

C. & J. CLARK INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

HERITAGE STATEMENT

56 KING STREET, MANCHESTER

Clarks[®]

SHOEMAKERS SINCE 1825

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1. INTRODUCTION

This heritage statement has been prepared to support an application for permission to alter and refurbish the ground & basement floors of 56 King Street, as well as redecorating & rebranding the front elevation to accommodate a new Clarks Originals store.

There are sections within this statement that are either referenced or based upon the '*proposed new shopfront heritage impact assessment*', submitted as part of a previous application for this address.

2. HISTORY OF THE SITE

The medieval settlement of Manchester grew up around the manor house and the Collegiate Church of St Mary (now the Cathedral). At one end was Long Millgate, the main approach from the north, following the River Irk, and at the other was Market Place, where Marks and Spencer now stands. From the Market Place ran Market Stead Lane (now Market Street) and Deansgate, the route to Chester and the south. Immediately to the south of Market Place was Acrefield, an area of arable land, where an annual cloth fair was held.

At the end of the 16th century the manor of Manchester was bought by Nicholas Mosley, who managed the London end of a textile business and was elected Lord Mayor of London in 1599. His descendant Lady Ann Bland changed the shape of Manchester by moving the centre of the town from the medieval core to what became St Ann's Square. As a counter to the pro-Jacobite leanings of the Collegiate Church, in 1708 she obtained consent by Act of Parliament to enclose the open land of the Acrefield in order to build a new church. Development of St Ann's Church was granted on condition that a public square 30 yards wide should be created to allow the Acre's Fair to continue to be held there as it had been since 1229.

After the church was built in 1709-12, St Anne's Square and King Street were quickly developed, becoming the most fashionable part of town to live. Apart from St Ann's Church, little remains today of the early 18th century development of the Acrefield. Almost all the present buildings in the area date either from the late 19th or early 20th centuries, with two exceptions: Nos. 35-37 King Street, which is a five-bay brick house of 1736, and almost opposite it No. 56 King Street, the subject of the application proposal.

3. RELEVANT ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Looking today at the frontage of No 56 King Street, it is not obvious that the property dates from the early 18th century. It is a modest building, and it has undergone several phases of alteration.

The building is three bays wide and three storeys high. The windows of the upper floors all have identical proportions and are framed by bolection moulded architraves formed in stucco. At first floor level the window-sills have been removed to accommodate a shopfront, whilst a band course connects the three sills of the second-floor windows. The sashes are 19th century and the central windows have been replaced with escape doors.

In 2010 an application was approved to install a new shopfront to the ground floor level of the building, which has since been completed, but is now left un-branded and vacant. Internally, at ground and basement level there is no visible fragment of 18th century fabric within the 56 King Street.

The original doorway into the property from King Street would have been in the right-hand bay, as this is where the staircase from the upper floors would have extended down to ground floor level. However, the upper floors can now only be reached by passing through No 41 South King Street.

4. STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Statutory Designation

56 King Street is a Grade II listed building. The brief list descriptions provide the following details:

KING STREET (South side) No.56 GV II Also known as: No.41 SOUTH KING STREET.

Town house, now shops and office. c.1700, much altered. Stucco on brick, roof not visible. Rectangular double-depth plan at right-angles to street. Three-storey 3-window facade, with C20 shops at ground floor, 4-pane sashed windows at 1st and 2nd floors, all with moulded architraves (all flanked by C20 pseudo shutters and those in the centre with C20 balconies); bracketed cornice. Principal features of interest are in the INTERIOR: front room at 1st floor with fielded panelling, fluted Ionic pilasters and plastered beams; rear room with late C17 or very early C18 moulded plaster emblems on the frieze (portcullis, running deer, flying boar etc), and moulded plaster decoration to the soffits of the beams (foliation with masks); closed string staircase with turned balusters and square newels. Linked by corridors to 1st floor of No.41 South King Street (q.v.), which contains the entrance.

The description of 56 King Street confirms that the building is listed for the value of its first-floor interior, not it's ground floor, basement floor or exterior.

4.2 Aesthetic Value

The cumulative effects of alteration to the front facade of the building have damaged its aesthetic value, making it very difficult to appreciate that this is an early 18th century building.

The first-floor front room is a rare survival of an early 18th century domestic interior in the city century. In spite of its lack of sophistication, its aesthetic value is significant. The staircase, fragments of 18th century decoration in the first floor back room and outrigger, and the roof purlins are also of significant interest.

4.3 Historic Value

The primary historic interest is the fact that 56 King Street is one of only two surviving examples of the early 18th century development of the Acrefield as a new residential district. Although the original property has been much altered, it retains its historic plan form to some degree.

4.4 Scientific Value

The 18th century building was conserved for its date and is of little scientific interest.

4.5 Social Value

The building is not known to have had any special social connections.

5. THE PROPOSAL

Externally we are proposing to redecorate the relatively new shop front and apply new branding to it, to reopen it as a trading shop. Internally the proposal seeks to remove the previous ground floor retail unit's shop interior, to then fit a new one.

No changes are proposed to any of the key historical features or values identified above.

6. CONCLUSION

This application represents a mindfully considered design approach, ensuring the preservation all elements of historical importance at 56 King Street. The resulting positive outcome ensures this shuttered up, vacant retail unit gets a new lease of life; A fresh new-look at ground level, improving the overall streetscape of King Street and also helping to generate new footfall to the area.