Heritage Note.

The Priory Pub, Whitechapel Road, Cleckheaton.

On behalf of Highstone Building Services.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Pegasus Group have been commissioned by Highstone Building Services to provide a Heritage Note for the Priory Pub, Whitechapel Road, Cleckheaton. The Note has been produced in response to a consultation comment provided by the West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Services (WYAAS), in association with a planning application for the demolition of the existing public house, and the erection of a new two-storey building comprising 8no. self-contained supported living flats (Application Ref. No. 2025/90665).

1.2. The consultation response provided by WYAAS on 13th May 2025 stated the following:

"The applicant has produced a heritage assessment with gives some reassurance that The Priory has limited heritage potential. However, we note that this appears to be based on external evidence alone. The absence of information about the building's roof structure, an important source of historical information, is a concern.

Given the Priory's status the recommendation to mitigate the destruction of the former pub by a comprehensive archaeological and architectural record is acceptable and can be secured by a suitably worded condition. The best route forward would be to view The Priory's internal arrangements and roof structure (a fabric appraisal). Further advice would be based on this information.

If this shows the core of the building to be of an 18th century or later date then further work can be secured by condition and carried out post determination and prior to determination."

1.3. The Heritage Note comprises a heritage appraisal of the interior of the public house, in order to address the concerns raised by the WYAAS and to further understand the origins of the building and any surviving architectural features to the interior.

1.4. The interior appraisal was undertaken by a Heritage Consultant from Pegasus Group on 29th May 2025. The Note should be read in conjunction with the Built Heritage Statement produced by Pegasus Group in January 2025, to support the planning application.

2. Priory Pub Interior Appraisal

Overview

2.1. The former Priory Public House is not listed and has not been recorded on the West Yorkshire Historic Environment Record. It has also not been included on a local heritage list.

2.2. The Priory Public House, originally known as the Brown Cow Inn, likely dates from the 18th to early 19th centuries. The earliest available documentation of the building dates to the early 19th century; however, modern timber signage on the pub notes the building was established in 1749, with the provenance of this date unknown.

2.3. The public house comprises a two-storey 'L' plan building, with various phases of development. The historic core of the building comprises the two-storey central structure. There is a two-storey long extension attached to its western side, which is taller in height than the host building, and which projects to the south. A two-storey structure is also attached to the eastern side of the building, which is lower in height, as well as a modern single-storey extension.

2.4. The interior of the building is over two-storeys, and has seen extensive modern modifications, resulting in the extensive loss of original or early features. The architectural interest of the interior is contained to the roof structure. The interior of the building is in a very poor state of repair, with extensive damp and mould issues, with the damage to various ceiling and structures noted throughout.

Plate 1: The Priory Public House, Whitechapel Road, Cleckheaton.

Interior – Ground Floor

2.5. The ground floor of the historic core of the building is comprised of a bar and seating area to the south, with toilets to the north. The bar area has seen extensive changes, with interconnectivity with the western and eastern extensions. There is no semblance of the historic layout for the core structure, with no direct first floor access within this area. The ceiling structure of this space has a central exposed faux timber beam, with modern machine cut timber joists and modern timber panelling above. At the western end of the space, there is a buildout with modern stone fireplace. The eastern side of the space has a wide arched opening connecting with the eastern extension. The northern side of the room has a modern timber bar. The toilets within the northern extent of the historic core's ground floor have been entirely modernised, with no features of interest identified.

2.6. The ground floor of the modern single-storey eastern extension is formed of a former pool room, with the two-storey eastern extension comprising a seating area to the south, and storeroom to the north. These spaces are entirely modernised, with the pool room and seating area each featuring modern machine cut exposed timber joists to the ceilings. The ceiling structure of the pool room is in a poor state of repair, with extensive water damage and leaking. The walls of these spaces are predominantly of modern plaster, with the pool room featuring modern faux timber framing to its northern wall, with infill modern brickwork. The northern storeroom is sterile of architectural features, with modern plastered walls and ceiling, and with a concrete floor.

2.7. The ground floor of the western extension is formed of a seating area to the south and a kitchen to the north. These areas are again entirely modernised. The southern seating area has modern and exposed machine cut timber beams to the ceiling structure, with modern stone and plasterwork to the walling. The space has a modern fireplace with buildout, which the occupiers noted was not connected to a flue when installed. The kitchen space to the north has tiled walls and a modern office tiled ceiling. On its southern side there is a **timber staircase** connecting with the first floor, which may be original to the building.

Plate 2: The southern space of the historic core of the building.

Plate 3: The southern space of the historic core of the building.

Plate 4: Modern ceiling structure within the space of the historic core of the building.

Plate 5: Modern bathroom within the northern extent of the historic core's ground floor.

Plate 6: Modern bathroom within the northern extent of the historic core's ground floor.

Plate 7: The ground floor space of the single-storey eastern extension.

Plate 8: The ground floor seating space of the two-storey eastern extension.

Plate 9: The ground floor storeroom of the two-storey eastern extension.

Plate 10: The ground floor seating area of the western extension.

Plate 11: The ground floor kitchen of the western extension.

Plate 12: The timber stairs to the first floor, within the western extension.

Interior – First Floor

2.8. The first floor of the public house's historic core is formed of a central circulation corridor, which provides access to four bedrooms, with two to the south and two to the north. This is unlikely to represent the original formation of the historic core, with first floor access now only possible from the extension to the west. The bedrooms each have low height ceilings, with modern plastered walls. Two of the bedrooms feature a **timber beam** along their eastern wall, which runs across the width of the first floor. These spaces also feature **timber floorboards**, with some areas covered over with carpeting and plywood. Only a single bedroom retains a buildout associated with an earlier fireplace.

2.9. The first floor of the eastern extension comprises a kitchen and living area. These spaces are modernised, with modern plasterwork to the ceilings and walls. The partition wall between these spaces features a **timber beam**, which supports the roof structure above.

2.10. The first floor of the western extension comprises a function room to the south, with two bathrooms and a staircase corridor to the north. The function room comprises a long space, with no historic features identified. The ceiling structure comprises a range of exposed faux timber beams, with several machine cut joists to the north. Damage to the ceiling structure reveals timber lathes, as well as a machine cut beam beneath plasterwork for the faux exposed beam. The eastern wall of the structure has a buildout associated with an earlier fireplace, no longer present. Within the northern extent of the space there is a narrow timber staircase. The staircase corridor within the western extension has an exposed **timber beam** to the ceiling. The staircase has modern timber railings and newell posts. The bathrooms within this area are both modernised, with the larger space featuring extensive damage to the ceiling structure.

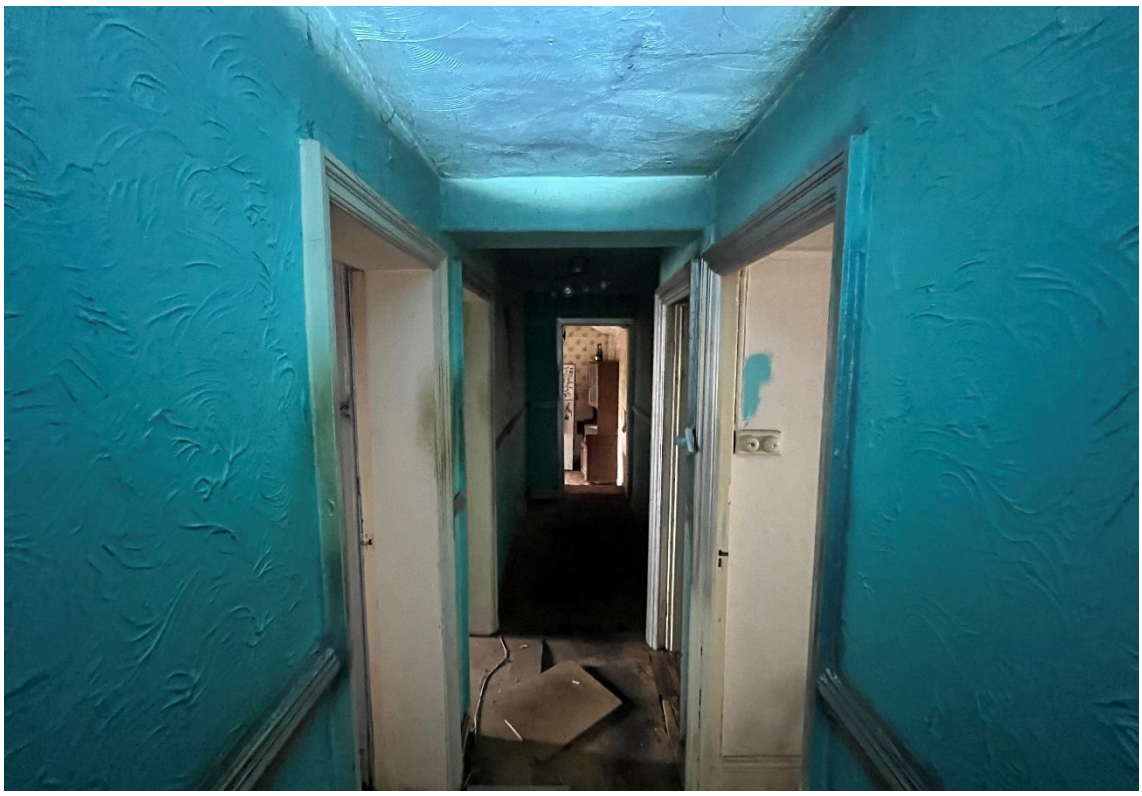

Plate 13: Central corridor of the historic core's first floor.

Plate 14: First floor bedroom with exposed beam.

Plate 15: First floor bedroom within the historic core, with buildout for earlier fireplace.

Plate 16: First floor bedroom of the historic core.

Plate 17: Timber floorboards within the first floor of the historic core.

Plate 18: The kitchen of the first floor eastern extension.

Plate 19: The timber beam within the living space of the eastern extension's first floor.

Plate 20: The function room of the western extension.

Plate 21: Ceiling structure of the function room of the western extension.

Plate 22: Side staircase within the northern extent of the western extension's function room.

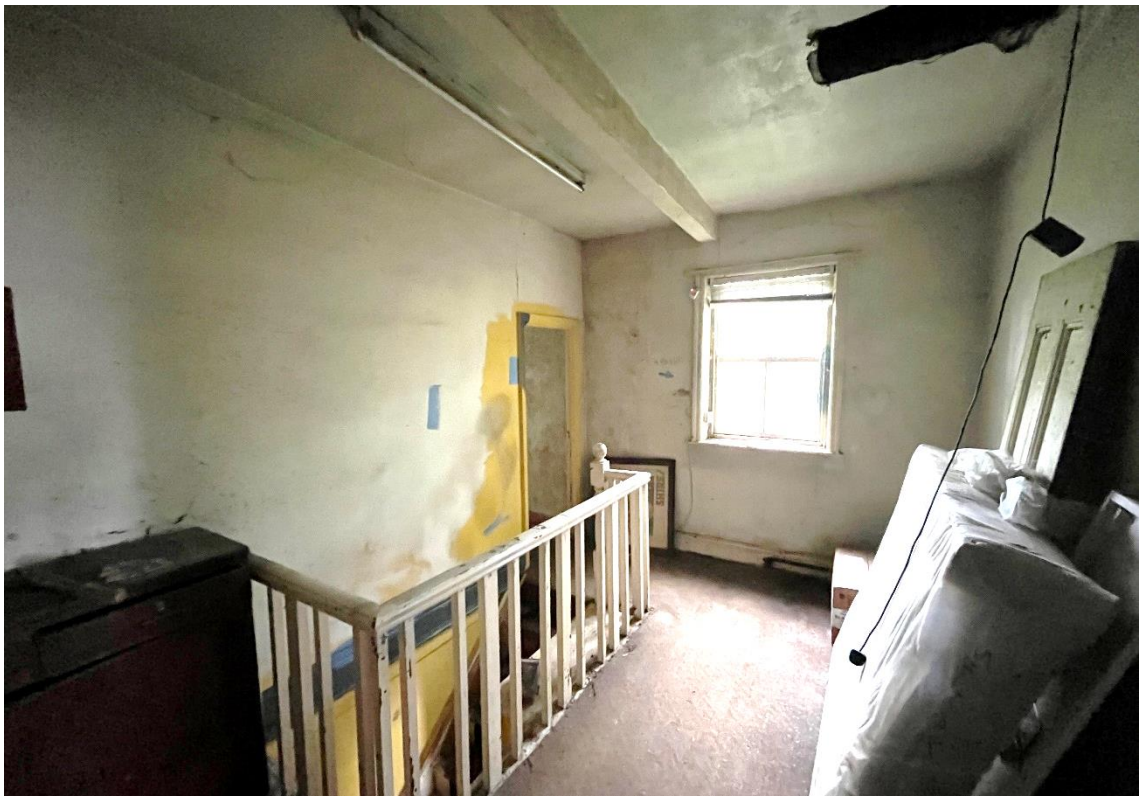

Plate 23: The first floor staircase corridor of the western extension.

Plate 24: Bathroom of the first floor western extension.

Plate 25: Bathroom of the first floor western extension.

Interior – Roof Structure

2.11. The roof structure of the building was partly accessible via ceiling hatches within the first floor of the building. A full inspection of the roofing was not possible, with access contained to a ceiling hatch within a bedroom of the central historic core of the pub, as well as a hatch within the staircase corridor of the western extension. No access was gained to the first floor of the eastern extension.

2.12. For the building's historic core, the roof structure retained historic timbers, supported by modern machine cut timbers. The structure comprised a **king post truss roof** of narrow hand sawn timbers. This comprised a long king post with ridge beam above, with principal through rafters, and a single row of purlins to each side, supporting rafter beams above. The end walls of the building within the roof void appear to be formed of modern brick.

2.13. Within the two-storey western extension, the roof structure retained a historic **queen post truss roof**. This comprised sets of queen posts with struts connected with a straining beam and principal rafters above. The roof structure has two rows of purlins supporting rafter beams above. The roof structure has seen some repair and support work, with modern machine cut beams present.

Plate 26: The roof structure of the central core structure.

Plate 27: The roof structure of the central core structure.

Plate 28: The queen post roof structure of the western extension.

3. Conclusions

3.1. The interior appraisal has determined that the building has a highly limited degree of architectural interest to the interior, with the building having been modernised with the loss of the majority of original and early features. The architectural interest of the interior is localised to the roof structure, which has seen the retention of early timbers. The central core structure retains a king post truss roof, constructed with narrow hand sawn timbers. This roof structure indicates that the core building likely has origins in the 18th century, which corresponds with the evidence of the building's exterior and documentary research. The western extension also retains a queen post truss roof. This suggests that the structure may also have origins in the 18th century.

3.2. Should a condition for Historic Building Recording be imposed by the LPA in mitigation of the demolition of the public house, it is recommended that this comprises a Level 1 or 2 record at most, given the limited architectural interest of the building, and the limited potential for this survey to yield additional information through the analysis of fabric.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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