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- Architectural Design
- Building Surveying
- Rope Access Surveys
- HSEQ & CDM2/5 Compliance

## Heritage Asset, Design & Access Statement

In support of

Conversion of Class 2 Building & Development of Plot to Create 6 No Build to Rent 1 Bed Studio Flats  
@  
Former Orchard Centre, No's 1 Douglas Crescent & No's 14 Lothian Street Bonnyrigg EH19 2DF



On Behalf of

**Esk Homes Ltd**

Document Control:

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

This heritage asset, design and access statement has been prepared by LBE Services on behalf of Esk Homes Ltd in support of the proposed conversion & development works at the former Orchard Centre Bonnyrigg to provide 6 No 1 bed studio flats on a build to rent model for mid-market tenants. This statement should be read in conjunction with the architectural drawings and appended specialist reports (coal mining risk assessment, geo-environmental phase 1 report, phase 1 habitat & arboricultural report, chartered surveyors condition survey report, structural engineers report, structural engineers surface water drainage strategy & calcs). The drawings and reports have been referenced where appropriate.

The existing building was found to be in fair condition for its age and fit for conversion, although has suffered as a result of illicit alterations, a lack of recent maintenance & time expired elements necessitating substantial financial investment to ensure its longevity. The building is category B listed, has considerable history, a strong architectural form and would be considered iconic in its locality (as would its sister building opposite). External & internal finishes were found to be dilapidated, although meaningful repair would still be achievable in most instances. The building is located in close proximity to Bonnyrigg Toll (<100m) and is within a DEV-2 area on the Midlothian local development plan map (just outside of the TCR-1 boundary). Its sister building, located opposite on the other side of Douglas Crescent, was commissioned by Andrew Carnegie as a library and is now used as a mosque. Ground floor shop units with upper floor flats exist towards Bonnyrigg Toll with the land uses in the immediate vicinity comprising terraced dwellings, maisonettes and semi-detached units. The old store site at the far end of Douglas Crescent (Leyden Place / Park) has recently been demolished with new build retirement & assisted living flats formed; flatted maisonettes exist to the junction between Lothian Street and Rae's Gardens and the former library site to the southwest of the empty supermarket building has been demolished with flatted Council housing built in its stead.

There is less of a demand for commercial and retail accommodation in town centres and reduced requirement for office space; this follows the move towards home working during the covid pandemic and market conditions from the current financial recession; recent planning applications for residential conversion to the 1<sup>st</sup> floors of buildings along the High Street further evidence this. A national housing emergency has been declared with shortages exacerbated by the pressure on private rentals (circa 22K units have left the market). A significant reduction in grant funding for affordable housing has been announced and new build social housing has dropped to lowest numbers since the late eighties meaning the situation is likely to worsen. National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) encourages bringing historic buildings back into use and redevelopment of brownfield sites; this is important to mitigate loss of green-field land. On taking cognisance of the above, it is felt that the subjects would be most suited to a multi-unit flatted residential conversion given the surrounding land uses, LTV requirements for development funding and scarcity of small homes in the mid-market rental sector. Such a scheme would allow a listed building to be re-purposed, a brownfield site to be redeveloped, a use class compatible with its locality, energy efficiency improvements, biodiversity enhancements and a small step towards addressing the housing crisis. It is noted that similar schemes for listed buildings are being considered across the country (IE –Station House, St Enoch Square, Glasgow).

The vision for the project is as follows:

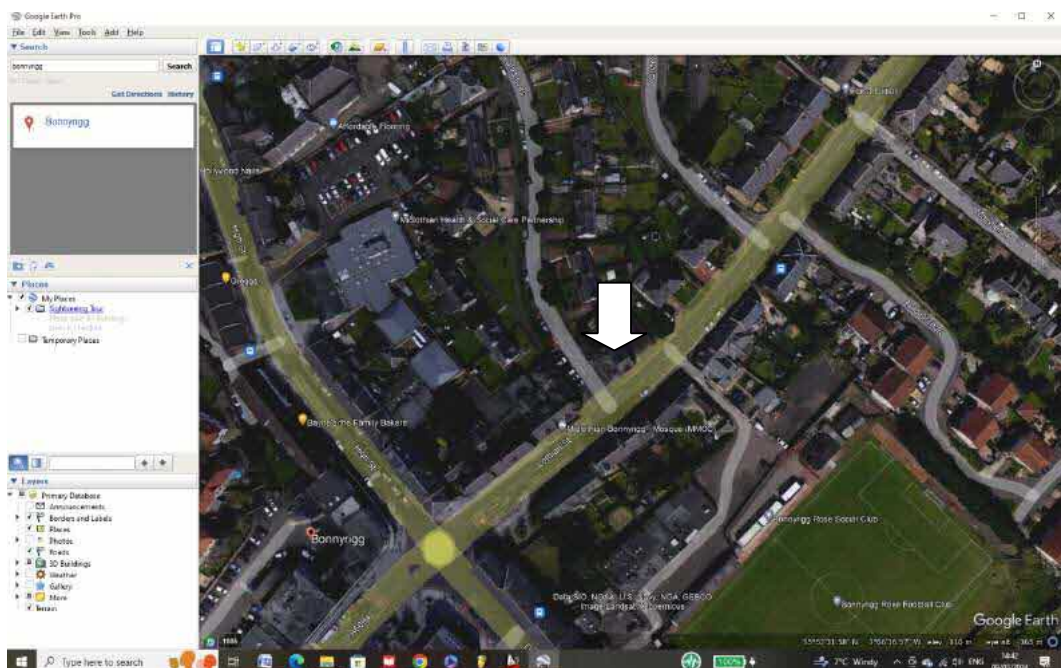
- Repurposing a local iconic listed building and preventing it from falling into further disrepair.
- Retention of the listed buildings elements that inform its character & significance.
- Removal of previous illicit alterations with minimal intervention in relation to new development.
- Demolition of the unsympathetic flat roofed extension with a smaller new build element created that is set back and sits subservient to its surroundings.
- Improvement of biodiversity through soft landscaping, replacement trees, a hedgerow, a sedum roof and bird boxes.
- Fabric and services upgrades to the original listed building to provide well insulated energy efficient units; new build element to incorporate renewable technologies.
- High quality, well designed flatted units with suitable internal & external amenity that would be well served by the adjacent town centre.
- A development that does not detract from the present amenities enjoyed by the neighbouring units.

## 2.0 The Site & Surrounding Area

### 2.1 The Location

The subjects are located in Bonnyrigg, which is a prominent town in the Midlothian district. Early records of 'Boney-Ridge' and 'Bannock-Rigg' date back to the battle at Pinkie in the 1500's and historic 1700's maps. There are records of a church in Lasswade dating as far back as 850AD. Bonnyrigg fully established itself in the mid 1800's following creation of industry along the river esk and was a mining village until the 1920's.

The application site comprises former Midlothian Council offices (use class 2), which were known as 'The Orchard Centre' and housed a community support team. It is understood that the premises has been in government ownership throughout its life with past uses including a rental payment office. The subjects form part of a pair of listed buildings commissioned at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century located less than 100m from Bonnyrigg Toll; the sister building on the opposite side of Douglas Crescent has similar form and materials with it being built as a library facility by Andrew Carnegie (now in use as a mosque). Ground floor shops with upper floor flats present towards Bonnyrigg toll, although with the exception of the mosque, the subjects are generally surrounded by residential use classes comprising a mixture of maisonette, terraced and semi-detached units. The old store site off the end of Douglas Crescent (Leyden Place / Park) has recently been demolished with a scheme for retirement & assisted living flats constructed, the library site to the southwest of the empty supermarket building (circa 150m from subjects) has been demolished with a scheme for flatted council housing units developed (this contains 5No studio flats), residential care flats are being developed on the old St Mary's school site and flatted units are also present to the end of Rae's Gardens looking onto Lothian Street (<200m from subjects). The locality has a strong mix of residential accommodation of all sizes typical of a town centre.

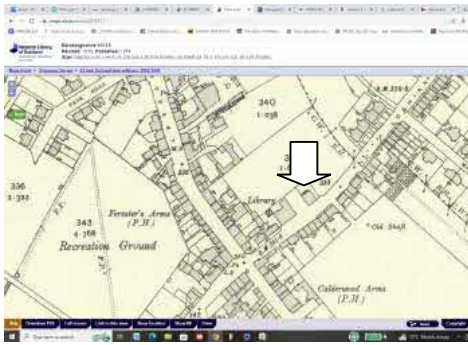


Google Earth Image of Locality

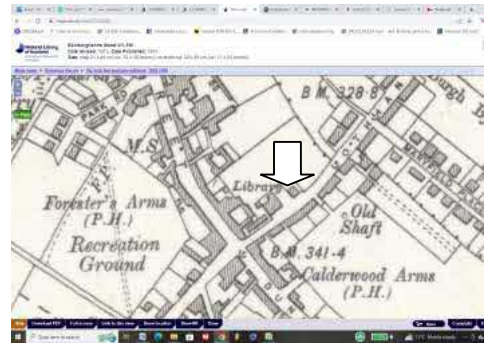
### 2.2 The Site

The original listed building was constructed in Arts & Crafts style (circa 1909) and is 2 stories in height with a green slated pitched roof incorporating circular corner turret, cast iron rain-water goods, projecting timber eaves, 1<sup>st</sup> floor ½ dormers, rendered brick elevations, red ashlar sandstone detailing and timber framed sash & case leaded window units. *A lean too!*

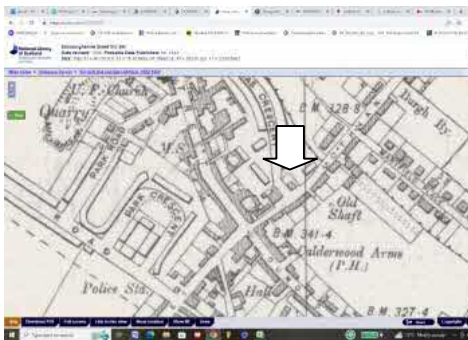
A lean too annex has been formed in similar style to the rear with a more modern unsympathetic timber clad extension to the northeast; there is a small lean too store on the NE gable too. The site has no parking (although there appears to be an old vehicular access point to the southeast corner via double gates in the post & wire fencing) and limited external amenities with an enclosed courtyard off Lothian Street providing bin storage, a narrow strip of grassed land between the NE extension & No 16 Lothian Street and a modest enclosed rear garden between the annex and No 3 Douglas Crescent. The site is bound by a mixture of rubble stone and common brick walling (circa 1400mm H or thereby). The maps and images below show the development of the area and adjacent library building over the last century.



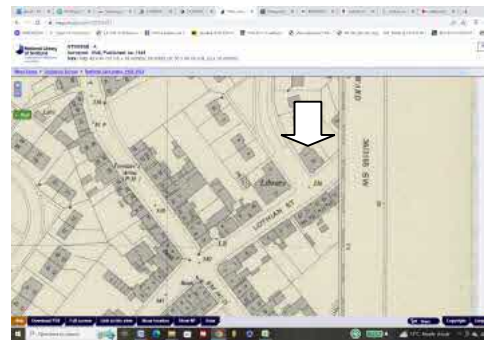
1912 OS Map



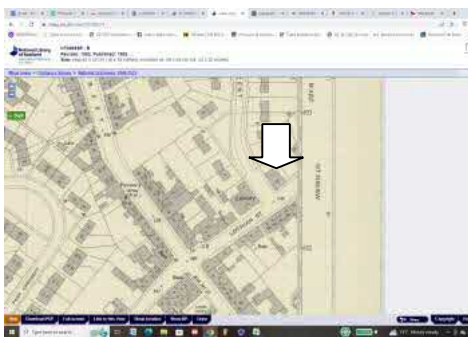
1913 OS Map



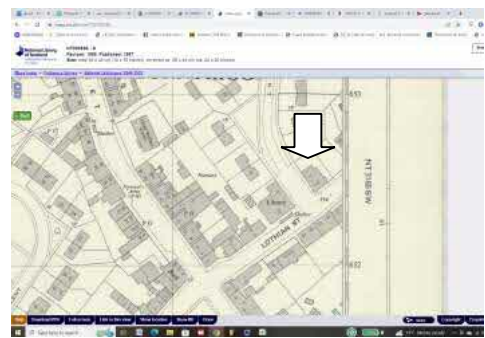
1938 OS Map



1948 OS Map



1952 OS Map



1966 OS Map



1952 – 1956 OS Map





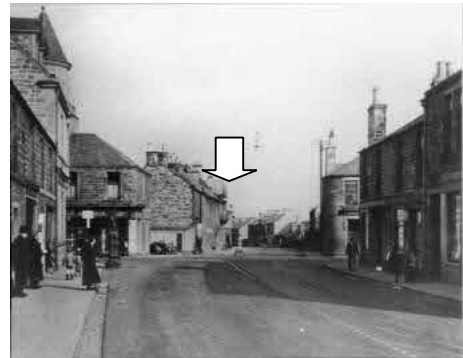
Adjacent 'Carnegie' Library (Sister Building – Note Grey Render)



Adjacent 'Carnegie' Library (Sister Building – Note Grey Render)



View of Lothian St



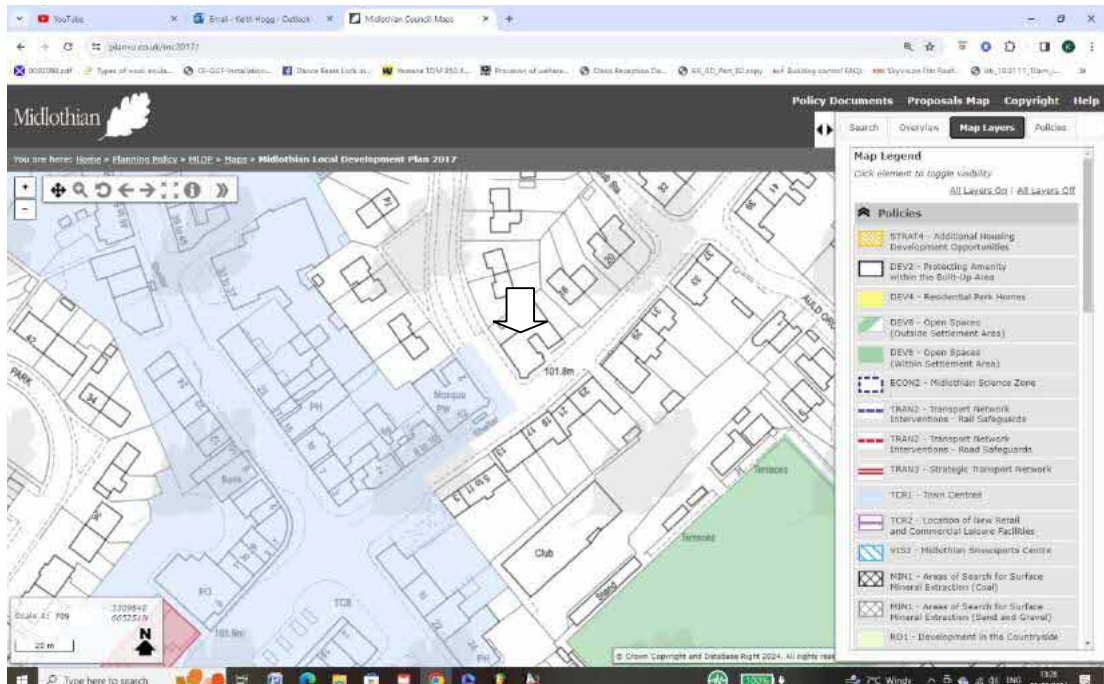
View of Lothian St (Subjects & Library Visible)



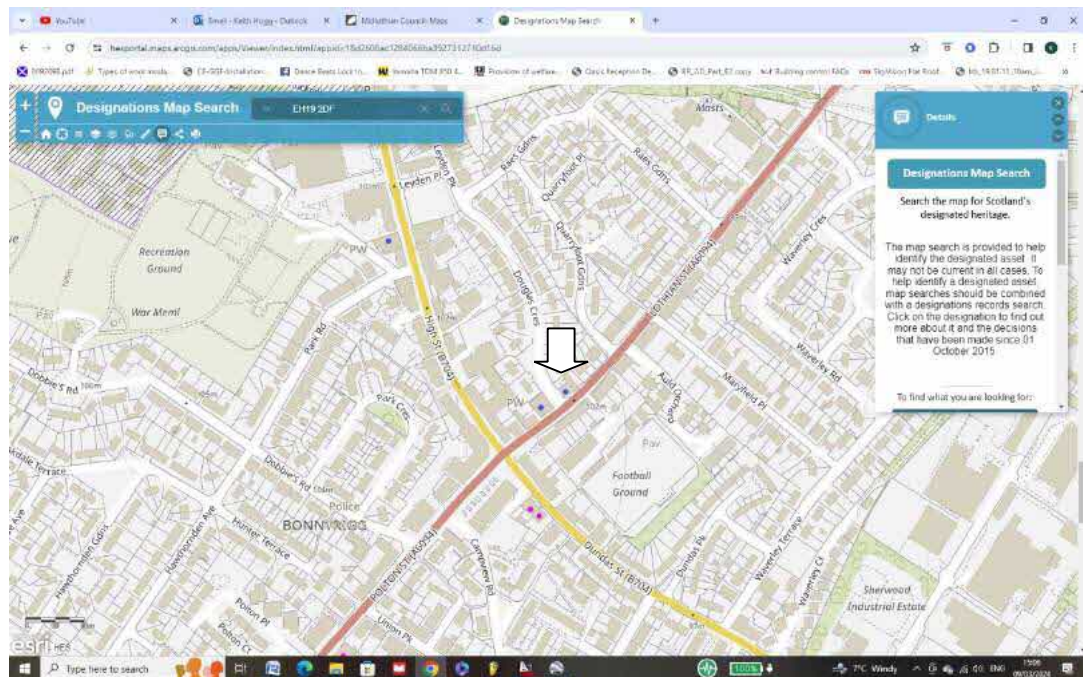
View of Lothian St (Subjects & Library Visible)

There is a mix of property styles in the locality comprising late 19<sup>th</sup> & early 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings (inclusive of the subjects), a more modern flat roofed timber clad structure (extended off the subjects), post WW1 semi-detached dwellings to Douglas Crescent & Lothian St, 1950's - 70's post-modernist architecture to Bonnyrigg toll and more contemporary styles to recent flatted developments (IE - library site next to empty supermarket, old market site on High Street & refurbished restaurant further down Lothian St).

The following maps show the properties location within the local development plan boundaries and the proximity of other listed buildings:



Local Development Plan Map –Note within DEV-2 & Out-with TCR-1



Historic Scotland Listed Buildings Map –Denoted by pink & blue dots

As above the subjects are located in a 'DEV-2' area –'protecting amenity within the built up area' and are out-with the TCR-1 boundary. The subjects are not located in a conservation area and are in close proximity to the listed building opposite (sister building –old library & now mosque). Other listed buildings in the locality include the parish church on the high street and dwelling houses on Dundas Street; which are quite far removed from the subjects.



### Building Condition Assessment

Please refer to the appended detailed condition survey, which has been prepared by a chartered building surveyor and further verified by a chartered structural engineer's summary report. It is understood that the building was last operational circa 2021 before Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership decided to redesign the provision for community mental health support. The building is in fair condition for its age, although is showing signs of dilapidation due to lack of maintenance and time expired elements. The condition survey report estimate circa [REDACTED] (Excl Vat) investment being required to return it into a sound state of repair, which is inclusive of thermal fabric and M&E services upgrades. This is a substantial sum and would equate to circa [REDACTED] (Excl Vat) in relation to GEA. Pertinent issues include:

- Douglas Crescent pitched roof requires re-slating with remainder over-hauled (at minimum). Water ingress & dry rot evident to NW 1<sup>st</sup> floor room (internal preservation works required once outside made good).
- Rain-water goods require overhaul, re-sealing & redecorating (gutter detached to turret).
- Soffits & fascias require rot repairs & redecorating.
- Original leaded windows have suffered from a lack of maintenance decoration. Now require comprehensive overhaul incl rot repairs & reinstatement.
- Render system to external walls beginning to fail and requires full replacement.
- Stone plinth damaged from road salts and requires scheme of replacement, repair & re-pointing.
- Felt flat roofs to extension beginning to fail with numerous patch repairs and leaks evident – requires replacement and rot repairs.
- Timber cladding to extension generally rotten and requires replacement.
- Timber framed hopper windows to extension generally rotten and requires replacement.
- Internal finishes & fittings tired & dated requiring whole-sale refurbishment. Plasterwork beginning to fail to ceilings (cracked & bossed). Asbestos removals required.
- M&E services time expired and not energy efficient requiring whole-sale upgrades.
- Thermal fabric poor (no insulation present & EPC = 'G –very poor'); upgrades required to floors, walls & roofs + suggest introducing secondary glazing to original leaded windows.
- Illicit alterations to listed building throughout including extract fans cored through original leaded windows, leaded glass replaced in plain glass with astragals mocked up in insulating tape, cast iron downpipes & waste branches replaced in UPVC, service cut outs to hardwood entrance panelling, pipe & cable boxing installed over decorative cornicing, surface mounted cabling over decorative internal features and external solum vents partially obscured by pavement. The render has also been repaired using different materials resulting in a 'patchwork quilt' effect.

Several photos have been provided below to evidence the above and more detail can be found in the appended condition survey report:



### 3.0 Significance of Heritage Asset

A heritage asset can be defined as a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meeting consideration in planning decisions because of its historic interest. A heritage asset's significance is also defined by its setting. In essence, a heritage asset can be determined based on three factors; architecture, history and setting. A planning brief was requested from Midlothian Council planning department in October 2023; the request was then passed onto the estates department and it is understood that no brief exists. We have therefore undertaken research on the history of the subjects and studied its architectural form to establish its significance in order to inform our own design proposals.

The subjects have been identified as having the following features contributing towards a heritage asset:

- In close proximity to Bonnyrigg Toll (<100m away) and prominent location on corner of Lothian St & Douglas Crescent along with sister library building opposite (**setting**).
- Constructed in Arts & Crafts style with green slated pitched roofs, dressed stone detailing, circular turret to corner, decorative entrance moulding and leaded sash & case windows (**architecture**).
- Buildings association with library opposite (Andrew Carnegie), Greig, Fairburn & McNiven, use by government (parish council offices, rental offices & community facility) and structure dates back to 1909 (**history**).

The building also has interior features of interest including the hardwood panelled octagonal entrance porch, the leaded porch internal door, the dentailed cornice to the porch & front room, the 1<sup>st</sup> floor combed ceilings and the 1<sup>st</sup> floor circular bay turret window. The interior layout has been altered in the past with evidence of structural slapping's, infilled doors and infilled windows; the finishes have suffered as a result of moisture ingress, lack of maintenance and poor surface mounted M&E services installations. The dentailed cornice to the porch & main front room has been subject to surface mounted cabling and has been partially covered by electrical switch-gear housing. As noted, the internal features are of interest, but lesser so than the exterior and did not appear to have been given much thought during previous tenure.

It should be possible to achieve 'meaningful repair' as defined in HES guidance in respect of the exterior fabric. In order to help address the climate crisis the interior of the premises would require renewal with insulation upgrades implemented to upgrade floors, walls and roofs. Conversion work could also necessitate upgrades to linings in respect of fire and acoustic separation.

It is clear that the building benefits from its architectural detailing, its form, its history and its setting in a prominent location. As noted, meaningful repair would be achievable to the exterior, although some of the internal elements could be hard to retain given requirements for energy, fire and acoustic upgrades as well as defects that present (IE –dry rot & bossed plasterwork).

#### Site Features & Flaws

An assessment of the buildings architectural features and flaws has been undertaken to inform the design process and approach:

##### Features

- Arts and crafts style / form.
- Green slated pitched roofs and prominent corner turret.
- Tall slender chimneys adding to the interest of the sky line.
- Red sandstone detailing to openings, plinths and band courses.
- Projecting timber eaves.
- Small timber framed sash & case windows with leaded astragals.



- Octagonal entrance porch with hardwood panelling & dented cornicing.
- Original main rooms to ground & first floors (4No).
- Annex adds interest at the rear.

#### Flaws

- Illicit alterations: several extract fans cored through original leaded windows, original glass replaced in several locations with plain glass incorporating mock insulating tape astragals, services cut out & mounted on hardwood panelling to entrance porch, surface mounted cabling over dented cornicing, window blocked up to ground floor, downpipe & waste branch to rear annexe replaced in UPVC, mis-match of patch repairs to rendered elevations & chimneys and external solum vents partially covered by pavement.
- The internal staircase would not comply by modern standards in respect of width, pitch, dimensions of tapered treads, number of treads without an intermediate landing, protective barriers or head height (<2m clearance beneath landing).
- The small store to the southeast corner of the original building (fronting onto Lothian Street) has been poorly constructed and is very narrow providing poor amenity value.
- The timber clad flat roofed extension to the northeast is of poor design quality and does not compliment the listed building in any way, shape or form. It is not subservient and is over-bearing when viewed from Lothian Street; this significantly detracts from the setting of the listed building.
- The timber clad flat roofed extension has multiple large windows, which overlook straight into the front, side & rear gardens of No 14 Lothian Street.
- The solum vents to the timber suspended floor have been partially covered by the macadam pavement restricting the ventilation pathway; it is assumed that the pavement level has been raised over the years without thought for the building.
- The building has no insulation, single glazed windows, dated services and provision of electric storage heaters. It is not thermally efficient.
- The subjects have no parking and the external amenity space is limited due to the extent and layout of the flat roofed extension.
- The internal and external fabric requires extensive repairs with significant financial liability. Asbestos removal works will be required.
- The side plot (No 14 Lothian Street), which houses the flat roofed extension has several constraints in respect of the listed building, the streetscape, No 3 Douglas Crescent and No 16 Lothian Street; any development on this area would need to take cognisance of the setting of the listed building, the impact on the street view, overlooking of the neighbours and sunlight to adjacent gardens.
- The mature tree to the southeast corner of the site has been noted as being in moderate to poor health and its root zone undermines the neighbour's driveway, boundary wall foundation and adjacent public pavement. Its canopy also overhangs the boundaries causing a nuisance. The site has limited ecological value at present.
- The coal mining risk assessment for the subjects has identified potential for shallow mine workings with requirements for borehole drilling & potential remediation works should redevelopment proceed. There may also be potential for ground gas protection, although the geo-environmental report noted associated risks as low.

#### Proposed Interventions

This led us to consider the features of the building that should be retained (features of merit) and interventions, which could be undertaken to allow the subject premises to be re-purposed whilst enhancing its surrounding environment. Considerations have been given to the following:

- Demolition of the timber clad flat roofed extension to the northeast of site.
- Demolition of the small lean too store to the southeast corner of original building.
- Asbestos removal works.
- Removal of the non-compliant internal timber staircase.

- Sub-division of the subjects with new external staircase introduced to nook at rear northeast corner; this would involve cutting down of an existing non-decorative 1<sup>st</sup> fl WC window opening to form a door.
- Introduction of new window at lean too store entrance and opening up of former window opening covered by flat roofed extension.
- A scheme of external fabric repairs to return the listed building to a sound state of repair.
- A scheme of internal fabric repairs and upgrades to provide a fresh energy efficient fabric suitable for modern living.
- Redevelopment of the plot to the northeast (No 14 Lothian Street) with a smaller modest structure set back from the listed building to maintain subservience, set back from the building line of No 16 to reduce dominance on the streetscape, low height & flat roofed to avoid over-shadowing of neighbouring gardens and cleverly designed openings to avoid over-looking / privacy issues.
- Introduction of car parking to the southeast corner of the site looking onto Lothian Street.
- Formation of external amenity space to the rear to serve the development comprising pedestrian access, bicycle storage, bin storage, drying area and communal garden.
- Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement comprising sedum roof to new development, grassed communal garden area, replacement trees, introduction of hedgerow along northern boundary and measures for nesting birds.
- Repurposing of a listed building and brownfield site including remediation of legacy coal mining issues.

#### Justification for Interventions and Impact on the Heritage Asset

It has been established that the original listed building has several important features which contribute to its setting, architecture and history making it a significant heritage asset worth saving. However, it also has several issues, which detract from its character such as the extension to the north east and catalogue of illicit alterations. The building is currently in a saveable condition, however, if it is left unused for an additional extended period of time it will likely fall into further disrepair putting it at risk of loss (particularly given that dry rot has already started to manifest). It is therefore important to consider a scheme for redeveloping the site in early course to ensure its longevity.

The interventions proposed above would result in the listed building becoming a standalone structure again with a strong presence on the corner of Douglas Crescent & Lothian Street, which we believe is what the original architect intended. Minimal interventions have been proposed to the external fabric of the listed building with the majority of works comprising repairs and making good; the proposed external staircase has been located in a nook to the rear utilising a non-decorative toilet window opening for the 1<sup>st</sup> floor access. A small development on the No 14 plot could compliment the listed building and streetscape providing that the design & materials are of high quality; a smaller building set back from the listed building and Lothian St building line would certainly be an improvement on the present scenario which dominates the frontage and detracts from the locality. The value of a small development would also help the LTV ratio for the site allowing for development funding towards the repair of the listed building thus ensuring viability of the overall scheme.

The proposed interventions allow for repurposing a listed building, retention of its character, development on a brownfield site, significant energy efficiency upgrades, ecological enhancement, remediation of legacy coal mining issues, improvement of site facilities and protection of neighbouring amenities, which would all align with planning policy. In summary, we believe that this would have an overall net positive impact on the heritage asset and streetscape ensuring its longevity for the future; planning policy context and detailed design development has been explained further in section 4.0.

*Proposed Use Class/*

### Proposed Use Class

Several different uses for the premises 'as it stands' have been explored, although it is difficult to justify retention as a non-domestic facility given the repairing / upgrade liability and the lack of demand for such premises following the covid pandemic. It is important to note that lending criteria has changed and the market is witnessing a credit crunch with banks putting more and more onerous security requirements on developers; the subjects will need to provide a suitable loan to value (LTV) ratio to give a lender sufficient confidence to grant funding and to achieve a feasible interest rate. It would be difficult to achieve this for non-domestic use on a property that has a potential £480K + VAT repairing liability in addition to its purchase price, fit out costs and legal fees. Similar sized commercial units in fair condition are being marketed in the region of £250K - £300K (source –Novaloca), which would put the LTV in substantial negative equity. The property would not lend itself to retail accommodation given the competition from out of town supermarkets and pressure on traffic; anything involving hot food could disrupt the neighbouring residents via noise & odours. The property could lend itself to nursery accommodation, although again this would raise concerns with parking and could significantly disrupt the neighbours of the site. The local area is mostly residential and given the higher end value, lower LTV ratio and likelihood of achieving development funding it is felt that a conversion to some form of residential housing would be appropriate in this instance; a modest development on the site of the existing extension (No 14 Lothian St) would be key to ensuring the financial viability of the scheme.

Interest rates have been rising along with property values; which has made a lot of larger homes unaffordable. Developers tend to provide lots of larger properties given the increased return margin in comparison to smaller units. Many people have down-sized due to affordability putting pressure on the market for smaller properties, which has been further exacerbated through the significant reduction in private rental units (circa 22K properties have been taken off the market – source Scottish Association of Landlords). The value of larger properties has been dropping with the value of smaller properties increasing due to this demand cycle. House-building has been slowing down with several prominent developers filing for administration. New build social housing is now at lowest level since 1988. The chartered institute of housing in Scotland (CIH) has declared a housing emergency (as at March 2024) and there appears to be a drive towards repurposing existing buildings and brownfield sites to mitigate impact on green virgin land (source –NPF4). Bonnyrigg has seen recent developments approved / built with respect to social housing (library site), assisted living and retirement flats (old store site & 51B High St) and residential care units (St Mary's school site). Private new build developments tend to proceed on the outskirts with sites at Hopefield and Cockpen progressing at present, although a central project has been completed on the old market site off the High Street. On review of this, there appears to be an opportunity for mid-market rental properties in the town centre that would accommodate people who would otherwise not qualify for social or retirement housing. Identifying this market need led us to explore the opportunity for conversion of the old Orchard Centre into multiple small flatted units on a build to rent model.

N.B –this development model appears to be gaining traction across Scotland with a fine example being the B listed former Station House at Glasgow's St Enoch Square, which shall be converted into 26No mid-market affordable housing units.



## 4.0 Planning Policy & Context

### 4.1 Planning History & Precedents

The premises have been subject to limited planning and building standards applications in the past with records presenting for altering a rear exit plat to the extension and installation of signage. A review has been undertaken on the old library 'sister' building opposite as-well as a study on residential conversion & new build applications in the locality. We have also looked at residential conversion applications to listed buildings in the wider Midlothian region in order to establish suitable precedents for the subjects. The applications have been summarised as follows:

08/00069/FUL –20 Main St Gorebridge –3No Studio Flats

Salient points: town centre location, GIA of studio flats ranging from 32 –36m<sup>2</sup>, small gardens (16 –39.5m<sup>2</sup>), provision of communal space & no parking provided (application approved).

08/00094/FUL –51B High Street Bonnyrigg –23 Flats (consent has been extended since)

Salient points: town centre location, brownfield site, report noted that denser development permitted in town centre locality; has tight access / visibility splays onto High Street (application approved).

08/00607/FUL –12A Stobhill Road Gowkshill –Sub-division of dwelling to flats

Salient points: horizontal sub-division of property with rear staircase added; egress / descent from staircase overlooks neighbouring gardens (application approved).

10/0572/DPP –106 High Street Dalkeith –Sub-division of property to create studio flat

Salient points: town centre location, listed building, GIA of 31.5m<sup>2</sup> with no garden, no parking & outlook onto a close (limited visible sky component - VSC). Report noted that there are 'requirements for all types and sizes of residential units' in area (application approved).

11/00422/LBC –Cross Keys Hotel –1&2 Bed Flatted Units

Salient points: town centre location, listed building, 1 beds have GIA 40.9 –41.6m<sup>2</sup>, small terraces for external amenity & small communal space (application approved).

13/00898/DPP –33A Main Street Gorebridge –Conversion to 2 Bed Flats

Salient points: town centre location, GIA of 43 –44m<sup>2</sup> for 2 bed units, sub-divided & accessed from rear staircase, no private garden space or parking (application approved).

15/00072/LBC –12A Lothian Street Bonnyrigg –Alterations (old library site opposite subjects)

Salient points: mounting of services on exterior walls, installation of entrance canopy to rear, internal layout alterations, provision of new velux rooflights, new boiler flues and new secondary glazing. Property also has separate living quarters within (address 2 Douglas Crescent) (application approved).

15/00169/DPP –31 Polton Street Bonnyrigg –18No flats (13 one bed & 5No studio)

Salient points: multi-unit flatted development in town centre location, includes 5No studio flats with GIA of 36m<sup>2</sup>, 100% parking allocated (18 spaces –1 per unit), minimal communal garden space (circa 52m<sup>2</sup> & shielded from sun by building) (application approved).

15/00758/DPP –56 High Street Bonnyrigg –Conversion of office to flat

Salient points: no parking and no garden (application approved).

17/00182/DPP –14 Main Street Gorebridge –Sub-division to form flats

Salient points: town centre location, listed building, horizontal sub-division with new rear staircase formed (application approved).

17/00865/DPP –62 High Street Bonnyrigg –Conversion of office to flat

Salient points: no garden or parking (application approved).

18/00349/DPP –2A Polton Street Bonnyrigg –Conversion to flat

Salient points: no garden or parking & above hot food takeaway; located circa 100m from subjects (application approved).

18/00668/DPP –2-4 Dundas Street –Conversion to flat

Salient points: no garden ground or parking; located circa 75m from subjects (application approved).

19/01002/DPP –131 High St Dalkeith –Conversion to 4No studio flats

Salient points: GIA'S of 30m<sup>2</sup>, 35.5m<sup>2</sup>, 45m<sup>2</sup> & 48.7m<sup>2</sup> respectively, outlook onto a vennel (limited VSC) & public house car park, listed building, conservation area (not town centre), no garden and no parking (application granted).

21/00335/DPP –6 Kentigern Mall Penicuik –Conversion to flats

Salient points: unusual long & narrow units, natural light amenity supplemented by roof-lights, 100% parking provision (1 per unit) (application granted).

21/00939/DPP –81-83 High Street Bonnyrigg –Construction of 20 flats (retirement & assisted living)

Salient points: 9No parking spaces (below 50%) and small communal garden (circa 65m<sup>2</sup>) (application granted).

22/00836/DPP –6 High Street Bonnyrigg –Conversion to flat

Salient points: No parking or garden & 100m from subjects (application granted).

23/00034/DPP –7 High Street Bonnyrigg –Conversion to flat

Salient points: has garden provision, but no parking & 100m from subjects (application granted).

23/00255/DPP –59 High Street Bonnyrigg –Conversion to flat

Salient points: no parking, small private amenity space and limited window outlook (application granted).

### Summary

To summarise the above we would note that several small flatted developments have been approved in the Midlothian area in recent times, some with GIA's as low as 30m<sup>2</sup> and many with limited outlook, no gardens and no parking. This has applied to listed buildings and properties in conservation areas with alterations such as external staircases being approved where the design has achieved a suitable standard. Further, the conversion of commercial accommodation to residential appears satisfactory providing that it does not affect ground floor commercial use in a town centre business district and does not detract from the amenity of the subjects or neighbours (IE – proximity of hot food takeaways, noise, overlooking, privacy, etc). Notwithstanding this, these factors do not set a precedent for minimum size & minimum amenity developments to be approved; it is noted that applications 12/00640/DPP & 19/01002/DPP were refused due to poor amenity provisions, poor outlook and negative effects on neighbours; minimum standard properties should not be encouraged and high quality development should be strived for.

Midlothian's LDP & supplementary guidance does not set minimum size standards for dwelling's and focuses more on quality of place and amenity value. Edinburgh Council sets a minimum GIA of 36m<sup>2</sup> for studio flats, 52m<sup>2</sup> for one bedroom dwellings and 66m<sup>2</sup> for two bedroom dwellings. It is noted that this can be reduced where a build to rent model is applied using efficient open plan floor layouts with minimal circulation space. This guidance does not appear to have been applied or referenced for the above noted historic applications (although possibly used for the library site), with many falling below the Edinburgh standards. The Midlothian supplementary guidance notes that flatted developments should generally have access to at least 50m<sup>2</sup> external garden space; however, this can be reduced when working with existing buildings and where good levels of amenity present elsewhere; IE –adjacent to town centre & public open space. It is also understood that garden space can be reduced for certain use demographics (IE –affordable, social & retirement housing). The supplementary guidance also sets standards for distance between buildings; 16m between gables, 22m between front elevations and 25m where located back to back.

The purpose of the above research is to establish certain precedents & standards that can be tweaked providing that sufficient amenity is provided by other means; it is important to determine this when working with an existing historic building as it is not always physically possible to tick all boxes in the local development plan and supplementary guidance whilst dealing with the site constraints. We would see the following as being potential acceptable design precedents:

- Small studio flatted developments may be considered acceptable where the locality has a mixture of property types and is close to town centre amenities.
- Reduced parking and private garden provisions may be considered acceptable where the subjects are in close proximity to town centre amenities and public open space. Provisions can also be reduced for certain use demographics (IE –social housing, affordable housing, assisted living, retirement flats & build to rent).
- Outlook from apartment windows is important with preference for dual aspect floor plans; where restrictions arise it may be possible to enhance amenity through clever design (IE – roof-lights & open plan living).
- Developments which affect the amenity of neighbours by reduction in privacy, increased noise, unacceptable use class or restriction of sun-light will not be considered acceptable.
- Internal sub-division of listed buildings to provide separate units can be achievable including exterior alterations such as staircases & canopies where not immediately obvious from public areas and where well designed to marry with original building.
- Thermal fabric upgrades to improve a listed buildings energy efficiency and acoustic performance may be considered acceptable (IE –secondary glazing).



## 4.2 Design Proposals

### Proposed Design

It is proposed to demolish the existing flat roofed extension, remove the existing lean too store, remove the internal staircase, open up a blocked off window and sub-divide the original listed building internally to provide 4No studio flats, which would be suitable for a single person. External interventions would be minimal with the most 'radical' being the provision of a new period style external black steel staircase supported off circular columns (rounded base, smooth column & rounded capital) to the nook at the rear of the building; this would utilise an existing non-decorative window opening for access (opening cut down to form a door). An existing door entry point on the Douglas Crescent elevation would be blanked off, although we have suggested replacing the door in a fixed hardwood panelled unit to match the existing profile with an insulated partition behind; glazing would be provided within the upper panels to afford natural light to the bathroom behind (N.B –existing door also has glazed panels). This would provide a non-obtrusive reversible intervention that does not change the exterior fabric of the building.

The internal alterations have been kept to a minimum with open plan layouts and a small amount of structural alterations. Each flat has dual aspects with living, bed, bathroom and storage space. The outlook and visible sky component for flat 2's bedroom window may be considered poor given its location underneath the proposed stair; however, the room has an open link to the adjacent living quarters with borrowed light from same and high level glazing within the proposed partitioning. Alterations will be required to upgrade fire & acoustic separation (compartment walls and ceilings) and improve the thermal fabric (floor insulation, wall linings, and roof insulation). The application of secondary glazing has been suggested as it allows the existing leaded windows to remain in-situ, improves the thermal performance of the fabric and enhances the acoustic integrity of the premises, which is important given its location next to a main thoroughfare (provides up to 50db reduction). The external fabric will also be attended to with the roof, rain-water goods & eaves over-hauled, windows refurbished, render replaced and stonework repaired + re-pointed. An existing roof-light will be renewed on the rear facing pitch with a conservation style unit incorporating a central glazing bar & perimeter lead flashing's; a light-well will be formed from the unit to improve the amenity of the proposed 1<sup>st</sup> floor communal entrance lobby.

A new build structure has also been proposed on the site of the current extension; this would be single storey, flat roofed & contemporary in form and would house 2No studio flats of similar size and amenity to the above. Both of the flats would have dual aspect glazing, which would be partially louvered for privacy & solar shading, whilst maintaining outlook to the frontage & rear communal garden; further amenity would be afforded via large roof-lights over the main living quarters. The externals of the new build element would involve high quality materials including a red sandstone feature panel to the corner, smooth light cream render and horizontal 'thermopine' cladding. The roof would comprise a sedum layer (to enhance biodiversity) over EPDM membrane with projecting soffits; solar panels would be sited on top of the flat roof to provide a renewal form of energy generation for the units.

The front of the site would be utilised for car parking; 6No parking spaces have been provided on a 100% 'one per unit' basis. Link pathways have been shown to the external staircase with a new pedestrian gate formed in the existing rubble boundary wall on Douglas Crescent. The rear of the site would accommodate a bin storage area, bicycle storage (2No locations –6No spaces), drying green and communal garden area. The new build element would have small terraces to the rear afforded by smoke glass screens; allowing light through & maintaining outlook, whilst providing privacy; these would also negate overlooking to No 3 Douglas Crescent in conjunction with the proposed louvers to the windows, dog rose hedge and existing 1400mm H wall.

The above has been explained in more detailed in the following NPF 4 statement.

### 4.3 National Planning Framework 4 Statement

#### Policies 1&2–Tackling the Climate and Nature Crisis & Climate Mitigation / Adaptation

The current premises have no insulation, single glazed windows, electric storage heaters, inefficient lighting and no means for generating renewable energy. The EPC is rated as 'G –very poor.' There is no off street parking on site and no secure bicycle storage. The premises comprise a listed building & have been occupied by other structures in the past as per historic maps (IE - brownfield land). The site has limited habitat and the mature tree is of moderate to poor health. The PH1 habitat & arboricultural report note that the existing habitats don't pose any limitations to development (subject to additional surveys being implemented –bats and flora).

Our proposal seeks to repurpose a listed building and brownfield site within a built up area. The works would involve thermal fabric upgrades to the listed building with modern M&E services to significantly improve its energy efficiency (IE –bring a red EPC rating up to a green). The new build element would incorporate a well insulated mechanically ventilated air tight fabric, with southeast facing aspects to main living areas and solar panels linked to battery storage to provide a renewable means of electricity generation. Further the proposals involve the provision of off street car parking, electric car charging points and bicycle storage areas to encourage active travel. The rear communal garden will include a dog rose hedgerow and 3No new trees to offset those lost by the development proposals; a grassed communal area has been proposed along with sedum flat roof to the new build element to provide further biodiversity enhancements. Bird boxes will also be affixed to the trees once planted & matured.

The existing building and flat roofed extension roofs appear to be connected to the combined drainage system at present. Our proposals reduce the size of the flat roofs on site by circa 50m<sup>2</sup> and involve means for attenuation of surface water drainage beneath the car park so that the development reduces the overall flood risk of the locality (please refer to appended engineers plans).

The above would provide considerable improvements to the site in respect of energy efficiency, biodiversity and surface drainage which would help address the climate & nature crisis, whilst providing 6No small rental units to help mitigate the housing crisis; thus tackling the environmental, economic and social facets of sustainable development.

#### Policies 3, 4, 5 & 6 –Biodiversity, Natural Places, Soils & Trees

As above, the site has limited biodiversity and the mature tree, site vegetation & hedgerow are of moderate to poor health; please refer to appended PH1 habitat & arboricultural assessment by Elan Consultancy in this regard. Further, the site has had structures located on it for some time as indicated by historic maps –IE - brownfield land; we would trust that the proposals are not considered as affecting soils & natural places (not carbon rich peat-land or green-field).

In respect of biodiversity and trees the following is proposed:

- Further surveys in summer months (June / July) with respect to bats, flora and INNS.
- Removal of 1No mature tree, hedgerow and vegetation to facilitate proposed development. To be undertaken out-with bird nesting season or under supervision of qualified ecologist.
- Planting of 3No new trees (2No hazel & 1No crab apple) and a dog rose hedgerow.
- Turfing of rear communal garden area.
- Provision of sedum layer to flat roof on new build element.
- Provision of bird boxes to trees once planted & matured.

We would trust that this would provide considerable enhancement to the existing site.

Policy 7 –Historic Assets and Places

The proposal seeks to bring a redundant and neglected listed building back into use, whilst repairing its fabric and removing illicit & unsympathetic alterations that otherwise detract from its significance. The proposed thermal fabric & M&E services upgrades will also help ensure that the historic asset is resilient to the current and future impacts of climate change. We would also see the conversion as a positive outcome for the locality given the mix of residential house types in the vicinity and the perceived requirement for smaller mid-market rental properties.

The proposed interventions to the listed building are minimal; the infilled door opening on the Douglas Crescent elevation will maintain the same external appearance. The proposed external period style staircase is located to the rear within an existing nook and utilises a cut down on a non-decorative window opening for the door on a section of the building that is currently covered by an unsympathetic flat roofed extension. Internally the layouts have been kept mostly open plan, although interventions will be required to provide fire & acoustic separation and thermal fabric upgrades.



Existing WC Window



External Stairs –As Proposed

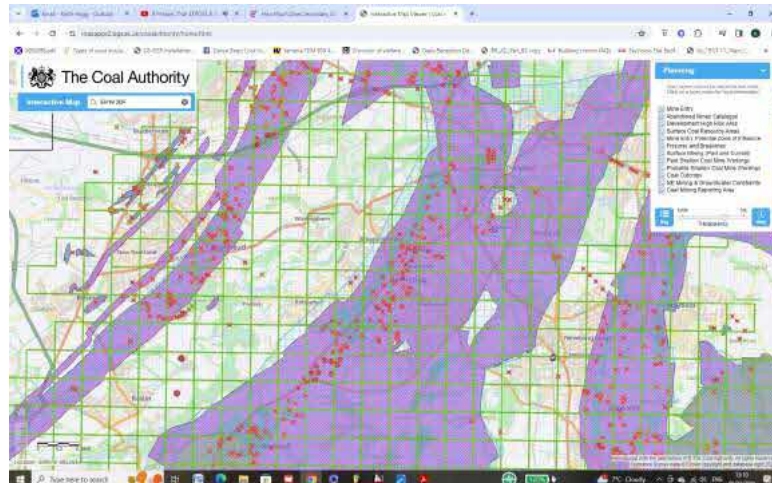
The new build element of the scheme is set well back from the listed building allowing its gable to be fully viewed. It is wholly detached from the listed building and is also setback from the building line of 16 Lothian Street (circa 1m or thereby). Its GEA is circa 50m<sup>2</sup> less than the existing flat roofed extension and it is no taller in order to mitigate its impact on the neighbouring gardens. The new build element involves a contemporary design and high quality materials to provide a significant improvement on the existing situation and enhance the setting of the original listed building.

Policy 9 –Brownfield

We would consider the proposed development as facilitating the re-use of brownfield, vacant and derelict land & empty buildings, whilst helping to address the housing crisis thus reducing the need for greenfield development. The proposed new build element is circa 50m<sup>2</sup> smaller than the existing extension and therefore mitigates additional land take.

The site is in a coal authority high risk development area with risk of shallow mine workings as identified on the map below and appended coal mining risk assessment. Recommendations have been given in the appended coal mining risk assessment for further investigations on the site of the new build element. In the event of planning being granted permission would be sought from the coal authority for the drilling of exploratory bore-holes. This work would be undertaken and a remediation plan would be submitted for approval as necessary (IE –grouting).





Coal Authority Map

A phase 1 geo-environmental report has been prepared, which notes the site as low risk with respect to contamination and ground gasses. Phase 2 investigations have been recommended (IE –testing & monitoring), which would be undertaken in conjunction with the borehole drilling.

The existing building is circa 110 years old with little evidence of structural movement on site. The proposed new build element comprises a light-weight flat roofed structure, which would be sited on a raft foundation; it would therefore have low bearing pressure on the soil as advised by our structural engineer. Based on this and the above, we would surmise that the site is suitable for residential conversion subject to exploratory phase 2 investigations & implementation of remediation strategy (as necessary); we trust that the phase 2 element could be treated by condition.

#### Policy 12 –Zero Waste

The proposed development seeks to re-use an existing building and the demolition of the existing extension would involve separation & recycling of materials where not degraded beyond salvage. The new build element is modest in size & scale and aims to use a timber framed, clad and sedum flat roofed structure to maximise the use of natural materials.

#### Policies 13 & 15 –Sustainable Transport & Local Living / 20 Minute Neighbourhoods

The proposed development is well served by local amenities and is less than 100m from Bonnyrigg Toll, which has an array of shops, hot food outlets, public houses and hairdressers etc. Eskbank train station is circa 1 mile away and several bus stops are in close proximity linking the subjects to other prominent Midlothian towns, Edinburgh city centre and out of town shopping areas. Public open space is present at Bonnyrigg Toll (100m), King George V Park (300m), St Cyr Park (400m) and Waverley Park (600m); the subjects are circa 350m from the old railway line, which provides a walking & cycle route from Penicuik down to Dalkeith via Bonnyrigg.

A parking area capable of accommodating 6No spaces has been proposed on a ratio of 1:1 (100%) for the development. It is appreciated that this falls below the requirement of 150% expressed in the supplementary guidance, although the building currently has no parking spaces and the building is in close proximity to public transport and cycle routes. Further, it is unlikely that every studio flat will have a car and the provisions are similar or betterment than other proposals approved in the locality.

The parking area shall accommodate 2No electric car charging points and two areas have been provided for secure storage of bicycles to support active travel (arrangements to accommodate 6No bikes).

Policies 14 & 16 –Design, Quality and Place + Quality Homes

The existing listed building is two stories in height with a pitched slated roof & corner turret and in 'Arts & Crafts' style with a sister building opposite. An unsympathetic flat roofed timber clad extension of low quality design & materials has been added on to the northeast elevation, which detracts from the setting of the listed building when viewed from Lothian Street. The neighbouring properties on Douglas Crescent & Lothian Street comprise two-storey pitched slated roofed dwellings with rendered masonry elevations. A terraced row of single-storey cottages and two-storey dwellings of traditional construction exist opposite on Lothian Street. The building vernacular towards Bonnyrigg Toll comprises a mixture of traditional, brutalist / post modern and contemporary form. The building types are mostly traditional towards Hardengreen, although there are more modern contemporary structures & materials present (IE –@ refurbished restaurant).



Street view –Towards Toll



Streetview @ Restaurant

The existing site has no parking, limited external amenities and the windows of the northeast flat roofed extension overlook the end gable, side & front gardens of No 16 Lothian Street. The existing rear garden shares its boundary with the side & rear garden of No 3 Douglas Crescent too. This would present challenges for redevelopment of the No 14 Lothian St Plot in respect of provision of sufficient amenities for the subjects and detraction from amenities of the neighbours (IE –overlooking & sunlight). On that basis it is felt that any re-development on this plot should be modest in size and form + cleverly designed to mitigate impact.



Existing NE Extension - Windows



Existing NE Extension - Windows

It is proposed to convert the existing building into 4No studio flats and provide 2No studio flats within a new build element on the No 14 plot. Each flat would have internal provision for living, bedroom, kitchen, bathroom & storage accommodation and external provision for car parking, bicycle storage, bin storage, clothes drying and access to communal garden space. The flats have dual aspects, outlook to surrounding streets and open plan layouts with measures included for additional light where the visible sky component could be compromised.

The Douglas Crescent and Lothian Street elevations sit circa 15m from the buildings on the opposite sides of the street, which would fall short of the requirement for 22m expressed in the supplementary guidance, although this is an existing situation that is prevalent as Lothian Street bottlenecks towards Bonnyrigg Toll. The rear elevation of the subjects sit circa 16m from the end gable of No 3 Douglas Crescent, which would comply with the supplementary guidance and we would trust that overlooking would be mitigated by virtue of the distance and angle of the upper floor windows in this instance. It is proposed to locate service accommodation in the ground floor annex; the shower room windows sits circa 14m from the end gable of No 3 Douglas Crescent; overlooking would be mitigated by the provision of obscured glazing in this instance, which would be standard for a sanitary facility requiring privacy. The kitchen window sits just over 15m from the gable of No 3 Douglas Crescent and overlooking would be mitigated by the use of the space behind, the small size of the window, the angle of the window and the boundary hedge treatment.

The proposed sliding doors to the rear of Flat 5's living / kitchen space are located circa 13m from the end gable of No 3 Douglas Crescent. Overlooking would be mitigated by the timber louvers to the fixed side panel, the privacy screen to the terrace and the boundary hedge treatment; a smoke glass privacy screen has been provided as it still maintains a degree of outlook; N.B - Flat 5 would also have outlook to Lothian Street over the car parking area and a large roof-light over the living area. The angle of the doors, louvers, privacy screen and boundary hedge also prevent any overlooking of No 3's back garden. The sliding doors to Flat 6's bedroom are angled wholly away from No 3 Douglas Crescent gable & garden and the bathroom windows to each unit would comprise obscured glazing for privacy so would not result in any over-looking.

The common entrance off the top landing to the proposed external staircase is circa 19m from the gable of No 3 Douglas Crescent; the half landing is circa 16m away and the view of No 3 and its rear garden is obscured on descent by the new build and proposed planting as-well as virtue of its distance. We have provided a few camera views from the back & side gardens of No 3 below to show the outlook from same.



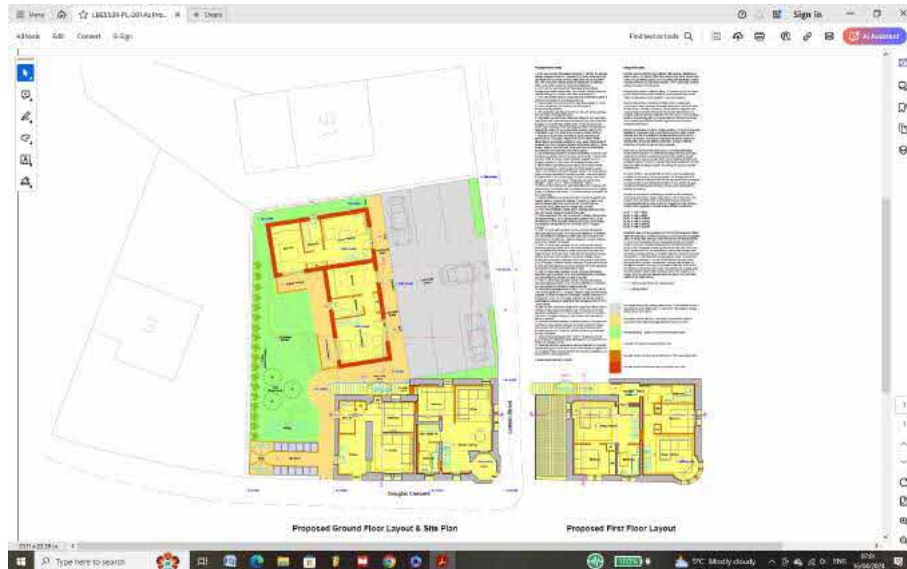
Outlook from No 3 Rear Garden



Outlook from No 3 Side Garden

In terms of distance between buildings the new build element is not any closer to No 3 Douglas Crescent than the existing extension; in fact the majority of it is further away (please refer to over-lain red dashed line on floor plan drawing 201 below). The new build element would be circa 4.3m away from the end gable of No 16 Lothian Street, which does not comply with the supplementary guidance, although it should be noted that No's 8 & 12 Lothian Street are circa 3.7m apart and No's 18 & 20 are circa 5m apart; the impact of the new build element on No 16 has been mitigated by it being circa half the length of the existing extension with no overlooking apartment windows and its roof has been kept to a modest height so as not to be over-bearing and cause over-shadowing as demonstrated on the drawings. The strip of land to the side of No 16 is utilised for driveway & bin storage with its private garden space to the rear so we trust the proximity of the structure would not affect its amenity value. A 1m strip of land has been maintained between the new build and boundary as a buffer and to allow for maintenance access to same.





Red Dashed Line Denotes Existing Extension Location

The new build element has been designed to be contemporary in form with a feature red sandstone panel, light cream render, infill larch cladding, projecting soffit, sedum flat roof and full height Alu framed glazing incorporating timber louvers for solar shading & privacy. It is intended to use high quality materials to compliment the original building, whilst remaining subservient by virtue of the buildings size and set back positioning. It is appreciated that the new builds design differs from the original listed building and the adjacent houses on Lothian Street; however, the supplementary guidance states that novel architectural solutions including those, which meet the need of energy conservation and sustainability will be encouraged; we feel that this is a novel architectural solution and it incorporates a sedum flat roof to enhance the biodiversity of the site. Further, it is a considerable improvement on the current extension in that it has high quality materials, it doesn't dominate the elevation fronting onto Lothian Street, and it allows the listed building to stand on its own and read as originally intended. Sketch images have been shown below to demonstrate the proposal in context to the existing scenario.



Lothian St Elevation - Existing



Lothian St Elevation –As Proposed



NE Gable Elevation - Existing



NE Gable Elevation –As Proposed

As noted above, it is intended to provide 100% parking for the site (1No space for each studio flat). The spaces have been sized @ 5000x2500mm with a 6000mm space in the middle to allow a car to be able to drive in, manoeuvre and leave in a forward gear; a 1200mm W pedestrian path has been positioned next to the end spaces, which would extend the activity space to 3700mm W allowing for disabled access / egress. A wall mounted electric car charging point would be positioned on each side of the car parking area and the positions of drop kerbs & street lighting would require agreement with the roads department. The proposed vehicular access point is circa 20m from the junction to Douglas Crescent and 35m to the bus stop outside the old library (now mosque) with the narrow vehicular access to Bonnyrigg Rose's car park opposite (which may raise concerns, although opposite driveways, car parks & junctions are prevalent throughout Bonnyrigg). A low level post & rail fence has been proposed to the frontage of the car parking area to maintain visibility up and down the street for exiting vehicles.

Bin storage has been allowed to the northwest corner of the site with provision for 2No 240L bins for each flat (1No grey & 1No blue); the internal kitchen spaces will include storage arrangements for glass recycling boxes and the external communal areas will be managed by the landlord with respect to garden waste. A drying area has been allowed with 2No whirly-gigs proposed and bicycle storage will be provided via 2No areas; 1No to northwest corner and 1No beneath stairs; secure ground anchors will be provided in each location to lock bikes too (6No in total). Each of the new build flats will have a small private terrace accessed from sliding doors and a communal garden will be provided thereafter for the enjoyment of all residents; the communal garden area excluding the drying green, hedging and paths will be circa 50m<sup>2</sup> (not compliant with LDP guidelines for 50m<sup>2</sup> per flat, but comparable to developments at former library & store sites, which have significantly more units & property is located within 100m of Bonnyrigg Toll amenities). The garden will be screened from the neighbour at No 3 Douglas Crescent via the existing 1400mm H boundary wall and proposed Dog Rose hedge. It should be noted that this sort of development would be unlikely to house any children and the garden would likely only be used by a few persons at once during summer months; we therefore trust that it wouldn't cause noise issues to No 3 Douglas Crescent. View of garden below:



Existing Garden



As Proposed

The gross internal areas of the proposed studio flats are as follows:

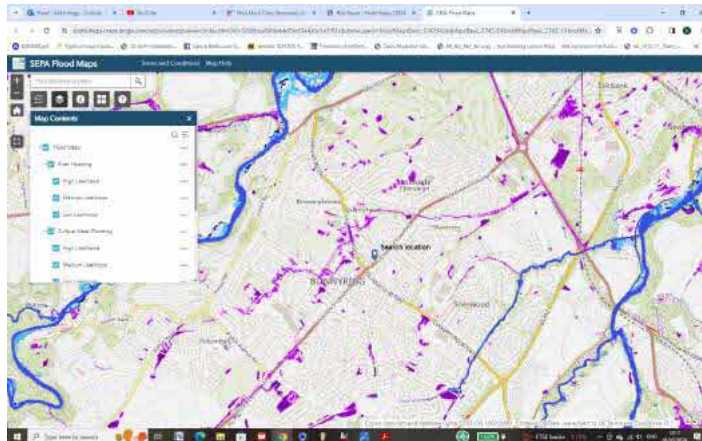
- FLAT 1 - GIA = 48m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 2 - GIA = 38m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 3 - GIA = 33.5m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 4 - GIA = 33.0m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 5 - GIA = 33.0m<sup>2</sup>
- FLAT 6 - GIA = 33.0m<sup>2</sup>

The flats are small, although are open plan in layout with minimal circulation space, incorporate measures to ensure sufficient amenity, are located close to Bonnyrigg town centre amenities and include provisions over and above other recently approved applications. We would therefore hope that the proposed development is looked upon favourably and considered as a good design.

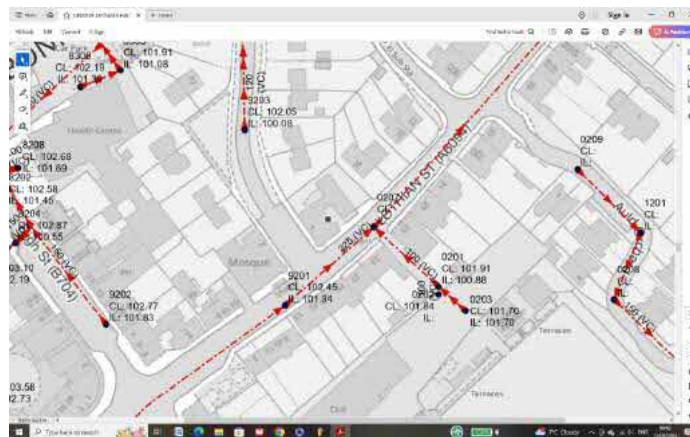


Policy 22 –Flood Risk and Water Management

The site is not in a known area of flood risk as identified on the SEPA map below and the appended Geo-Environmental report further confirms this. The finished floor level of the subjects has been set above the adjacent road level with a gentle slope up to the accessible entrances through the car park to mitigate potential future surface flood risk; ACO drainage channels shall be installed at the thresholds with the walls and floor slab appropriately tanked. In terms of drainage, there is a foul sewer in Lothian Street, with disconnecting man-hole in existing front courtyard area. It is intended that the existing foul connection would be re-used / upgraded as necessary with provisions for new distribution pipe-work within the site.



SEPA Flood Map



SW –Drainage Asset Plan

The surface drainage for the subjects appears to connect to the combined sewer. It should be noted that the new build flat roof is circa 50m<sup>2</sup> less than the existing extension flat roof and permeable surfacing shall be utilised for the car parking & pedestrian pathways. An attenuation system shall be formed beneath the proposed car park with a flow control device thereafter to limit discharge; this shall serve the new build and hard surfacing elements of the project to ensure that the proposals do not increase the flood risk to the wider community. N.B –there is no dedicated surface drainage or watercourses to discharge a surface drain too in the locality and the soil appears to comprise clay, which would not be suitable for a soakaway.

Policy 24 Digital Infrastructure

The proposed development will include high speed network connections for each flat in accordance with building standards to ensure that the subjects have suitable connectivity with respect to digital infrastructure.

## 5.0 Conclusions

To conclude, the site requires significant investment to return it into a sound state of repair, improve its energy efficiency and enhance its biodiversity. Further, it has suffered as a result of poor interventions in the past, which detract from the setting of the original listed building (IE – flat roofed extension and cores through leaded windows). The site is located in a predominately residential area, which has a mixture of house types in close proximity to amenity services at Bonnyrigg town centre. A housing crisis has been declared with particular issues in the rental sector and a sufficient LTV ratio is required to secure development funding. As such, we feel that the premises would lend itself to a build to rent model for multiple small flatted units. Considerable thought has been given to the design and we feel that the proposals:

- Provide small studio flatted residences with suitable amenity in close proximity to the town centre.
- Repurpose & repair a listed building whilst enhancing its setting and ensuring longevity.
- Provide building fabric and energy upgrades to help address the climate crisis.
- Redevelop a brownfield site and enhance biodiversity.
- Help address the nationally declared housing crisis.
- Provide a well designed scheme involving high quality materials that enhances the streetscape whilst incorporating parking and active travel measures.
- Provide a scheme that mitigates potential harm to neighbouring amenity.

Based on the above, it is suggested that the proposed scheme is given consideration for approval.

PS –should consent be granted, it should be noted that the development is of a type that would be unlikely to house any children, it involves repurposing a listed building, it involves the development of a brownfield site and it involves the provision of rental properties for mid-market to help address the housing crisis; we would therefore seek exemptions for developers contributions in accordance with the supplementary guidance.