

Application: F/YR14/0545/F

AGENDA ITEM NO. 06

Minor

Parish/Ward: March Town Council

Date Received: 7 July 2014

Expiry Date: 22 September 2014

Applicant: Snowmountain Enterprises Ltd

Agent: Morton & Hall Consulting Ltd

Proposal: Change of use of part of building from offices/storage to 1 x 2-bed dwelling and 1 x 2-bed flat involving the insertion of 9 rooflights, the erection of 1 no chimney stack erection of 1 no dormer window and replacement of existing uPVC windows with timber sash windows

Location: 93 High Street, March

Reason before Committee: This application is before committee as an elected Member has an interest in the site. Should this not have been the case it would have been determined under delegated powers by Officers.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/ RECOMMENDATION

This application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of part of the existing building into a 2-bed dwelling (maisonette) and a 1 bedroom flat and involving the replacement of windows and the erection of a chimney stack. Please note that there is an associated application requesting Listed Building consent for internal and external works ref: F/YR14/0546/LB.

The key issues to consider are;

- Policy Considerations;
- Design and Appearance
- Ability to protect and conserve the Historic Environment
- Health & Wellbeing
- Economic Growth

The property is a Grade II listed building set within The March Conservation Area and March Town centre. The building is currently used for a mixture of B1 offices, A1 retail and, storage area and caretakers office in association with the Cromwell Hotel adjacent. The areas proposed for residential conversion are currently underused and evidence suggests that the building did, in part used to provide residential accommodation in the attic space. Prior to the submission of this proposal pre-application advice was sought from the conservation team, building control and the fire officer. The proposed scheme was, in principle, supported and the application submitted reflects the matters discussed.

It is felt the creation of residential space within this building can be achieved in a manner which preserves the character and appearance of the host building, the amenities of neighbouring properties and the character of the conservation area in general.

The recommendation is therefore to approve the application as it accords with policies LP2, LP3, LP16 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014 and sections 7 and 12 of the NPPF.

2. HISTORY

Of relevance to this proposal is:

2.1	F/93/0720/LB	Internal and external alterations etc -	Approved 25.10.94
	F/90/0721/F	Change of use to create 2 flats -	Approved 25.10.94
	F/93/0562/F	Change of use of existing offices to dwelling –	Approved 08.06.94.
	F/93/0558/LB	Internal alterations etc. -	Approved 08.06.94.

3. PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework:

Paragraph 2: Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan.

Paragraph 14: Presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Section 7: Requiring Good Design

Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment

3.2 Emerging Fenland Core Strategy:

LP2: Health & Wellbeing

LP3: Spatial Strategy & Settlement hierarchy

LP6: Employment, Tourism, Community Facilities and Retail

LP16: High Quality Environments

LP18: Conserve and enhance the historic environment.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 **Town Council**

Recommend Approval

4.2 **CCC Highways**

1 x 2-bed dwelling and 1 x 2-bed flat should have 2 and 1 parking spaces respectively. I note on the application form three have been indicated, but no parking spaces specifically relating to the proposed development are clear on the submitted plans.

Defer for amended plans to clearly show the parking allocated to this development. Subject to approving a revised plan I would have no highway objections subject to the following condition;

Prior to the first occupation of the development the on-site parking /turning shall be laid out in accordance with the approved plan and thereafter retained for that specific use.

Reason - To ensure the permanent availability of the parking / manoeuvring area, in the interests of highway safety.

4.3 **FDC Contaminated Land**

No objections

4.4 **Middle Level Commissioners**

Will not be commenting

4.5 **FDC Conservation Officer**

Prior to the submission of this proposal pre-application advice was sought from the conservation team, building control and the fire officer. The proposed scheme was, in principle, supported and the application submitted reflects the matters discussed.

No objections subject to conditions controlling materials, joinery details and details of the proposed chimney stack and fire place prior to development.

4.6 **Local Residents**

No comments received at time of report

5. **SITE DESCRIPTION**

5.1 The site is located within the Conservation Area of March and within the defined town centre area. The existing building is surrounded by manicured lawn and is prominent in the streetscene. The building is subdivided up in use ranging from offices and Hairdressers at the front at ground floor, to caretaker's accommodation and storage rooms towards the rear and at 1st floor level. The existing roof space is mostly vacant save for some small-scale storage. Evidence exists of previous residential use in the attic space. The rear ground and 1st floor and attic space are proposed for residential conversion.

6. **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

6.1 The key issues to consider are;

- Policy Considerations;
- Design and Appearance;
- Ability to protect and conserve the Historic Environment;
- Health & Wellbeing;
- Economic Growth

6.2 **Policy Considerations –**

The proposal is to change the use of some existing rooms within Audmoor House to facilitate the residential conversion, involving the replacement of existing uPVC windows, the erection of a chimney stack and the insertion of 9 rooflights. All other works form internal alterations.

Policy LP3 seeks to focus residential development in the first instance to the market towns, seen as the most sustainable locations.

Securing high quality design is a core planning principle of the NPPF (Section7). Section 12 of the same focusses on the historic environment and seeks to ensure that local authorities take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, whilst also observing the positive role that conservation of

heritage assets can make to the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental setting. The creation of an environment in which communities can flourish is also a key concern of policy LP2 of the Local Plan and an overall driver towards sustainable development.

LP16 seeks to ensure that when considering proposals for new development, issues including the scale, style, character, appearance and amenity protection are taken into consideration, whilst protecting and enhancing heritage assets and their settings in accordance with LP18.

Policy LP6 seeks to retain B1 (Office uses) within town centre locations unless it can be demonstrated through a marketing exercise that the use is no longer viable. Whilst the description indicates that Office space is to be converted to residential use, the site visit has revealed that the proposed residential locations are not in fact currently in use as B1 and instead are partly vacant or partly used for small-scale storage or caretaker premises in association with the adjacent Cromwell Hotel use.

In principle therefore, the formation of residential accommodation within the building is compliant with Policy LP3 and LP6 and should be acceptable subject to its accordance with policies LP2, LP16 and LP18

6.3 Design and Appearance

The proposal will see the installation of replacement timber sash windows with single glazing. These will replace the existing uncharacteristic uPVC double glazed windows and will therefore enhance the character of the host building and Conservation Area in general. In addition, the chimney stack to be erected will appear sympathetic to the building. There is evidence that in fact a chimney originally existed where the proposed is to be erected. 9 Rooflights and 1 dormer window are proposed to be inserted in the roof to provide light to the proposed attic flat. The materials and specification are yet to be fully submitted and agreed, however the proposal at this stage is considered sympathetic to the existing building and will not cause injury to the amenity of neighbouring users or the location in general.

In accordance with the Councils current parking standards and as observed by County Council Highways, the development will trigger the need for a total of 3 parking spaces. The agent has confirmed that users of Audmoor House currently have full use of the adjacent car park which serves the Cromwell Hotel. Although no allocated spaces are provided, it is considered that the acknowledged use of this car park and the close proximity of other public car parks are adequate provision, particularly in view of the town centre location.

6.4 Ability to protect and conserve the Historic Environment

The principle views of this building, which is how it is seen from the street, will see no fundamental changes through the implementation of this scheme. In addition, enhancements will be introduced as a direct result of the proposal by way of replacement fenestration designed to accord with the age of the property, the re-introduction of a chimney stack and associated fireplace. Therefore, the proposal clearly enhances the existing property and protects the character of the historic environment.

6.5 Health and Wellbeing

The Council recognises the positive role that conservation of heritage assets can make to the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental setting and how this can add creation of an environment in which communities can flourish. The proposal will not compromise the living conditions of existing residents and within walking distance town centre services. The development therefore addresses health and well-being principles.

6.6 Economic Growth

The proposal will make use of currently underused space and will provide accommodation in a town centre location thereby ensuring the vitality of viability of the March town centre and supports economic development.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application has been considered in-line with core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework and with policies LP2, LP3, LP6, LP16 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan 2014.
- 7.2 The development accord with LP3 by introducing residential use within the market town of March. It is considered that the proposal is acceptable as it will protect and enhance the historic environment in which it is set in-line with policies LP16 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan. The development will also have a clear positive impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre through enhancing existing heritage asset, enabling communities to enjoy the built and historic environment thereby satisfying policies LP2 and LP6. The development is therefore considered to be sustainable addressing social, economic and environmental considerations and in accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF is recommended for approval.

8. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

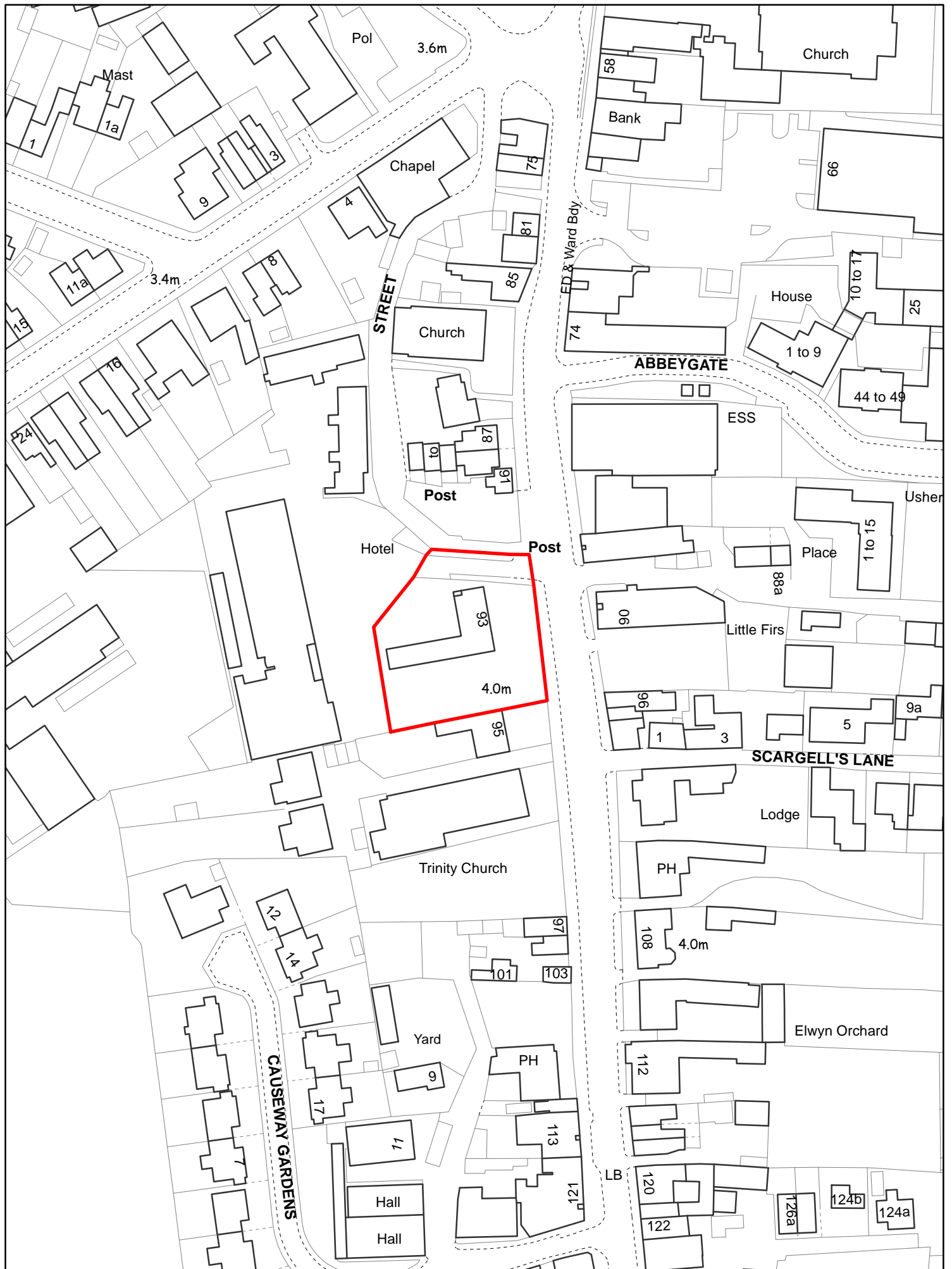
- 8.1 The development permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason - To ensure compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 8.2 Prior to the commencement of works full joinery details for the replacement external windows (scale 1:10) including vertical and horizontal section shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the works carried out in accordance with the approved details and completed prior to the occupation of the flats created under this permission.
- 8.3 Prior to the commencement of works details to include (i) full product information for the specific roof lights to be used, (ii) dormer detail (1:10) including vertical and horizontal sections and (iii) clarification of positioning flues and vents (to be presented on 1:50 plans) and associated product information shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the works carried out in accordance with the approved details.

8.4 A schedule of works detailing the full scheme of work to the fireplace including the reinstatement of the stack along with a brick sample of the brick to be used in the rebuilding of the stack shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

8.5 Approved Plans



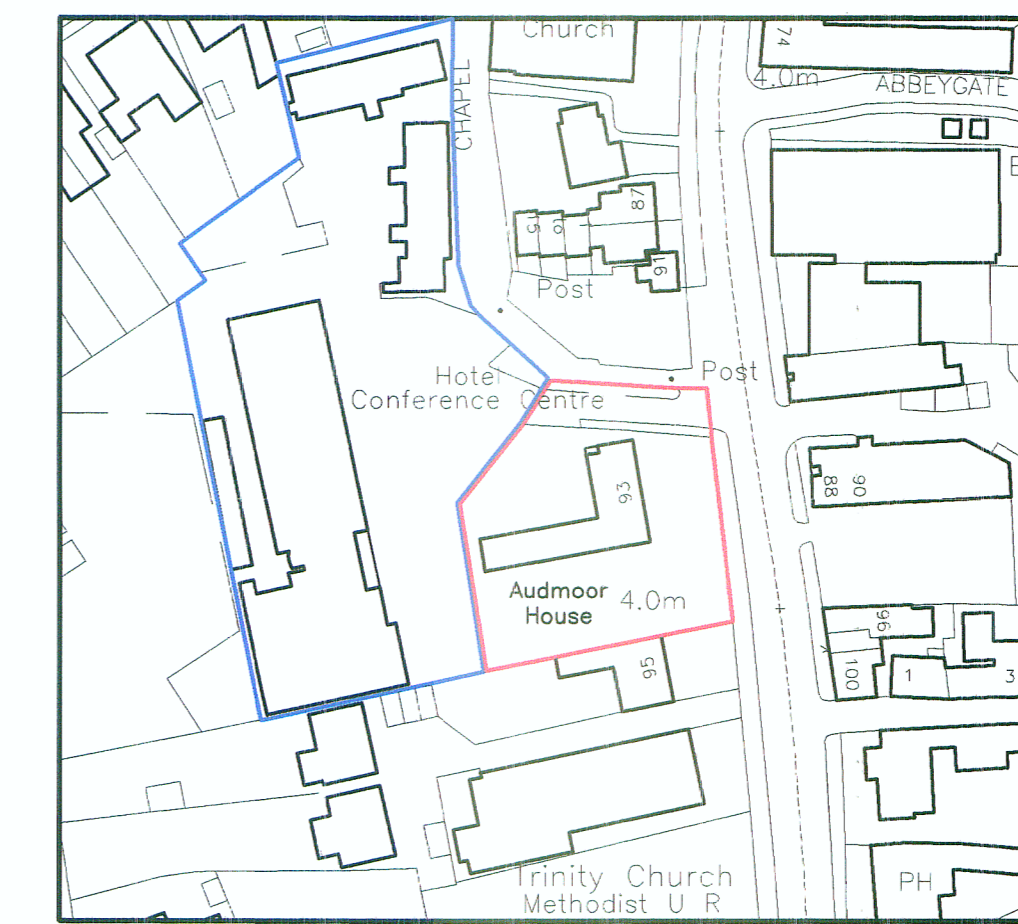
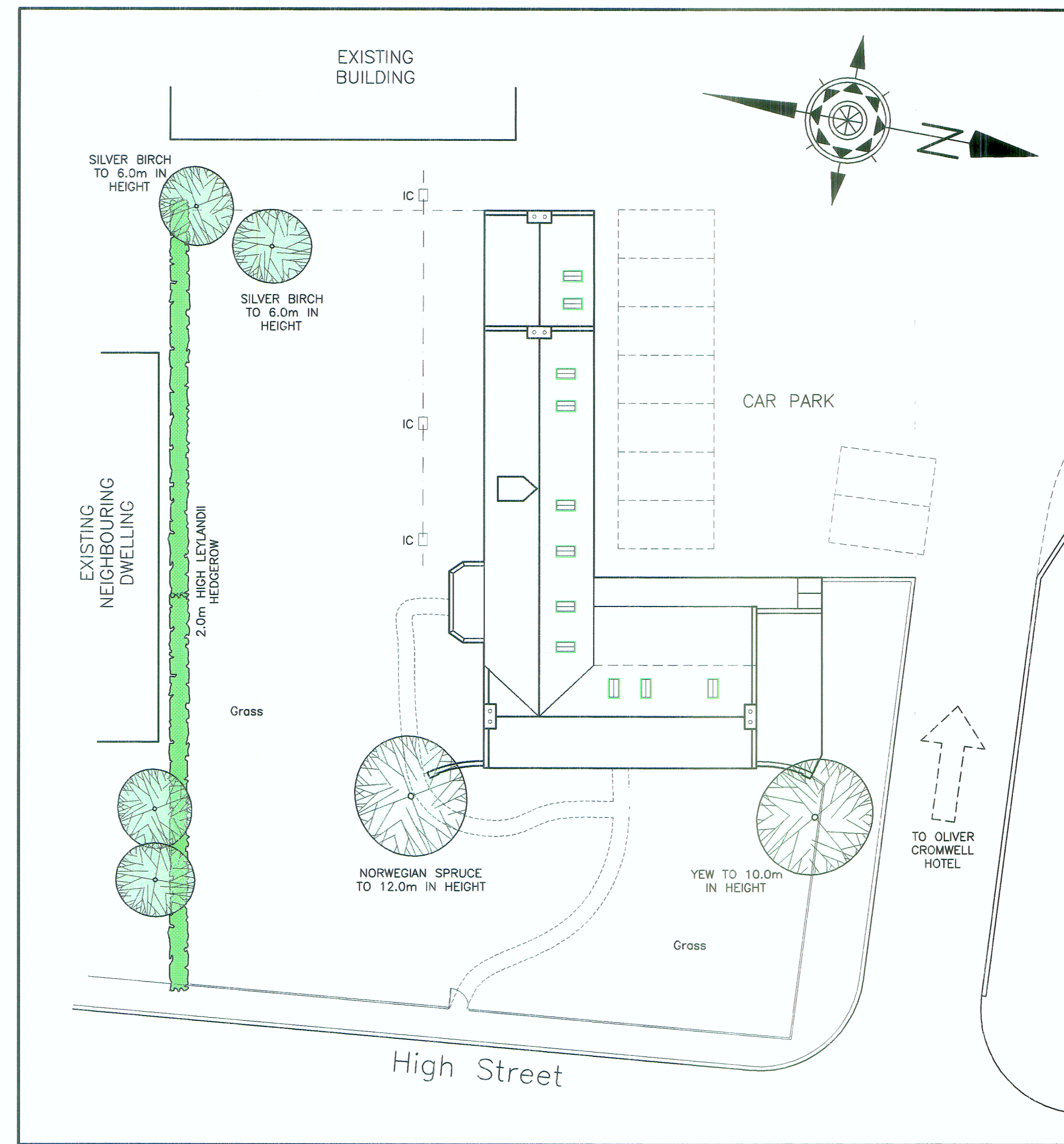
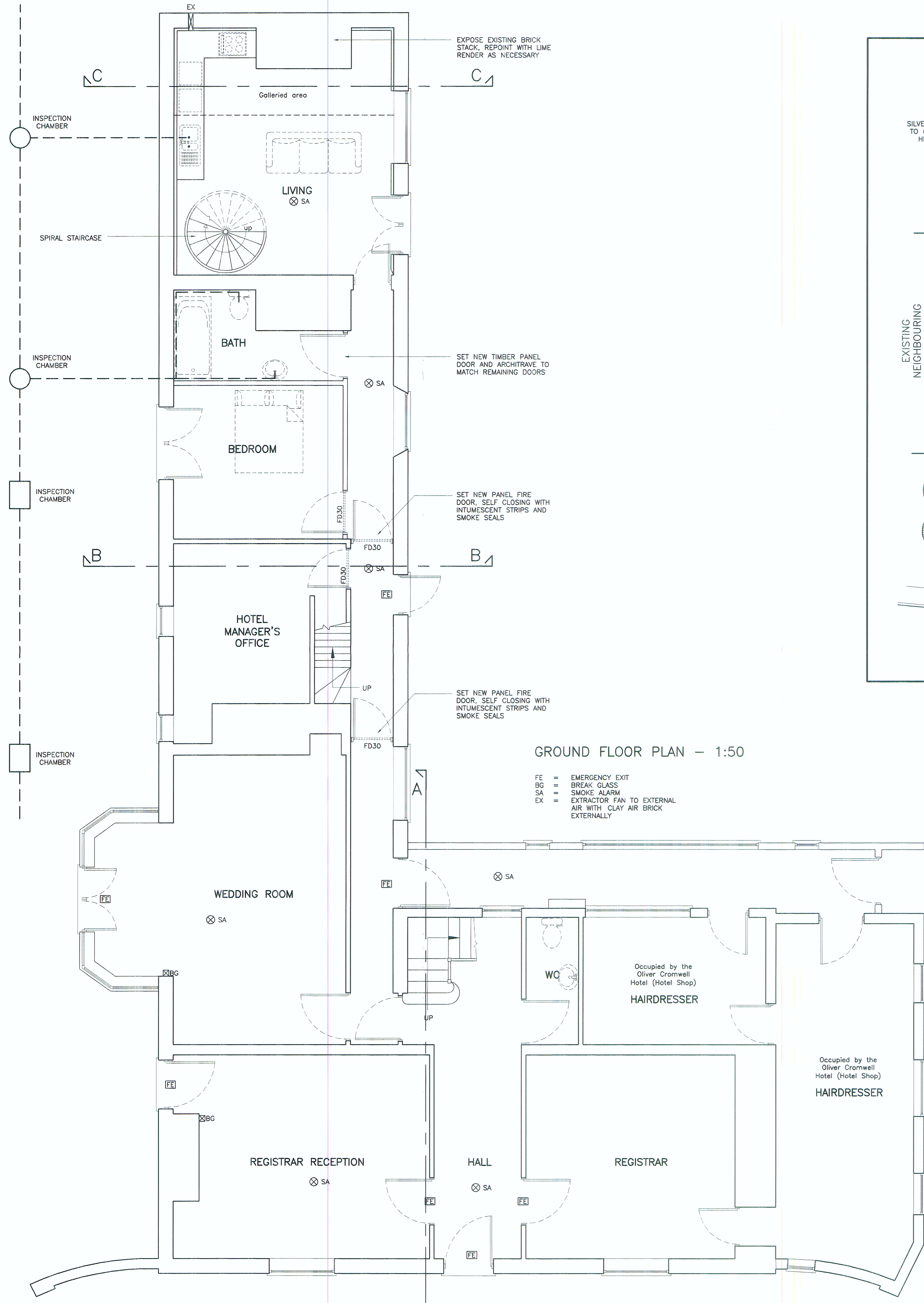
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Scale = 1:1,250





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REVISIONS	DATE
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Snowmountain Investments	
PROJECT Audmoor House, 93 High Street, March, Cambs.	
TITLE Proposed Ground Floor Plan	
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