

PROPOSAL,  
HERITAGE APPRAISAL  
& IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**relating to the application for Planning and  
Listed Building consents to alter and convert:**

No.'s 2 & 4 Skirbeck Road,  
BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE



December 2020

**THE PROPOSAL:**

The proposal for which Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent are being sought is to make internal and external alterations to the whole building and for the conversion of No.2 Skirbeck Road (half of the building) from a six-bedroom House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) to four individual bed-sits / flats.

This document is in two sections: The first looks at the heritage of the application site and setting, and the second assesses the impact of the proposals on the heritage of both the application site and other heritage assets in the vicinity:

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## **SECTION 1 ~ HERITAGE APPRAISAL**

### **THE APPLICATION SITE :**

The application site - shown in the photograph below - is a three-storey, Georgian, Grade II 'listed' dwelling house sitting at the western entrance to the Skirbeck Road and forming part of the setting of the historic River Witham frontage.

The building is two constructed as two separate dwellings (No. and No.4) but owned under a single title and separated internally into multiple living spaces; two separate houses in multiple occupancy (HMO's)

Further details on the application site are provided later in the document.



The front and rear elevations of No.'s 2 & 4 Skirbeck Road.

## HERITAGE ASSETS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS :

In addition to No.'s 2 & 4 Skirbeck Road (the building to which the application relates), the application site is also part of the setting of other heritage assets / listed buildings within 50 to 80 metres, as follows:

1. **Hussey Tower**- Listing Grade II\* - H.E List entry No.1388981
2. **Saint John's Place** - Listing Grade II - H.E List entry No. 1388979
3. **1-9 South Terrace** - Listing Grade II - H.E List entry No.1389010

The heritage assets noted here are indicated on the map below, with further detail and description given in the following pages.



A location plan showing the relative positions of the application site (red) and all other nearby heritage assets (green)

## **THE HERITAGE ASSETS :**

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### **2 & 4 SKIRBECK ROAD** – Listing Grade II - H.E List entry No.1388978

#### **THE APPLICATION SITE**

The Historic England list entry description for this asset is as follows:

*'Pair of houses. Late C18, altered C20. Red brick in English bond, pantile and concrete tile roofs, brick coped gables with partial tumbling, central large ridge stack. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys, 4-bay front arranged 2:2, with dentilled wooden eaves cornice. To left a 6-panel C19 door with plain overlight, broad pilastered surround, flat hood on brackets. To right a blocked former door opening with to the left of it a C20 doorway. In the centre a margin light sash and a C20 3-light casement in C20 opening with brick soldier course. To 1st floor 4 margin light sashes and to 2nd floor 4 smaller similar ones. INTERIOR: Not inspected.'*

### **SAINT JOHN'S PLACE** – Listing Grade II - H.E List entry No.1388979

Statutory Address: ST JOHN'S PLACE, 33, SKIRBECK ROAD

The Historic England list entry description for this asset is as follows:

*'House. Early C19, Red/brown brick, stucco dressings, rendered rear, hipped slate roofs, with rear stack. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys, 3-bay front, overhanging eaves. Central 6-panel door with plain overlight, up 4 steps. Moulded door surround with slender attached half-columns, and moulded hood, flanked by single glazing bar sashes. To 1st floor a tall semicircular-headed stair window, with glazing bars, flanked by single glazing bar sashes to each floor, those to the 2nd floor smaller. To the roadside elevation a single glazing bar sash to each floor and the name 'St John's Place' inscribed in a stone. All sash windows have cambered heads and splayed stucco lintels. INTERIOR: retains stick baluster stair and some contemporary joinery.'*

### **1-9 SOUTH TERRACE** – Listing Grade II - H.E List entry No.1389010

The Historic England list entry description for this asset is as follows:

*'Terrace of 9 houses. Early C19 with minor C20 alterations. Gault brick in Flemish bond, concrete tiled roofs to all properties except No 4 which retains original Welsh slate roof. 9 ridge stacks. Curved terrace with hip at each end. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys plus basements, 19 bay front. Each house has a single window and door to ground floor, and 2 windows to 1st floor, except No.1, which has 2 ground floor windows. Each house originally had a 6-panel door, up 4 steps, with bordered overlight, set in moulded surround with half-engaged fluted columns and dentilled hood. This pattern remains, except that No.8 has a glazed C20 door and No.6 a half-glazed C20 door. Windows are generally margin light glazing bar sashes, but No.1 has glazing bar sashes, No.2 has plain sashes, No.6 has casements to 1st floor, No.8 has margin light sash to ground floor, and No.9 has plain sash to ground floor. Windows have splayed painted cambered brick arches. A new casement has been inserted to right of doorway to No.1. Basement windows, beneath a broad ground floor sill, are glazing bar sashes, No.7 has a widened C20 basement opening. INTERIOR: retain stick baluster staircases and some panelled doors.'*

**HUSSEY TOWER** – Listing Grade II\* - H.E List entry No.1388981

The Historic England list entry description for this asset is as follows:

*'Tower. Late C14 or early C15. Brick tower 12m high and 10m square. Octagonal turret at south-east angle. Crenellated parapets. Rib vaulted ground floor. Originally Benyington Tower. Sold to the Corporation and dismantled after 1545 when Lord Hussey attained.'*

**HERITAGE OF THE APPLICATION SITE:**

**THE EXISTING FABRIC:**

The building was constructed in the late-18<sup>th</sup> Century and, barring the addition of two small extensions to the rear wings, minor external alterations and minor internal modifications to suit use, it remains largely unchanged from its original form, layout and appearance.

It is comparatively well maintained and in fair, habitable condition. It has undergone only one notable form of structural movement (settlement) since its construction, which is now long stable and the building exhibits no significant or progressive structural defects. It has undergone only superficial alteration and the maintenance or replacement of perishable materials in windows, box gutters and roof structure.

One of the two porticoed street entrance doors has been blocked up; the portico, door and door surround lost. Similarly, one of the two ground floor façade windows has been lost and the opening altered to install a basic casement window.

Please refer to the application support drawings for specific notes on the existing building fabric and the elements referred to above.

**THE EXISTING FINISHES AND DETAILS:**

Generally: The majority of the principal original, historic details of the building are intact – as noted in the application support drawings – including: the fireplaces, sash windows (most), staircase, box gutter and dentilled cornice and the ornate portico around one of the two street-facing entrance doors. The historic room layout is unaltered

Windows and External doors: The windows on the principal façade are of an appropriate historic style, although are more recent replacements. A typical example is shown in the photograph on the following page.



The existing ground floor window with its segmental arch and cill on No.2 Skirbeck Road; typical of all of the street façade windows on the building.

A historic window and historic double door on the rear elevation are present on site but were recently removed (to install uPVC), as shown in the photographs below. This proposal includes their reinstatement and refurbishment.



The existing historic rear ground floor double doors recently removed but still on site. To be reinstated.

Portico: The portico surround of the front door to No.2 Skirbeck Road is present - as shown in the photographs below. This appears to be original historic design but also appears to be in part recently refurbished or of replacement woodwork.



The existing historic portico door surround and door on No.2 Skirbeck Road.

Box gutter and cornice: The historic box gutter with dentilled cornice is present and in fair condition. Refer to the accompanying drawings for refurbishment proposals.

Interior generally: The building has undergone repeated fitting-out and re-fitting to suit its changing use, although this has resulted in only fairly superficial changes to the simple interior.

Walls, ceiling and floors: The walls are predominantly covered with lime plaster, although the ceilings have been re-covered with plasterboard. The floors are formed with the historic floorboards, although these are damaged in some areas.

Woodwork: Much of the historic skirting boards and plaster cornices have been removed from the rooms in the past but remain in the entrance hall. Other important elements of historic woodwork: cupboards, staircase and paneling are present, as shown in the photographs below and on the following page:



Right image: The existing historic cupboards in the first floor back room.

Left image: The historic paneling, mouldings, architrave and skirting around the ground floor hall arch.



The existing historic cupboards in the first floor front room at either side of the chimney breast

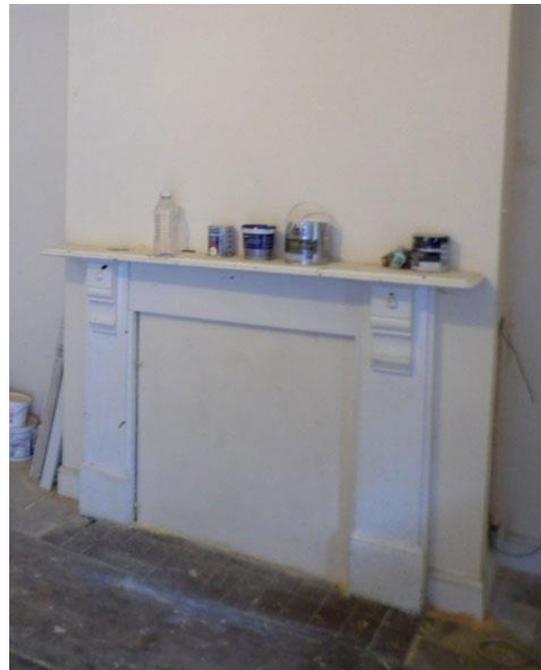


The existing historic cupboards in the first floor front room



The existing staircase.

Fireplaces: The historic fireplaces are present and shown in the photographs below and on the following page:



The existing historic fireplaces in the first floor front room (right image) and back room (left image).



The existing historic fireplaces in the first floor front room (left image) and back room (right image).



The existing historic fireplace in the second floor front room

## **SECTION 2 ~ PROPOSAL AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

### **THE DETAIL OF THE PROPOSALS:**

Please refer to the existing and proposed drawings that accompany the application for details of the proposal, including *Gillick Brothers* drawing numbers 196-101 to 196-104.

The proposal includes the following items, in summary:

#### EXTERNAL:

1. The reinstatement of the missing historic front door with portico and ground floor window on the façade of No.4 Skirbeck Road.
2. The refurbishment of the existing historic dentilled cornice.
3. The refurbishment of the main roof.
4. The replacement of the existing late 20<sup>th</sup> C. front boundary wall with a historically appropriate stone plinth and metal railing.

#### INTERNAL:

5. The non-permanent enclosure of two existing door openings.
6. The formation of three new door openings through existing brick walls.
7. The installation of new kitchens and bathrooms with associated services.
8. The installation of new stud partition walls.
9. The retention of existing fireplaces, cupboards and paneling.
10. The installation of uPVC window units inside the existing facade sash windows.

### **THE NEED FOR THE PROPOSALS:**

The applicant needs to carry out the proposed external alteration and refurbishment of the building in order to improve its condition, in addition to wishing to improve its historic appearance and integrity.

The applicant needs to carry out the proposed internal alteration of the building in order to convert its use from being a six-bedroom House in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) into four independent bed-sit flats.

### **THE BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSALS:**

The proposals will be beneficial on two fronts:

- They will improve the living accommodation provided by the building; moving away from inferior-quality HMO living accommodation to bed-sit flat accommodation that allows for a better quality of life for the inhabitants.
- It will enhance and protect the historic building by refurbishment of damaged fabric and reinstatement of key missing features.

## **IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS ON THE HERITAGE ASSET / LISTED BUILDING :**

### IMPACT ON THE APPLICATION SITE:

#### BENEFICIAL:

- The proposed refurbishment of damaged fabric and reinstatement of key missing features will protect the building from decline and will enhance and protect the heritage of the building.
- The proposed replacement of the street boundary wall with plinth and railings will enhance the historic presentation and integrity of the building.
- The transition away from HMO accommodation to bed-sit flats will reduce the risk of damage to the historic building through its use; because HMO's are a cheaper form of accommodation than flats, they are often treated with less care and, therefore, suffer greater damage than flats.

#### DETRIMENTAL:

- The proposals include the introduction of new bathrooms and kitchens with their associated services. This will necessitate the following impacts on the historic fabric of the building:
  - o The installation of new water and waste pipework will require lifting of floorboards, holes through walls and joists and fixing into walls.
    - This will be mitigated by the location of the new bathrooms and kitchens close to existing waste pipework to reduce the number of new holes being made.
    - Holes through walls can be reversed in future and do not materially alter the building.
    - The existing floorboards would be lifted to facilitate the work – not cut through – and reinstated afterwards. Damaged floorboards would be replaced like-for like.
- The proposals would require a new electrical installation, necessitating chases being cut through the historic lime plaster on the walls.
  - o This damage can be reversed in future with suitable materials.
- The proposed refurbishment of the roof will include the loss of some historic timber; where it is defective.
  - o The roof structure is not of a historically unusual or 'special' type, being a simple arrangement of rafters and purlins.
  - o Many parts of the roof structure have been patched and strapped with new timber since its construction to make good rot and beetle damage. Further, more comprehensive refurbishment will be carried out to match the existing timber sizes and structure pattern of the roof, making it a more complete example of its original construction.

- The proposed refurbishment of the roof will include the introduction of a new, non-historic membrane.
  - o The membrane would be non-permanent and does not impact upon the historic integrity of the building.
- The proposals include the blocking of door openings.
  - o No historic doors or frames will be lost as a result of this change as they were removed in decades past. Any existing architraves around the openings will be retained.
  - o The method of blocking the openings will be with timber and plasterboard studwork. This is removable / reversible and would not occupy the full thickness of the wall, leaving the original openings and room layout visible.
- The proposals include the formation of door openings through walls.
  - o This will require the removal of brickwork and surface plaster.
    - The openings would not be completed with architrave or doors matching the historic period of the property, making the distinction between new and historic doors evident and avoiding permanent confusion of the historic room layout.
    - The historic room layout could be easily restored with minimal reversal work.
- The proposals include the installation of new walls.
  - o The new walls will be lightweight timber and plasterboard stud partitions that will not require the alteration of the existing building and can be easily removed to restore the historic room layout.
- The proposals include the fixing of new uPVC window units into the window reveals on the inside of the existing windows.
  - o The new units would be screwed into the existing wood window reveal lining which, though leaving holes, would not materially alter the historic fabric and is completely and easily reversible work.
  - o The existing reveal lining and window boards would be retained as existing.

#### IMPACT ON OTHER HERITAGE ASSETS:

Both the proposed external work and the change of accommodation type will be beneficial to other heritage assets. The proposals will improve the visual standard and completeness of the historic setting, and will also improve the amenity of the vicinity by improving the quality of accommodation.

The proposals would not cause any detrimental impact to other heritage assets.

## **SUMMARY:**

While there will be some negative impacts on the historic fabric of the building resulting from its conversion to bed-sit flats, these will largely be minimal and, where larger, would be reversible.

The improvement of the living accommodation provided within the building, coupled with the improvement of the appearance and historic detail of the building, will have a beneficial effect on the application site / historic building itself, on the vicinity and the setting of other heritage assets within it, outweighing any negative impacts caused by the conversion work.

The nature, layout and character of the building would remain and could be fully restored with minimal reversal work.

The proposals would have no effect on the other heritage assets in the vicinity or setting.