

**COMMENTARY ON THE BUILDING WORKS
CARRIED OUT AT 21 – 23 CHURCH STREET,
BASINGSTOKE RG21 7QQ**



Client: Mr Ahmet Topcu
21 – 23 Church Street
Basingstoke
RG21 7QQ

Proposed Work: Erection of 2 no. first floor extensions and 2 no. external staircases, to create 3 no. 1 bed and 2 no. 2 bed dwellings, and a restaurant with outdoor seating area| 21 and 23 Church Street Basingstoke RG21 7QQ

Location: 21 – 23 Church Street
Basingstoke
RG21 7QQ

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Ref: 21965

Date: 2nd May 2023

**Commentary on the building works carried out at 21 – 23 Church Street,
Basingstoke RG21 7QQ**

Revisions

Rev	Date	Details

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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.10 This document has been prepared to assist in the understanding of the building works carried out during an extensive 3 ½ year construction period, to turn the existing empty derelict, and dilapidated water and rot damaged building into the very successful and popular Turkish and Mediterranean restaurant. They are passionate, local and independent family run business.
- 1.11 The premisses are run by husband and wife, Ahmet and Marta Topcu, with their very dedicated team. They are passionate as we are about creating wonderful food and memorable experiences. From our hand made breads to the extensive wine list, they have spent great care and effort on every aspect of our menu. They are passionate, local and independent family run business.
- 1.12 The Olive House is now listed as number 1 out of 147 ‘Top Restaurants in Basingstoke’ on the Trip Advisor website as of 7th May 2021.
- 1.13 The journey began back in 2016, when the premisses were bought by the current owners, with the vision of opening a special and quality Turkish and Mediterranean restaurant. We must say at this point that as one of the people first through the door when Ahmet took possession, the vision was a little hard for us to imagine.
- 1.14 The building is a Grade II listed building.
- 1.15 The original proposals involved a change of use from a former bar/nightclub to restaurant and part-residential use with associated internal and external alterations, and two 1st floor rear extensions to no.21 and no.23. The ground floor retail use in the shop at no.23 will continue. The new residential use will comprise one 1-bedroom flat and one 2- bedroom flat to the 1st floor of no.21 and one 1-bedroom staff flat to the 2nd floor of no.21 and one studio ground floor flat to the rear of no.23 and one 2-bedroom flat to the 1st floor no.23. The proposals also include an external rear staircase to no.21 to provide access to the 1st floor flat and a further external staircase to the 1st floor of the brewhouse flat. The four flats will be for rent rather than sale and the staff flat will be maintained in that use as there is only direct access from the restaurant.
- 1.16 These proposals can be seen from the original approved drawings contained within application 16/01586/LBC, and 16/01585/FUL. There were also series of full and listed building applications during the course of the works, as the true extent of the years of decay and neglected, and structurally compromised elements of the building were uncovered as the works proceeded.
- 1.17 Drawing ICS/1968/58 has been prepared to show the layout of the building following the completion of the works, if the works in this sort and age of building can ever be considered as complete.

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Section 2

Ground Floor

Front restaurant

- 2.10 The internal layout of the front part of the restaurant is basically as shown on the original drawings, with only the furniture layout altering. The reception area, is just that, but, drinks, and coffee's are prepared from here as well. The 'Bar' area has been replaced with cover tables. The food orders bar has also been omitted.
- 2.11 The private door to the staff flat above the restaurant has been block up as this would not conform to current fire regulations and means of escape, further detail on this is set out in section 2.24.
- 2.12 The biggest change on the ground floor is where the kitchen and toilets have been repositioned. The proposed kitchen and food preparation area have been relocated into the end of the building where the toilets and storage and service area is shown. There a number of reasons for this, 1) it has provided a much larger kitchen floor area to service the number of covers being provided, 2) from a environmental point of view it was considered not to have the public passing a food preparation area to get to the toilets, 3) the revised layout provided an increased number and better layout for the tables, and 4) the number of toilets originally shown was not required.
- 2.13 The original ceiling lining (plasterboard) to the new kitchen area was removed as a result of water damage and the result removing the old toilets and blockwork walls. A number of morticed Oak timber beams were discovered providing support to the other softwood joists. Following discussions with the Local Authority (see listed building application) The beams in question had again suffered extensive damage dur to the ingress of water. The beam ends because they had been built into solid walls, their ends had suffered catastrophic rot.
- It was agreed and approved that these beams be replace with matching details and mouldings as the originals in Oak. The existing softwood joists that formed the ceiling of this area were removed, cleaned inspected, and were re-used for the new floor of Flat 4 (dining/living and kitchen). New softwood joists were then installed to form the support for the new ceiling in the new kitchen. The new Oak beams have once again been enclosed within the floor ceiling void.
- 2.14 At the front of the rear restaurant area, additional support posts have been installed to provide structural support to the (existing) rear walling at first floor level, and ultimately the roof structure above. These posts are provided with isolated pad foundations and have been located adjacent existing timber posts forming part of the original timber frame structure. The new posts have been clad in reclaimed timber and finished to match the existing.

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2.15 In the floor area adjacent to the door leading to the staff flat above, a glass ‘viewing’ panel has been installed into the floor. This provides an insight into part of the original cellar area. An opening has been made through the existing modern softwood joists to install the glass panel. Subtle lighting introduced into this part of the cellar area. This has proved to be a very popular feature of the restaurant, tables adjacent are at a premium.

Area to the rear of the Shop (Flat 1)

2.16 Changes have been made to this area, this area is now a ‘private’ restaurant area, providing a more secluded area for private functions. The whole area within this part of the building was found to be in a very serious state of dis-repair, with many of the existing features previously having been covered up with modern timber studwork and plasterboard. These have now been exposed and restored. The wall between the was would have been the living room and the kitchen dining area (studwork walling) has been removed leaving the original timber framing support posts and beams in place. Within this area all the existing ceiling beams, and an original metal support post have been restored back to their original state, including a carved beam over the reception area and pot wash. The wash room has also had a complete ‘make over’.

2.17 The rear external door and window to the area above has been replace, as the original door/frame and window were not serviceable.

External

2.18 There area a few changes to the outside of the building, some of which we will detail later in this document.

A number of the windows that view the inner courtyard from the rear restaurant have been replaced. The original windows were of a modern softwood storm-proof sash type windows double glazed, which were completely rotten. These have been replace similar softwood side hung casement windows.

2.19 The original approved external staircases shown leading to the first floor flats have been re-configured into one access stairway, providing the required escape routes in accordance with the current building regulations. Planning and listed building consent applications have been submitted for these alterations.

2.20 A link way has been provided between the rear doors at the back of the restaurant and the private function restaurant. This link provides the required fire escape requirements of both the ground floor restaurant and the first floor flat at the front of the building. The link provides the good and required food hygiene requirements, without having to outside the premisses.

2.21 The existing ‘garage’ structure to the North West of the site, provides a W/C for use by the staff members, and an area for refrigerated and frozen food products. The existing above ground drainage has been modified to suite the new layout.

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First Floor

Flat 2 (as originally)

- 2.22 The changes made in this particular flat is that the new door opening proposed to in positioned to gain access into Bedroom 1 has not been done. This bedroom 1 is now a studio flat for staff, which we refer to in item 2.26.
- 2.23 The main changes within Flat 2 are that the kitchen has been re-positioned within the entrance end of the main living room to form a kitchen/dining living room. The old kitchen location is bedroom 2, and bedroom 2 is retained.

The original fireplace that was going to be opened up, has not been for safety reasons. The existing internal door opening that would have lead into Flat 3, has been infilled. The three very large sliding sash windows to the front elevation, the sashes have been removed, stripped and repaired and re-decorated. Sash cords replaced and generally overhauled.

Flat 3 (as originally), (note the flat on the second floor now forms part of flat 3)

- 2.24 The opening between the kitchen/diner and the stairs leading up to the second floor and down to the ground floor has not been blocked up, but has been fitted with a fire resisting door. An additional partition has been fitted across the corner of the kitchen/dinner and fitted with a fire door to provided the requires of building control and the fire officer.

The opening in the floor formed by the stairs leading down to the ground floor has been filled in with floor joists and flooring.

The opening originally shown that opened into a lobby between the doors leading into the living room and the bedroom has not been fitted. These other two doors are fire doors.

- 2.25 The bathroom has been fitted out as proposed, however when removing some of the existing plasterboard wall lining, an existing fire place and surround was discovered. This has now been left exposed, after being cleaned and refurbished. The brickwork to this chimney breast has been cleaned, sealed and again left exposed.

Staff Flat

- 2.26 As we have mentioned in 2.22 above, this area of the building has been fitted out as a staff flat, due to the fact that the second floor flat could not be used for this purpose. The internal arrangement is a bit different to that approved, together with the relocation of the window in the front end, and the inclusion of the entrance door in the same gable end.

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Access to this self contained flat is via the re-configured rear access and escape staircase way. This flat is contained within the first floor extension approved under the original planning and listed building consent.

Flat 4 (as originally)

2.27 The original roof on this structural originally housed all the mechanical plant and large mechanical extract ducting for the original kitchen. The roof has suffered extensive water ingress, and the damage and rot that had taken place, thus ingress must have been happening for many, many, years. With the damage that had been caused, the entire roof structure had to be removed.

2.28 The internal court yard side of the first floor external walling, was a patchwork of timber studwork and external timber cladding. This also had significant water damage, and excessive structural movement as a result of this damage. None of this studwork walling has any buttressing support. It was commented by our structural engineers that the whole structure was one snow storm away from total collapse.

The rear (rear wall on the common boundary), front facing (car park) and back facing wall of the original roof structural, none of these walls were tie to each other, each of them effectively free standing and unsafe. These walls in part had to be rebuilt, tying them in at the corners, and providing steel strapping and ties where they could not be rebuilt.

The wall between the dining/living and Bedroom 1 had to be rebuilt in its entirety.

2.29 The internal layout of this flat is pretty much as proposed, but, with the addition of a timber studwork partition to separate the kitchen, dining/living room thus to provide the means of escape from the adjacent bedrooms. Again, this was a requirement of the fire officer.

The window in the front gable end (facing the carpark), it has been reported by the local authority that this was a new window opening. It was not. There was a slight smaller window that had been filled in many years ago. This infill has been removed, the window opening made slightly wider as shown on the approved drawings, and a new window installed.

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Second Floor

Flat 4 (as originally)

- 2.30 The basic layout has not changed from the original proposals, but, the two proposed rear facing dormer windows have been with conservation roof windows. Installing dormer windows would have required a significant amount of the original historic framing to have been removed.
- 2.31 The two front facing small dormer windows in the living room, and bedroom have been replaced as proposed with details to match the existing.
- 2.32 Several the existing ceiling being lath and plaster, had shown characteristics of de-lamination from the framing above. To avoid the removal of historical elements, these ceilings have been ‘over-boarded’ with plasterboard.