



The White Horse, Kimpton
Condition Report
December 2024

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The inspection of The White Horse has revealed, as identified from previous surveys, that there remains evidence of ongoing decay to numerous elements of the historic fabric that, if not addressed, will see further deterioration to the point of being beyond repair.

The clay tiled roof slopes to the central section are in poor condition with evidence of slipped and broken tiles to both pitches, particularly the rear pitch which has been subject to insensitive installation of plant and poor flashing details. Broken tiling to the surrounding hard standing suggests this is an ongoing hazard. Furthermore, sagging and bowing to sections of the rear roof pitch suggest remedial timber work may be required. The natural slate pitches to No. 20 and No. 24, being of later vintage, are in reasonable condition. Although not possible to survey at close hand, the brick chimneys display evidence of loose mortar and brickwork with missing or poorly installed lead flashings not in accordance with Lead Development Association (LDA) guidelines.

Internally, the building has been subject to much alteration throughout its history. External ground levels are a major factor in contributing to the ingress of moisture through the masonry walls and subsequent rot to timber structure and flooring interfaces in these areas. Hazardous joists spanning at ground floor level above the basement also require urgent attention. Historic lath and plaster finishes remain in poor to fair condition, with bowing and major fracturing observed to the ceilings at first floor level, attributed to the cutting of the king post bottom chords. Water ingress was observed within the roof space due to poorly installed and damaged roofing membranes and loose and missing tiles.

Some cast iron rainwater goods appear capable of salvage and restoration whilst the inevitable displacement of both downpipes and gutters has exacerbated the degradation of the brickwork.

In summary, a holistic and conservation-led package of remedial work should be prepared as a matter of urgency to avoid the loss of historic fabric and reduction in significance of the heritage asset.

2.0 DESCRIPTION

The White Horse is a Grade II listed public house set within the Kimpton Conservation Area and is located at the eastern end of Kimpton, on the northern side of the High Street (B652). Kimpton is located midway between Welwyn Garden City to the East and Luton to the West. It is linear in form, with historic properties located along the High Street. It is mostly residential in character, with newer houses set back behind the High Street, particularly on the northern side. There is one other pub 'The Boot' located toward the eastern side of High Street, other landmarks along the high street include The Lady Dacre Hall, Kimpton Primary School and at the post office at the eastern corner with Claggy Road. The Parish Church and Methodist church halls are located off the high street via Church Lane.

Occupying a rectangular plot the principal elevation faces south and is a prominent feature to the eastern approach to the village. The elevation to the West, predominantly formed by the gable of no. 24 High Street and boundary wall, faces onto the boundary with No. 26 High Street with the East elevation forming a party wall condition with No. 20. The White Horse is a two storey building forming the central part of a terrace, with dwellings on either side. The western "dwelling" is currently a part of the pub.

Set within a rural village context predominantly of red brick and clay roof tile palette, the main elevation is set back from High Street with three projecting square window bays and a carriage arch gaining access to the rear yard providing articulation to the brick facade.

Principal access is provided via the most eastern projecting ground floor bay. Another former entrance door to No. 24 is disused, and is bounded by a low brick wall with glazed tile cope. The topography is fairly level across the length of the front elevation and to the rear courtyard with bitmac hardstanding covering both.

The White Horse is a composite, multiphase building which has undergone stages of extension, alteration, internal subdivision and change in use over its c. 300 year history.

2.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE

This condition report on the the internal and external fabric of The White Horse, Kimpton was commissioned from Collins + Bell Architects LLP in conjunction with Michael Collins Architect LLP by the client, in September 2020.

The condition of the building has deteriorated since this survey was undertaken and no works or repairs have been undertaken to the property since the recent refusal. The building remains more

The commission involved inspection and reporting on the condition of the existing external and internal elements of the building and surrounding curtilage. During the course of the inspection, careful opening up works were undertaken and witnessed by Jacqueline Osborne of Osborne Edwards Consulting Structural Engineers.

This survey is not considered exhaustive and has been generated for the purposes of the forthcoming statutory approval applications. It is anticipated that several, more detailed surveys will be required to address specific matters as the project progresses.

3.0 THE SURVEY

The building was initially surveyed on 21st September 2020 and 23rd September 2020. Weather conditions were warm, dry and calm. The survey was carried out without the use of high level access equipment with all observations made from ground or floor level. Refer to the structural engineers report for structural observations and opening up works comments.

The survey was restricted to the external and visible internal fabric of the building along with some investigative structural opening up works. Parts of the structure and woodwork which were covered, unexposed or inaccessible, were not inspected. Collins + Bell Architects LLP is therefore unable to report that any such part of the property is free from defect. Please note below-ground drainage installation was not inspected. This should be undertaken by a specialist company and the findings made available to the engineer.

The report does not recommend remedial measures for identified defects. This is because an overall strategy for The White Horse will emerge as a result of design decisions relating to the future use of the building, funding requirements and a pragmatic response to the extent and nature of work to be carried out to secure the surviving historic fabric. The strategy may include demolition of parts of the complex in order to accommodate new spaces required by the agreed brief.

The report does not comment on the condition or compliance of M&E services and associated equipment and it is recommended a specialist M&E survey is undertaken by a qualified M&E consultant. It is recommended that both all life-safety systems are inspected as a matter of urgency.

It is recommended that a damp and timber repair specialist is appointed to undertake a survey to ensure that the maximum amount of historic fabric can be retained without unnecessary and uneducated removals.

A detailed digital photographic record was prepared during the inspection and has been retained for future reference. A selection of these have been included within the body of the report.

Finally, the report is not a specialist research into the presence of contamination by any harmful substance, nor an asbestos inspection as defined by the Control of Asbestos in the Workplace Regulations.



External: Front Elevation (South Facing)

01. Flush pointed Flemish bond brick with burnt headers in reasonable condition with isolated delaminated bricks to be surveyed in further detail. Provenance of existing brick to be determined. Bowing evident in part of facade. Allow for mortar sampling and testing in accordance with BS 4551: 2005 + A2:2013 Methods of Test for Mortar to determine original mortar mix to allow matching.
02. Flush pointed brickwork to segmental arch in fair condition with several bricks requiring isolated replacement.
03. Existing lead flashings and flat roof in poor condition and not in accordance with LDA standards.
04. Existing cast iron solum grilles. Fair condition.
05. Existing cabling and ferramenta to be surveyed in detail with M&E engineer.
06. Painted glazed timber entrance door. Poor condition.
07. Flemish bond glazed brick base course in good condition. Missing and blocked solum vents.
08. Impact damage observed to external brick corner.
09. Painted square headed timber window bays in fair condition with minor sections of rotten timber observed. Painted metal ventilation grilles to high level. Cill beyond repair.
10. 8/8 painted timber sash and case window. Fair condition with minor rot observed.
11. Clear vegetation to determine location, type and condition of existing gully outlet to ascertain remedial works.
12. Plasterboard soffit to archway subject to moisture ingress. Poor condition.
13. Existing cementitious pointing to former party wall joint. Poor condition.
14. Existing timber casement windows in poor condition. Cills beyond repair.
15. Existing painted and timber boarded gate. Poor to fair condition.
16. Existing cast iron rainwater goods. Poor to fair condition. Replacement and isolated repair required following detailed survey.
17. Brick corbel detail - isolated delamination to brickwork.
18. Single lap clay roof tiles on sloping timber rafters with bedded clay ridges displaying evidence of ridge timber deflection. Poor condition. Several broken and slipped tiles observed with evidence of falling tiles to hard standing.
19. Sand: cement render band boast and fractured with evidence of moisture ingress. Poor condition.



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External: Gable Elevation (West Facing)

- 19. Flush pointed Flemish bond brick with burnt headers in good condition. Allow for mortar sampling and testing in accordance with BS 4551: 2005 + A2:2013 Methods of Test for Mortar to determine original mortar mix to allow matching.
- 20. Existing timber verge boards in poor condition.
- 21. Detailed survey of chimney breasts and pots subject to scaffold access at commencement of works to inspect flashings, flaunchings and other components. Evidence of loose mortar, missing or loose flashings and delaminated brickwork throughout.
- 22. Existing timber soffit boards in poor condition.
- 23. Evidence of efflorescence to brick base courses.
- 24. Creeping vegetation.



External: Rear Elevation (North Facing)

25. Cat slide slate roof with ridge tiles in poor condition with slipped and broken slates.
26. Single lap clay roof tiles on sloping timber rafters with bedded clay ridges displaying evidence of ridge timber deflection. Poor condition with biological growth, some delamination and evidence of sagging to roof timbers. Several broken and slipped tiles observed with evidence of falling tiles to hard standing.
27. Existing cast iron rainwater goods. Very poor condition requiring replacement.
28. Redundant mechanical extraction plant supported on existing, timber roof structure. Poorly flashed - source of water ingress.
29. Natural slate roof shed dormer with rendered walls and lead watertight flashing to clay tile roof. Fair condition.
30. Natural slate pitched roof with bedded clay ridge tiles in fair condition with evidence of sagging to roof timbers.
31. Lead weathering to brick gable. Fair condition.
32. Bituminous felt flat roof. Very poor condition with sagging and ponding observed.
33. Existing timber casement windows in poor condition.
34. Painted sand cement render over existing brickwork. Fair condition.
35. Natural slate mono-pitch roof with bedded clay ridge tiles in fair condition with evidence of sagging to roof timbers.
36. Flush pointed brick with burnt headers in poor condition with delaminated bricks and evidence of poor quality alterations.
37. Existing vegetation to be stripped back
38. Tarmac surfacing in poor condition.
39. Poorly fixed profile sheeting over historic basement stair access. Dangerous condition with evidence of water ingress.
40. Flashed pipework penetration to slate roof. Poor condition with evidence of bitumen repair.
41. Partially sand-cement rendered, stretcher bond brick gable to cat slide slate roof. Poor condition with unsympathetic waste pipe penetrations and small, timber casement window.
42. Timber lintels rotten and subject to structural failure.
43. Sand: cement render band fractured, boast and compromised by water ingress
44. Cellar access hatch corroded and dangerous. Evidence of water ingress from hard-standing.
45. Stained weatherboard on flush pointed brick base. Fair condition with evidence of delimitation to brick base course.



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1.



3.



2.



4.

Ground Floor: Front of House Area

Floor

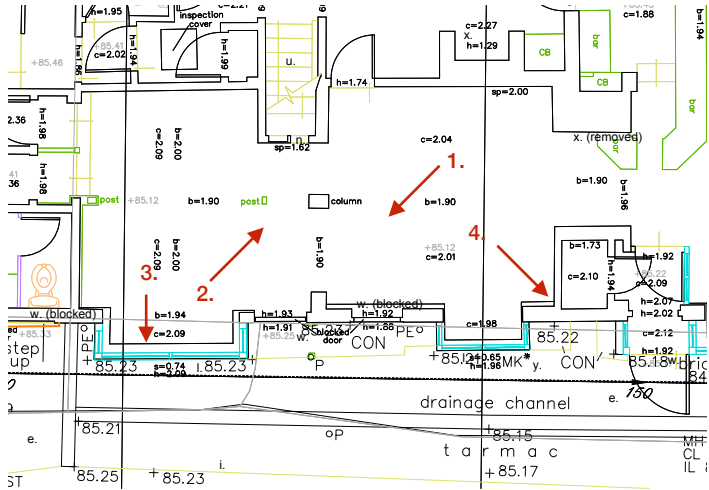
- Timber board floor on suspended timbers bearing onto masonry sleeper walls. Opening up work indicates timber joists rest on non-historic masonry sleeper walls with no minimal contact to the outer masonry walls. Poor to Fair condition with isolated sections displaying evidence of rot at wall junctions. Stepped access to basement subject to rot and dangerous.

Ceiling

- Exposed and painted first floor beams timber in fair condition to Western section. Opening up work indicates concealed first floor joists appear to have been affected by historic rot. Eastern section contains modern plasterboard ceiling. Opening up work indicates a central bearing steel beam spanning East to West.

Walls

- Walls lined at low level with modern, painted wainscoting. North wall comprised of modern timber stud walling with a historic masonry wall, incorporating fireplace between the Front of House Area and Kitchen. Existing cupboard contains evidence of potential historic inglenook. Evidence of corrosion to modern steelwork as observed through opening up works. Blocking up of external doorway renders condition of fabric unknown.



Key Plan



1.



2.



3.



4.

Ground Floor: Main Bar Area

Floor

- Timber board floor on suspended timbers bearing onto masonry sleeper walls. Opening up work indicates timber joists rest on non-historic masonry sleeper walls with no minimal contact to the outer masonry walls. Poor to Fair condition with isolated sections displaying evidence of rot.

Ceiling

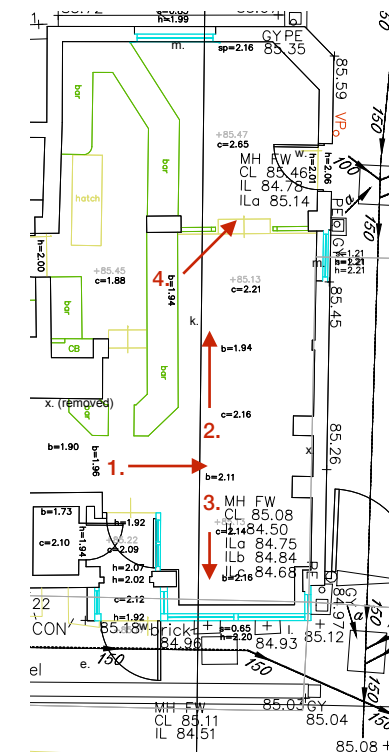
- Exposed first floor beams with central bearing timber in fair condition to Southern section. Historic evidence of minor rot. Northern section contains modern plasterboard ceiling with Southern section lath and plaster in fair condition with evidence of minor cracking and some damage by light fittings.

Walls

- Walls lined at low level with modern, painted wainscotting. Evidence of damp ingress observed behind wainscotting. Walls a combination of lath and plaster finish and modern plasterboard linings. Fair condition.

Services/ Fittings of Note

- East wall contains a fireplace with modern brickwork surround - further investigation recommended to establish condition of elements i.e hearth, flue, grate etc.



Key Plan

**Ground Floor: Kitchen****Floor**

- Modern solid concrete floor with vinyl finish. Poor condition with evidence of moisture ingress at base course level.

Ceiling

- Lath and plaster ceiling painted in vinyl-based moisture resisting paint with timber cased down stand beams observed on existing wall line. Poor condition with evidence of cracking.

Walls

- Walls tiled full height. Historic masonry wall, incorporating a chimney breast present between the Main Bar Area and Kitchen. Poor condition overall. Evidence of moisture ingress and loose tiles observed throughout.

Services/ Fittings of Note

- Stainless steel commercial kitchen fit out and white goods. Poor condition. No evidence of fire doors, fire stopping, fire rated ducting or fire detection observed.

**Ground Floor: WC Lobby and Stair****Floor**

- Vinyl covering on timber board floor on historic joists. Refer to basement section for elaboration on condition of floor joists. Access hatch present within corridor. Poor condition. Evidence of joist deflection and in dangerous condition.

Ceiling

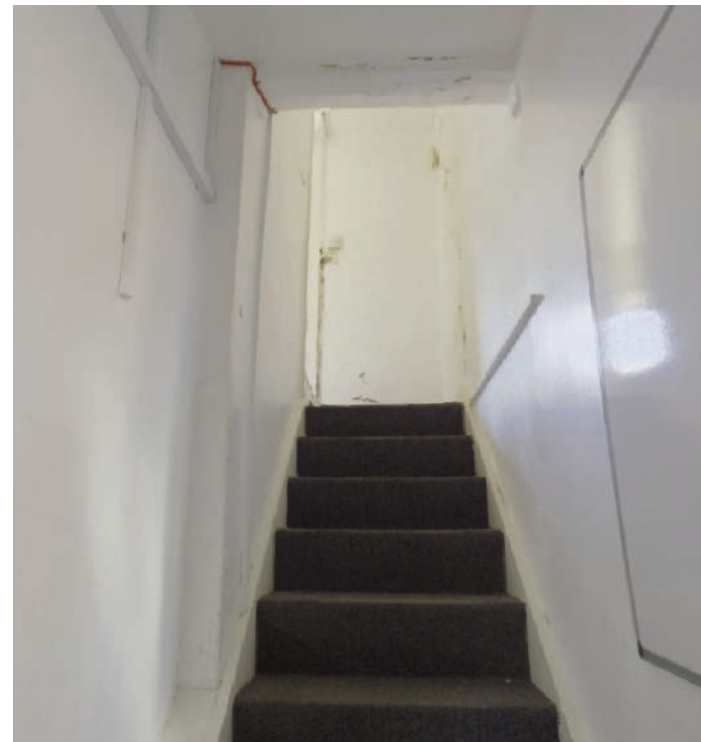
- Evidence of small sections of painted lath and plaster ceilings with painted historic floor beams. Modern plasterboard ceilings installed elsewhere. Variable condition.

Walls

- Walls painted and plastered with evidence of a historic timber stud wall with modern plasterboard finish to the South separating the WC and Front of House area. Evidence of structural movement to Northern wall and ceiling at wall-head and jamb. Evidence of efflorescence and ingress of moisture to base of external walls. Very poor condition.

Services/ Fittings of Note

- Timber stair with carpeted finish. Evidence of painted historic floor timber at high level to head of stair. Condition of stair structure; stringer, treads unknown.



**Ground Floor: Utility Annex and Stair**

Floor

- Vinyl covering on timber board floor on historic joists. Refer to basement section for elaboration on condition of floor joists. Access hatch present within corridor. Poor condition.

Ceiling

- Combination of Painted lath and plaster and painted plasterboard. Fair Condition. Boast lath and plaster ceiling above stair.

Walls

- Walls painted and plastered with evidence of painted brickwork walls expressed internally to corresponding external walls. Evidence of efflorescence, biological growth and ingress of moisture to base of external walls. Overall Poor condition.

Services/ Fittings of Note

- Timber stair with carpeted finish. Evidence of painted moulded panelling to stair walls with fracturing of plaster to walls at head of stair. Fair to Poor condition. Exposed high level services to head of stair. Existing waste pipe within utility. Condition unknown.

**Ground Floor: Scullery****Floor**

- Vinyl covering on modern screed floor. Substrate unknown. Evidence of damp. Poor condition.

Ceiling

- Painted lath and plaster ceiling throughout with evidence of painted historic floor beams. Minor cracking and damp evident. Poor to fair condition.

Walls

- East and South walls painted brickwork expressed internally. Evidence of efflorescence, biological growth and ingress of moisture to all walls. South wall demonstrates evidence of defective tanking membrane to external walls.

Services/ Fittings of Note

- Copper washing basin on brick base. Electrical switch board.



**Ground Floor: Rear Store****Floor**

- Vinyl covering on modern screed floor over historic quarry tile/ brick floor on earth base. Poor Condition.

Ceiling

- Modern mineral tile on suspended frame. Historic roof timbers evident from above.

Walls

- Painted and plastered walls lined in plasterboard. Overall Fair condition. Evidence of installation of defective tanking membrane to external walls.

**Ground Floor: Outbuildings**

Floor

- Exposed concrete screed floor. Fair condition.

Ceiling

- Exposed timber roof trusses with underlay visible. Good condition.

Walls

- Varying materiality. Evidence of historic flint wall forming part of the Western boundary wall with flush pointed stretcher bond brickwork to the south. North wall formed in timber stud with exposed inner face of timber cladding boards evident. Fair condition.



**First Floor Room: Room 1****Floor**

- Carpet finish on original floor boards and joists. Fair condition.

Ceiling

- Lath and plaster ceiling papered and painted. Poor condition with evidence of minor cracking and bowing.

Walls

- Papered and painted finish onto lath and plaster. Historic timber wall to North.

Services/ Fittings of Note

- Painted timber fireplace - further investigation recommended to establish condition of elements i.e hearth, flue, grate etc.

**First Floor Room: Bathroom and WC****Floor**

- Vinyl finish on original floor boards and joists. Note collapsed sections of ceiling to areas below.

Ceiling

- Potentially plasterboard ceiling finished in vinyl-based moisture resistant paint. Poor condition with evidence of minor cracking.

Walls

- Combination of papered and tiled finishes. Evidence of tiling debonding from walls due to ingress of moisture. Poor condition.

Services of Note

- Sanitaryware and taps. Exposed pipework. Variable condition.

**First Floor Room: Kitchen**

Floor

- Vinyl finish. Substrate unknown.

Ceiling

- Combed ceiling with textured finish. Substrate unknown. Fair condition. Presence of artex unknown.

Walls

- Combination of painted and plastered and tiled finishes. Poor condition.

Services of Note

- Kitchen tap, gas hob. Exposed pipework. Variable condition.

**First Floor Room: Stair Lobby/ Central Bay****Floor**

- Laminate timber floor on unknown substrate. Evidence of historic floorboards at internal door saddles.

Ceiling

- Lath and plaster ceiling papered and painted. Poor condition with evidence of both sagging and cracking. Evidence of damp ingress

Walls

- Papered and painted finish on lath and plaster. Historic timber wall to North. Evidence of damp ingress and boast plaster to head of stairs. Fair to Poor condition.

**First Floor Room: Room 2**

Floor

- Carpet finish on original floor boards and timber joists. Dipping observed within floor.

Ceiling

- Plasterboard. Moderate condition. Note:

Walls

- Papered and painted finish. Historic timber wall to North with original lath and plaster evident. Evidence of historic timber frame to small lobby to the East. Evidence of bowing to South external wall.



**First Floor Room: Room 3**

Floor

- Carpet finish on original floor boards and timber joists.

Ceiling

- Combination of plasterboard and papered and painted lath and plaster. Fair condition. Evidence of painted historic timbers to East wall? Gable truss?

Walls

- Masonry substrate with papered and painted finish. Fair condition.

Services of Note

- Wall mounted electrical storage heater.

**First Floor Room: Room 4**

Floor

- Laminate timber floor on unknown substrate. Condition of existing floor boards and joists unknown.

Ceiling

- Partial collapse/ removal of plasterboard ceiling with existing ceiling joists and roof trusses exposed. Poor condition. Refer to the Structural Engineers report and mark-ups for further observations to the roof timbers. Evidence of moisture ingress and wet rot observed from floor level to isolated timbers.

Walls

- Masonry substrate with papered and painted finish. Fair condition.

**Second Floor Room: Attic**

Floor

- Carpet finish on original floor boards and timber joists. Condition of existing floor boards and joists unknown.

Ceiling

- Combed lath and plaster ceiling papered and painted. Fair condition.

Walls

- Papered and painted finish on lath and plaster. Fair condition

Services/ Fittings of Note

- Potential infilling of fireplace - further investigation recommended to establish condition of elements i.e hearth, flue, grate etc.



Roofspace Central Section

General Observations

- Missing bottom chords to king post trusses.
- No evidence of fire-stopping with exposed electrics and cabling observed.
- Purlins locally bowed. Bearings unable to be inspected.
- Modern underlay to North pitch. Poorly lapped and damaged with evidence of water ingress.
- Poor quality mineral wool insulation sagging.
- Evidence of historic insect attack. Specialist survey required to determine if ongoing.
- Loose tiles and ridge tiles observed.



Western and Eastern Basements

Floor

- Brick floor on earth base. Poor Condition with evidence of water ingress throughout.

Ceiling

- Exposed painted ground floor beams with central bearing timber in poor condition. Evidence of extensive rot to bearing ends to the point of being hazardous. Very poor condition.

Walls

- Painted masonry walls a combination of exposed brickwork and plaster onto masonry. Poor condition with evidence of hydrostatic pressure and moisture ingress from below.

Services/ Fittings of Note

- Existing brick stair accessed externally from rear yard.
- Beer chute

