

# Heritage Statement in Connection to Works to The Ground Floor Flat, 36 York Street, Clitheroe, Lancashire

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### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Purpose and Format**

This heritage statement has been prepared to assess proposals to carry out interior alterations and repairs to the grade II listed property known as the Ground Floor Flat, 36 York Street, Clitheroe.

This statement will in essence assess the heritage significance of the building and review how the proposals for repair and alteration impact this heritage. It has been prepared in accordance with the general guidance laid out in the Historic England publications “Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance For The Sustainable Management Of The Historic Environment” published 23rd April 2008 and “MORTARS, RENDERS & PLASTERS” published 1st March 2012. Using technical information and guidance from The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings technical advice Notes “The Need for Old Buildings to ‘Breathe’” published in February 2020.

In particular it aims to respond to heritage policies set out in chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012)

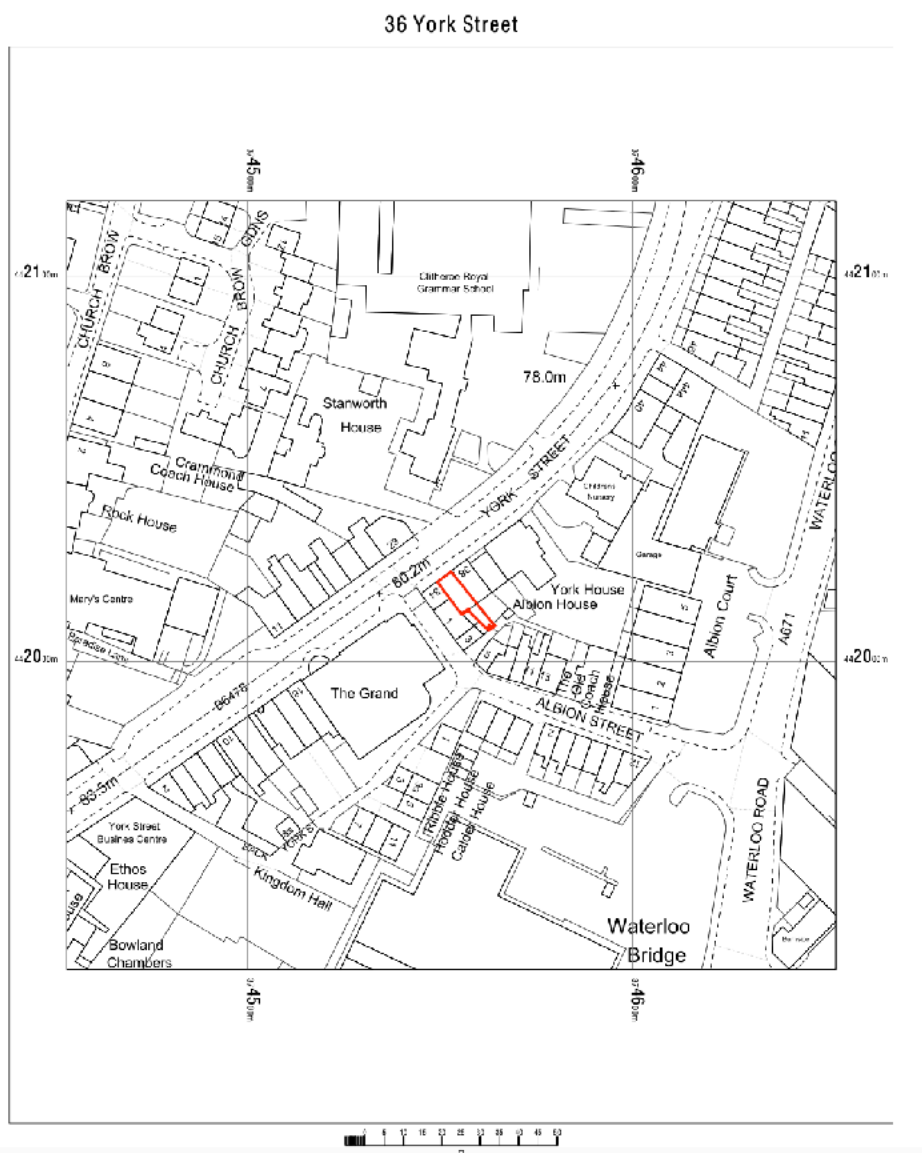
#### **1.2 Research and Investigation**

An inspection of the site was completed at the beginning of June to assess the condition and physical nature of the property. Background research has also been conducted to ascertain all relevant contextual matters appertaining to the proposals with particular emphasis placed upon the special architectural and historic interest of the site and those planning policies that affect/control change.

## General Description

### 2.1 Site Location

The Ground Floor Flat, Number 36 York Street forms the ground floor and lower ground floor of a building situated in the middle part of a grade II listed terrace row (34-38) found on the east side of York Street, on the corner of York Street and Albion street a short distance from Clitheroe Town Centre. Number 34, which sits on the corner is a hairdressers shop on the ground floor, basement and first floor with accommodation on the second floor. The First Floor Flat, number 36 York Street is a private residential property currently let out to a tenant. Number 38 formally being a retail (cheese) shop and has now been converted into a private residency. The terrace falls within the defined Clitheroe Conservation Area boundary, character area 3. A location map is shown below.



**Figure 1.** Site location showing the property edged in red and surrounding context

## 2.2 Site Description and Brief History

The building is believed to date back to circa 1830 towards the end of the Georgian period, and was possibly built by William Arkwright, a well known Clitheroe house builder trading from Wellgate and New Road in the 1820s. His name is mentioned in the title of both 36 and 38 York Street properties in March 1837 (he went bankrupt after building the Starkie Arms, now The Rose and Crown in January 1837).

The building is made from local limestone, the outside rendered in stucco, the top coat has drawn or scored lines to imitate ashlar. There is one modern, poor quality top opening timber window on the ground floor with two, modern timber windows to each first and second floor above. The windows have stone surrounds and are single glazed. The doorway has a rectangular fanlight with fine astragal glazing beads, cornice and stone architrave loosely based on the Tuscan order. The door itself has 6 fielded panels. The exterior stucco, windows and stone window and door surrounds have been painted with inappropriate plastic based masonry paint. The stone eaves have a moulded stone cornice behind which the gutters hide and the roof is slate.

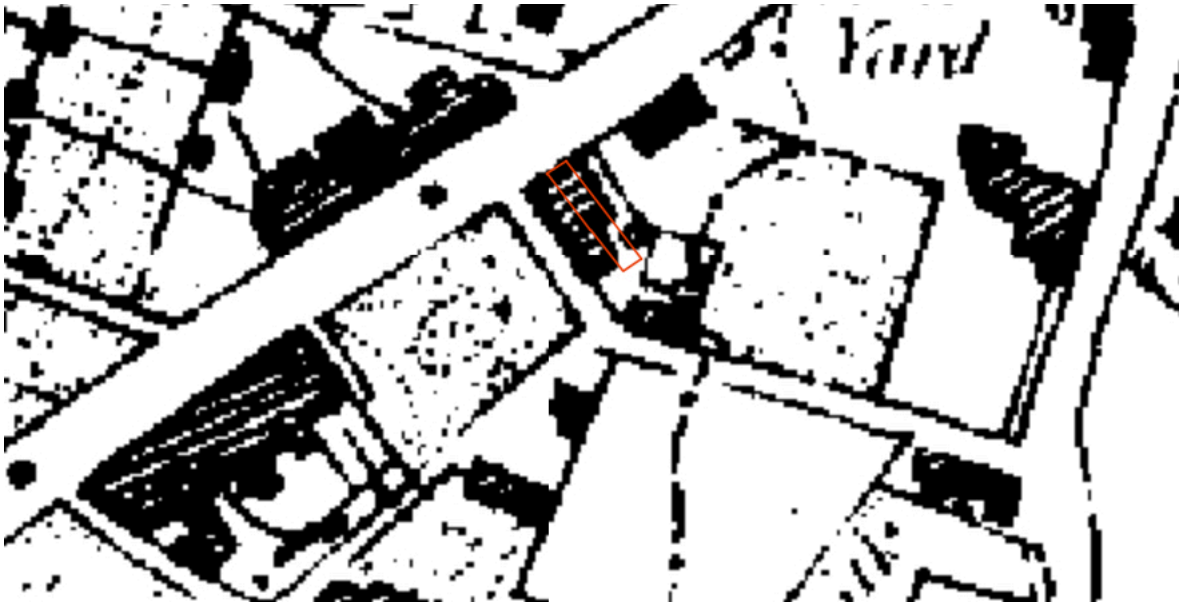
The listed description is given below for the row:

*'YORK STREET 1. 5295 (South-East Side) Nos 34 to 38 (even) SD 7442 2/21 II 2. C18 or early C19. 3 storeys, stuccoed. Moulded stone eaves cornice. Rusticated quoins. 3 windows to each storey, stone surrounds, 1 with glazing bars. Each has door with rectangular fanlight, cornice and stone architrave. 2 doors of 6 fielded panels and 1 of 3 panels to No 38. 2 ground floor windows and modern and C19 shop window to No 38.*

*Listing NGR: SD7454942016'*

York Street dates back to around 1828 and was developed by the Skipton-Clitheroe Turnpike Trust who employed the famous John Macadam as their consultant (Lancashire County Council - Discover the Clitheroe Town Trail - Date published unknown) .

The building and terrace row is shown on the OS town plan of the 1840s where it has a similar outline to the plan shown in figure 1 and again in the OS map of the 1890s showing the beginnings of the building known as Albion House between number 38 and York House, note the 1890s map shows number 38 whereas the earlier maps this building is not present.



**Figure 2.** OS Map 1840s First Edition 10560 showing the building outlined in red (approximate), accessed from Lancashire County Council MARIO Map Viewer.



**Figure 3.** OS Map 1890s first edition 2500 showing the approximate location of the building edged in red. Accessed from Lancashire Country Council MARIO Map Viewer.

The site falls within Character Area 3, York Street and Well Terrace, the following is an extract from the Conservation Area appraisal:

*'York Street descends in an open sweeping curve from Market Place to Clitheroe Royal Grammar School. At the top end are three large three-storey stone buildings (NatWest Bank, Public Library and the White Horse pub) but as the street continues northwards, and downhill, commercial uses give way to residential and the scale of development declines. The central length of York Street is notable for two opposing rows of early/mid 19th century three-storey terraced houses.'*

Some of the positive features from the CA as listed in the appraisal are; listed and unlisted rows of early 19th Century houses of architectural merit and good and varied historic townscape. It is considered that the proposed changes will not have any impact on these positive features.

Some of the negative features of the CA listed in the appraisal are:

*"Threats to the Clitheroe Conservation Area*

*- Loss of original architectural details.*

*-Many of the unlisted, and some of the listed, buildings in the conservation have been adversely affected by the use of inappropriate modern materials or details. Common faults include:*

- *the replacement of original timber sash windows with uPVC or stained hardwood"*

The proposed changes aim to enhance the visual and historic qualities of the Clitheroe conservation area.

## **Building Assessment and Statement of Significance**

### **3.1 Heritage Appraisal**

The following appraisal adheres to guidance published by English Heritage in 2008 "Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance For The Sustainable Management Of The Historic Environment" and relates specifically to the requirement contained in paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), given in extract below:

*"Proposals affecting heritage assets*

*194. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary."*

The appraisal begins by identifying the potential range of heritage values attributed to the building before evaluating these values and expressing them concisely within a 'statement of significance'. This statement is then used as a basis for reviewing the impact of the proposed changes, making sure to prioritise conservation wherever possible.

## **3.2 Heritage Values**

The following appraisal of the heritage values and how they are affected by the proposed changes are distilled under the following headings as described by English Heritage: evidential value, historic value, communal value and aesthetic value.

### **3.2.1 Evidential Value**

English Heritage (2008) suggest that *'Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity'*

The house offers physical evidence of the typical late Georgian style of townhouse seen within the centre of Clitheroe, with the classic late Georgian vernacular, proportions and well thought out styling to the eaves, cornices and architraves of the external architectural features mentioned in the site description. Internally some original features survive such as the original sandstone fire surround situated in the lower ground floor, some sandstone flags laid on the lower ground floor and the timber joinery panelling around the ground floor front window, although sadly due to past alterations the evidential value of the interior is comparatively low.

### **3.2.2 Historical Value**

English Heritage (2008) suggest that *'Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative'*

The house forms part of a terrace row which contributes to the valuable historic character of Clitheroe Town centre and helps conserve its strong sense of history, while there are no known important historical associations with the house besides the connection with the house builder William Arkwright who is mentioned in Dictionary of English Furniture Makers, 1660-1840 and that the house sits on a street with design connections to John MacAdam the famous Scottish civil engineer, road builder and inventor of 'macadamisation'.

The building's usage has changed regularly in recent history between residential and commercial use, being formally a residential building before becoming a pizza takeaway sometime before 1989 where it became two flats, the upper floor flat, and the ground floor flat. In 2003 the property changed from a residential flat into commercial use as an accountants office and then in 2020 permission was granted to change the property back into residential use.

### **3.2.3 Communal Value**

English Heritage (2008) suggest that *'Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory'*. As the building is a private residential property the public facing front elevations are most relevant to the communal value. As the property is situated close to the town centre and other communal properties such as The Grand public theatre and the Grammar school there is a large quantity of passers by who will value the appearance and the setting of the property, especially in relation to the other high quality buildings and heritage assets on York Street and the greater town centre area.

### **3.2.4 Aesthetic Value**

English Heritage (2008) suggests that 'Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place'.

The house forms part of a terrace row on a street of mostly terrace houses of a similar form and harmonious architectural styles including upright sash windows, moulded stone eaves cornice, stone door surrounds with rectangular or circular fanlights with stone cornices and architraves and stucco rendered facades. Some of the houses on the southern part of York Street retain the original sash windows with 12 light panes and glazing bars such as those that can be found at numbers 4, 6, 12 and 14 on the same side of the street and the modern replacement 16 light pane sash windows found in the majority of the terrace properties on the opposite side of the street. Sadly the property has lost the original sash windows as they have been replaced with more modern, poor quality single pane top opening windows and as such have eroded the aesthetic value of the property and the street. Luckily the front door, stone surround with its fanlight with original glazing bars remain intact and in a style that enhances the aesthetic and historical value of not only the property but the terrace row and whole street. Thus the public facing front elevations are considered of high aesthetic and historic value and as such its conservation is of primary importance in retaining the historic character of both the building and the conservation area as a whole.

By contrast the rear of the property and the interior possess comparatively very little aesthetic value owing to a hodgepodge rear extension in the late Victorian era and the building being subject to previous alterations. Hence their aesthetic value is comparatively very low and these are not considered major contributors to the visual aesthetic quality of the house.

## **Proposed Works and Statement of Significance**

### **4.1 Front Elevation Window**

When considering the above listed heritage values the existing relatively modern top opening window found on the ground floor front elevation is not deemed to have any historical or aesthetic value and has a negative impact on the appearance of the property and its setting on York street within the conservation area. This application seeks consent to replace this poor quality window with a more historically appropriate Georgian style timber sash window which is of the same style as the original historic Georgian sash windows found further up the street at numbers 4, 6, 12 and 14 on the same side of the street which have 12 pane and glazing bars timber sash windows and the modern replacement 16 light pane sash windows found in the majority of the terrace properties on the opposite side of the street.

The existing window is of a style not found historically in late Georgian properties, is missing paint, exhibits signs of rot and cracks and has swollen and distorted.

The poor thermal performance has negatively impacted the properties EPC rating due to the poor seals and the poor quality single glazing coupled with the timber distortion. Plus the window furniture is very poor quality and is of no historical value whatsoever. The window also poses a severe security risk to the building.

Historic England provides guidance where windows are not historic and do not contribute to significance. Their replacement is consistent or even encouraged by current planning policy and guidance:

*“Can I replace non-historic windows?”*

*Some windows, if they are later replacements, may not contribute to your building's historic interest and may even spoil its appearance.*

*An exception to this could arise where the replacement windows were installed during an important later phase of construction, even though they do not follow the original historic pattern.*

*You could consider replacing them with ones that are in keeping with the other historic features of your home.*

*Old photographs, or similar houses nearby, may have examples you can base your replacement windows on.*

*We will support the removal of non-historic windows provided it is clear that they are not of historic or architectural interest and that the new windows are of an appropriate style that enhances the building.”*

Given the limited age and poor quality of the existing window, even if the window was in good condition, replacement would be clearly consistent with this guidance, which is based upon current policy. However, in this instance the window is also well towards the end of its life with numerous defects, as outlined above.

The application seeks to replace this window with a traditionally made timber sliding sash with 12 panes manufactured and installed by heritage window specialists. The replacement will be a more historically and aesthetically appropriate Georgian type 12 pane sliding box sash which will further enhance the historic and aesthetic value of the property and will tie the building into the surrounding properties on York Street far more harmoniously having the same style Georgian window design. It will be an important positive contribution to the enhancement of the Clitheroe Conservation Area. Furthermore, although not overriding, there will be an improvement in energy efficiency and occupant comfort and health. The proposal is therefore consistent with the aims underpinning LBCA Act 1990 sections 16 and 72; NPPF chapter 16; Core Strategy policies EN5 and DEM4; and guidance published by Historic England.



- The existing front elevation poor quality damaged window.



- Several examples of neighbouring properties on York Street with original or historic 12 pane Georgian timber sash windows and modern Georgian style 16 pane double glazed PVC or timber sash windows.

## 4.2 Lower Ground Floor Plaster and Ventilation

Additionally the application seeks permission to repair failed modern basement “tanking” plaster to the lower ground floor basement. There has been significant damage to the tanking plasterwork by trapped salts contained in moisture present in the earth behind the retaining wall in the front elevation of the lower ground floor. Traditionally this moisture and the dissolved salts would pass through the traditional, breathable lime plaster and lime wash and be drawn outside the building by ventilation provided by the old coal holes, cellar ventilation pavement grills and by working open fires creating a through draw. Sadly changes to the internal of the property and the renovation of the pavement outside the property has seen these original features be blocked up and modern waterproof tanking solutions coupled with modern plastic paints applied to the walls which have prevented this breathability. Therefore the moisture and salt has become trapped in the foundations of the building, which have eventually forced their way through the impervious tanking plaster causing it to split and crack and a build up of hygroscopic salts to form around these cracks, further attracting moisture, more damage and damp.

The application seeks to remove this impervious plaster and replace it with traditionally applied heritage quality insulating hot lime plaster with a hot lime wash finish historically found in most traditional stone built buildings. This should allow the salt to draw out of the walls for them to breath and dry out, enchaining the living standards, improving the internal air quality and prevent further deterioration to the original building substrate. Furthermore the thermal and insulating performance of the building will be improved, enhancing the EPC score.

This combined with the addition of mechanical ventilation via front and back VapourFlow extractor fans will further improve the conditions of the basement by removing the damp, humid, stale internal air and replacing it by drawing in dry warmed air from outside. This should improve the internal air quality and further decrease the risk of damp, humid conditions which encourage decay, rot and moulds.



- The salt damage and blown cellar “tanking” plaster to the front elevation.

Six inch square cast iron slotted vent covers, painted the same colour as the render will be used at low level to minimise the harm caused to the external aesthetic value of the property.



- Similar slotted vents found on neighbouring properties on York Street where the traditional pavement cellar vents have been removed. .

### **4.3 Statement of Significance**

Having assessed the heritage values associated with the property and its setting, it is possible to take a more informed approach to the assessment of the sites significance, giving specific consideration of plans to implement change. In this context a statement of significance is given below.

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that, “When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance”.

Significance in the Framework glossary is defined as;

‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.’

The significance of the listed building derives from its position along York Street and the townscape and collective value which is appreciated from the terrace.

### **4.4 The impact of the proposed works**

The proposed work to replace the existing poor quality, out of place and tatty window with one more in keeping, complimentary and matching the other styles found on the street will hugely benefit the aesthetic value of not just the building as part of the listed terrace row but will also improve how the building sits within the wider conservation area. Therefore the impact of the proposal is one of only benefit and is considered of no harm to the historical, heritage or aesthetic value of the towns important listed asset.

The proposed internal work to replace the failed lower ground floor “tanking” plaster will only add value to the heritage of the building. By putting back similar plaster to what would have originally been present, namely traditional hot mixed sand, slaked lime and fibre plaster will not only improve the heritage value of the listed asset but also will immeasurably improve the condition of the building and its longevity. Lime plaster has been proven by countless heritage bodies as contributing great benefits to the building fabric and replacing the inappropriate failed modern plaster will further enhance the quality and the enjoyment of the living space. This coupled with a mechanical ventilation system should eradicate any potential damp issues, decreasing the risk of decay to the building’s structure along with improving the usability and enjoyment of the below ground living space.

The impact of the ventilation grate to the front elevation will be minimised by choosing a traditionally made, UK based cast iron slotted grill with is similar to others found on the street and on other buildings in the conservation area and will be painted the same colour as the building’s render to blend seamlessly into the building fabric and minimise its visual impact.

These proposals acknowledge the importance of the town's heritage asset contained within the conservation area and aim to sympathetically improve both the aesthetic of the building and also its performance, both as an abode and also as historic house, all the while bearing in mind its traditional construction. By using traditional materials and craftsmanship in exactly the same manner as what would have been done when the house was built the aim is to be as historically accurate and considerate as possible to make the building an enjoyable space to live in.

## **5.0 Summary and Conclusion**

36 York Street is a good example of a late Georgian townhouse and has architectural and historical value, individually due to its originality and collectively with the other similar properties on the terrace and on the street which make up part of the Clitheroe conservation area.

There is no loss to any historically valuable or architecturally important fabric. The alterations will bring the property inline with other neighbouring properties on York street further enhancing the important values of the conservation area and the historic building as a whole.

The replacement of the poor quality, inappropriate, rotten modern window with one of a similar design to those existing original Georgian windows found on York Street will only enhance the value of the building as part of the listed terrace row and as part of the wider row of similar terraces making up York Street and the Clitheroe conservation area. By replacing the window it will help to improve not only the aesthetic, but the thermal properties of the building and the street as a whole by harmoniously matching and tying together the same styles of other quality windows found on York Street's (and other buildings within the conservation area) similar beautiful heritage assets.

The restoration of the internal plaster back to traditional hot lime/lime wash with the addition of proper ventilation will have no impact upon the conservation area but the benefits to the health and longevity of the building will be immeasurable as outlined by countless heritage building bodies such as the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, Historic England, The Institute of Historic Building Conservation and Historic Environment Scotland.

These proposals are considered sympathetic to the originality of the building and aim to only improve the standard and condition of towns heritage asset in accordance to both regional and National policy.