

Job No: 2317
Client: Northumberland County Council
Project: The Repair and Conservation of the Shambles Market
Address: Market Place, Hexham Northumberland, NE46 1XQ
Date: 12th October 2023

Design and Access Statement

1.0 Description of the Site

1.1 Planning Jurisdiction

The building is located in the Market Place of Hexham which is the centre of the town; it lies within the jurisdiction of Northumberland County Council who are also the client for this project. It is also within area of the Hexham Town Council.

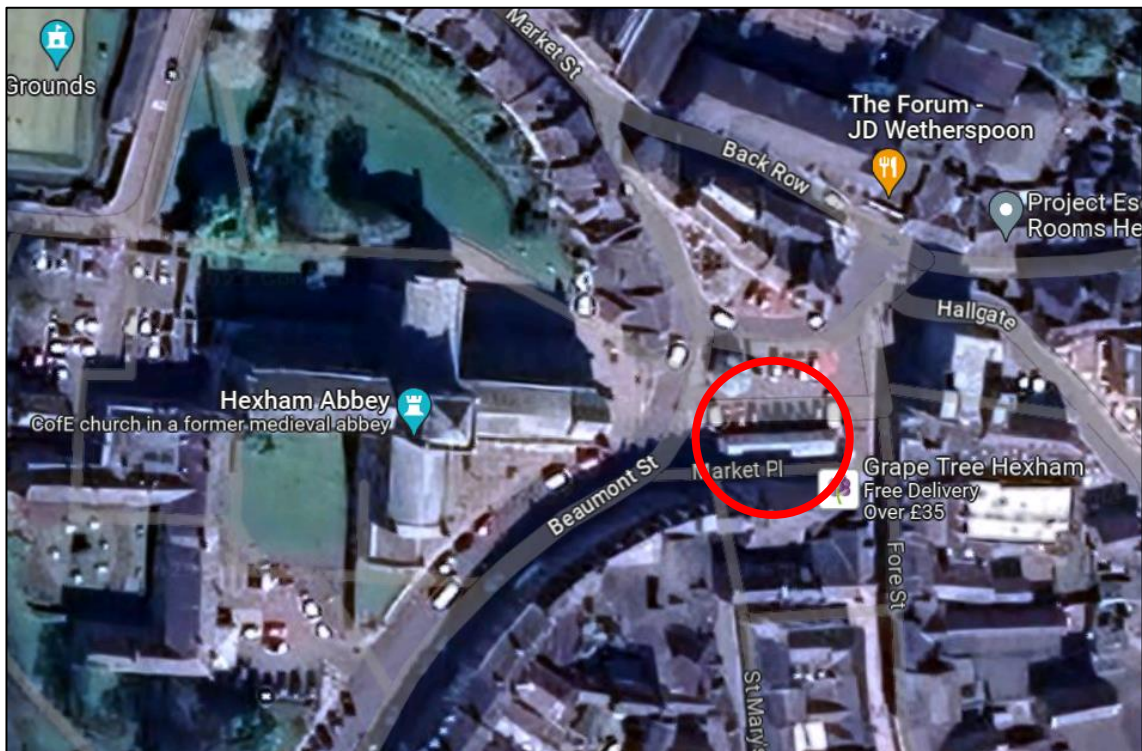
The building is listed grade II* List Entry Number: 1370800.

The Hexham conservation area is large and the Market Place is in the centre of it.

To the west of the Market Place, the east gable of Hexham Abbey dominates the views across the open area. For more detail of the context and surroundings, please see the Heritage Statement.

1.2 Aerial Map

North is to the top of the page. The building is ringed in red.



2.0 Summary for the Proposals

The market structure has existed since 1766. There is written evidence that it was re-slatted in 1911 and the ground surface of concrete was laid in the late 19th century. The last major refurbishment works were completed in the 1990s. In recent years, the stone columns have regularly suffered impact damage from parking vehicles.

In this project, the roof weatherings will be lifted and the timber boarding and structure below cleaned and patch repaired prior to the existing slate and lead materials being re-laid, using new fixings throughout. The perimeter timber ring beam will be repaired and redecorated and all the cast iron rainwater goods will be replaced or overhauled as necessary.

The roof structure sits on a mixture of timber and stone columns. These will be carefully cleaned and any severely damaged stonework replaced. The bases of the timber columns currently sit in the wet, are decaying, and will be provided with new stone plinths. Better gullies and below-ground surface water drainage will be provided. New lighting and small power equipment will fully replace the existing electrical installation. Black painted stainless steel mesh panels will be installed in the eaves to prevent the local pigeons roosting in the gaps between the rafters.

The 19th century concrete floor is settling and cracking. It will be replaced with either natural stone flags or matching aggregate concrete flags, depending on the overall project costs. To protect the columns from vehicle impact in the future, bollards will be installed, along the north and west elevations.

3.0 Previous Listed Building Consents

3.1 This Property

Please refer to section 4.3 in the Heritage Statement.

3.2 Adjacent Properties

Not applicable.

4.0 Detail of the Proposals and Design, Repair and Conservation Strategies

4.1 Roof Weathering

Please refer to the detailed roof condition report which forms part of this application.

The proposal is to lift all the leadwork and slate weathering, the exposed timber sarkings can then be checked for decay, repaired and refixed. At the eaves, the sarking boards will be lifted so that the rafter ends can be checked and refixed to the wall plate. The tilting fillet will be replaced together with any sarking boards with rotten edges, etc.

All the existing weathering will then be refixed in the same manner as they are currently.

4.2 Cast Iron Gutters

These will be taken down, shot blasted and redecorated prior to refixing and resealing.

4.3 Roof Rafter, Purlins and Truss Structure

Please refer to the structural engineer's drawings for the repairs currently proposed. The contractor will provide access for the structural engineer to carry out a thorough check of the entire roof structure and identify any further structural repairs required. The whole building will be carefully cleaned of detritus, etc.

4.4 Perimeter Ring Beam

The main timber structural beam was extensively repaired in the 1990s and, from the inside where it is exposed, looks to be in acceptable condition. Externally, it is clad in a fascia of timber floorboards. These are currently in poor condition and need to be carefully patch repaired, refixed and redecorated while the gutters are dismantled.

4.5 Stone Columns

Careful cleaning and judicious repair in matching stone are proposed. For details of the carving and mortar etc, see the detailed specification.

4.6 Timber Columns

Refer to the engineer's drawings. The bases of all the columns have decayed and they will be cut out and replaced with simple rectangular stone plinths.

4.7 Ground Surfaces

The existing concrete will be replaced. If the budget does not stretch to Option 1, Option 2 is an alternative which will be in keeping with the existing concrete surface.

Option 1

Please see the detailed specification for the proposed stone paving. This will be in keeping of that used elsewhere in the town during 2023.

Option 2

Please see the detailed specification of the aggregate topped paving which will be selected to match the existing concrete.

4.8 Surface Water Drainage

Traditional salt glazed gullies will be fitted below the existing rainwater pipe outlets. A flush drainage channel is proposed at the west end of the building.

4.9 New Electrical and Lighting Proposals

Please see the engineer's drawings, specifications and fittings data sheets which form part of this application.

4.10 Bird Mesh Infill to the Eaves

Pigeons roosting in the internal eaves of the building have been a problem since 1766. The stallholders' methods of preventing this is filling the spaces with cardboard, duvets or anything else that comes to hand. See Drawing D1 for details of the proposals for hinged black painted stainless steel panels.

4.11 Visual Impact of the Proposals

The repair and conservation of the project will have minimal impact on the building. The cleaning and redecoration will not remove the patina of age.

The following will have minor impacts with positive effects:

- The stone plinths to the timber columns.
- The bird mesh panels.

5.0 Access

5.1 Thresholds

Ideal flush access is available into the shambles at the west elevation. The steps and kerbs of the other elevations do restrict access but cannot be changed without severe impact on the adjacent buildings and their access.

5.2 Disabled Parking

Disabled car parking spaces are located near the Market Place.

5.3 Local Public Transport

The market is at the centre of the town which is served by rail and bus stations and easy connection to good roads.

6.0 Ecology

6.1 Protected Species

Please see the report which is included in this application.

7.0 Employment

Not relevant to this application, but the improvements could attract more stallholders to the market.

8.0 Flood Risk

None of the work being carried out will have any effect on the current flood risk.

- The centre of Hexham is significantly raised above the Tyne river flood plain.
- There is no risk from sea, river or reservoir flooding.

The surface water map is reproduced below. It shows low risk in Fore Street and the Market Place but this water decants down the steep road at the north east corner of the Market Place, Hallstile Bank.

