

Mint Velvet

Site Address: 7 Exchange Street,
Manchester,
M2 7EE

1072_SC_007 - Heritage Statement

Client contact details:

Name: Mint Velvet

Address: St John's Place, Easton Street,
High Wycombe, HP11 1NL

Telephone: T: 01494 956 716

1.0 Background and Summary

- 1.1 Application Site: Mint Velvet, 7 Exchange Street, Manchester, M2 7EE.
- 1.2 The premise is currently a retail unit occupied by French Connection, the unit is surrounded by a range of other quality shops in the historic Royal Exchange Building in Manchester's retail heart.
- 1.3 The premise is a Grade II listed building under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.
- 1.4 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany an application for listed building consent for the reconfiguration and redecoration of the shopfront and internal works to the ground floor. New Advertisement Consent to the shopfront.

2.0 Site and Proposal

- 2.1 The building is an existing retail unit, which will be refurnished and re-branded to trade as Mint Velvet. The proposal comprises a number of alterations to the facade and the internal retail space. The works are intended to achieve a store environment reflective of Mint Velvet's brand design language, whilst retaining the historic features of the building. Additionally it aims to improve the standard and aesthetics of the building and make good all areas which have got into disrepair. It is considered that the special interest of the building would not be harmed and that the alterations proposed would further reveal and reinforce its significance. The proposal ensures a sustainable beneficial use serving the local community consistent with its conservation for the benefit of present and future generations.
- 2.2 The ethos employed is to leave undisturbed all existing listed features. Any works to the interior will take place mainly on the ground floor, within the main retail areas. The intention is that any works will be completely reversible in the future.
- 2.3 The works to the facade comprise the removal of existing cut-out letter signage from the stone fascia and projecting sign logo panels (from previous tenant). The facade itself will be retained as existing. New cut-out letter signage and projecting sign logo panels with Mint Velvet branding will be installed, all new signage will be installed in line with the Royal Exchange's signage guidelines. Existing internal illuminated signage (from previous tenant) will be removed and replaced with illuminated Mint Velvet signage, this will be designed and installed in line with the Royal Exchange's signage guidelines. The signage design & colours used have been developed in keeping with the Royal Exchange's signage guidelines in order to compliment the buildings historic character.

- 2.4 The works proposed to the interior of the building comprise of the removal of the existing shop-fit, reconfiguration of the fitting rooms and redecoration throughout. The alterations proposed are non-structural and aim to retain and reinforce the buildings historic character. New partitions, finishes, fittings, furniture and lighting will be of modern materials and construction which will be inserted into the existing fabric of the building. New dividing partitions will accommodate a dedicated DDA fitting room, x4 fitting rooms and a personal shopping suite. This addition will yield attractive and usable fitting room areas, with the DDA fitting room designed in line with current standards offering an improved retail experience. The interior will be redecorated throughout whilst retaining any original features. All works to back of house areas will be minimal redecoration only and the current uses of these rooms will not change.
- 2.5 Any existing perimeter shop-fit will be removed and new Mint Velvet perimeter fixtures will be installed on the ground floor.
- 2.6 Any recessed lighting will be removed and replaced with new. Existing A/C system will be retained, A/C grilles to be relocated to suit new layout. Existing sprinkler system to be retained.

3.0 Heritage Asset and Impact Assessment

- 3.1 7 Exchange Street is a Grade II Listed building added to the statutory list on 03-Oct-1974 and is described in the listing as:

SJ8398SE 698-1/27/124 MANCHESTER EXCHANGE STREET(East side) Nos.1 to 13 (Odd) Royal Exchange 03/10/74

GV II Includes: Nos.4 to 20 ROYAL EXCHANGE ARCADE. Includes: Nos.1 to 19 ROYAL EXCHANGE ARCADE. Includes: Nos.1 to 17 OLD BANK STREET. Includes: Nos.1 to 7 Former Royal Exchange ST ANN'S SQUARE. Includes: Nos.2 to 20 Former Royal Exchange MARKET STREET. Includes: Nos.2 to 20 Former Royal Exchange CROSS STREET. Commercial exchange, now shops, theatre, etc. Rebuilt and enlarged (for the fourth time on this site) in 1914-21, by Bradshaw, Gass and Hope. Darley stone, slate roof with three glazed domes.

Very large approximately rectangular plan on island site penetrated by east-west arcade at ground floor and enclosing central atrium at first floor. Classical style. Four storeys with two attic storeys; ground floor treated as rustic, with channelled rusticated piers, giant Corinthian order to first, second and third floors with massive entablature and modillioned cornice; first attic storey with cornice and balustraded parapet, second attic storey in mansard roof, Baroque turret at north-west corner, domes over other corners. Giant round-headed entrance arch in west side with wide steps up; first and second floor windows set in giant round-headed arches; mullioned windows to third floor and first attic storey.

- 3.2 The building has previously been adapted to accommodate shop premises to the ground floor with storage space currently at basement level.

4.0 Impact of Proposal

- 4.1 Based on the surrounding retail units, the proposed design in our view will not have any impact on the nature of the area. All proposed works are considered within scale and respect the internal proportions of the existing building. There is no extension forming part of the application that affects the external profile.
- 4.2 All works are intended to involve the minimum intervention and to be reversible in the future, allowing the building to evolve and maintain the possibility of new uses or layouts within the context of its listed status.
- 4.3 The proposal does not detract from the character or setting of the building and the proposal respects and enhances the original architecture, scale, materials and colour, detailing and other significant features of the building.

- 4.4 The works are not considered to have any adverse impact on the neighbours therefore no discussions have been made in relation to the proposal.
- 4.5 No works of the proposal affect the public routes or impact the street. New signage will not be illuminated and will replace the existing signs of similar size and location.
- 4.6 Public access to the store will be from the main entrance at the front of the of the store from the High Street as existing.
- 4.7 The application has considered the accessibility to and between parts of the proposed works. Mint Velvet will provide a high-level customer service and can assist access where necessary. It is not proposed to alter the existing staff welfare facilities other than through redecoration. The store is accessed via steps or a platform lift from the entrance lobby and the retail area and fitting rooms are on one level, creating a space that will be fully accessible for customers.
- 4.8 It is acknowledged that the most effective way to secure the future of an historic building is to find a suitable beneficial use for that building. The proposed function and associated alterations are consistent with the building's conservation and it is considered that the proposal would give rise to the significant economic and heritage benefits through the rearrangement of modern inserted partitions that inhabit practical use of the space and how it is experienced.
- 4.9 It is submitted that no important part of the historic fabric or character would be compromised and the significance of the building as a whole would be enhanced by the proposal.

Heritage Statement completed by: Alicia Ovington
Position: Designer, StudioJill
Date completed: 28/03/2023