Rose Crescent

Rose Crescent is a highly distinctive shopping street constructed as two homogenous developments in the early C19 and early C20 and is now a popular pedestrian route into the market. The narrow entrance and sharply curved building lines make it a ‘hidden’ street.

Rose Crescent is partly built over the buildings and yards to the former Rose Tavern, of which nothing now remains. The north east side of the Crescent was laid out as a planned development in 1825 and the south west side was acquired by Gonville and Caius College which demolished the old buildings to build St Michael’s Court in 1901-3.

General Overview

The two developments have continuous frontages that both rise to three storeys from the rear of the pavement with curving building lines creating a strong sense of enclosure. The south side has a fourth (attic) storey that is set just back form the eaves. The buildings on the north side form a continuous frontage of Neo-classical grey Gault brick townhouses, with ground floor shops which retain a number of the original shopfronts with notable details such as the cast iron grills to the basement light wells and the engaged panelled Tuscan pilasters. A through-arch between Nos. 9 and 10 is closed by large panelled gates, whilst the presence of a second arch can be detected further along the row.

The south side is formed by a single building designed to resemble a C16 college building clad in sandstone ashlar with projecting oriel windows which mark the staircases which rise up several storeys. The contribution of these has been emphasised by the addition of C21 plate glass oriel shop windows. Other windows and doorways from the street are framed in stone with deep chamfered reveals and mullions and arched heads or pierced stonework surrounds.
Street lanterns on long swan-necked or hooped brackets project from the buildings on either side. The street is notable for its stone paving and is a very popular pedestrian route into and out of the market square, although it is a quieter area at night and could be an intimidating space. At its entrance from Trinity Street the street narrows, creating a pinchpoint that hides the street making it a ‘hidden’ part of the city.

Street lanterns at the entrance from Trinity Street

**Townscape Elements**

- The street is lined on both sides by buildings on the back of the footpath.
- The very enclosed nature and the curve of the street restrict views northwards, creating an enclosed space that emphasises the shop frontages.
- A good example of purpose-built early 19th century and later commercial development in the heart of the city.
- Views to the south are focused on the bustling Market Place with the Guildhall looming over.
- The castellated roof on St Michael’s Court and the rhythm of stair bays and lantern brackets on the other side of the street all add richness to streetscene.
- Landscaping is restricted to tub-planters by some shops.
- Large slabs of riven stone paving create a unified street surface.
- Street lanterns on brackets add to the interest of the street scene.
- High quality historic shopfronts form the focus of views and make this a distinctive location.
**Enhancement Opportunities**

- The reinstatement of the few shopfronts to the North-east side, which have been altered, with associated improvements to the shop signage, is the main enhancement opportunity.
- The bollards and street signs at the ends of the street would benefit from improvements.

**Archaeology / Historic Topography**

Anticipated deposit depth is generally around 2.50m. Potential for prehistory is low. Potential for Roman is moderate. Potential for medieval is high.

In 1901 finds were made on Rose Crescent indicating the presence of a cemetery dating to around the 7th century AD. Details are scarce, but these finds included spearheads, knives and shield-bosses. The cemetery may be similar to others discovered around the town of broadly equivalent date, but it is the closest in proximity to the medieval town centre. The nearby church of St. Michael's is much later than the cemetery, built in c. 1327 as a chapel for Michaelhouse. The ‘lost’ medieval street of Alweis or Alwyn's Lane crosses the Crescent east west towards its southern end.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building No./Name</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Height (Storeys)</th>
<th>Wall Materials</th>
<th>Roof Form / Materials</th>
<th>Architect</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. 9 Trinity Street</td>
<td>Listed Grade II</td>
<td>late C18</td>
<td>3 + attic</td>
<td>buff brick</td>
<td>cornice &amp; parapet / slate &amp; tile</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 11</td>
<td>Listed Grade II</td>
<td>C1825</td>
<td>3 + attics</td>
<td>Gault brick</td>
<td>parapet / slate</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nos. 1 – 4, 8 and 11 retain original shop windows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 18 Gonville &amp; Caius: St Michael's Court</td>
<td>Listed Grade II</td>
<td>1901-3</td>
<td>3 + basement + attics</td>
<td>ashlar-faced</td>
<td>tiled</td>
<td>Sir Aston Webb</td>
<td>Tudor style with C21 oriel shop windows as a high quality addition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 15 Market Hill</td>
<td>Listed Grade II</td>
<td>C1840</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Flemish bond brick</td>
<td>mansard / slate</td>
<td></td>
<td>Included for group value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 16 ,Gonville &amp; Cauis: Market Hill Buildings</td>
<td>Listed Grade II</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>portland stone</td>
<td>flat</td>
<td>J Murray Easton</td>
<td>Listed with Nos. 16-21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>