boards within rooms S4 and G3	10.12, 12.19	100
16.16	Fill gaps between timber frame and plaster panels internally with caulking where water staining noted, following filling of joints externally, and decorate adjacent plaster	10.11, 10.19, 11.3, 11.15, 11.20, 12.2, 12.28	1,000
16.17	Specialist conservator to inspect wall paintings and advise on their condition as well as the environmental conditions of the room	11.6	1,000
16.18	Fill voids between skirting and wall/floor to room F2, decorate	11.13	100
16.19	Patch repairs to damaged plaster. Cut back to sound and reinstate to match before decorating	11.32, 12.32, 12.38	500
16.20	Remove any redundant fixings from historic fabric	12.4	100
16.21	Adjust external doors to rooms G1 and G4 to ensure latches connect fully and doors do not rub on floors	12.8, 12.26	250
16.22	De-rust and decorate iron lintels to fireplace in room G2	12.13	100
16.23	Provide a breathable perimeter detail to quarry tile floors to limit moisture being forced up walls	12.29	500
17.	Desirable Improvements		
17.1	Remove plywood facing to dormer window gables and repair presumed timber frame and render panels suitable for exposure	7.15, 7.20, 7.32	1,500
17.2	Provide additional lead flashings to ends of eaves to direct water into gutters	8.3	1,000
17.3	Comprehensive redecoration of timber frame and render panels rather than localised decoration as noted above		15,000

17.4	Clean lichen and moss from tiles to lean-to roof on north elevation	9.36	100
17.5	Where plastered walls and ceilings are bulging, these should ideally be re-fixed back to the substrate		1,000
17.6	Remove visually intrusive blinds to windows and replace with specialist UV film to glass	11.5, 11.10	1,000
17.7	Renew decoration to walls within the 'Pink Room' ensuring suitable preparation in order for new paint system to fully adhere	11.36	1,000
17.8	Rationalise M&E installations, with any redundant equipment or cables removed and remaining fixed more sensitively	12.3, 12.17, 12.30, 12.36	1,000
17.9	Ease sash windows to room G2 which appear to have been painted shut	12.14	500
17.10	Remove display board and papered finish to walls in G4, decorate	12.22, 12.23	1,000
17.11	Provide hook to hold open door to kitchen G8	12.33	50
17.12	De-rust and re-decorate iron grille to cellar window opening	13.5	250
17.13	Archaeological assessment of the cellars	13.7	2,000