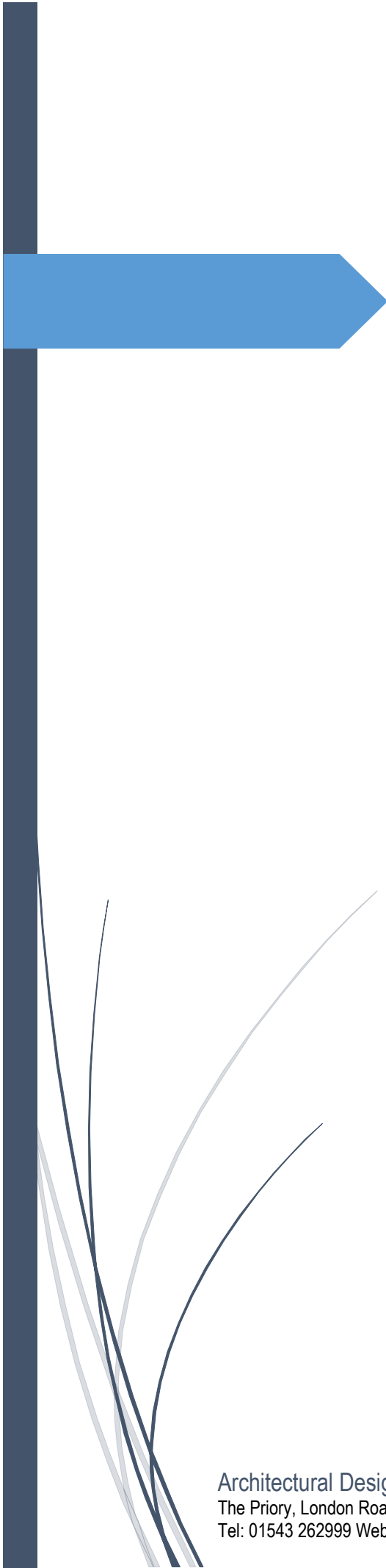




Design, Access and Heritage Statement

Replacement Signage and repainting of
shopfront

2 King Street / 95-97 Deansgate
Manchester,
M3 2BQ

On behalf of:

DeMontfort Fine Art



USE

Current use of site is A1 retail. We are seeking consent for new replacement signage and the change of colour of the shopfront only. No change of use is proposed.

AMOUNT

We are seeking consent for new replacement signage and the change of colour of the shopfront only. The footprint and floor area will remain the same, so amount is not considered to be an issue.

SCALE

No change to scale or massing of the building is proposed. We are seeking consent for new replacement signage and the change of colour of the shopfront due to the rebranding of Whitewall Galleries to Clarendon Fine Art.

DESIGN/APPEARANCE

Please see application drawing number 995/200 for precise details.

LANDSCAPING

Not applicable.

ACCESS

No changes to the access into the building are proposed.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

The site lies on the corner of 2 King Street and 95-97 Deansgate and is located within the St Ann's Square conservation area. St. Ann's Square was the first conservation area to be designated by Manchester City Council, on 29 July 1970. It comprises an important part of the city centre around St. Ann's Square, extending as far south as John Dalton Street. The building in question forms a single coherent four storey plus basement building which occupies a single city block bounded by four streets, Deansgate, King Street, South King Street and Ridefield. The building is one of a number of listed buildings contained within the St Ann's Conservation Area. The building dates from the 1870s and was originally constructed as chambers / office accommodation above ground floor shops. The floor plan is trapezoidal in form, defined by the street pattern surrounding the building which pre dates the construction of the building. The application site is situated within the vicinity of a number of Grade I and Grade II listed buildings. The building to which this application relates is Grade II listed, listed since 03/10/1974.

The conservation area appraisal by Manchester City Council states that "St. Ann's Square is in the commercial heart of the City, where almost every building accommodates shops on the ground floor. Encouragement of this variety will help maintain the character of the area. Where buildings need to be replaced, historic copies are not encouraged; instead high quality modern design, taking cues from the remaining historic buildings is promoted. Building proposals should be designed to enhance the existing quality of the built environment".

The St Ann's conservation area appraisal also goes on to say "from time to time, however, a building will need major refurbishment or reconstruction, and this provides an opportunity to create a design that contributes positively to the character of the conservation area".

Given the building's location within the St Ann's conservation area; its age and listed status; and also the original elements of the building which have not been removed or altered as part of modern redevelopment works; the building is considered to be a significant heritage asset, but one which has already been radically altered from its original condition. It is worth noting that the upper floors of the building have been granted planning and listed building consent for change of use to form apartments and minor external alterations.

The frontage to Deansgate & King Street consists of a facade of buff coloured sandstone to all four floors. At ground floor, each bay of the building is bounded by a sandstone pier with a glazed retail frontage within, the historic external façade is to remain.

The ground floor and basement retail unit has been occupied by Whitewall Galleries since 2009 when the original shop fit out was undertaken to convert it from a coffee shop to an art gallery. Listed building consent for alterations to entrance door, internal alterations including installation of suspended ceiling rafts and erection of external signage was granted under application number 091569/LO/2009/C1. More recently, planning and listed building consent has been granted for internal alterations, repainting the shop front Dulux Trade Ice Storm 1 and new signage (115365/AO/2017, 115726/LO/2017, 115270/LO/2017). Further applications for a replacement shopfront and advertisement were approved in 2018: 119050/FO/2018, 119051/LO/2018, 119052/AO/2018. We are now seeking to repaint the shopfront in Farrow and Ball No.36 Mahogany

Planning legislation relating to the built historic environment is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Guidance relating to this act is published as National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 with particular reference to Section 12. The guidance encourages the use of the term 'heritage asset' to describe *a building site place or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions*. The designated heritage asset assessed in relation to this proposal is number 95 Deansgate, which is a Grade II listed building. This retail unit is a corner plot, accessed off Kings Street and Deansgate.

Part 12 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, in paragraphs 126 and 141. The NPPF places much emphasis on heritage 'significance'. Significance is a common threat that occurs throughout Part 12 of the NPPF and is defined as *"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."*

Setting is defined in the glossary of the NPPF, as follows *"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."*

The effects of any development on a heritage asset therefore needs to be assessed against the four components of its heritage significance: its archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest.

Paragraph 128 states that *in determining applications local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected... the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.* The significance of the listed building is discussed in more detail below but it is worth noting that the listed building is made up of a number of units within this 'block' all containing different and indeed modern shop fronts at ground floor level, suggesting that the significance of the building is defined more to the upper floors rather than the ground floor retail units.

Paragraph 137 states that: *Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and ... within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.* It is considered that the impacts of the proposal are limited with no work being carried out that could harm the character of the building and that the proposal will preserve the special interest of the listed building, the character and appearance. It is worth noting that other units that form this 'block' all have different shop fronts and there is no uniform design and it appears a modern approach to shop fronts and entrances from street level have been approved on units such as Castle Fine Art, L'Occitane and Midas for example. Furthermore, consent has been given to convert the upper floors to apartments therefore alterations within the building block are not deemed to be unacceptable and considering all shop fronts are different, we are seeking consent to remove existing modern Whitewall Galleries signage and replace with something very similar in scale and appearance.

Identification of Significance

95 – 97 Deansgates are statutorily listed as part of a group listing that also incorporates 99-103 Deansgate, 4-14 King Street and 1-5 South King Street. Regard has been had to the listing details which confirms that the building was listed on 3rd October 1974. The listing states:

Includes: Nos.1 TO 5 SOUTH KING STREET. Includes: Nos.4 TO 14 KING STREET. Commercial block with chambers over shops. c.1870-80, altered. Sandstone ashlar facades and brick rear (roof not visible). Large trapeziform plan on island site. Muted eclectic style with some Gothic features. Four storeys, 5 bays, symmetrical, with cornice over ground floor, sill-bands to the upper floors, modillioned cornice; C20 shops at ground floor; coupled windows on all upper floors, round-headed, segmental-headed and shouldered on successive levels, all with hoodmoulds except at top floor, but the centre accented with differing fenestration: at 1st floor, a 2-light window in a round-headed arch with shafts, keystone and prominent cornice on brackets; shafts with carved capitals to those at 2nd floor; and a 3-light window at 3rd floor; and a tall pedimented dormer above, with round-headed 2-light window. North return has alternate bays slightly projected, with round-headed 2-light windows at 1st floor but otherwise similar fenestration. Interior not inspected.

The listing details relate solely to the façade of the building indicating that at the time of listing it was not considered that the rear facades of the building at ground floor contained any architectural detailing or features of particular importance that was worthy of mention. Indeed, following a site visit, it is clear that the rear facades do not contain any details or features of particular merit at ground floor only. The listing details make clear that the interior of the buildings were not inspected, therefore it is not known whether the buildings contained any important features at the time of listing. It is clear from a site inspection that there are some important original features remain internally at ground floor level within 95 – 97 Deansgate and these were assessed in the recently approved planning and listed building application for internal works that was granted consent last year. 95 – 97 Deansgate has an entirely modern shop fit out.

Whilst the shopfronts are mentioned in the listing, they are simply referred to as 20th Century shopfronts indicating that at the time of listing the frontages at ground floor level were not the original shopfronts and did not contain any features of particular importance. Furthermore, following a site visit, it appears that the shop fronts at 95 – 97 Deansgate are a combination of aluminium entrance doors and timber windows. It is worth noting that the timber windows and signage do contain elements of plywood, further suggesting that the shop front is not the original.

It is therefore clear that it is the façade above ground floor level which is important to the building's special character, and therefore its significance.

Archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest

As mentioned above, the listing text does refer to the ground floor frontages but only refers to them as 20th Century shops at ground floor. With the whole building being dated from circa 1870-1880, it would suggest that the shop front is not considered to be original and therefore has little to offer in terms of archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest. Furthermore, the shop front and entrance doors are a combination of timber (including plywood) and aluminium, with polished stainless steel lettering. It is considered that replacement signage and the repainting would not have any detrimental impact on the wider conservation area.

Conservation area

As mentioned above, the application site is located within the St. Ann's Conservation Area, which according to the Council's Conservation Area Appraisal was first designated in 1970. The boundaries are Deansgate, St. Mary's Gate, Market Street, Cross Street and John Dalton Street, some of which are common boundaries with conservation areas designated subsequently. St. Ann's Square was laid out in the Georgian period, early in the 18th century, and is one of the main spaces in the city centre. The church, which dominates the southern end of the Square is the only surviving building of that time in the area, the remainder being later replacements which continue to enclose the Square in a satisfactory and coherent manner.

The conservation appraisal discusses a majority of buildings nearby the Grade I listed Church but does say that St. Ann's is one of only fifteen buildings in the City listed as Grade I, and because of its position at the south end of the Square it is the most prominent building in the conservation area. It

goes on to say that St Ann's conservation area is now the commercial heart of a large city, almost all the buildings in the conservation area are shops or offices, or a combination of both. There is a wealth of buildings of architectural quality, the majority of them being Victorian with some Edwardian and a few of more recent origin. Few properties remain from the 18th century. Many buildings are listed for their special architectural or historic interest.

Following a site visit, it is clear that whilst this part of the conservation area contains a number of important attractive listed buildings, but it is not the shopfronts at street level that contribute greatly to the character of the conservation area, rather it is the upper parts of these buildings that are important to the conservation area's significance. It is clear that very few original shopfronts remain in this part of the centre. Indeed, modern shopfronts and signage prevail within this 'block' that make up the listed building, with the modern shopfronts close-by often without traditional features.

It is clear from the above that the historic core of St Ann's and the various listed buildings within this part of the centre and along Deansgate and King Street, in particular their attractive facades above ground level, contribute to the significance of this part of the conservation area rather than the ground floor shop fronts.

Design / impact assessment

As discussed above, Whitewall Galleries occupy the corner unit on Deansgate and King Street. This is just one of a number of retail units that make up the ground floor retail element of this city 'block' bounded on all four sides by the public highway. Access to the recently converted apartments at first, second and third floor is via a modern glazed entrance at no. 8 King Street. Paragraph 2.9 in the Guide to development in Manchester SPD says that "The design of shop fronts and signage should contribute to the character, identity, individuality and accessibility of local centres. These elements play a major role in creating the sense of place and image of the area. Whilst it is important for people to be able to identify specific shops and services, the design of shop fronts and signage should relate to and harmonise with the character of the area within which the building is located". It can be said that there is no uniform design to signage within this block and within the surrounding area, all appear to have their own design. For example, 99 Deansgate has a modern glazed shop front, fascia signage at mid-height and further vinyl advertising in the windows at high level. This is also the case for no. 101 Deansgate. Modern shop fronts within this block are also evident on No. 4, 6, 10 and 12-14 King Street. No. 103 Deansgate has taken on a more traditional timber shop front whilst maintaining large areas of glass. All these are identified as being within a grade II listed building.

Looking further along King Street, Suttons & Robertson have taken on a more traditional style shop front with low level stall riser, high level signage and ventilation grilles above. However, Harrington and Hallworth who occupy a corner unit on King Street / Police Street, have a modern shop front with large panes of glass and a clean, crisp high level fascia with signage.

With no uniform design in the area, it is our view that the replacement signage and repainting of the shopfront does not detract from the original architecture of the building.