

FURTHER CAAG COMMENT ON THE AMENDED PLANNING APPLICATION 21/02292/FUL

CAAG COMMENT ON THE OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL/COMMUNITY CENTRE SITE PALACE STREET. November 2021 As previously posted CAAG believes that the planning application 21/02292/FUL falls into two discrete parts. The restoration of the 1754 Mansion House which is Grade 11* listed to create office and training spaces and nine flats. The other section is to construct a workshop/garage and now one new house to the rear. The site of this proposed development lies within an area enclosed by the earlier Edwardian and later Elizabethan Walls, themselves scheduled and listed. CAAG accepts that the applicant has attempted to address that any development must be sensitive so that the sight lines from the ramparts which as the Character Appraisals of the Berwick Conservation Area says are extremely detailed and varied into the town and beyond, will not be lost.

The repositioning of the one house attempts to address these concerns. The height is more appropriate with a simplified design to include the upper story within the roof space. The window details and use of stone quoins and conservation roof lights are more appropriate. The increased space for sensitive landscaping is to be commended. Subject to more detail being made available of the proposed PV slates and that this does not give rise to further concerns CAAG has no objection to the amended plans to the build in the rear of the property.

Regarding the plans for the listed building, CAAG understands that the space for car-parking has been removed from the front of this Grade 11* building. This is to be commended. However, there have been no amendments to the desire to render the front of the building. Repair and replacement of the stonework is essential despite the cost. Other experts have suggested that the work on the stonework may not be as costly as the survey of 2015 suggests. The removal of the archway does not address its significance and the widening of the passageway by cantilevering to widen the access point needs to address any internal amendments positively. With suitable permissions it may be possible to raise the archway to an acceptable height. There does not appear to be any amendment posted to the proposed internal changes.

While CAAG can support the significant improvements to the rear of this listed building until CAAG can be assured of the concerns mentioned previously they still object to the development and restoration in its present format.

Margaret Shaw. Hon Secretary to Berwick Conservation Area Advisory Group