Method Statement 03: Programme for Historic Building Assessment & Structural Recording (LEVEL 3)
The Old Grammar School, Hales Street, Coventry

Planning Application FUL/2012/2392: Condition 4, &
Listed Building Consent LB/2012/2375: Condition 4
Prepared on: 10 July 2013

Scope of Work
The approved scheme for the restoration and repair of the Old Grammar School (Planning Application FUL/2012/2392 & Listed Building Consent LB/2012/2375) will affect the Grade I listed complex of buildings centred on the former Medieval Hospital of St John, subsequently used as a Grammar School from 1545, in Hales Street, Coventry.

Condition no. 4 attached to both the grant of planning permission (ref. FUL/2012/2392) & listed building consent (ref LB/2012/2375) therefore requires that:

No demolitions or alterations shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of building assessment and structural recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Once approved the development shall only be undertaken in full accordance with those approved details (or in any subsequently approved amendments).

Following consideration of the development proposal, the Coventry City Council (the local planning authority (LPA)) has requested, as an appropriate level of mitigation, a historic building survey of the structure equivalent to a Level 3 record, as defined by English Heritage (Understanding Historic Buildings, A Guide to Good Recording Practice, English Heritage, 2006).

This survey is to be undertaken by a suitably qualified contractor prior to the implementation of any proposed alterations or demolition.

Site Location and Description
The existing property, which sits on the corner of Hales Street and Bishop Street is a Grade I listed building, being the former Medieval chapel and infirmary hall of St John the
Baptist’s hospital, that was then used as a grammar school from 1557. The existing standing building dates principally to the 14th century, when it was built to replace an earlier 12th century building on this site, with a subsequent two storey extension added to the north side of the medieval building fronting Bishop Street in the early 20th century, and a further single storey extension was added to the rear in the 1960s.

The proposed development also makes provision for the demolition of the neighbouring property at no. 31 Silver Street, to the north of the Listed Building.

A full history of the building is summarised in the Conservation Management Plan that was produced for the Listed Building Consent application.

**Historical and Archaeological Background**

The Old Grammar School is a Grade I listed building and the brief list description describes the property thus:

*Former Chapel of the C12 Hospital of St John, used as a Grammar School from 1545. Sandstone, old tiled roof. C12 lancet windows, blocked, and C13 traceried east window with modern glass. West window blocked. Modern entrance. Buttresses. Dugdale was a scholar here.*

**Previous Work and Archaeological Survey**

Whilst no known archaeological work has previously been carried out on the buildings it is also proposed to undertake a programme of archaeological work as part of these proposals consisting of a mixture of archaeological watching brief and evaluation test pits and trial trenches.

**Project Aims**

The principal aims of this project are to produce a permanent record of the building to a standard that will allow the future understanding and interpretation of the buildings within the context for which they were originally designed as well as later uses. An archive and report will be created as a result of the survey.

**Level of Recording**

The Planning Archaeologist has requested that a level of recording equivalent to a Level 3 record as defined by English Heritage (*Understanding Historic Buildings, A Guide to Good Recording Practice*, English Heritage, 2006). A Level 3 record is a fully analytical record, comprising of an introductory written description followed by a systematic account of the
building’s origins, development and use. The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analysis has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined. It will also include all visual records that may be required to illustrate the building’s appearance and structure and to support a historical analysis.

The information contained in the record will for the most part be obtained through an examination of the building itself, without extensive use of other sources, and it will not normally discuss at any length the building’s broader stylistic historical context and importance.

**Historic Building Recording Methodology**

Prior to the start of any fieldwork, a fieldwork site code will be obtained from the City Council’s Archaeology Officer at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum. This fieldwork code will be clearly marked on all reports, finds and archive material created during the project and will cover all components of the project.

Inevitably there will be information that only emerges as the works progress on site. It is therefore proposed to undertake a phased programme of historic building inspection and recording that will be carried out in advance of and during the development programme.

A suitably qualified contractor or organisation will be appointed to undertake the programme of historic building survey to the standards published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and in accordance with the following methodology.

The Level 3 Record will typically comprise of the following:

1. **The Written Account:**
   - The building’s precise location as a National Grid reference and by address, and a note of any statutory designation (listing, scheduling or conservation area).
   - The date when the record was made, and the name(s) of the recorder(s) and the location of the archive.
   - A table of contents and a list of illustrations or figures.
   - An introduction, setting out the circumstances in which the record was made, its objectives, methods, scope and limitations, and any constraints which limited the achievement of objectives. Where appropriate the brief for the work or the project design should be stated or appended.
   - Acknowledgements to all those who made significant contributions – practical, intellectual or financial – to the record or its analysis, or who gave permission for
copyright items to be reproduced.

• A discussion of published sources relating to the building and its setting, an account of its history as given in published sources, an analysis of historic map evidence (map regression) and a critical evaluation of previous records of the building, where they exist.

• Copies of historic maps, drawings, views or photographs illustrating the development of the building or its site (the permission of owners or copyright holders may be required) may be added as necessary, for example to meet the wider needs of a conservation project.

• Full bibliographic and other references, or a list of the sources consulted (in long reports it is preferable to include both). Websites which may prove to be ephemeral should be avoided as references wherever possible; where their use is unavoidable the date on which the site was consulted should be noted.

• A statement describing the building’s plan, form, function, age and development sequence. The names of architects, builders, patrons and owners should be given where known.

• An account of the building’s overall form and of its successive phases of development, and of the evidence supporting this analysis.

• An account of the building’s past and present use, and of the use of its parts, with the evidence for these interpretations. An account of any fixtures or fittings associated with the building, and its purpose.

• Any evidence for the former existence of demolished structures or plan associated with the building.

• Copies of other records of the building, or a note of their existence and location.

• A note of the building’s past and present relationship to its setting: for example, its relationship to local settlement patterns; its part in a larger architectural or functional group of buildings; its visual importance as a landmark etc.

• Where appropriate the account shall include a note of the significance of the building locally, regionally or nationally, in terms of its origin, purpose, form, construction, design, materials or status.

2. **Drawn Record:**

• Measured plans (to scale or full dimensioned) of all main floors as existing. The plans should show the form and location of any structural features of historic significance, such as blocked doors, windows and fireplaces; masonry joints, ceiling beams and changes in floor and ceiling levels, and any evidence for fixtures of significance.
• Measured drawings (to scale or fully dimensioned) recording the form and location of other significant structural detail (e.g. Timber or metal framing roofs).
• Measured cross sections, long sections or elevational sections to illustrate the vertical relationships within a building (e.g. ceiling heights; differing floor heights; roof trusses).
• Measured drawings showing the form of any architectural decoration (the moulding profiles of door surrounds, beams, mullions and cornices, for example) or small-scale functional detail not more readily captured by photography. A measured detail potential drawing is particularly valuable when the feature in question is an aid to dating.
• Measured elevations, where these are necessary to an understanding of the building’s design, development or function and not more readily obtained by photography.
• A plan or plans identifying the location and direction of accompanying photographs.

3. **Photographic Record:**
• A general view or views of the building in its wider setting or landscape.
• Views of the building’s external appearance. Typically a series of oblique views will show all external elevations of the building, and give an overall impression of its size and shape. Where an individual elevation embodies complex historical information, views at right angles to the plane of the elevation may also be appropriate.
• Further views, where desirable, to indicate the original design intentions of the builder or architect, where these are known from documentary sources or can be inferred from the building or its setting.
• The overall appearance of the principal rooms and circulation areas.
• Any external or internal detail, structural or decorative, which is relevant to the building’s design, development or use and which does not show adequately on general photographs.
• Any dates or other inscriptions, any signage, makers’ plates or graffiti which contribute to an understanding of the building or its fixtures, if not adequately captured by transcription. A contemporaneous transcription should be made wherever characters are difficult to interpret.
• Any building contents or ephemera which have a significant bearing on the building’s history, where not sufficiently treated in general photographs.
Monitoring
To enable the City Council’s archaeologist to monitor the work, the archaeological contractor will give at least one week’s written notice of the commencement of the archaeological programme. In addition, prior to the start of works, the contractor shall provide a timetable of proposed works and ensure that the City Council’s archaeologist is kept regularly informed regarding the progress of the project. Any significant variation to the agreed programme will be notified to the City Council’s archaeologist.

Reports & Archive
A digital pdf copy of the survey and report will be submitted to the LPA within 2 months of the completion of the fieldwork to seek a formal discharge of the appropriate planning conditions.

Following the approval of the survey and report the archive consisting of the full written, drawn and photographic record will be deposited with the City Council’s Archaeology Officer.

A copy of the final report/s will also be deposited digitally or sent as a paper copy with the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project.

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