

# TRAFALGAR HOUSE OPTIONS

Consultation summary prepared for Borough of Pendle

05 August 2022





# The opportunity

Trafalgar House is located in the heart of Nelson and has an attractive heritage frontage but is in a very poor state of repair. The building has recently been acquired by Pendle Borough Council. Further funding will be needed to bring the building/site back into use. Options are being considered around the retention, demolition or redevelopment of the building.

This report summarises the opportunities to enable the local community and stakeholders to inform the best way of using this site to reinforce the ambitions for Nelson as a vibrant town centre.





## Progress to date

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### Preparation

Site visit  
Review condition  
Use options  
Heritage impact

### Initial consultations

Borough of Pendle  
Project Steering Group

Liberata Property  
Services

Registered Providers

- Calico homes
- Together Housing
- Great Places

Local Estate/  
Commercial Agents

- Petty Commercial
- Taylor Weaver
- Trevor Dawson
- Northlight Estates

Homes England

EVC Chargers

bpPULSE / Lancashire  
County Council

Right Move / Zoopla

### Long list

Design options

Assess demand

Funding sources

Initial viability appraisals  
of long-list

Prepare shortlist

### Short list

Draft final report

Agree with Borough of  
Pendle

### Complete study

Refine viability  
appraisals of short-list

Re-consult with:

- Liberata Property Services
- Registered providers - expanded list
- Homes England
- Further work on EV charging

Issue final report for  
circulation and  
consultation with other  
community stakeholders

## Existing Building

### Exterior condition

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Trafalgar House presents an ornate sandstone and granite façade to Market Street, although signs of dilapidation are apparent.

The side street elevations are plainer with more restrained stonework.

Poor quality uPVC windows and boarded up openings detract from the quality of the Whitfield Conservation Area townscape.





## Existing Building

### Interior condition

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The interior of the building is in very poor condition.

Water damage due to substantial loss of roof slate coverings has exacerbated the deterioration interior fit out materials.

The building structure appears solid, with original stone staircases and ornate cast iron balustrading still in place.

If stripped of debris, a potentially good foundation for re-use.





## Existing Building

### Floor space

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Site area : 847 sqm  
Total area: 1911 sqm

The building has two above ground storeys in the front portion and three above ground storeys in the rest of the block.

A large semi-basement spans the full length of the building.

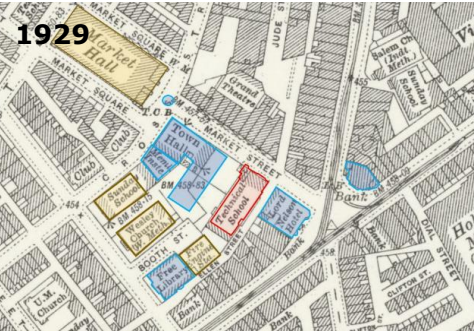
All of the storeys have generous floor to ceiling heights





Heritage Significance

# Historic context and development



- Trafalgar House (the site)
- Heritage Assets within setting
- Demolished heritage assets in group

Heritage Asset	Designation Type	Grade	National Heritage List no.
Former Nelson Old Library	Listing	Grade II	1440566
Former Union Bank of Manchester	Listing	Grade II	1472844
Boy Scout War Memorial	Listing	Grade II	1424664
Nelson Inn	Non-designated heritage asset	n/a	n/a
Nelson Town Hall	Non-designated heritage asset	n/a	n/a
Trafalgar House	Non-designated heritage asset	n/a	n/a
Wesleyan Memorial Institute	Unlisted, forms part of town hall	n/a	n/a
Lost assets:			
Market Hall	Demolished	n/a	n/a
Wesleyan Chapel	Demolished	n/a	n/a
Fire Brigade Station	Demolished	n/a	n/a

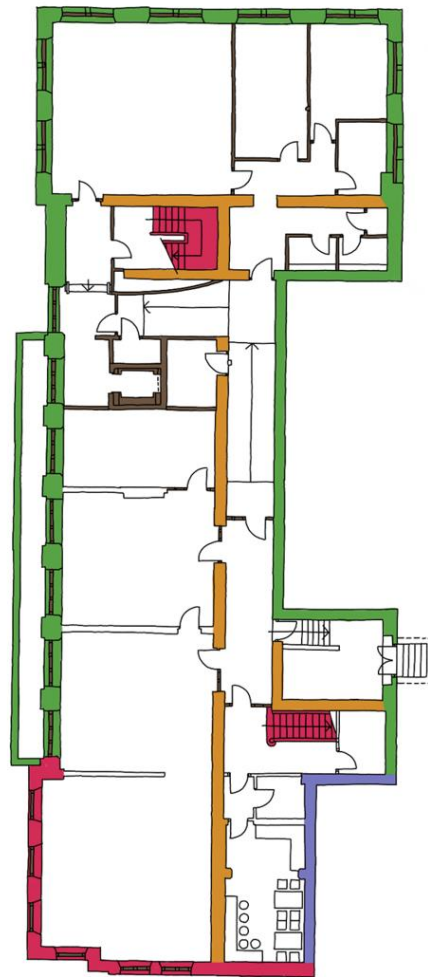


## Historic features

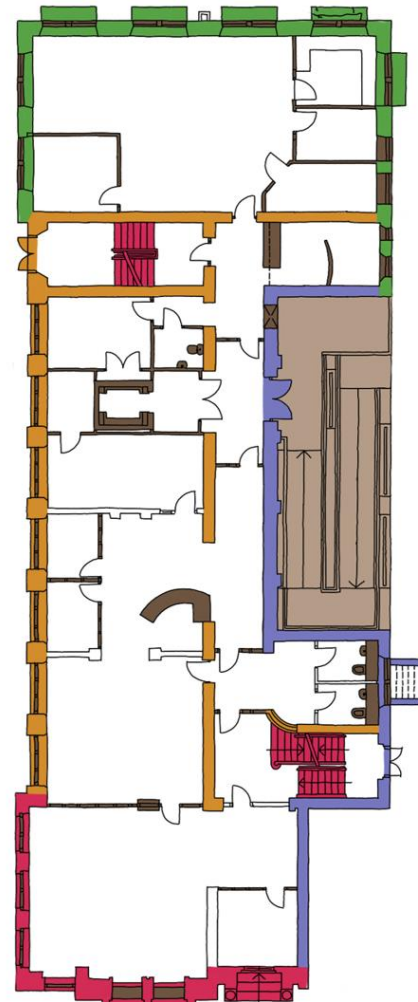
Trafalgar House is classified as a non-designated heritage asset.

Plans by the heritage consultant show an overview of the relative significance of the built fabric, in consideration of its architectural and historic special interest.

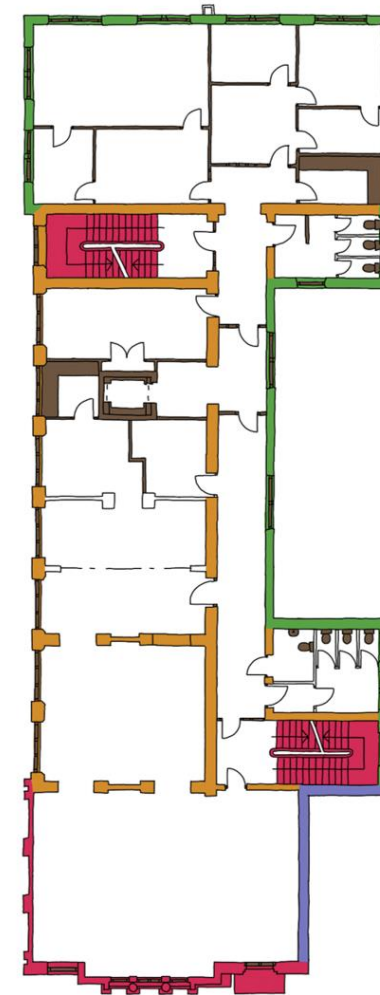
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Neutral
- Detrimental



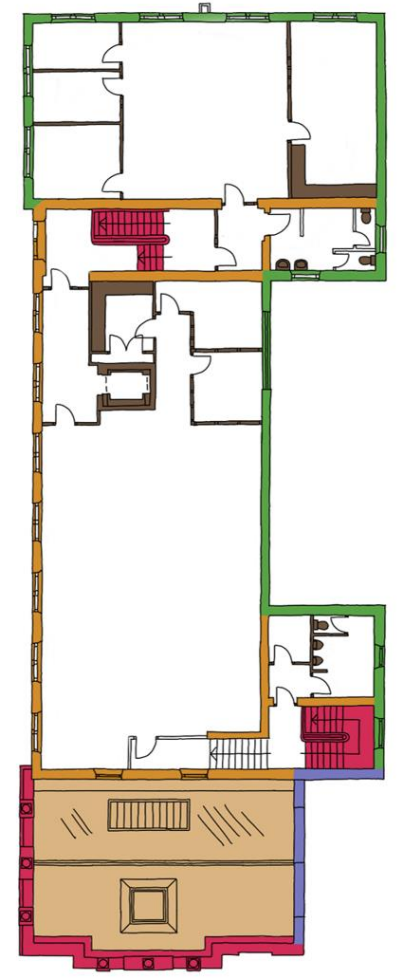
Basement



Ground Floor



First Floor



Second Floor



## Historic features

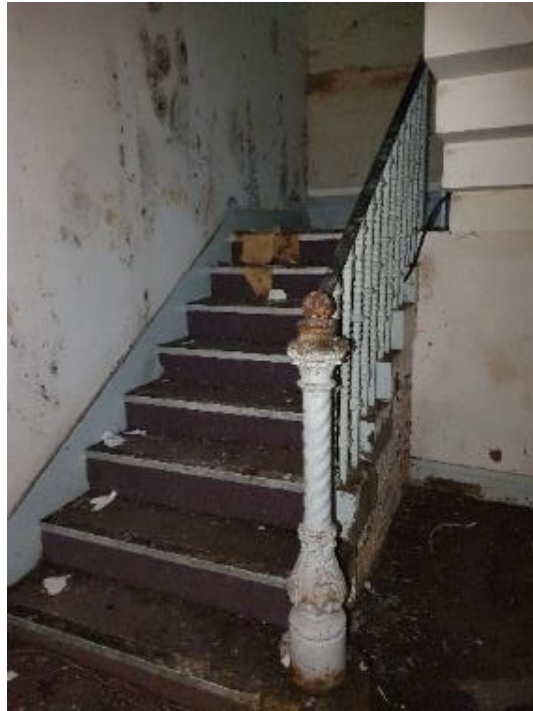
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### Key survivals

External envelope and internal plan form



**Two Historic Staircases**  
Basement to second floor



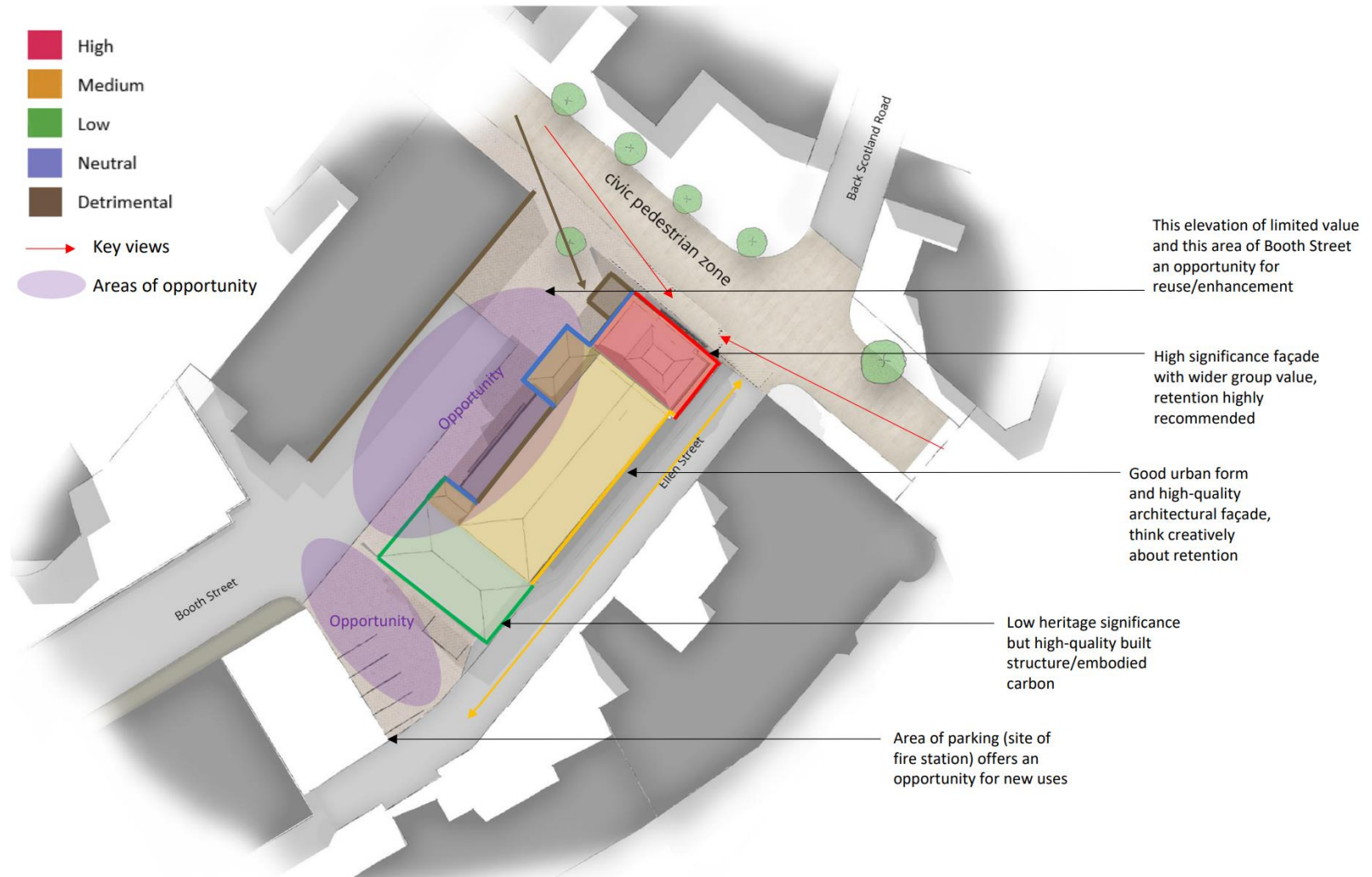
**Historic Fabric**  
Welsh slates and brick structural walls





### Conservation parameters

1. As a non-designated heritage asset – take conservation into account and weigh this against the public benefits of any future scheme.
2. Key parameters include high architectural interest of the Market Street façade, strong urban form along Ellen Street, historic interest of internal plan form and surviving historic features
3. The rear elevations are less ornate but still high quality, utilising local stone.
4. Opportunity on the north side where the poor quality WC block and ramped access are located.
5. Open spaces are underutilised and represent possible opportunities for development.
6. Poor condition of the interiors offering 'blank canvas' that could be reappropriated into any number of uses
7. Reuse of embodied carbon, which would be lost through demolition.
8. If demolition is required, the central core offers the most scope by retaining urban form and footprint of the building.
9. Ideally, the Ellen Street façade should be incorporated into a new scheme.





## Long-list Options

### Possible Uses Considered

To consider all options for a sustainable future for Trafalgar House, a wide range of possible uses has been considered.

This long list of potential options has been further tested in relation to the existing building and its siting.

Potential interventions to the building fabric include:

- **Retention** (restoration, remodelling and extension)
- **Demolition** (as well as partial demolition), and
- **Redevelopment**



#### RESIDENTIAL

- Apartments
- Town houses
- Senior living
- Mixed use



#### LEISURE

- Food and beverage
- Hotel
- Sports/ Gym
- Arts/ Community
- Open square/ mini park



#### COMMERCIAL

- Offices
- Retail
- Workshops/warehouse
- Self-storage
- Car parking
- EV charging





## Option 1 Retention

- A – Repair only
- B – Convert to residential
- C – Convert/extend for commercial use

## Option 2 Demolition

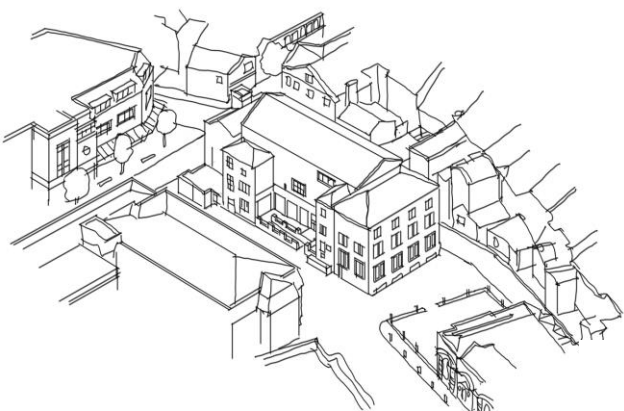
- A – Flexible open space/ Mini park
- B – Covered open space
- C – Flexible box
- D – Car parking

## Option 3 Redevelopment

- A – Partial demolition residential use
- B – EV charging



# Option 1A – Repair Only



- Repair external envelope, strip out and clean internally
- Market as sound shell for reuse by others

### Advantages

- Stops further deterioration
- Preserves existing town centre building fabric

### Disadvantages

- Lack of clear future plan
- Property may remain vacant and vulnerable to deteriorate again
- Uncertainty that would be sufficient to stimulate viable use



### Heritage Impact Assessment

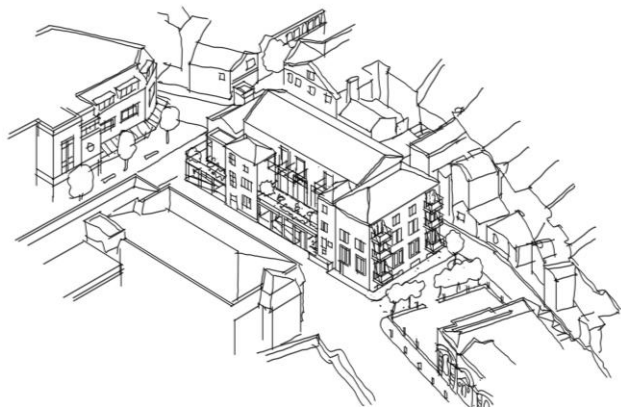
From a fabric first perspective, to repair Trafalgar House and carry out no further development would be beneficial to preserve the structure and our current understanding of significance, avoiding harm as defined under planning policy.

However, this is not practical, as much of the fabric is irreparably damaged by water ingress, for example roof structures, internal fixtures & fittings, and this would largely be a restoration exercise with no substantial evidence, and no defined future use. Change is needed to bring relevance back to Trafalgar House and to ensure future maintenance.

Heritage Asset	Level of Impact
Trafalgar House and setting	Beneficial
Designated Assets (CA/LBs)	Beneficial
Non-designated	Beneficial



# Option 1B – Convert to Residential (Apartments / Town houses)



- Existing envelope retained and restored with internal, and minor external, modifications to create apartments or town houses

**Advantages**

- Demand exists for dwellings in the area
- Location is compatible with residential use

**Disadvantages**

- Affordability is challenging due to high costs of refurbishment



**Heritage Impact Assessment**

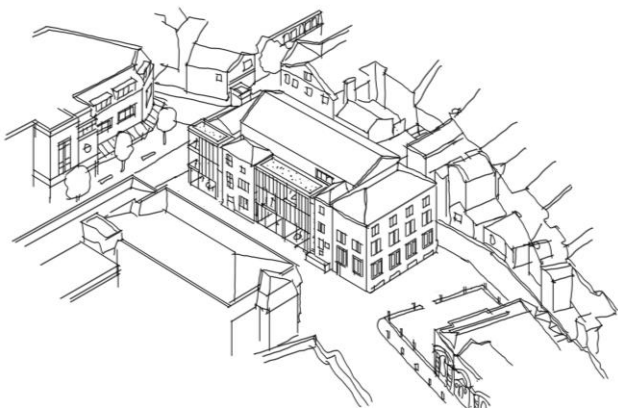
As with commercial reuse and refurbishment, retention of the existing structure of Trafalgar House is highly sustainable and beneficial to surrounding designated assets.

Residential reuse would have a higher degree of harm due to the internal alterations needed (partitions, staircases, services) but still represents one of the optimum uses for the site. Residential use would also introduce a domestic character on the north side, which is at odds with its original function.

Heritage Asset	Level of Impact
Trafalgar House and setting	Beneficial overall
Designated Assets (CA/LBs)	Negligible
Non-designated	Negligible



# Option 1C – Convert/Extend for Commercial Use



- Existing envelope restored with minor internal modifications
- Infill extensions added to increase useable area

### Advantages

- Potential to provide retail/commercial accommodation

### Disadvantages

- Long term viability is uncertain



### Heritage Impact Assessment

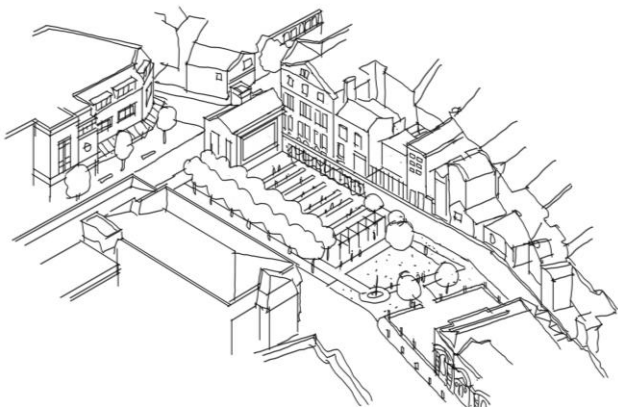
Once Trafalgar House has been stripped back to its bare components of a solid brick structure and attractive external appearance, it offers a myriad of opportunities to refurbish and reuse for the benefit of local people.

This is a highly sustainable option and would also benefit the character and appearance of the conservation area. Extensions on the Booth Street side would provide additional space and further enhance Trafalgar House on this (less significant) elevation. A public use such as commercial/retail brings relevance back to the site and allows internal plan form to be retained.

Heritage Asset	Level of Impact
Trafalgar House and setting	Beneficial
Designated Assets (CA/LBs)	Beneficial
Non-designated	Beneficial



# Option 2A – Flexible Open Space / Mini Park



- Market Street block retained and restored
- Rear of the site cleared and made available as a public space for community use

**Advantages**

- Replacement of degraded building stock with space available for use by the public

**Disadvantages**

- Amenity value restricted to good weather conditions
- Better suited to more central location



**Heritage Impact Assessment**

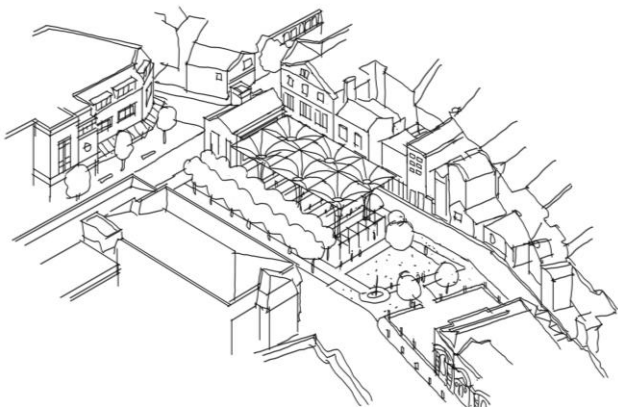
Retention of the Market Street block would mitigate total loss and retain a degree of street presence within the conservation area. The reuse of the space as an open (possibly green) space for public use has merit over a car park.

However, group value with surrounding civic buildings would be irreparably harmed and the tight urban grain in this area would be lost. Without a clear design intent or maintenance regime, such spaces are liable to end up as ‘brownfield’ in time, further harming the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Heritage Asset	Level of Impact
Trafalgar House and setting	Major Harm
Designated Assets (CA/LBs)	Minor Harm
Non-designated	Minor Harm



# Option 2B – Covered Open Space



- Market Street block retained and restored
- Rear of the site cleared and made available as a public space for community use

### Advantages

- Replacement of degraded building stock with weather protected space available for use by the public

### Disadvantages

- Use better suited to more central location in Nelson town centre



### Heritage Impact Assessment

Retention of the Market Street block would mitigate total loss but demolition of the remainder still constitutes major harm. While there is lower significance to the rear of the site, this would still require loss of the two historic staircases and internal plan form/fabric.

A semi-covered open space would provide a beneficial public use, but to the detriment of a solid, historic structure that could also be re-purposed. If demolition is chosen, it could be considered as a short-term solution prior to construction of a new building on the historic footprint of Trafalgar House

Heritage Asset	Level of Impact
Trafalgar House and setting	Major Harm
Designated Assets (CA/LBs)	Minor Harm
Non-designated	Minor Harm



# Option 2C – Flexible Box



- Market Street block retained and restored
- Lightweight enclosure added

## Advantages

- Replacement of degraded building stock with lightweight enclosed space available for use by the public

## Disadvantages

- Nearby vacant community/cultural spaces suggest use may not be viable



## Heritage Impact Assessment

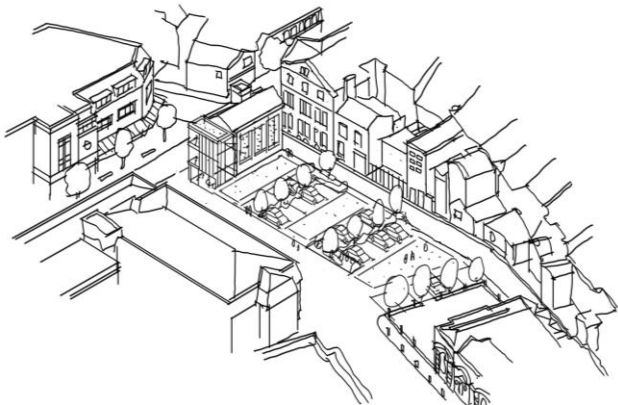
Partial demolition of the central core of Trafalgar House would constitute harm through loss of fabric, form and understanding, the staircases in particular.

However, this option offers an opportunity to provide a design-led intervention of architectural quality that could enhance the conservation area and bring relevance back to Trafalgar House, potentially as a community facility. Urban form and group value would be preserved.

Heritage Asset	Level of Impact
Trafalgar House and setting	Moderate Harm
Designated Assets (CA/LBs)	Beneficial
Non-designated	Beneficial



# Option 2D – Car Parking



- Market Street block retained and restored
- Rear of the site cleared and redeveloped as a car park.

### Advantages

- High demand for car parking in the area

### Disadvantages

- Detrimental to townscape and sustainable travel objectives



### Heritage Impact Assessment

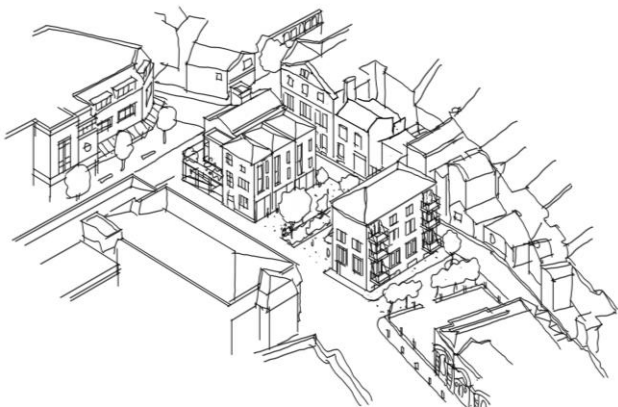
The full demolition of Trafalgar House would constitute total loss of significance and trigger the 'substantial harm' test set out within planning policy.

Retention of the Market Street block would mitigate this to a degree by retaining a fragment of the building and some of its historic urban form within the conservation area, but ultimately, understanding of this site as a civic and community facility will be lost. Creation of surface parking in the town centre is also at odds with sustainable travel and would impact on the group value of surrounding heritage assets.

Heritage Asset	Level of Impact
Trafalgar House and setting	Major Harm
Designated Assets (CA/LBs)	Moderate Harm
Non-designated	Moderate Harm



# Option 3A – Partial Demolition Residential Use



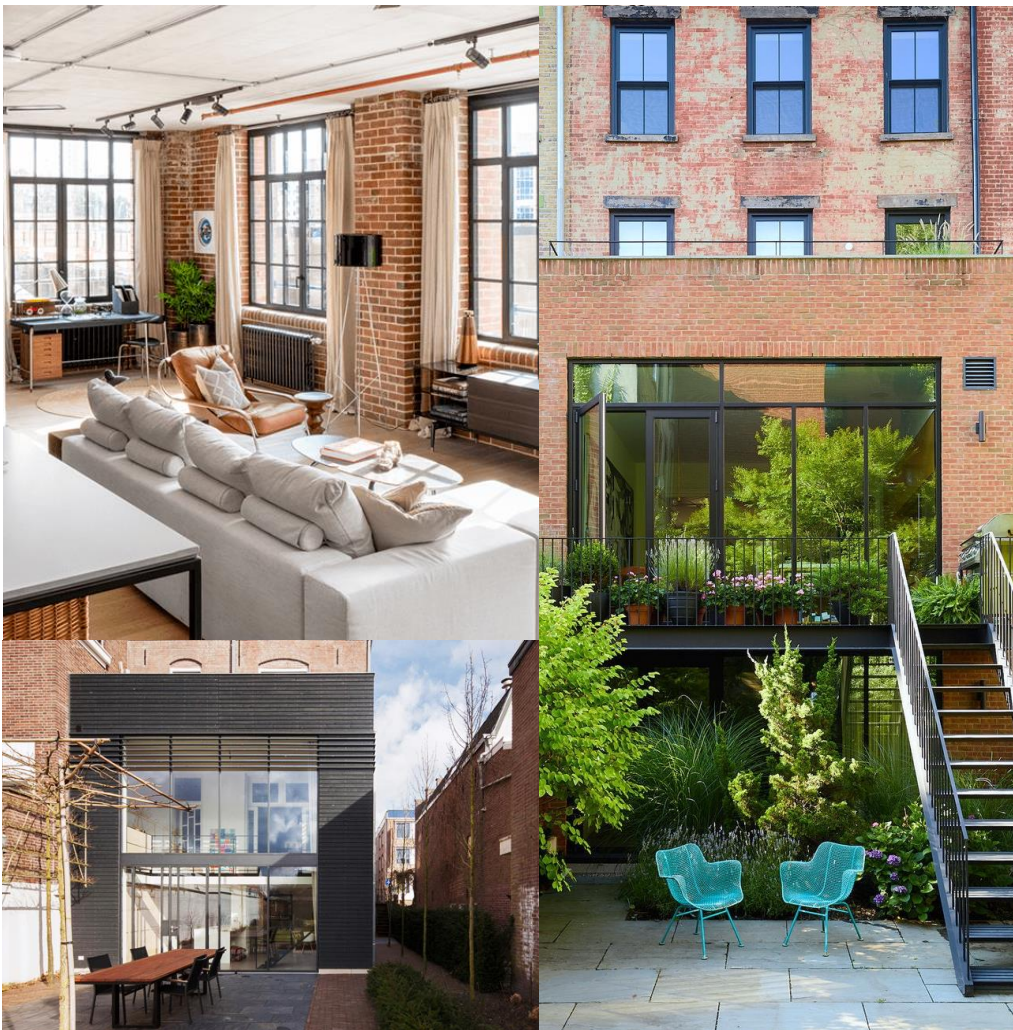
- Middle and/or rear portions of building removed and cleared for new-build residential development

## Advantages

- Demand for dwellings exists and is compatible with location.
- New-build more viable for Registered Housing providers
- Potential for low or net zero redevelopment

## Disadvantages

- Partial loss of historic urban form



## Heritage Impact Assessment

Partial demolition would result in the loss of heritage significance, historic fabric and plan form the non-designated heritage asset of Trafalgar House. However, by bookending demolition, with retention on Market Street and to the west (Carr Road), the historic urban form is partly retained and those areas with most external architectural interest are preserved.

While impact on Trafalgar House is harmful, the impact on surrounding designated assets to negligible. Residential use would reduce relevance of the site as a civic building, but would ensure a long-term future use.

Heritage Asset	Level of Impact
Trafalgar House and setting	Moderate harm
Designated Assets (CA/LBs)	Negligible
Non-designated	Negligible



# Option 3B – EV Charging



- Market Street block retained and restored
- Rear of site redeveloped as a fast-charging station for electric vehicles

**Advantages**

- Growing demand for EV charging
- Compatible with sustainable travel objectives

**Disadvantages**

- Compatibility with adjacent uses to be considered



**Heritage Impact Assessment**

The full demolition of Trafalgar House would constitute total loss of significance and trigger the ‘substantial harm’ test set out within planning policy.

Retention of the Market Street block would mitigate this to a degree by retaining a fragment of the building and some of its historic urban form within the conservation area, but ultimately, understanding of this site as a civic and community facility will be lost. Although promoting wider use of electric vehicles would support a sustainable travel plan there would still be an impact on the group value of surrounding heritage assets.

Heritage Asset	Level of Impact
Trafalgar House and setting	Major Harm
Designated Assets (CA/LBs)	Moderate Harm
Non-designated	Moderate Harm



## Potentially Viable Uses

No  
Maybe  
Yes

The long list of options has been considered against the range of criteria below.

This has resulted in the shortlist of options that are developed further on the following pages

Aspects Considered	Description / Criteria
<b>Market demand</b>	Evidence of demand from current suppliers of similar property spaces
<b>Affordability of delivery</b>	Cost of works, expected ROI and NPV
<b>Affordability of occupation</b>	Is the future cost of occupation in line with market expectations and competition
<b>Achievability</b>	Risks of delivery and dependency on external support and funding
<b>Economic Risk</b>	How stable is the local economic base and what is the sensitivity to change
<b>Planning Risk</b>	Is the use likely to gain support from the planning authority
<b>Political Risk</b>	Is the use likely to gain support from Members and the local community
<b>Sustainability</b>	Does the use align with local and national objectives and targets

Uses	Comment	Shortlist
<b>Commercial Options</b>		
Office use	Plentiful supply of office accommodation in the area Limited parking onsite restricts take up	1
Retail use	Parts could be suitable for retail use ground floor front /the basement Limited footfall to rear of site	2
Workshop/Warehousing	Limited access to and around site for deliveries Low rental yields would not cover the cost of refurbishment	1
Self-storage	Competition with existing big box storage nearby	1
Car parking	Demand exists currently but is detrimental to heritage setting	2
EV Fast charging station	Demand for EV charging is growing Few facilities in the area	3
<b>Leisure Options</b>		
Food and beverage	Could be suitable on ground floor/Market St site frontage	2
Sports/Private gym	Potential for the basement area as part of a mixed use offering	2
Hotel	Low viability and low demand in this location, has proved unsustainable in nearby Brierfield development	1
Community/Arts	Current vacant community and arts premises nearby	1
Open space/Mini park	Positive amenity but indirect location may lessen benefit	2
<b>Residential Options</b>		
Apartments	Demand exists and use is compatible with location Affordable housing providers preference for newbuild only	2
Town houses	Demand exists and use is compatible with location. Viability potential is greater for Affordable, Shared Ownership and Market sales procurement options	3
Senior living	Good quality provision nearby	1
Mixed use	Possible compatibility with retail use on front of site	2



## Short-list Options

### Option 1 – Town House Refurb

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The existing building envelope is retained and restored.

The front block facing Market St is converted for retail use at ground level, with a dwelling above accessed via a new staircase element that replaces the existing unsightly toilet side extension.

The rear block is subdivided vertically into a further seven town houses. Both of the existing historic staircases are retained within two of the dwellings.

The basement area can optionally be retained as storage or games room space.





Short-list Options

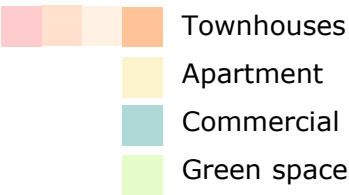
Option 1 – Town House Refurb

Each dwelling has its own street entrance door and off-street parking.

All houses have their own private outdoor space space: front gardens to the two end houses and terraces at first floor level to the mid-block houses.

**This could be developed as a benchmark zero carbon retrofit development.**

Features	Provision
3-bed townhouse	2
4-bed townhouse	3
5-bed townhouse	1
2-bed apartment	1
Car parking	8
Private green terrace	Yes
Commercial/cafe	Yes





## Short-list Options

### Option 2 – Town House New-build

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As with Option 1, the Market St facing block is restored and converted, with café or retail space at ground floor level, and a dwelling above.

The rear portion of the existing building is removed and the site cleared for redevelopment.

New-build offers the opportunity to deliver state of the art, high performing, net zero carbon dwellings.





# Option 2 – Town House New

Each dwelling has its own street entrance door, off-street covered parking and private garden spaces.

**This could be compared to Option 1 as a benchmark zero carbon town centre development advancing the national debate about retrofit vs new build.**

Features	Provision
4-bed townhouse	8
2-bed apartment	1
Car parking	8
Private green terrace	Yes
Commercial/Cafe	Yes

- Townhouses
- Apartment
- Commercial
- Green space



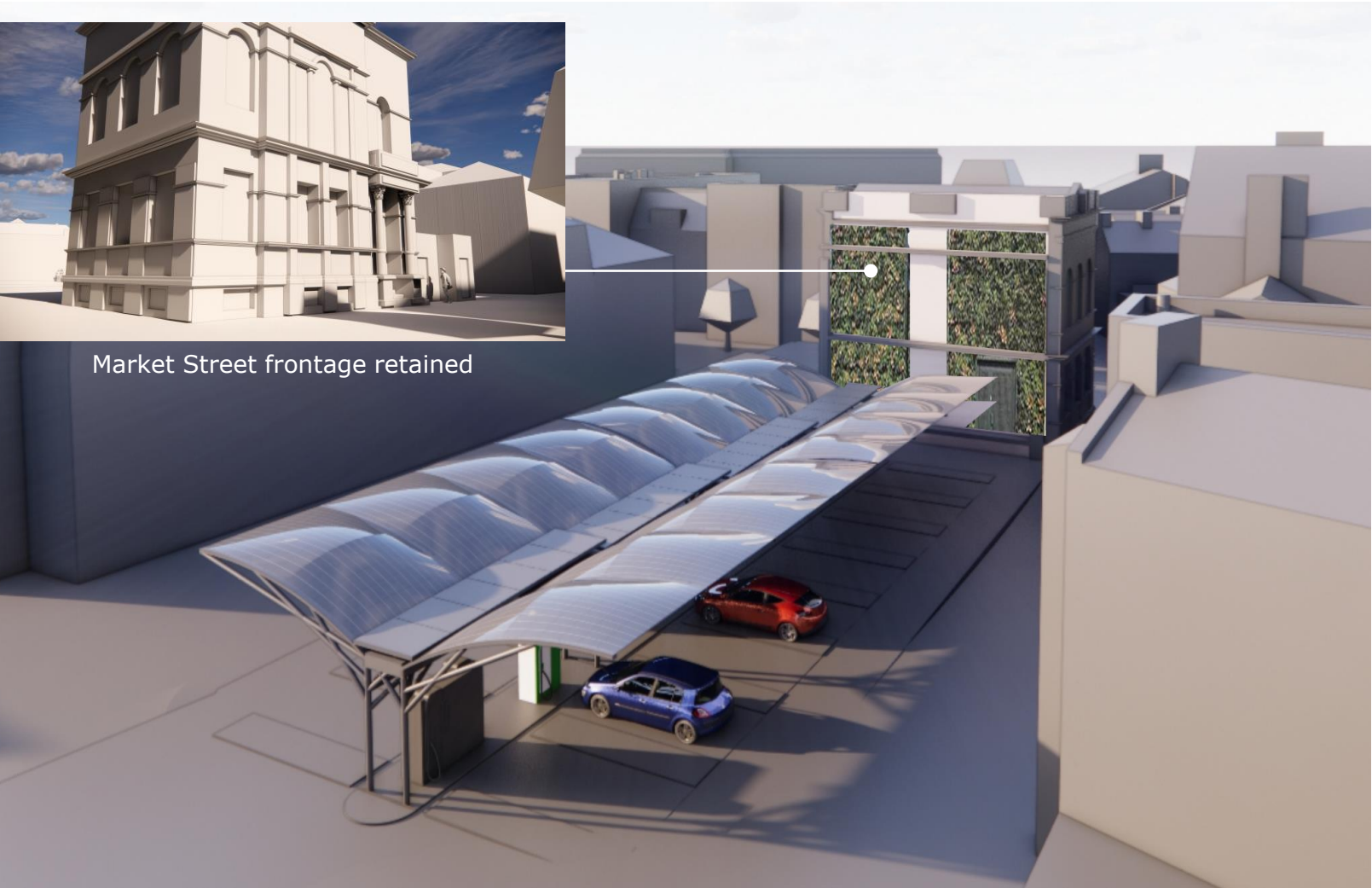


# Option 3a – EV Charging Station

Market street block retained, with retail/cafe use on ground floor and residential above.

Rear of site converted to fast-charging station for electric vehicles.

With uptake of electric vehicles growing this provides amenity for both residents and town centre visitors.



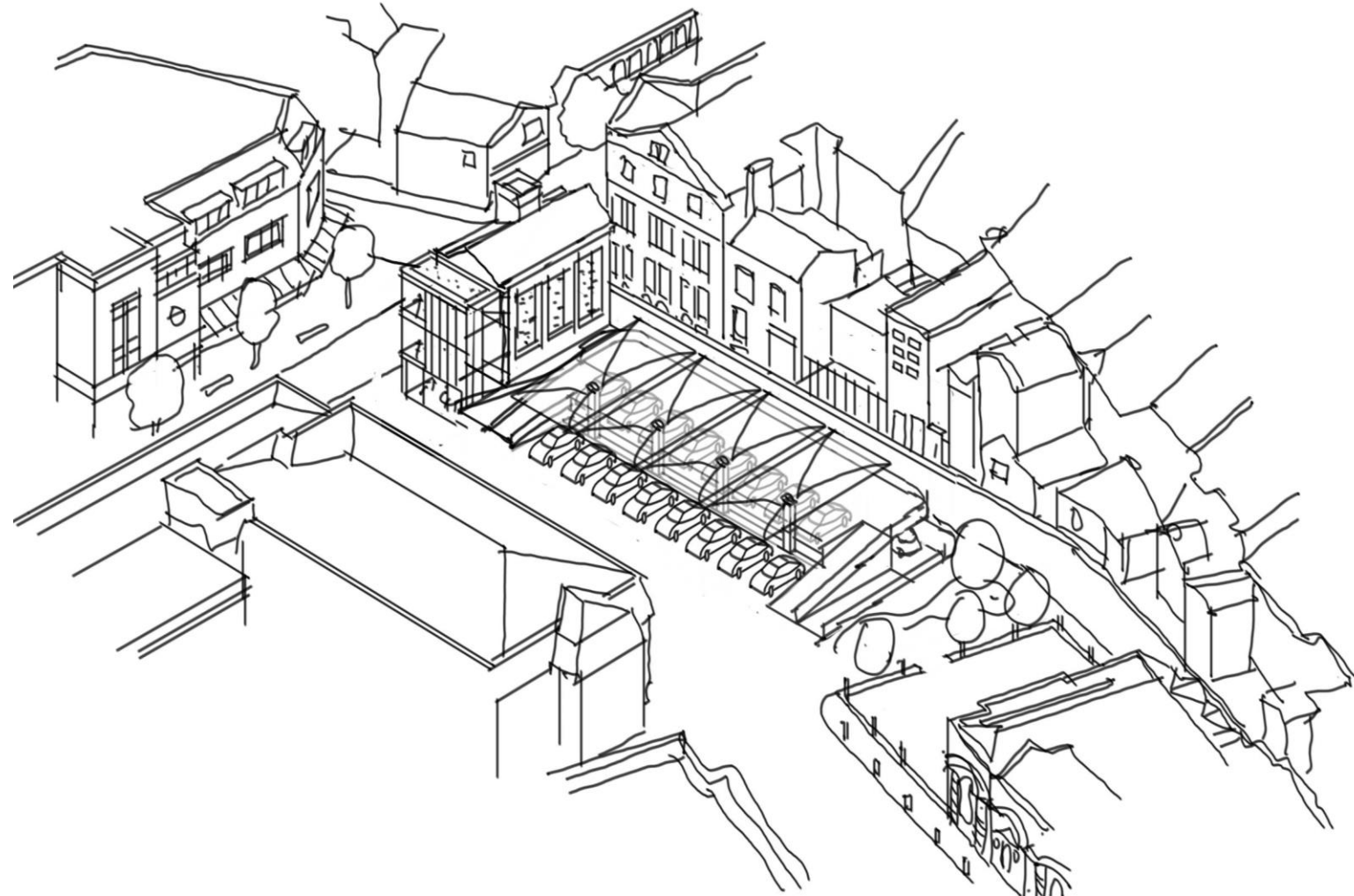
Features	Provision
2-bed apartment	1
Car charging spaces	16
Private green terrace	Yes
Commercial/cafe	Yes



## Option 3b – Double stacked EV Charging Station

Site use as per Option 3a

Existing basement area adapted at rear of site, to create a multi-level arrangement with additional number of charging spaces



Features	Provision
2-bed apartment	1
Car charging spaces	24
Private green terrace	Yes
Commercial/cafe	Yes



## Short-list Options

### Summary

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All of the options show benefits in retaining and enhancing the existing street frontage and using the corner to gain step free access to the front building and provide amenity space for the first floor.

If that is agreed, the focus is therefore on the use of the remaining part of the site.

#### Questions:

- **Is there an option missing from the long-list?**
- **Is the short-list agreed?**





## Consultation Plan

Stakeholder and category	Method	Frequency
<b>Collaborate</b>		
Area town councils	Emails / occasional face to face updates	Monthly
Local voluntary sector	Emails / occasional face to face updates	Monthly
Elected members	Emails / occasional face to face updates	Monthly
Businesses	Emails / occasional face to face updates	Monthly
Youth services	Emails / occasional face to face updates	Monthly
Leisure services	Emails / occasional face to face updates	Monthly
Health service providers	Emails / occasional face to face updates	Monthly
Lancashire County Council		
<b>Consult</b>		
Funders	Monitoring forms	Once every quarter
<b>Involve</b>		
Heritage England	Email updates	Once every quarter
Homes England	Email updates	Once every quarter
Registered Housing Providers	Email updates	Once every quarter
Environment Agency	Email updates	Once every quarter
Pendle Council Officers	Emails /occasional face to face meetings	Bi Monthly
LCC Officers	Emails /occasional face to face meetings	Bi Monthly
<b>Inform</b>		
Media (LET)	Email updates	When required
Pendle website coordinator	Email updates	When required