26/00971/FUL 13 – 15 Chapel Street Proposed demolition

Lancaster Civic Vision wishes to express a number of reservations about the proposal to demolish this building and would wish further evidence to be explored before action is taken.

The left hand portion of the east elevation, which abuts Butterfield Street, is potentially quite an attractive building. This elevation has finely dressed, coursed sandstone with stone jambs and quoins. In terms of build quality this portion of the site would appear to be of better quality than the rest. On map evidence the angled frontage of the building dates from before 1845, the date of survey of the earliest available OS map (published 1849). We feel that if this element was retained and restored, it could become a rather attractive addition to the streetscape in this Conservation Area.

Whilst, in its present state, the complex is uninspiring, this is quite largely a result of the render and roll-shutter doorway inserts, which are features that can be improved by sensitive development Although not a building of beauty, it is part of that serviceable vernacular that used to characterise Lancaster so strongly and is everywhere being lost.

We are very concerned at the lack of any indication of a future use for the site and fear that it could stand empty, adding to the increasing number of unoccupied eyesores which already disfigure the city centre. It will leave another gap at a prominent point in an area with significant architecture, both on Cable Street and at nearby St John's Church. We believe that to demolish the building without first determining its potential for re-purposing is short-sighted. In the meantime the building should be repaired and left standing.

We ask that Building Control should make a close examination of the site ahead of any further action. Investigation should be made of the likelihood of cellars. The possibility of flood risk should be thoroughly explored.

The site lies within the City Conservation Area), so there is precedent to condition that a proper Heritage Statement and desk-based assessment and building survey should be made before the application can be determined.

Hugh Roberts (on behalf of Lancaster Civic Vision) 16.10.2026