



Heritage Statement

for

3, Clerk Bank

Leek

Staffordshire

ST13 5HB

Heritage Statement for Listed Building Application for 'Blue Plaque' Scheme at 3, Clerk Bank, Leek, Staffordshire.

Introduction

3, Clerk Bank is situated within the Leek Central Conservation Area and is classified as a Grade II Listed Building – a copy of the listing is attached within this statement. It sits slightly elevated above Mill Street in the midst of a small row of terraced properties, known as 2 to 4, Clerk Bank.

The row of properties were originally built as a single dwelling in the 16th century, consisting of a cruck framed two bay two and a half storey cottage. The building was sub-divided in the 18th century and is currently two dwellings and a now vacant shop (hairdressers).

It is one of the only remaining cruck framed buildings in Leek and was therefore listed in 1972.

Leek and District Civic Society have assessed this building as being an important part of Leek's built heritage (given the cruck frame) and history (given its association with early commerce and its age).

Proposal

The proposal is to hang a 400mm diameter, 12mm thick resin plaque from an existing fixing – its position is shown on details contained within this statement, using a photograph with the plaque lifted into place – its actual position will be approximately 100mm higher than shown.

The wording of the plaque will be: 'In 1859, the twelve founder members of Leek & Moorlands Co-operative Society Ltd. Opened their first grocery and provisions shop here'.

This statement has been confirmed following research of a 50th anniversary souvenir booklet produced by the society in 1909 (see attached article from Local Life.

Design Issues

The position of the plaque has been assessed given the existing openings on the front elevation - It is felt that the fixing of the plaque centrally above the front entrance door will not affect the significance of this listed building.

LEEK

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611-1/4/43
07/06/72

CLERK BANK
(North side)
Nos. 2, 3 AND 4

GV

II

Row of 3 cottages, now in use as shops. Built in 2 phases, and probably dating back to C15 or C16, extended and refaced, C17 and C18. Partly cruck-framed, with well coursed and squared sandstone walls to Nos 3 & 4; cruck-framed with brick external walls in No.2. Plain-tiled roofs. Each cottage single-unit in plan.

EXTERIOR: No.2: 2 storeys, 2-window range. Inserted C19 shop window with small panes, plank doorway and passage entry to its right, blocked window to left. Upper windows are casements of 2 and 3 lights, with small panes in the 2-light casement to the right. Left-hand gable stack. Stairs in angle with fireplace.

Nos 3 & 4: low 2 storeys with attic dormers, 2-window range. Paired inner doors with plain wood lintels (nailed over stone?). Inserted C19 shop windows each side, with traces of an earlier opening visible below right-hand window. Upper windows renewed in earlier openings, and 2 dormers in the roof. End wall stacks.

INTERIOR: No.2 is also cruck-framed in gable wall, with timber-framing in square panels to internal wall separating through passage to right. Brick externally (probably C18).

Stairs in angle with fireplace.
Nos 3 & 4 cruck-framed internally (1 cruck truss partially exposed in right-hand gable wall, a second cruck truss in the dividing wall between the 2 units).



This Clerk Bank cottage, second from left, was site of Leek's first Co-op shop, opened in 1859, but quickly proved too small

Leek empire of the

Co-operative pioneers

By David Cliffe

Nowadays the cottage on Clerk Bank, Leek shows no outward sign of the place it holds in the town's history. Yet this modest house was the setting for the birth of an organisation which was to play an important part in the lives of local people for more than a century.

It was here in 1859, in premises formerly occupied by a tailor named Armit, that the founding fathers of the Leek and Moorlands Industrial Provident Society – later renamed the Leek and Moorlands Co-operative Society – opened their first grocery shop.

A history of the society's first fifty years is recorded in a special souvenir booklet printed to mark its jubilee in 1909, telling the enterprising story of those provident pioneers and illustrated with photographs of the Co-op's Leek empire of a century ago.

The idea of a Leek and Moorlands Co-op is thought to have been first discussed among workmen employed by Miles



This shop on Overton Bank was headquarters of the local Co-op for many years. Today it is JD's bar and bistro

