

Grant Webster

From: /O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=0AF2102975E24B24B33E25AD90C4EC39-GWEBSTER
on behalf of FoI Enquiries
Sent: 05 July 2018 15:24
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: EIR-18-0896 - Windows Replaced
Attachments: V2 - Further Information - Right to Review & Appeal.pdf; EIR-18-0896 - 1485219-Supporting Statement-Condition Survey Report.pdf

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your information request of 12 June 2018. Aberdeen City Council (ACC) has completed the necessary search for the information requested.

Under the freedom of information Act - Please provide me with 1) the window condition survey, and 2) the quotations for repair / replacement required to justify replacement, by the Conservation team in the Planning Department for the application number 170302/LBC for the Installation of replacement windows at 421 Union Street, Aberdeen, AB11 6DA.

We can confirm with reference to part a), we did not receive a specific Window Condition Survey but rather a more generalised Building Condition Survey which is currently in the public domain through the Council's website. I have attached a copy for your reference.

In relation to part b) of the request, there are no records held which relate to quotations for repair/replacement of windows within the first floor of the property.

ACC is unable to provide you with information on **the window condition survey or the quotations for repair / replacement** as it is not held by the Council. In order to comply with its obligations under the terms of Regulation 10(4)(a) - Information Not Held - of the EIRs, ACC hereby gives notice that this information is not held by it. ACC is required by Regulation 10(1)(b) of the EIRs to inform you as to why in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining this exception outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information to you. ACC is satisfied that it does not hold this information and considers that, as there is no information held, the public interest lies with the exception.

We hope this helps with your request.

Yours sincerely,

Grant Webster
Information Compliance Officer

INFORMATION ABOUT THE HANDLING OF YOUR REQUEST

As the information which you requested is environmental information, as defined under Regulation 2(1) of the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 (the EIRs), ACC considered that it was exempt from release through FOISA, and must therefore give you notice that we are refusing your request under Section 39(2) of FOISA (Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002). However, you have a separate right to access the information which you have requested under Regulation 5 of the EIRs, under which ACC has handled your request. Please refer to the attached PDF for more information about your rights under the EIRs.

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10 January 2017

Ref: 17/01

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Dear Mr Wallace

421 Union Street Aberdeen

We refer to your verbal instructions to survey the Union Street frontage building at the above address and to report to you on the condition of the external fabric of the property. Following our inspection on the building on 22nd December and 9th January we now report to you as follows:-

1.00 Description

- 1.01 The building has a three storey and attic frontage to Union Street with a commercial property front at ground floor level, offices at first floor level and residential flats at second and attic floor levels.
- 1.02 The ground and lower ground floor levels of the building extend all the way back to Justice Mill Lane at the rear, however the upper floors extend back around 11 meters, which is the depth of the original Union Street property and the extent of the building to which this report refers.
- 1.03 The building is mid terraced and is adjoined on the West side by a similar height building, however, to the East it is adjoined by a building which is one storey lower in height, leaving an exposed upper section of the East gable wall.
- 1.04 The rear of the building is exposed from first up to attic floor level, with a two storey extension abutting the lower levels.
- 1.05 The building is located within the Aberdeen City Council Union Street Conservation Area and is category C listed by Historic Environment Scotland.

2.00 Construction

- 2.01 The Union street frontage of the building is in dressed granite ashlar blockwork at first and second floor levels, with dressed granite piers at either side of the ground floor shop style frontage.
- 2.02 There are two rectangular single glazed timber framed sash and casement windows at second floor level, a similar window at first floor level along with a Palladian style window which has two intermediate cast iron support columns.

- 2.03 At ground floor level the building has a boarded up entrance to the commercial property which occupies the lower two floors of the building and a recessed entrance door giving access to the upper floor accommodation. A shop type sign fascia is provided along the head of the ground floor frontage.
- 2.04 The exposed section of the East gable wall is in granite rubble construction, which includes a central chimney stack. The wall has dressed granite skew and chimney head cope stones.
- 2.05 The rear wall of the building is also in granite rubble construction with a central red brick chimney stack. There are other sections of red brick where the wall has been heightened at the stairwell, and around a window opening at second floor level.
- 2.06 The windows in the rear wall are a mixture of original timber framed single glazed sash and casement windows at first floor level and various styles of timber and UPVC framed casement windows to the upper floors.
- 2.07 The building has a pitched slated roof with two original pitched slated dormer windows in the front roof slope. The rear roof slope has been altered at some time in the past and now incorporates a large pitched hipped end slated dormer structure with a vertically slated rear wall. The roof has galvanised steel ridge flashings and lead valley and side slip flashings to the dormer windows.
- 2.08 The front roof slope is unusual in that it discharges to a half round cast iron gutter along the Union Street frontage. We would suspect that the roof has been altered at some time in the past as most buildings in Union Street have a concealed gutter behind a raised parapet wall. There is also evidence to suggest that the existing cast iron downpipe is not in the original location.
- 2.09 The rear roof slopes, including the dormer section, have half round aluminium gutters and downpipes which discharge into the valley gutter on the rear extension roof.

3.00 Condition & Recommendations

- 3.01 The Union Street granite frontage has been repointed at sometime within the last 30-40 years with a cement mortar mix. The pointing is in reasonable condition and with no immediate remedial works required.
- 3.02 We would point out that whilst it was quite normal in the past to repoint granite buildings using a cement mortar mix, it is now widely accepted that lime mortar is the preferred method for repointing, as it allows the wall to breathe and reduces the risk of trapped moisture within the fabric of the wall.
- 3.03 The Union Street granite frontage is generally soiled and weathered with age and there is more extensive green algae staining to the stonework which has been caused by water cascading down the frontage from the blocked rainwater gutter.
- 3.04 Cleaning of the frontage will be required to remove the algae staining, however, this work will require Planning Approval and Listed Building Consent. Any application for stone cleaning will have to include a Consultant's report detailing the proposed method of cleaning and demonstrating that the cleaning will not prejudice the long-term structural integrity and appearance of the building.
- 3.05 The pointing to the exposed section of the East gable wall is in poor condition with extensive areas of loose and missing mortar, and evidence of vegetation growth in some of the stonework joints. We are of the opinion that this wall requires repointing and recommend that this be done at an early date using a suitable lime mortar mix. This work will also require Planning Approval and Listed Building Consent.
- 3.06 There is an area of damp staining on the internal face of the East gable wall in the rear Kitchen/Dining Room at second floor level. It is most likely that this dampness is due to the defective external pointing, or possibly water ingress down some of the

many chimney flues, the cans of which may require capping. Whilst the suggested repair works will hopefully rectify the damp penetration, we would advise that removal of the damaged plasterwork, and clearing of the void between the lath and plaster and granite wall may also be required to completely eradicate the problem.

- 3.07 The pointing on the side faces of the East chimney stack and on the rear South and West elevation chimney stacks appears to be in sound condition, however, the haunching to the chimney cans is cracked in areas and requires repair, and there is some minor vegetation growth in the chimney stack cope joints.
- 3.08 The West face of the East elevation chimney stack is coated in smooth cement render which is cracked and crazed, and possibly boss. A closer inspection will be required to establish whether or not the render needs to be completely stripped and redone.
- 3.09 The rear South elevation of the building has been repointed at some time in the recent past using a cement mortar mix. The pointing is generally in good condition although there are minor areas of hairline cracking. We are however of the opinion that no repair works are presently required to this wall.
- 3.10 There is an area of staining on the ceiling of the rear Kitchen/Dining Room in the second floor flat which we cannot attribute to any defect in the external wall or roof. There is the possibility that it could be due to condensation, as there is no mechanical extract fan in the Kitchen, however we would recommend that the problem be monitored to establish whether or not it gets worse during periods of rainfall.
- 3.11 There are two areas of dampness on the internal face of the rear wall within the East room at first floor level. There are no obvious defects on the external face of the wall and it may just be that during periods of prolonged wind blown rain the wall is becoming saturated and the dampness is showing up internally where there is a build-up of debris in the void between the lath and plaster and the granite wall. We would recommend that the affected areas of the wall be stripped, the void cleaned out and the wall replastered.
- 3.12 The roof of the building would appear to have been stripped and reslated in the last 30-40 years and the slating appears to be in reasonable condition. There is however some moss and vegetation growth on some areas of the slating on the front slope which would be better removed. In addition, as is the case on any slated roof, there are likely to be a small number of cracked or missing slates which require replacement.
- 3.13 The cement skew pointing down the sides of the slated roof is cracked and defective in some areas and requires repair or replacement.
- 3.14 The rainwater gutters and downpipes appear to be in reasonable condition, however, the front elevation rainwater goods are in need of redecoration. We also noted that the front elevation downpipe is routed back into the building at first floor level, where the cast iron downpipe is connected onto a lead elbow which appears to be in poor condition and is a likely area for blockage to occur.
- 3.15 The gutters at both the front and rear of the building are badly choked with vegetation growth which should be removed as soon as possible to prevent damage to the fabric of the building. We appreciate the difficulty in gaining access to clean out the rear elevation gutters, however, this is essential maintenance and a safe method of regular gutter cleaning should be sought.
- 3.16 The timber framed windows are in varying states of repair but all are in need of redecoration.
- 3.17 At attic floor level the windows have obviously been replaced in the past with double glazed units in both the front and rear elevation. The rear elevation windows are in

reasonable condition, however, there is extensive decay in the cills and base of the frames to the front elevation windows. The timber facias and decorative facings to the front dormers are also in poor condition and affected by decay.

- 3.18 No inspection was carried out to the front elevation windows at Second floor level, however the rear elevation timber framed window to the Kitchen/Dining Room is in poor condition and affected by decay. The UPVC framed bathroom window appears in reasonable condition.
- 3.19 At first floor level the front elevation windows, which appear to be the original single glazed sash and casements, are in very poor condition with extensive decay to the frames and cills. We also noted corrosion to the base of the cast iron support pillars in the Palladian window which require treatment to prevent further deterioration. The rear elevation windows to the first floor accommodation are also in very poor condition and in need of replacement.
- 3.20 There rear elevation windows to the common stairwell are in a variety of ages and styles with the window to the upper level being in reasonable condition whilst the lower level window is affected by wet rot in areas.
- 3.21 As the building is Listed, any replacement or alterations to the windows, particularly on the Union Street frontage, will require Planning Approval and Listed Building Consent. We are aware that the conservation department of the Council try to retain, where possible, the existing windows, however, in our opinion, the first floor windows are now beyond economic repair and replacement should be considered.

4.00 Limitations

- 4.01 Our report covers only the original Union Street section of the building and the extent of our internal inspection was limited on the Second and Attic floor levels and with no inspection of the ground and lower ground floor accommodation.
- 4.02 Our inspection was carried out from street level at the front of the building and from the roof level of the rear extension.
- 4.03 We have not inspected parts of the property which were covered, unexposed or inaccessible and as such cannot guarantee that such parts are free from defects.
- 4.04 This report has been prepared for Baxel Limited and should not be relied upon by any third party without our prior written consent.

We trust we have reported in accordance with your instructions, however, we will be happy to meet and discuss the contents of the report if required.

Yours faithfully



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