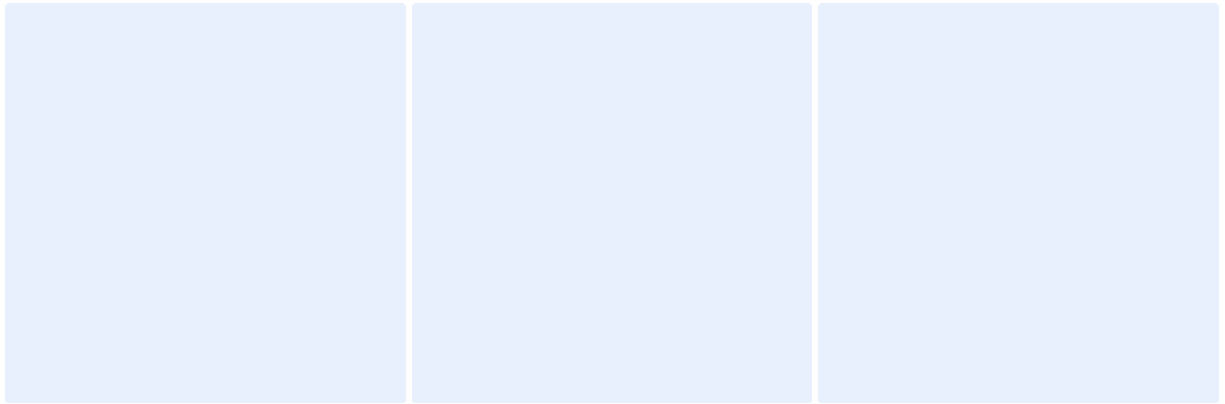




Heritage Statement

Little Holcombe House
Ramsbottom
Bury

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Format

This statement has been prepared in connection with proposed works to the residential property Little Holcombe House.

The purpose of the appraisal is to assess the significance of the building and how this significance might be affected by the planned changes. The document has been prepared in accordance with the general guidelines set out in the English Heritage publications 'Informed Conservation'¹ and 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance'² and in particular responds to heritage policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012).

1.2 Methods of Research and Investigation

Inspections of the site were carried out in April 2024 in order to assess its physical nature. Background research has also been conducted in order to fully ascertain contextual matters appertaining to the site's history. The scope of this research has, in accordance with the NPPF, been proportionate to the nature of the proposed works, with particular emphasis placed upon the special architectural and historic interest of the site and those planning policies that affect/control change.

2.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Location

Little Holcombe house is situated in a rural location approximately 1km south west of Ramsbottom town centre.

2.2 Site Description

The building (detached property) is in a rural location on the outskirts of Bury. Holcombe is a rural area, comprising a series of scattered settlements on steeply rising ground with a small nucleus around the historic road junction where the church and the Shoulder of Mutton Pub are located. The Conservation Area stretches from the northern edge of Holcombe Brook in the south and Higher Barn and Rakes Fold in the north. Peel Monument on Holcombe Hill and Top o' th' Moor Farm mark the western boundary; Lumb Carr Road, the path from Little Holcombe to Dundee Lane and part of Dundee Lane itself (excluding the modern houses) comprise the eastern boundary.

While the structure and distribution of the earlier farms have been retained, most such buildings have been adapted for domestic usage. The economic focus of the area is therefore largely residential, although the natural beauty and its position on the edge of moorland within reach of a major conurbation attracts recreational visitors as well.

The site plan is given below in figure 1.



Figure 1. Site Plan (OS extract)

2.3 Building Description

The detached dwelling known as Little Holcombe Farm is a stone finished farm house approx. 200 years old

See Photo of front elevation of House (Prior to planning Application in 2024). It has had extensions in the past to extend the property along with solar panels fitted within the last decade.



See Photo of the rear elevation of the House (Prior to planning Application in 2024)



2.4 Brief Summary of Proposals

The aim of the proposals is to extend the living space into the lower garden area using contrasting materials to the existing.

The new extension is to be stone to match existing with large apertures. The new extension is to nestle within the landscape with its rear elevation up against a retaining wall.

The below historic map is titled Ordnance Survey County Series 1955.



Three classes of buildings, representing the different socio-demographic groups in Holcombe's earlier social structure, can be distinguished within the Conservation Area: the small farm hamlets comprising a farmhouse a few barns or agricultural buildings and a cottage, as seen at Lumb Carr Farm and Little Holcombe; the larger houses of the landed gentry such as Hey House with its associated coach house, stables, kennels and farm, now all converted to residential use and Higher Barn which has an extensive house and ancillary buildings; thirdly rows of workers' cottages set in small gardens such as Merchants Row, Printers' Row, those on Old Holcombe Road and Cross Lane and elsewhere.

3.2 Heritage Values

An appraisal of the heritage values associated with the house has been carried out, with particular interest in how these might be affected by the changes proposed. The appraisal process relates to the range of heritage values as outlined by English Heritage (2008), which are distilled under the following headings: evidential value; historic value; communal value; aesthetic value. The purpose of assessing these values is to develop a clearer understanding of the site's significance – whether physically manifest (e.g. architectural features) or in some other less tangible form (e.g. historical associations) - so as to enhance the objective appraisal of proposals for changing the site. In essence this follows the approach generally advocated by English Heritage, whereby necessary change in the historic environment is intelligently managed.

3.2.1 Evidential Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests that - "Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity".

The property offers physical evidence that it has been used as a residential property since it has been built as it is currently a family home.

3.2.2 Historical Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests 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 historical value of the house is partly derived through its function and partly through its association with the other properties on the row. Its existence bears testament to the historical development of construction in the area and the growth of the C19th community. The house does not possess unusually high levels of historical value in this regard.

3.2.3 Communal Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests 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".

No communal value can be attributed to the house. It is a building, with minimal communal purpose as it's a dwelling.

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 has a medium aesthetic value as it is and does offer low intellectual stimulation to the surrounding residence.

3.3 Statement of Significance

The houses heritage values combine to establish the significance of the building, and conserving this significance is a key aim of this appraisal process.

Evidentially, the house acts as a physical reminder of late C19th buildings and is representative of the local building methods and tradition. It provides us with a small historical connection to the communities of old and allows us to interpret an aspect of development of the local region. Communally the building possesses little if any heritage

value, whereas aesthetically its 2-storey form is a typical feature of housing styles in the north of Manchester in the early 19th century.

4.0 ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED WORKS

4.1 General Principles

Given the consideration of significance included in section 3.0 above, it is possible to develop a more objective assessment of those proposals which are deemed to have a potential effect on the heritage asset. General guidance on assessing proposed changes to listed buildings is given in chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, or 'NPPF' (2012). This advocates conserving the significance of listed buildings and the need to understand significance before proposing change, the overall intention being the avoidance of harm. An analysis of the NPPF policies in respect to the proposed scheme is given below in 4.2. Whereas local heritage planning policies also exist, these have in most instances been superseded by the recent NPPF. Otherwise, there exist policies and supplementary guidance in the conversion of rural buildings, but these are not solely concerned with heritage issues and therefore have only been considered in the general context of the current policy drivers.

4.2 Analysis of the Proposals: National Planning Policy Framework

As discussed above, section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF (2012) considers heritage planning and identifies the following key drivers in the decision making process:

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.*

These drivers are then contextualised by a range of policies that seek to ensure effective management of development control decisions, placing the conservation of heritage significance at the core of decision making. This premise guides the consideration of change to heritage assets, as legally outlined within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990.

In order to establish a clearer objective assessment of the proposals in the context of the NPPF, the following commentary relates the completed/proposed changes to the house to the four principle policy drivers listed above. The works to the building is as previously outlined above in section 2.4 above.

4.2.1 *The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.*

The building is essentially a private structure situated on a road with other residential properties. Its potential for bestowing the social and cultural benefits referred to in the policy driver are limited, The proposals will not be detrimental to this enjoyment.

4.2.2 *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

The internal/external works will neither make or not make a positive contribution to the local character as there is an old conservatory in the proposed extensions place.

5.0 Summary & Conclusion

Maintaining active use is a fundamental philosophy of internal and external works to the house. The property is already used as a residential property and as such it is the findings of the heritage statement may be summarised as follows:

- The works are to the rear/side of the property and there will be no change to the front of the house. The material choice is an opposite to what is there and will be a contrast enhancing the existing property style.
- There is no communal loss due to the property having limited communal value.

In the opinion of the author, the proposals represent a well conceived scheme, which acknowledges and responds to the significance of a site. It fulfils policy requirements and, if executed in a careful and high quality manner on site, should prove to help sustain this heritage asset for many years to come.