

Heritage, Design & Access Report

14-16 Castlegate, York, YO1 2DN



Higgs Young Architects
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Introduction

This Planning and Listed Building Consent application relates to a terrace of three properties at nos. 12, 14 & 16 Castlegate. The site is within the York Central Historic Core Conservation Area and the properties are Grade 2 Listed.

The properties were previously in use as 9 no. residential units and are currently vacant. Despite significant historic internal alterations in their conversion to flats they retain much of their historic fabric and detail. This application proposes the restoration of the building fabric and to revert to their original use as 3 single dwelling houses.

1.0 Heritage - Context

- 1.1 The site is within the York City Centre Character Area 12: Kings Staith & Coppergate Centre. In developing proposals for the site the prevailing character of the area and opportunities to enhance its special character have been investigated.

In line with the LDF Core Strategy Heritage Topic Paper the principle characteristics have been identified which create the setting for this important, historic terrace of houses.

- 1.2 The site has a strong urban form, within a townscape of compact, dense urban grain, typical for the historic centre. The terrace building line follows the curve of Castlegate, an important historic street which once formed the east side of a Franciscan Friary. Prior to the creation of Clifford Street was the main thorough fare to the Castle.

- 1.3 This narrow street with small irregular public spaces is an intimate urban space, with rich time-depth townscape and punctuated by the landmark Grade 1 listed buildings of St Mary's Church, Castlegate House and Fairfax House. Castlegate is highlighted in the Conservation Area Appraisal as being within the 'dense historic commercial core – the pedestrian realm'.

Once a bustling commercial street, today Castlegate is a quiet back street, but a well-used pedestrian link to Cliffords Tower and the Coppergate shopping centre and car parks.

- 1.4 There is a variety of architectural styles along Castlegate but a harmony of materials, scale and detail. The roofscape and original frontages of the application site make an important contribution to this character.

- 1.5 The variety of uses in the city centre, with compact residential and commercial uses co-existing, is a key contributor to the city being 'alive' at all times of the day. Policy aims to conserve and enhance this rich mix of uses.

- 1.6 The continued presence of residential community within the historic core is also considered fundamental to the special character and economic vitality of the city centre.

2.0 Heritage – Application Site Existing Buildings at 12, 14 & 16 Castlegate

2.1 Historic England Listing - FRIARGATE HOUSE

List entry Number: 1259334

FRIARGATE HOUSE, 12, 14 AND 16, CASTLEGATE

District: York

Grade: II

Date first listed: 14-Jun-1954

SE6051NW CASTLEGATE 1112-1/28/138 (South West side) 14/06/54
Nos.12, 14 AND 16 Friargate House (Formerly Listed as: CASTLEGATE
Nos.12 AND 14) (Formerly Listed as: CASTLEGATE No.16)

*Terrace of three houses, now flats. Nos 12 and 14 early C18; No.16
early C19; later alteration.*

*MATERIALS: pink-orange brick, in Flemish bond at front, stretcher bond
on right return, on chamfered brick plinth; timber door cases and
moulded eaves cornice on consoles, returned at right end. Double span
pantile roof with brick copings and kneelers to Nos 12 and 14; slate roof
at lower level to No.16: brick stacks. Roof right return twin gabled with
ramped-up parapet and coping masking valley.*

*EXTERIOR: 3-storey front on semi-basement; 7 windows. 3 windows
behind grilles in basement. 3 door cases, of plain pilasters on tall
pedestals, with plain friezes and cornice hoods, those to Nos 14 and 16
paired. 6-panel door beneath over-light to No.12: doors to Nos 14 and
16 are 4-panelled and recessed beneath margin-glazed over-lights at
head of short flights of steps. All ground and first floor windows are 12-
pane sashes, except that on ground floor of No.16, which is 16-pane
sash between sunk-panel shutters. Second floor windows are squat 6-
pane sashes. All windows have painted stone sills and flat arches of
gauged brick. Brick bands to first and second floors, returned at right
end. Right return: 3 storeys and attics; 2 gabled bays. Central doorcase
as on main front, approached by flight of steps, with 6-panel door
beneath radial fanlight in panelled reveal. Windows on first and second
floors are 2-light sliding sashes; attics have squat 6-pane sashes. All
windows have elliptical arches of brick. Elongated S-shape and circular
tie rod ends and plates.*

INTERIOR: not inspected.

- 2.2 The Grade 2 listed properties at nos. 12 and 14 Castlegate are some of the oldest 18th century house on the street possibly built in 1730 and described in 'An inventory of the Historical Monuments in City of York' (Vol. 5 central, 1981) as follows:

*"This terrace of three houses, Nos. 12, 14, 16 (Fig. 66), has retained its
domestic character throughout. Nos. 12 and 14 were built perhaps c. 1730 as
a pair of three-storey houses, similar but not identical, with fireplaces on the
party wall and transverse staircases between front and back rooms. The
entrance to each house is from a through-passage and into the stair hall. The
passage to the entrance to No. 14 is within the structure of No. 16, which was*

built in the early 19th century, conforming to the size, plan type and elevation of the earlier pair.

The houses have semi-basements and on the front elevation there are brick strings at the first and second floors. The walling is of common brick with red brick dressings to Nos. 12 and 14. The original timber eaves cornice has been replaced by a smaller one. The N.W. side elevation has two gables with the parapet swept in a semicircle between them (Plate 136); the windows are set under elliptical arches. Nos. 12 and 14 have the original close-string staircases with turned balusters."

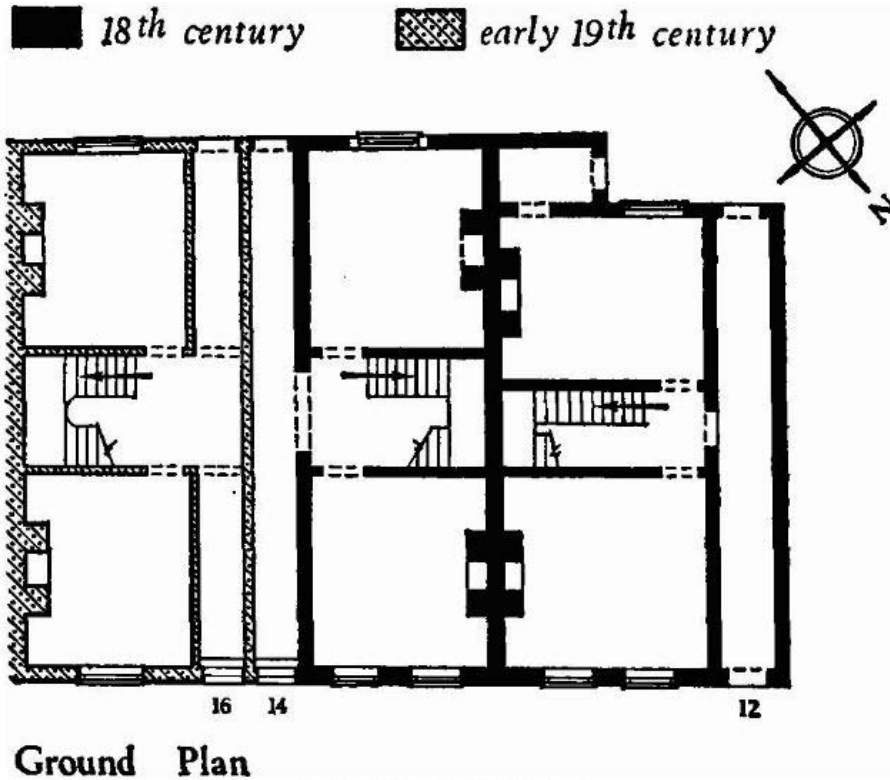


Fig. 66. (85) Nos. 12, 14, 16 Castlegate.



(85) No. 12 Castlegate, c. 1730.

Plan and Photo of gable at 12 Castlegate
(An inventory of the Historical Monuments in City of York (Vol. 5 central, 1981))

2.3 20th century Alterations

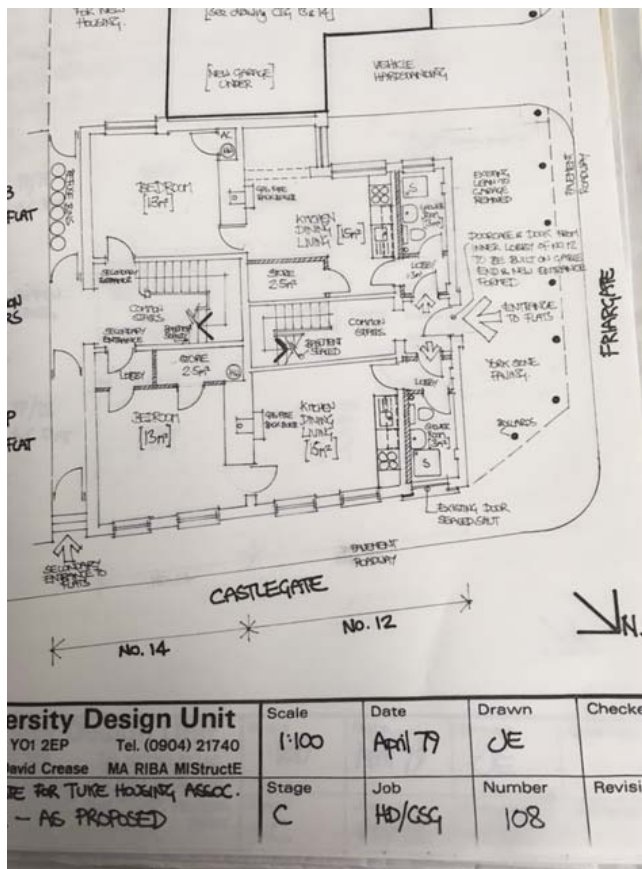
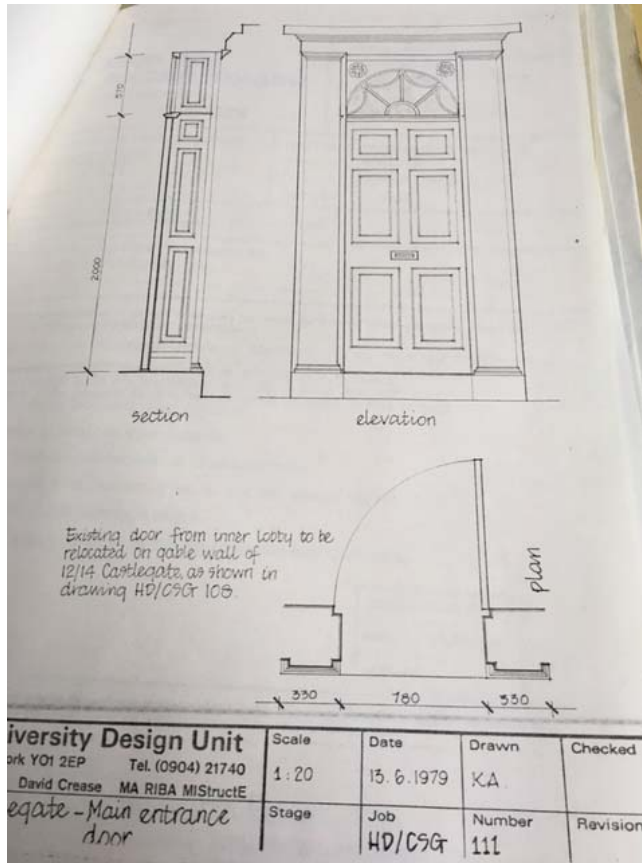
In 1979 after a lengthy planning process the buildings were converted to be flats. The most significant external alteration was the creation of a new doorway on Friargate. An existing internal lobby door was repositioned onto the gable wall, with a new door surround and steps formed to become the main access for the block of flats.

Fortunately CoYC Conservation officers at the time insisted that fire separation and other building control requirements be done from above to retain the ceilings and cornices. Partitions were also upgraded and new dividing walls inserted to retain the skirtings and existing doors were upgraded and retained wherever possible.

Internally joinery, staircases, doors and fireplaces were retained or boarded over such that today there is great scope for restoration of the properties to their original plan form and detail.



View of Castlegate 1979 (CoYC Planning Files)



Relocating an inner door to the external wall and internal alterations approved in 1979 (CoYC planning files)

3.0 Existing Buildings Condition Survey

At time of writing transfer of ownership of the properties is ongoing and this historic fabric condition survey has been done as a preliminary investigation. A further detailed analysis and proposals will follow prior to works starting on site.

3.1 External Elevation facing Friargate

The external façades are intact as listed but have suffered from a lack of maintenance since their conversion to flats and over recent years when they have been left vacant and unoccupied.



Ground Floor façade facing Friargate (St Mary's Church in the background)



Main entrance and elevation to Friargate

Friargate House (nos. 12 & 14 Castlegate) has its main entrance off Friargate. The main entrance is centrally placed with a painted timber door surround, and accessed by three stone steps supported on brick risers. The steps are not original, simple square edges paving slabs which show some damage and have plants growing at their edges.

The lower brickwork courses to this elevation also have plant growth, moss and staining. At ground level the brickwork appears to have a band of wet brickwork running across indicated by darker brick colour, which could possibly be caused by the use of the internal rooms behind as showers.

The historic photograph evidences extensive brick repairs to the second floor of this façade. Areas of more recent brickwork repairs have taken place at roof gable level and also underneath the 2nd floor window above the entrance. The brickwork to the elevation facing Friargate also displays a number of areas that have been previously used for flues or services that have been bricked up. Six no. replacement boiler flues have then been inserted at a higher level through the brickwork.

There are many historic cast iron ties painted black on the façade which provide visual historical interest. However, the boiler flues and additional brown pvc extract vent covers create visual clutter and are not in keeping with nor enhance the building's character.

There are 4 windows on this façade, two over the entrance which are positioned on the staircase landings and two in the gables which light the roof space attics. With the exception of the 2nd floor window all are in fair condition and need only decorating. The 2nd floor horizontal sliding sash requires timber repairs to the lower edge of one of its sashes.

3.2 External Elevation Facing Castlegate

The elevation to Castlegate, has paired doors to nos. 16 & 14. With an unused door to no. 16. The Castlegate elevation is intact with cornice, string courses and all original windows in place.





The doorways and surrounds to nos. 16 and 14 have five bull nosed stone steps to their entrances. The risers to two steps have been replaced with air bricks and the lower riser of no. 14 is broken.

The door surround is mainly intact but requires decoration. The lower edge has water damage and the boot scraper is broken at no. 14.



The entrances and brickwork above have been damaged by water from a broken gutter and rainwater hopper above. At the lower ground level the brickwork has suffered from damp, but otherwise the brickwork on this elevation is in fair condition. The historic subsidence of the corner of the building is evidenced by the sharply angled frame to the redundant doorway and window above to the house at no. 12. This long standing repair will be investigated further when works start on site.

All other sash windows and cills are intact and in fair condition requiring only over hauling and decoration.



Distorted doorway and sash window to no. 12 Castlegate

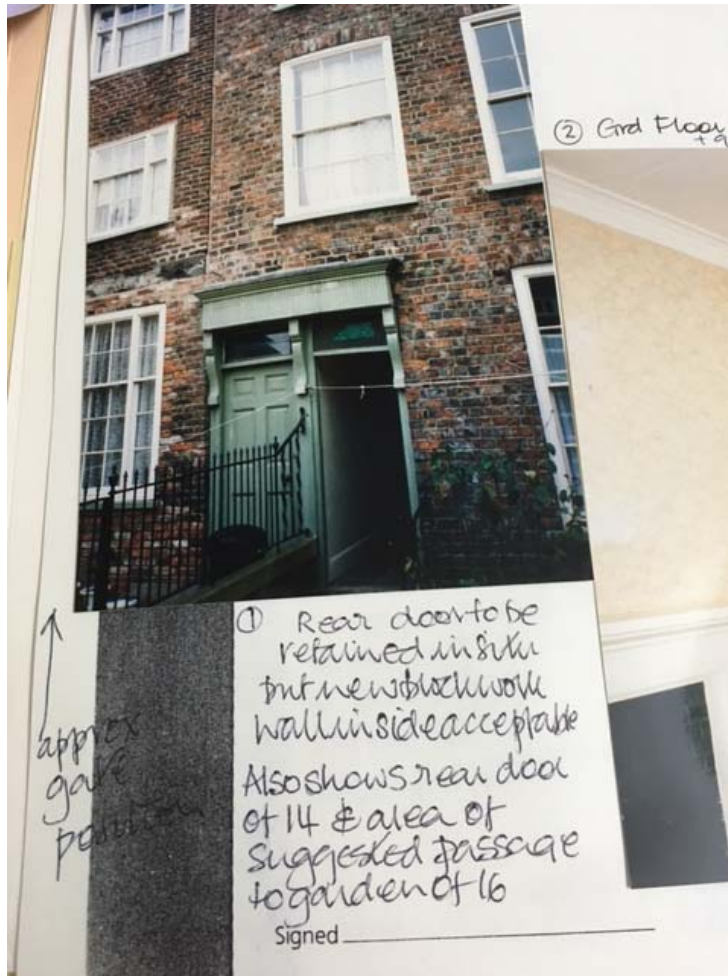
3.3 Rear Elevation

The rear elevation to the terrace is not prominent form the public realm but the rooftops can be seen from the garden to the Friends Meeting House off Friargate. The roofs have been recently repaired and the tiles and lead flashing appears to be sound



Rear View Roof top to Nos. 12 & 14 Rooftop to No. 12 Castlegate

The rear of the properties have not been accessible to date and a full schedule of condition will be undertaken prior to works starting on site.



Photograph of rear doors to Nos.14 and 16 taken in 1979 (CoYC planning files)



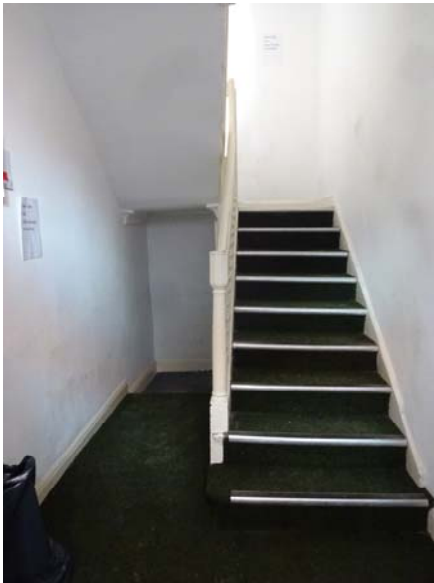
View of No. 12 seen from Friargate



Windows to rear elevation of No. 12

3.4 Interiors – Staircases

All three original staircases are intact. All have simple stairs down to the basement areas.



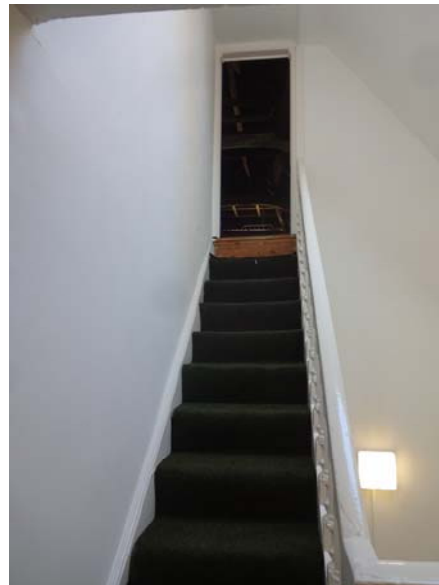
Staircase at No. 12 Castlegate.



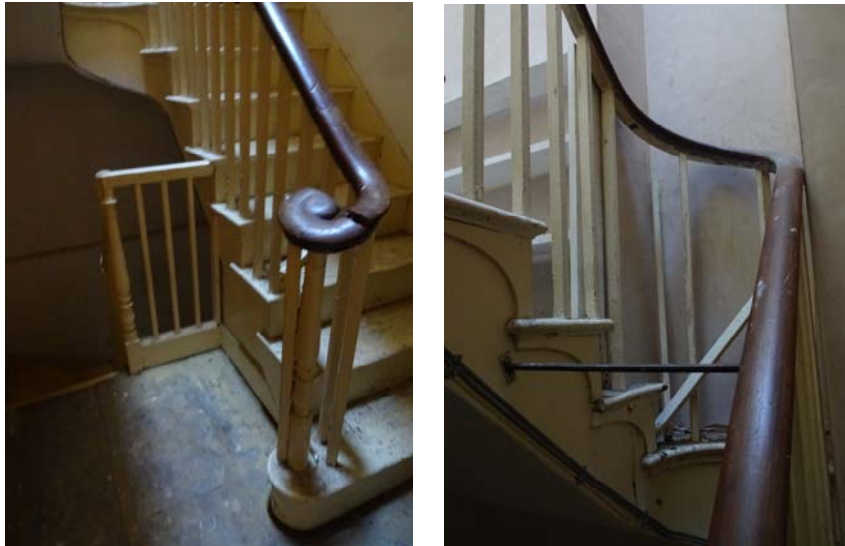
Balustrade, strings and handrail complete and painted. Stairs covered with carpet and nosings.



Staircase at No. 14 Castlegate.



Balustrade, strings and handrail painted. The conversion added timber boxings and cupboards in places. York stone paving at landings with steps covered with carpet and nosings. A more modern access stair is extant up from 2nd floor landing to access the roof space attics above both nos. 12 and 14. The stairwell has been extended vertically and opened up with a Velux rooflight added to light the space.

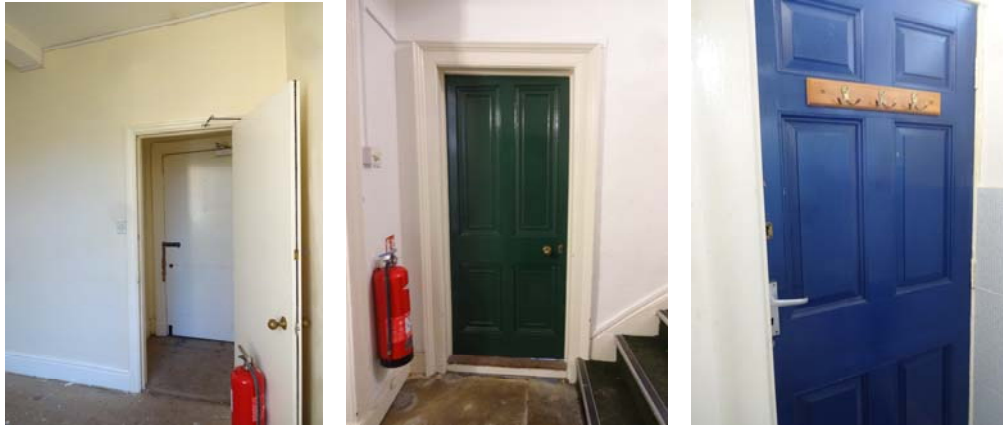


The staircase at No. 16

Staircase is intact and requires minor repairs to fabric damage by it being walled off with plasterboard partitions for building regulation compliance when the building was converted to flats.

3.5 Interiors – Doors and Joinery





Period panel doors are existent to principle rooms in all three buildings. Doors opening onto the staircases have been lined or replaced with fire doors. Skirtings, architraves and other joinery items are generally intact.

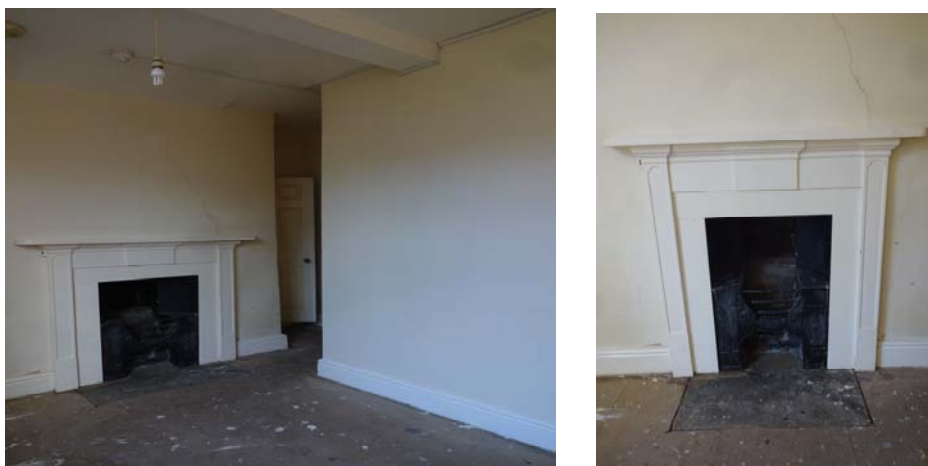
Cornices to ceilings indicate original rooms and where missing will be reinstated.

There are no cornices at 2nd floor level.

3.6 Interiors – Fireplaces



12 Castlegate Ground Floor Fireplace and Basement Range



14 Castlegate Ground Floor Fireplaces



14 Castlegate 1st Floor Fireplace



12 Castlegate 1st Floor Fireplace

The principle rooms have fire surrounds and hearths as indicated on drawing HYA 01 Existing Plans. In places hearths have been over boarded and site investigations will take place once soft strip demolition is approved.

3.7 Interiors – Attics



Attic to no. 12 Castlegate

Original timber roof structure – no changes proposed to attics other than restoration of existing and reorganization of services. Spaces to remain as storage use.



Attic to no. 14 Castlegate

This has had an access stair built and requires further investigation on site. No access is currently possible to the attic at no. 16 Castlegate.

4.0 Proposals

4.1 The properties have been converted to 9 no. 1 bed flats and this introduced the need to partition many of the principle rooms to create kitchens, WCs, boiler cupboards and bathrooms. The proposals seek to remove these modern stud and plasterboard partitions, along with their modern flush doors. This allows the reinstatement of the historic plan and layout of the original houses.

4.2 In the conversion to flats access to the rear small room of no. 12 was altered to be joined to no. 14 and in the current proposals this will revert to the original plan as indicated in the plan in the Inventory of the Historical Monuments in City of York.

4.3 The staircases will be restored to serve the single house to which they belong.

The staircase in no. 12 will be retained as existing giving access from basement to 2nd floor. A small attic stair exists to the front roof space only and access to the rear attic will need to be by hatch in the ceiling of the rear bedroom.

The staircase in no. 14 will be retained as existing giving access from basement to 2nd floor. The upper flight which is a non-original staircase is proposed to be altered at the top to access just its own attic.

In the roof space the party wall will be built up in brickwork to form compliant separation between the two houses at no. 14 and no. 12.

The staircase in no. 16 will be opened up and restored to access basement to 2nd floor. The roofspace in no. 16 will be accessed by a hatch in the ceiling.

4.4 The roof spaces will be plain floor boarded for storage with access hatches.

4.5 Basements will be tanked for utility and storage uses. No excavation or underpinning is proposed. The ground floor walls will have injected dpc added. Plants, mold and moss will be removed from the lower brickwork and stone paving.

4.6 There are 9 no. existing gas and electricity meters on site. Once the terrace is converted back to be 3 house 6 of each can be removed and 3 relocated to serve an individual property. Services runs will be at basement level and avoid the need for any excavation in Castlegate itself.

The properties will be fully rewired for building regulations compliance sensitively to avoid damage to partitions and ceilings.

Proposed gas central heating will be retained to the properties but with cast iron radiators fitted throughout.

4.7 External rainwater goods and gutters will be replaced and any new proposed to be in cast iron to match existing.

4.8 Brickwork will be repointed and repaired where necessary. The approach to repair will be conservative, in line with SPAB guidance. That is, past repairs

will be retained as part of the history of the building. Similarly the subsiding brickwork at the corner will not be interrupted if structural engineers deem it safe.

- 4.9 All windows will be retained, overhauled and repaired where necessary.
- 4.10 Decorations externally to all windows and doors and surrounds. Paint scraping to be undertaken on existing frames and original colour determined. Colour to be agreed with Conservation Officer.

5.0 Planning Policy

- 5.1 The current planning use is for 9 no. 1 bed flats. Basement and attic spaces are unused. There is no level access to the properties which all have raised ground floor levels. The properties were vacated in 2015 and remain unoccupied today.

A pre-application by the Yorkshire Housing Association for change of use was made when the properties were vacated in April 2015 with conversion to single dwelling houses viewed favourably.

- 5.2 Planning advice noted the desirability of preserving the buildings and their historic interest alongside enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 5.3 NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development that comprises an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.
- 5.4 The Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment has established a need for family sized housing units within the City Centre. In this area there is a mixed use of residential unit sizes and single dwelling house use would be appropriate in the area and not harm the conservation area character or local amenity.
- 5.5 More problematic is the need for Part M disability access and as all three buildings have stepped entrances to ground level compliance would require significant alterations to both the internal and external listed building fabric.
- 5.6 The current proposals take on board the comments from the Pre App which highlighted the high heritage significance of the buildings within the historic Central Core of York City.

The proposals represent a unique opportunity to restore a row of intact Georgian town houses, preserving their building fabric, restoring their original plan form and enhancing the conservation area.

6.0 Access

- 6.1 The site is highly accessible within the historic core and city centre. There are numerous bus routes and stops on the nearby Clifford Street and York railway Station is within walking distance.

- 6.2 Parking and vehicular access is restricted in this part of the city centre. Pedestrian movements are a priority as Castlegate is on a key tourist and shopping access to Cliffords Tower and Coppergate facilities.

The prevailing site layout and historic street line dictates that no parking on site can be provided. Residents in this location can apply for long term parking in St Georges Fields car park, approximately a 5-10 minute walk away.

- 6.3 Cycle parking is possible on the private forecourt of no. 12 facing Friargate. No. 14 has no external space and cycle storage would be in the basement level. No. 16 has private open space to the rear and it proposed that this would be used for cycle parking.

7.0 Refuse & recycling

Due to the dense city centre location and hard site boundary refuse and recycling will necessarily need to be stored within or at the rear of the properties. All houses will have substantial basements with space for refuse and recycling storage. This will be put out at prescribed times as with existing residential properties on Castlegate.

Conclusions and Benefits

- This project present a rare opportunity to restore a row of three historic houses in the city centre.
- All listed building fabric will be retained and restored.
- Repairs and any new work will match period materials and detail as existing in the properties. (Note that this is a preliminary schedule of condition and works which will be updated when full access to the properties is possible).
- The residential use will create 3 family sized city centre dwellings in a sustainable location.
- The properties have been vacant for some time and have suffered damage with maintenance neglected. Providing viable long term uses for listed buildings safeguards their future.
- The proposals will enhance the Conservation Area character by the careful restoration of the listed buildings.