

# **DISCHARGE OF CONDITION**

## **COMET HOTEL, HATFIELD**

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# Quality Assurance

**Site name:** Comet Hotel

**Client name:** Fusion Students

**Type of report:** Discharge of Condition

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**Signed**

**Date** 30 May 2018

**Reviewed by:** Chris Surfleet MA MSc PGDipUD IHBC

**Signed**

**Date** 31 May 2018



## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Fusion Students to accompany the information submitted to discharge of Condition 4(e) of the Listed Building Consent (ref: 6/2017/2746/LB) granted on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is make an assessment of the condition of the existing windows at the Grade II-listed Comet Hotel, Hatfield. It includes a Condition Report and Schedule (**Appendix 1**) prepared by Giles Alldis RIBA Arb.

## 2.0 Existing Windows

- 2.1 The Condition Report concludes that 83% of existing Crittall windows either require complete replacement or require such extensive repair work as to render the repair unpracticable, unviable and tantamount to windows which are beyond repair. A plan showing the findings of the survey can be found in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.2 It should be noted that GD1 and GW 3 have already gained permission for removal as part of the re-design of the building. GD1, for example, is the existing revolving reception door which is being demolished as part of the approved scheme. It should also be noted that windows FW 31, 32, 33, 34, 45, 36 (all highlighted as requiring a medium level of refurbishment works) as well as FW 37, 38, 39, 40 and 41 (requiring a high level) are not being proposed for replacement. These windows, which all face into the inner courtyard, are to be left in situ.
- 2.3 Due to the high level of repair required, the existing windows could not be repaired/refurbished in situ and require to be taken off-site for attention. As a result of their overall poor condition, it is likely that further damage and breakages will occur during the process of the windows' removal, due to their fragile condition. The construction of the windows also make removal as a single element difficult. Structurally-fixed ties, from the frame head, cills and jambs, are embedded into the existing masonry structure. These ties are not accessible without cutting the existing fabric, a process which may itself lead to extensive and intrusive work to the existing brickwork surrounds. As a result, the process of removing the existing windows to enable repair will itself lead to more damage to both the windows and the existing brickwork.
- 2.4 A number of windows within the building are later insertions (GW2, GW 7, GW8, GW12 and GW13). These windows have no value and detract from the building due to their lack of subdivision, which does not follow the established pattern across the building. A number of the doors, GD4, GD3 and GD2, are also later replacements. The original doors to these locations would have been timber doors, matching the detailing of GD 5, as shown below (Figure 1). GD 5 also appears to be a replacement of the original door, although it is of the correct detailing. Figure 1 also shows that the lower panes of the windows within the front curved block are slightly opaque. Today, these panes have been painted over, completely obscuring them, which also detracts from their appearance.
- 2.5 It is evident from the Condition Report that the majority of windows and doors (83%) within the building are either beyond repair or are in a state of such disrepair that they should be considered equivalent to beyond repair. Example photographs of the condition of the windows can be found within the Condition Report in **Appendix 1** and additional photographs within **Appendix 3**. All windows have been heavily decorated layer on layer, which compromises their operation, and have been significantly altered including the removal / alteration of the majority, if not all, the fixing and opening mechanisms. The windows also suffer from significant condensation which has led to damage and areas of damp to the frames.

- 2.6 As a result of the findings of the Condition Report and the associated impracticality of achieving an acceptable and authentic level of repair, it is therefore proposed to replace all existing Crittall windows, with the exception of those within the inner, first floor courtyard, with new sealed units. These units would be designed to match the existing as closely as possible to maintain the architectural character of the existing building.



Figure 1 – 1937 photograph showing historic timber doors and blocks where the later windows (GW7, 8, 12 and 13) were inserted.

## 3.0 Replacement/new windows

- 3.1 A manufacturer's brochure for the proposed replacement windows can be found within **Appendix 4**. The proposed windows are of aluminium construction, which is powder coated, and they have been designed to match as close as possible to the original windows including the profile and dimension of the existing glazing bars. The new windows would integrate sealed unit double glazing to increase the thermal performance of the listed building and also improve acoustic and security considerations.

The wholesale replacement of the windows to the external façade will ensure a consistent and high-quality finish to the building which will improve the aesthetics and fabric quality of the building. Any new windows which are proposed as part of the proposed scheme, along with the windows which do not currently match the detailing of the original design, will successfully integrate with the original character of the existing building. Other proposed enhancements include removal of the painted panes to the front curved windows and significant improvement in terms of health and safety, acoustic and fire requirements.

- 3.2 It is considered that the replacement of the badly-deteriorated existing windows will result in an overall visual enhancement to the building. Although there will be a loss of original fabric due to the replacement of the existing Crittall windows, we are satisfied that the largest proportion of the existing windows are beyond meaningful repair. Based on the careful design approach of the replacement windows, we are content that the proposals pay special attention to the desirability of preserving the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, in accordance with Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 3.3 We therefore consider the proposals to be acceptable in discharge of this condition.

# APPENDIX 1

## CONDITION SURVEY REPORT

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Comet Hotel Hatfield  
Fusion Hatfield Hotels Ltd  
Giles Alldis - Bidwells  
14<sup>th</sup> May 2018



# COMET HOTEL, HATFIELD CRITTALL WINDOW SURVEY

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## **Appendix 1**

FLOOR PLANS WITH WINDOW  
& DOOR REFERENCES

## **Appendix 2**

RECORD PHOTOGRAPHS

## **Appendix 3**

CRITTALL WINDOW SURVEY

## **Appendix 4**

WINDOW SPECIALIST REPORT

# 1.0 Crittall Window Survey Report

## 1.1 Request Aim

Bidwells have been asked to survey the condition of the Crittall Windows at the Comet Hotel Hatfield which is Grade II listed and report on the ease with which these windows and doors could be refurbished. This report has been prepared by Giles Alldis [Consultant Architect, RIBA Arb].

## 1.2 Report

The windows and doors both externally and internally were inspected as found on site on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018. Generally, the Crittall units are heavily weathered, partly augmented with alternative ironmongery, and overpainted with many years of redecoration, which conceals the metalwork condition. However, there are several stripped back areas of decoration build-up, as seen in the detail photographs, which suggest the frames have deteriorated significantly.

To practically restore the Crittall units to an acceptable standard will be impractical. The Architectural Aluminium and Glass Ltd statement (Appendix 4) recommends complete removal for stripping down to bare metal and then repairing and restoring the units. However, some of the units may be too fragile for this and break down further. As the units are single glazed, the windows would require unsightly secondary glazing units to improve thermal and acoustic performance to current Building Regulations and Client expectation. There are also a few elements replaced over the years that are not Crittall units and should be replaced.

Our survey identifies the likely amount of work required to refurbish, or the repair potential to the Crittall units to a reasonable standard under headings: High, Medium, Low, or Nil, and we have added Replacement. High means that a high level of work would be required to refurbish the windows and that the extent of work required would make repair unpracticable, unviable and tantamount to replacement. Low would imply a low level of work required to bring the existing windows back into use.

The resulting count is as follows: -

High -	46
Medium -	12
Low -	0
Nil -	0
Replacement -	11

## 1.3 Conclusion

The above summary indicates that 57 windows (83% of the existing windows) would require either complete replacement or such a high level of intervention as to render them tantamount to beyond repair. Given the scale of the potential refurbishment and use of secondary units to bring the windows and doors to current weathering, acoustic and thermal standards, we recommend that all the existing units are replaced with a new Crittall system that matches the appearance and design intentions of the original windows and doors, thereby achieving this Grade II listed building's overall restoration and refurbishment.

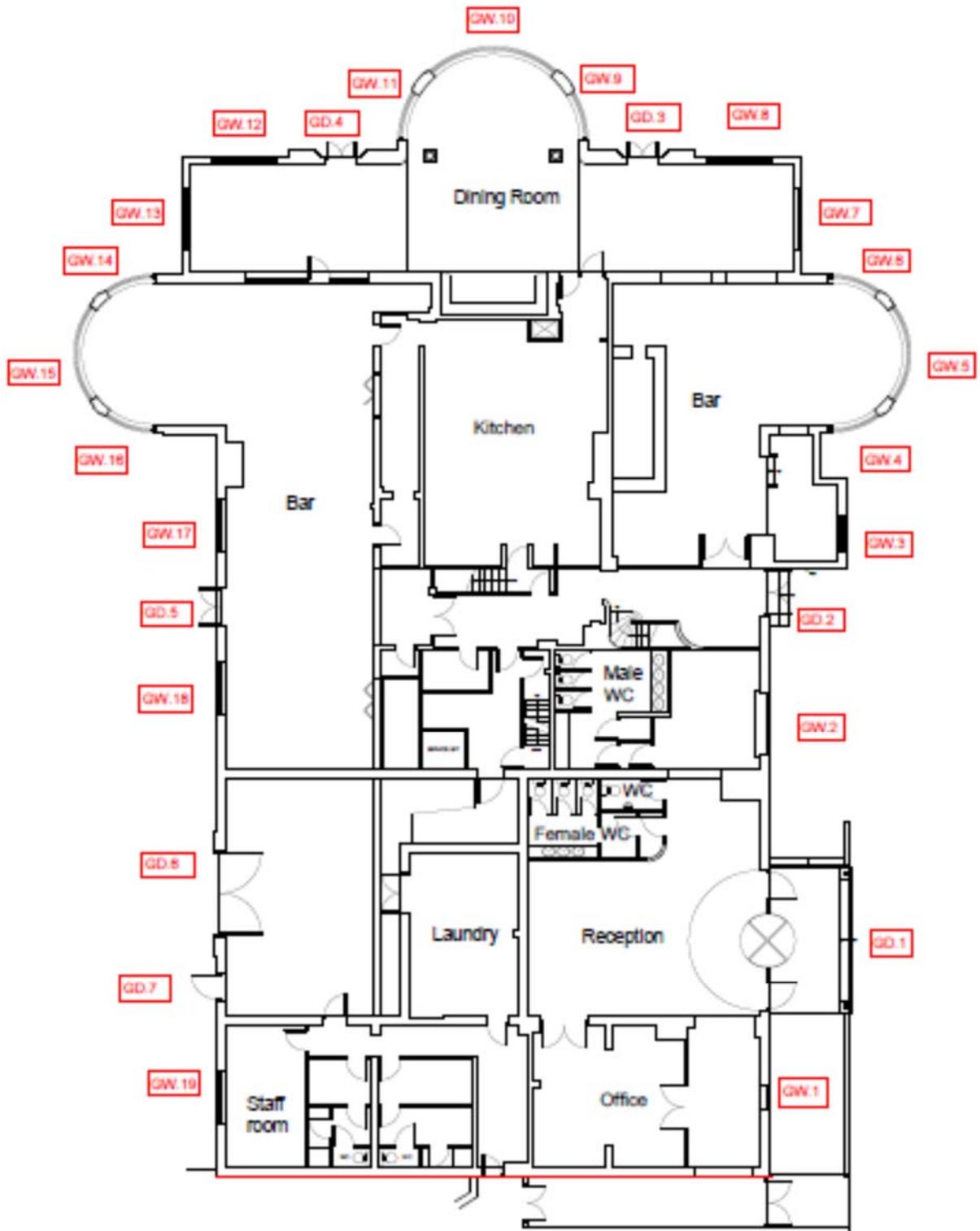
Opening lights and doors should be designed to match but with matching ironmongery throughout that is easy to use and incorporates discrete security to today's standards and quality.

The bay window sliding door sets are proposed to be replaced with a new Crittall system to match, with new ironmongery and security equipment.

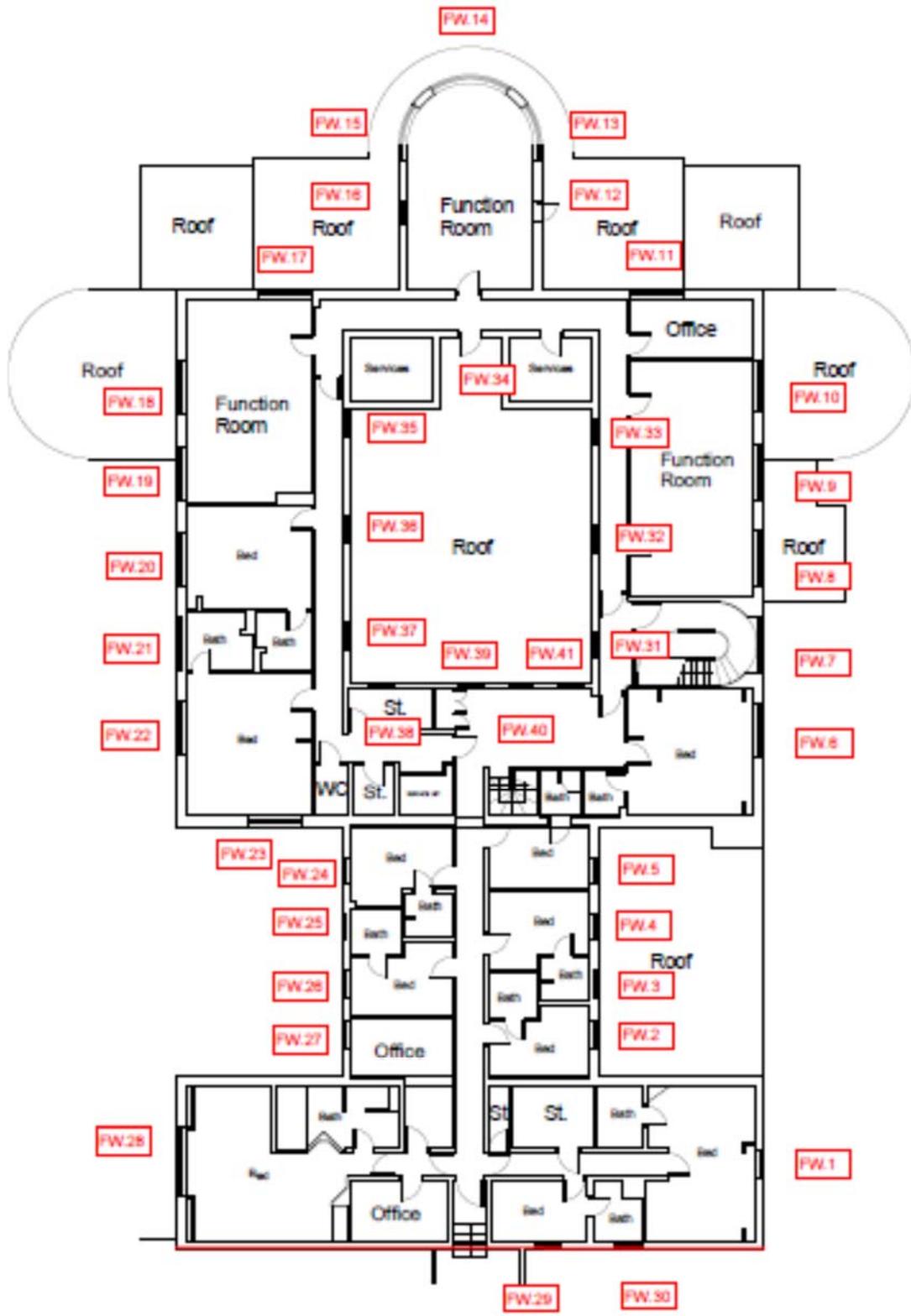
Replacement with a new system avoids the need for unsightly secondary glazing.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**FLOOR PLANS WITH WINDOW**  
**& DOOR REFERENCES**

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Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

# APPENDIX 2

# RECORD PHOTOGRAPHS

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P5142170



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P5142184



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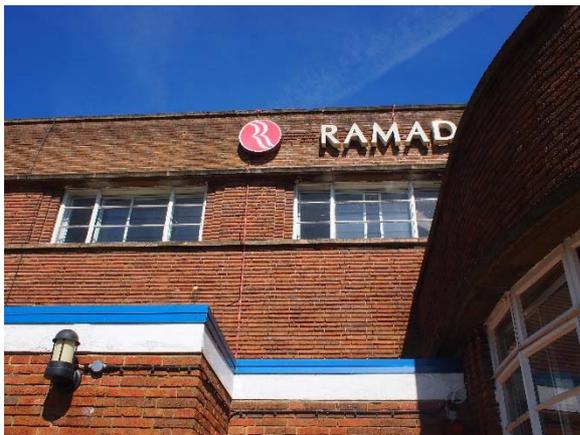
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