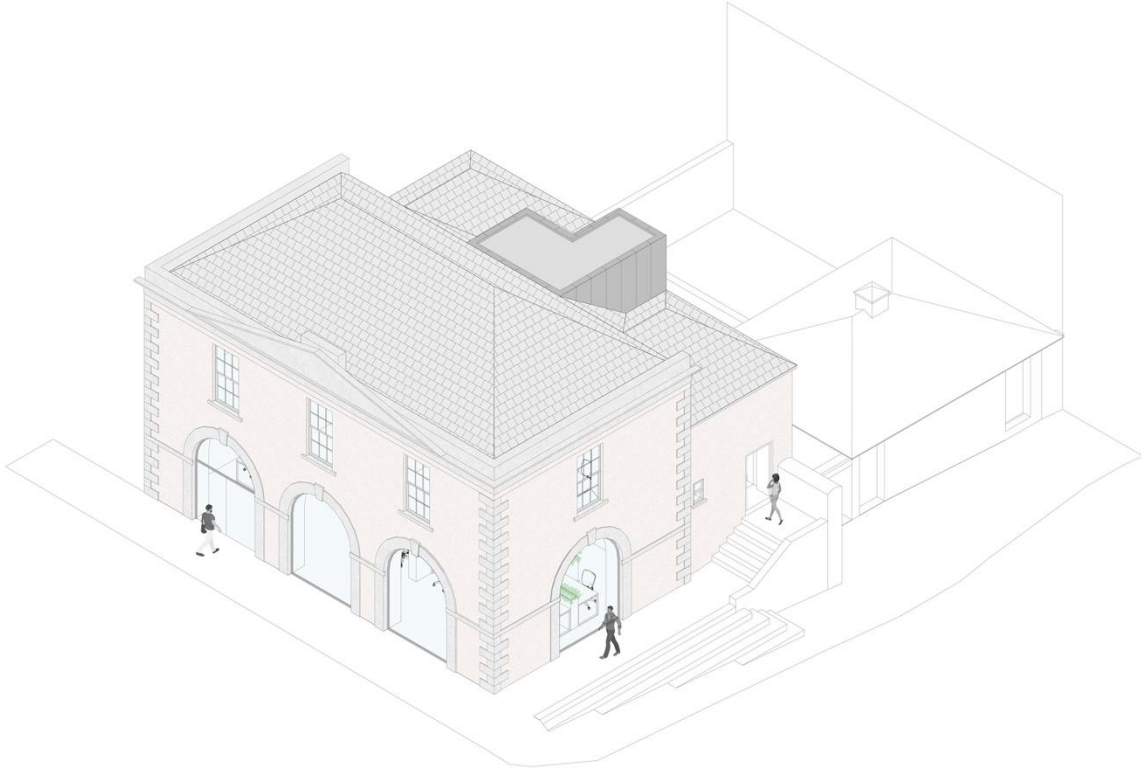


the working hub | Charleville Court and Market House



## Charleville Court and Market House

### Conservation Feasibility Study

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## Introduction

The following report has been prepared by JCA Architects who were commissioned by Cork County Council to inspect the former Court and Market House in Charleville in order to prepare a feasibility study of the site's future potential for new uses.

Charleville Court and Market House is included in Cork County Council's Record of Protected structures (RPS No. 00013). It is located within an Architectural Conservation Area (Charleville) in the 2014 Cork County Council Development Plan. It is also included in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (Reg. No. 20806032).

A site visit to inspect and record the building was carried out by JCA on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

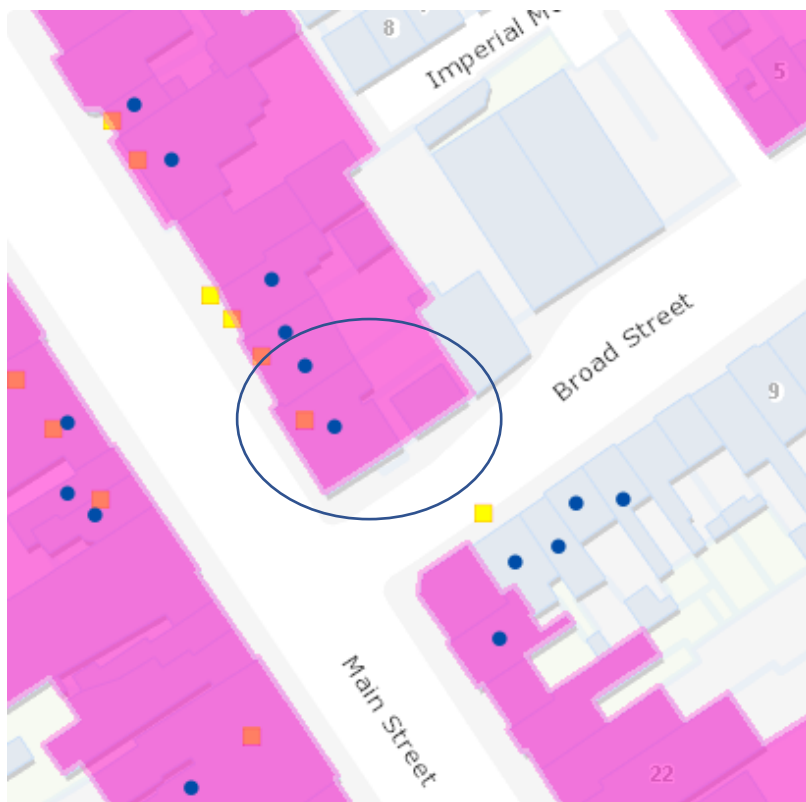


Figure 1: Heritage Map, indicating Architectural Conservation Area (pink shading), inclusion on Record of Protected Structures (blue dot) and NIAH (yellow dot)

## Outline Historical Context & Description

Charleville Market and Court House is a three-bay, two-storey ashlar limestone building, sited on the corner of Main Street and Broad Street in Charleville. It was built in 1769, according to the date inscribed on the keystone of the central arch of the ground floor arcade.

The arcaded ground floor was originally the town's Market House, with the upper floor used for court sittings. In 1837 Samuel Lewis noted:

*The Market is on Saturday, and is well supplied with provisions. Fairs are held on the 10<sup>th</sup> January, March 16<sup>th</sup>, May 12<sup>th</sup>, August 15<sup>th</sup>, October 10<sup>th</sup> and November 12<sup>th</sup> for fat cattle, pigs, hardware and other merchandise... The shambles for butchers' meat are in a small area at the back of the court-house.... Petty sessions are held in the town every alternate Monday, by the county magistrates. The court and market-house is a small plain building on the north side of the main street <sup>1</sup>.*

Lewis provides no further detail about the building, and the name of the architect is unknown.



Figure 2: First edition OS map, surveyed 1841



Figure 3: Large scale OS map, 1903

<sup>1</sup> Lewis, Samuel, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, (1837)

Late nineteenth-century photographs show the survival up to that stage of a striking, tall cupola, topped by a weather-vane. The cupola appears to have been removed in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These photographs also provide evidence of the original, or at least early, multi-pane timber sash windows to the side elevation of the market house.



Figure 4: Photographs from the NLI's Lawrence Collection, dated c. 1880-1900, showing the cupola on the building in place



Figure 5: Comparative drawings of Charleville Court and Market House in its present form, left, and a 1715 sketch by Thomas Wright of Waterford Exchange, right

Although described by Samuel Lewis in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a small, plain building, the design of Charleville Court and Market House was very characteristic of the typical early 18<sup>th</sup> century market house or exchange building, which would have had an open arcaded ground floor. As in Antrim, for example, at Charleville an external stone stair led to the courthouse located above the market house. These buildings had a formality of design and construction that was intended to set them apart from other urban buildings. Tall cupolas further distinguished their civic presence, as in Cork.



*Figure 6: The Exchange building that stood in Cork, built c. 1705-10, left, with Charleville Court and Market house (right)*

Renovations in the 1970's included the introduction of an acoustic tiled ceiling internally, and the replacement of the majority of the building's windows with uPVC.

The building is no longer in use. Court sittings were moved first from here to nearby Kilmallock, and then in 2013 to Mallow.

### **Current Description**

The side elevation, to Broad Street, is shorter, comprising just a single bay with an arch to the ground floor. There is a pair of lower two-storey rear returns. The building has a hipped roof with an artificial slate covering and terracotta ridge tiles. There is a rendered finish to the pediment above the first floor at the front of the building. The rear returns have hipped roofs with artificial slate finish, with render ridging and some surviving cast-iron rainwater goods. The walls to the front and side elevations of the main building are of dressed ashlar limestone, with punch-dressed stone finish to first floor and tooled stone finish at ground floor, with tooled limestone stringcourse and raised stone quoins. The rear of the building has a roughcast render, with the scar remaining of an earlier, pitched roofed extension which has now been replaced by a separate public toilet building. The arcaded ground floor to the front and side has tooled limestone impostes and voussoirs, with projecting dropped keystones. There is a keystone to the centre arch bearing a date, assumed to be the date of construction. The arches, originally open, are now filled in by modern timber doors and windows. Square headed window openings to rear returns, retaining timber sliding sash windows: single paned to ground floor south-east elevation and six-over-six, with horns, to first floor north-east elevation. Limestone steps to south elevation leading to entrance door, retaining painted cast-iron railing. Shallow limestone steps from street level to building level at south, with pavements having a modern block finish.



### **Significance of the Court and Market House**

The Court and Market House makes an important contribution to the historic architectural character of the town of Charleville. It is designed with reference to classical market houses typical of Irish cities and towns in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early eighteenth centuries, with features such as an arcaded ground floor, a pedimented front façade, and originally a cupola drawing attention to its presence from further afield. Although Charleville's Court and Market house is a more restrained example of its type in a national context, it retains much of its formal architectural character and notably high quality construction materials.

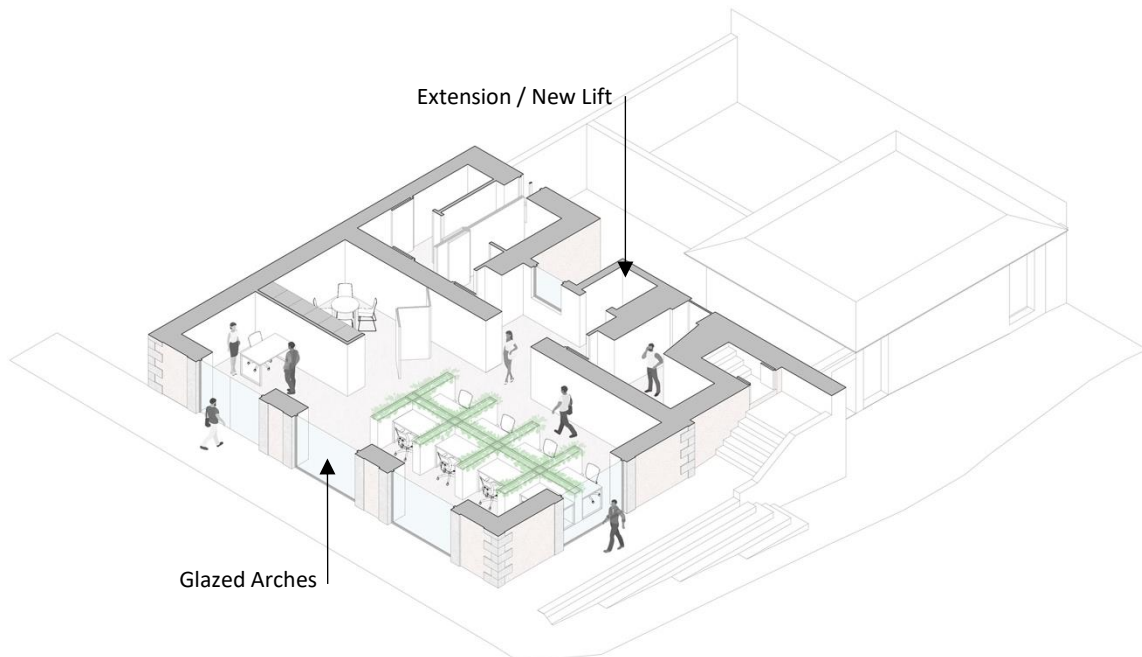
The NIAH appraisal notes:

*This imposing civic building forms a key social, historical and architectural focal point for the town. It is one of the earliest buildings in the town. The design is familiar throughout the country, sharing many features such as the round-headed openings and labour-intensive ashlar stonework. The building has always had an important civic function and has considerable potential for reuse.*

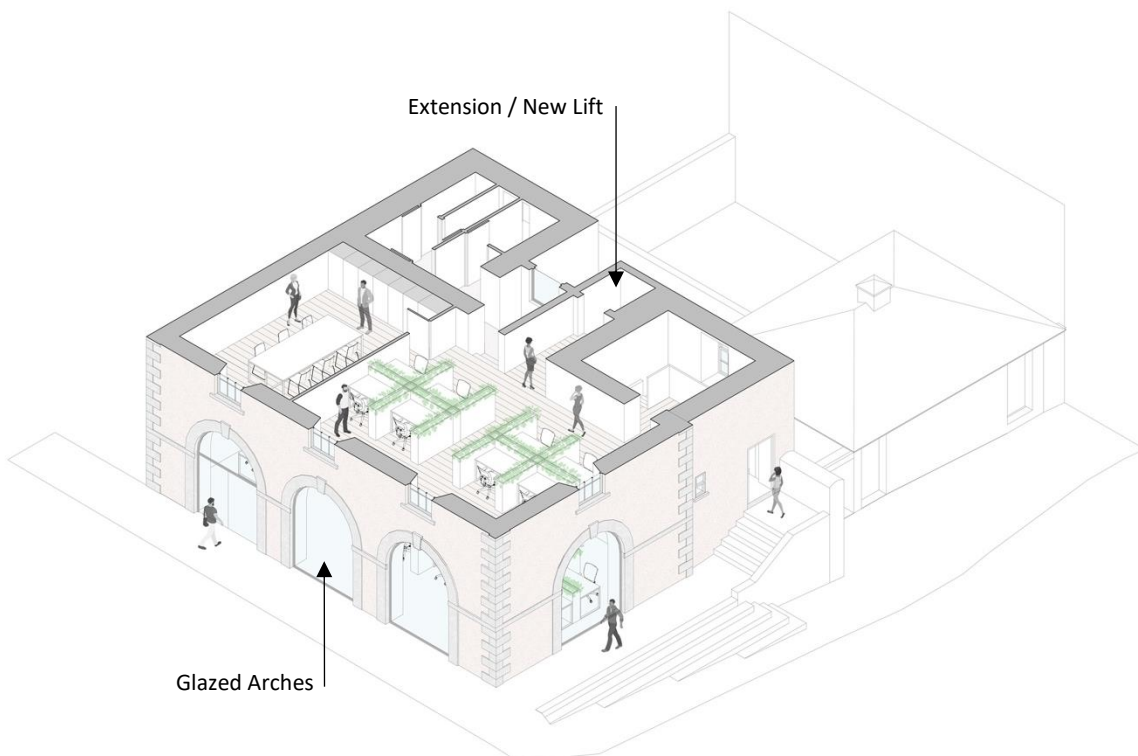
## **Feasibility Study**

The proposed development explores the potential to adapt the unique character of Charleville Court and Market House into a new working hub for the town of Charleville.

It is envisioned through a series of small-scale interventions, the rich architectural heritage of the site will be maintained and heightened with the adaptive reuse of the space.



The Working Hub - Ground Floor



The Working Hub - First Floor



## The Working Hub:



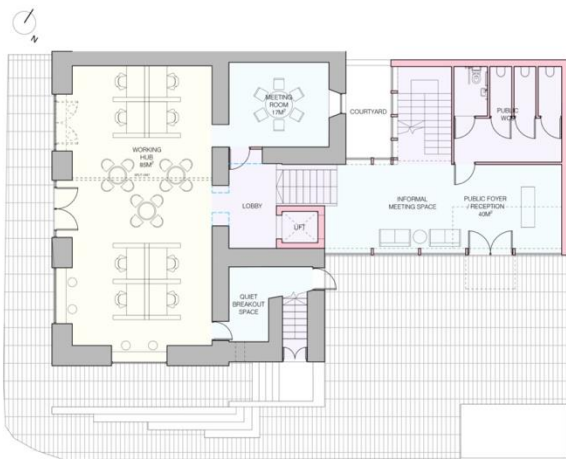
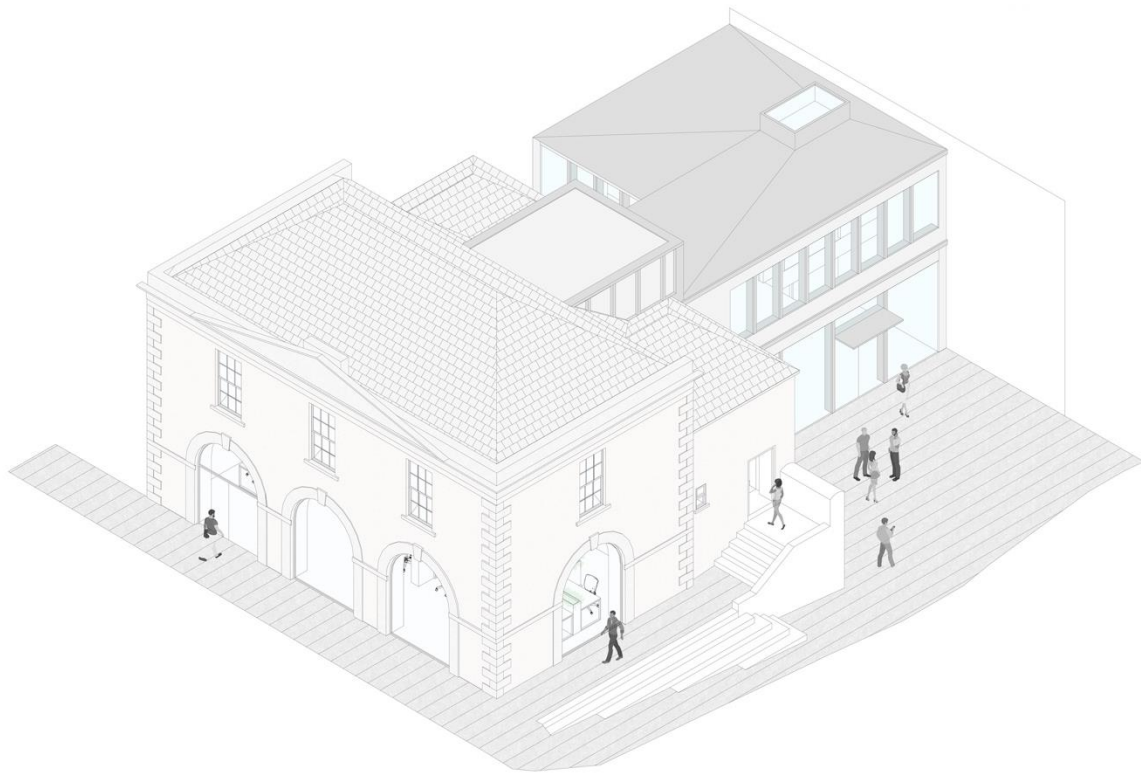
The four arches on the ground floor are to be glazed and access to the ground floor through the northern arch. The ground floor of the working hubs consists of a reception area, provides for eight workspaces and new lift to the first floor.

The first floor of the building is currently accessed externally via staircase to the south (to be repaired). A new lift is proposed to make the first floor universally accessible to the users of the building.

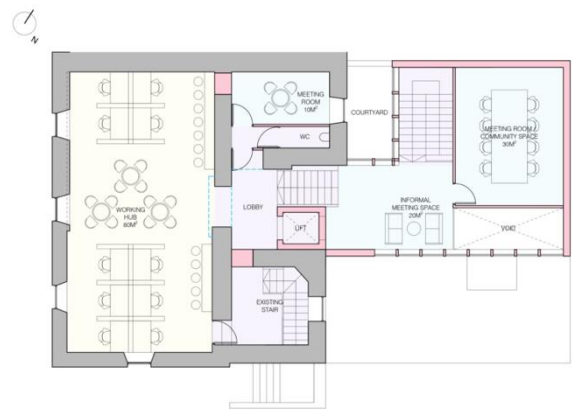
The first floor of the Court and Market House is to be subdivided providing for a large meeting room and for 8 workspaces.

The back of house facilities of the ground floor provides for a staff kitchenette / small meeting room, quiet break out space, one disabled WC and two ambulant WCs. Two WCs and a staff store are provided on the first floor.

Phase Two:



Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

**Photographic Record**

Exterior:

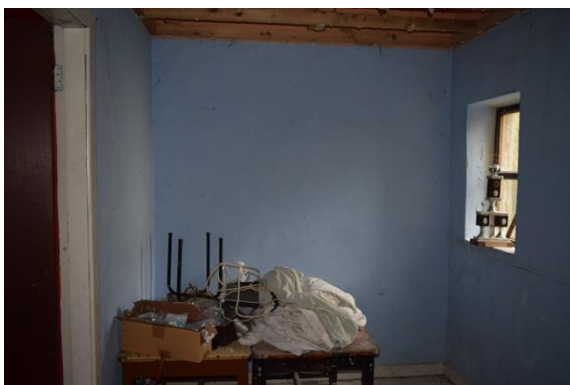


Interior:

Ground Floor







First Floor







## **Outline Scope of Works**

### **1.0 Roof**

- 1.1 Previous slating works appear to have weathered and protected the building from significant decay, the main hip roof and two returns are currently covered with a modern artificial slate incorporating a bituminous felt at the underside.
- 1.2 Much of the historic timber roof structure remains, including the queen post trusses, a significant number of rafters have been replaced / strengthened with new timbers alongside.
- 1.3 Following further inspection with the input of a timber decay specialist it may be necessary to carry further timber repairs to facilitate a new use below.
- 1.4 When there is a requirement for re slating a natural slate such as a Welsh Penryn Celtic Grade Blue Bangor slate incorporating a breathable roofing membrane at the underside should be used.
- 1.5 The section of lean to roof to rear of building and structure below, infilling area between the two returns is in very poor condition and should be fully replaced. This is the area identified for the potential installation of lift.

### **2.0 Rain Water Goods**

- 2.1 Allow for the removal of the existing defective predominantly PVC system to east elevation and returns, salvaging any cast iron elements for refurbishment and re use.
- 2.2 Allow for new heritage cast rainwater goods, 100mm (4") circular downpipes with ears and 125mm (6") gutters by Hargreaves Foundry or equivalent.
- 2.3 Replace any damaged or decayed fascia and soffit timbers to match existing.

### **3.0 Parapet Capping / Gutter**

- 3.1 It is apparent that a number of repairs have already been undertaken to the parapet capping, some, particularly the introduction of a lead course is likely to have afforded protection to the structure. Others such as the re rendering of cornice and frieze in a cement-based render has likely had unintended consequences as demonstrated by vegetation growth now apparent.
- 3.2 Vegetation growth should be carefully removed, and approved Biocide / Herbicide treatment applied. Where it is causing unintended damage the cement based render is to be removed, assuming the current visible lead course is preventing water ingress the underlying stones (if suitable) should be re pointed with lime based mortars or dressed in Code 7 Lead.
- 3.3 Condition of Parapet Gutter to be inspected, to be repaired and relined new Code 5 Lead and counter flashing if required

### **4.0 Stonework**

- 4.1 Vegetation growth should be carefully removed, and approved Biocide / Herbicide treatment applied, followed by a Low-Pressure Steam Wash (e.g. DOFF System or similar approved) to remove any Debris and Loose Organic Growth.
- 4.2 The existing modern cement-based strap pointing is to be raked out and repointed with lime mortars to a flush finish.
- 4.3 As depicted in the Lawrence Collection photograph the snecked limestone of the building appears to have been rendered previously with the quoins and ashlar limestone exposed.
- 4.4 Allow for plastering with a 3-coat hydraulic lime plaster with the final coat a harling (wet dash) finish 3 - 6 mm rounded pebble or pea gravel based, not crushed angular stone, applied with harling trowel (similar to scudding spoon)

## **5.0 Windows**

- 5.1 An original 6 over 6 Timber Sash Window remains in the east elevation of the south east return and should form the basis for the replacement of the other six number windows throughout the building, predominately at first floor level.
- 5.2 The new 6 over 6 Timber Sash Windows are to be box weighted and draft sealed.
- 5.3 Assuming timber heads throughout (to internal face where window set in limestone) allow for new replacement reinforced concrete heads to each window.
  
- 5.4 It is our understanding that the four number arched opes at ground floor level were once fully open and subsequently infilled, on this basis we suggest there may be an opportunity to insert new contemporary fully glazed units integrating a new glazed entrance door in one of the units.

## **6.0 Floors**

- 6.1 Ground Floor: if existing, historic flag stone floor to be exposed, if a new floor is required the flag stones are to be protected and over laid in a reversible manner.
- 6.2 Suspended Timber First Floor: existing timber floorboards to be carefully lifted and stored for re use, joist ends embedded in walls to be exposed and inspected with input of timber decay specialist, where defective to be treated and splice repaired.
- 6.3 It may be necessary to upgrade suspended floor build up in terms of fire safety requirements.

## **7.0 Ceilings**

- 7.1 Existing modern suspended grid ceiling to be removed, there are remnants of a lath and plaster chamfered ceiling at first floor which should be reinstated following works to roof.
- 7.2 Allow for repairs / replacement of regular damaged ceiling and decoration throughout

## **8.0 Wall Linings**

- 8.1 Impervious insulated plasterboard linings to be removed and replaced with breathable insulation systems.
- 8.2 Allow for repairs / replacement of plaster in lime based plasters and decoration throughout.

## **9.0 Services**

- 9.1 Electrical: Building is likely to require full electrical upgrade / renewal to facilitate new use
- 9.2 Mechanical: no existing central heating system, system required to facilitate new use
- 9.3 Sanitary: existing facilities not adequate for new use, upgrade / additional requirement