

Proposed Garage:

83 Holcombe Old Road, Holcombe Village Conservation Area

Heritage, Planning and Design Statement

1.Introduction/Background

It is proposed to remove an existing timber garage to the side/rear of number 83 and replace it with a permanent stone and timber faced garage with a store above. The primary policies in this context cover heritage and green belt.

The site is within the Holcombe Village Conservation Area (a designated heritage asset) and a statement is required in support of the proposals in line with paragraph 207 of the NPPF 2024/25. Part of the paragraph states that *"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 and the conservation area. 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."*

For completeness this statement also deals with planning policy issues and design matters. The site has been the subject of two planning proposals in the past: in 1996 a proposal for a two storey side/rear extension (application 96/31738), and in 2004 for a single detached garage (application 43642). Both applications were approved but there are no scheme details on the Council's website.

2. Significance

The Conservation Area

The conservation area is a very large area of farmland and moorland containing individual buildings and groups of buildings and settlements. In 2010 Kathryn Sather and Associates produced an appraisal of the conservation area. The report outlined in summary the special character of the Conservation Area. It stated that it derives from the following elements, all of which remain the same today.

1. The unspoilt scattered rural village on the shoulder of a hill, built in tightly knit small hamlets amidst fields of pasture and small woodlands, along old packhorse and turnpike routes, dating from the 17th century and earlier.
2. The dominance of 18th and early 19th century residential and agricultural buildings, with very little modern infill, set in gardens in scale with the size of the building.
3. The adaptation of an early pre-industrial community with textile home-working to outworking, as demonstrated by the buildings, pathways and handrails which testify to the interconnection between Holcombe and Ramsbottom.
- 4.The high quality of the natural landscape of the Conservation Area and its setting, combining steeply sloping moorland, pasture and woodland, typical of Pennine valleys.

5. Views out of and into the Conservation Area. The Peel Monument and the church steeple are important landmarks viewed from inside and outside the area while from within the area there are panoramic views to the north, east and south.
6. The comprehensive range of dwelling types from a similar period, ranging from houses of the landed gentry, farmhouses and workers' cottages, often in rows, with appropriate ancillary buildings.
7. The large number of buildings of architectural and historical interest, including a large number of statutorily listed buildings as well as many others on the Draft Local List and of similar quality.
8. The homogeneity and visual harmony of the buildings resulting from the use of local materials (millstone grit, stone tiles), traditional building techniques (weather struck masonry, stone corbels supporting rainwater goods, coal holes in the walls) and the unity of height and scale.
9. Traditional stone walls along the roads with upstanding stones, several stone troughs, the large number of traditional stone gateposts and use of widespread use of stone sets, utilising local materials.
10. The long historical association with hunting and hunting dogs, attracting the interest of royalty, as well as other sporting traditions including cockfighting and the Holcombe Wakes.

This independent view confirms the importance of traditional materials and the homogeneity of the area's buildings and details. It is a largely undamaged example of local C17 to C19 hillside vernacular, still within its early setting undisturbed by later development, and with a long, clear and strong history.

The conservation area is a visitor attraction for walkers of all kinds as well as a resource for those in the village. People follow these old routes and footpaths far and wide and many visit Peel Tower and the pilgrims cross. They come to Holcombe because of its qualities. They may not understand its history or judge its architecture but they know that it is special.

It would score strongly on the evidential, historical, communal and aesthetic values assessment.

The Application Area/Site

The site is on Holcombe Old Road an early pre-turnpike north/south route. It is part of a stone and slate terrace facing west fronting directly onto the stone sett roadway with a private garden to the north and east. Number 83 is at the northern end of the terrace with the proposed garage in the north east corner. To the north and east is Tower View a large detached property in grounds. This is screened from 83 with timber fencing, a hedge and trees. To the west across Holcombe Old Road, is land raised above the road level held by a stone retaining wall and used as a garden. The existing garage is in timber set at the back of the site and with timber gates to the front of a driveway.

The terrace is in coursed stone, some watershot, two storeys, with slate roofs and stone chimney stacks. The buildings are of mixed design and plan but generally plain with outbuildings and garages in both stone and timber. Many have rear extensions. There are timber and Upvc window frames and doors of mixed design.



Number 83



83 from the north

and from the south



The remainder of the terrace

and garage

3. The Proposal and Options

The proposal is to replace the existing timber single garage with a slightly larger stone and timber garage in broadly the same location. This is set back from the highway in the north eastern corner of the garden. The location of the garage is to be excavated to set the garage floor broadly at road level and involves the cutting into the land in the rear garden. Some excavated material will be used to raise the ground immediately surrounding the proposed garage.

The lower part of the proposed elevation will be in natural stone with the upper part in stained timber, fixed vertically. The roof will be flat but raised slightly to accommodate some storage.

Design options have been considered. A two storey option was considered but this was expected to meet green belt volume objections and be more visible than other options. A pitched roof on the current proposal was considered but it was thought that a flat roof would reduce the scale and

impact of the development. The proposed building will be partially below the land immediately around. The only visible elevation is the frontage when briefly glimpsed when passing along Holcombe Old Road. The materials, stone and timber, are appropriate in their setting and in relation to other buildings and outbuildings in the locality.

4. Impact on Conservation Area

The proposal will involve very little change to the site and its appearance. Although slightly larger than a domestic garage it will be largely hidden from any public views and is to be built in materials that are appropriate for an outbuilding in a semi-rural area and reflect the materials found generally within Holcombe. It will replace a structure that has reached the end of its useful life. The character of the area will remain unaltered.

5. Compliance with Heritage Policies

The relevant heritage policies are paragraphs 212 to 215 of the NPPF, and EN1/2, EN2/1, EN2/2, and JP-P2 of the local plans.

The policies and official guidance are in italics.

The most relevant NPPF policies are :

210. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

212. 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.

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c)

conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

JP-P2 was adopted as part of the Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Plan in March 2024 and this contains general policies as follows :

Particular consideration will be given to ensure that the significance of key elements of the historic environment which contribute to Greater Manchester's distinctive identity and sense of place are protected from harm. These include historic town centres, places of worship, historic transport routes including the canal network, industrial buildings and structures including textile mills, farmsteads and other sites, buildings, and areas of identified archaeological, architectural, artistic and/or historic value. Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets and/or their settings will be considered having regard to national planning policy.

The LPA's UDP policy for proposed development in conservation areas is -

'EN2/2 - Conservation Area Control.

Development within a Conservation Area will only be acceptable if it preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the area. In considering proposals for development in Conservation Areas, regard will be had to the following criteria:

- 1 the nature of the development in terms of its bulk, height, materials, colour, design and detailing;*
- 2 the relationship between the proposed development and the architectural and visual qualities of the surrounding area.*

Parts 3 and 4 of this statement indicate why the proposal will have negligible/minimal impact on the character and significance of the conservation area. It meets all of the above national and local policies.

6. Compliance with Planning Policies

In addition to the heritage matters the main planning issues are green belt and design.

Green Belt

The function of the green belt as outlined in the NPPF and local policies is :-

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The construction of a single garage would not normally be seen to challenge these objectives. The detail of how these functions are interpreted and assessed is outlined in national and local guidance.

Nationally the NPPF's guidance is 'When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness'. The detailed guidance is a reflection the local policies, as below.

Locally the relevant parts of the Development Plan are Policy OL1/2 - New Buildings in the Green Belt and its supporting planning guidance. This is consistent with the recently approved Places for Everyone Green Belt Policy JP-G9.

The words outlined in bold apply to the proposed garage.

Policy OL1/2 states that 'The construction of new buildings inside the Green Belt is inappropriate development, unless it is for one or more of the following purposes: agriculture and forestry (except where permitted development rights have been withdrawn); essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it; **limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings, provided that this would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling**, or, in the case of replacement of existing dwellings, the new dwelling is not materially larger than the one it replaces; limited infilling in existing villages as set out under Policy OL1/3.

*Justification. Green Belt policy has been very successful in controlling development of the urban perimeter and limiting sporadic development on open land. This policy continues the Council's commitment to ensuring that the Green Belt will generally be kept open and protected from inappropriate development. The policy also states how the Council will respond to proposals for development within the Green Belt. The potentially acceptable categories of development listed in the policy all possess at least one of the following characteristics. They would: have a low proportion of building area in relation to land area; or **would not injure the visual amenities of the Green Belt or be conspicuous from or within the Green Belt**; or be essential or traditional countryside uses; or help to secure the proper management of Green Belt land.*

The local planning guidance is within SPD DC Policy Note 8 parts 4, 5 and 6 as follows.

Part 4 Extensions

4.25 Residential extensions **should be proportionate to the size of the original dwelling**, excluding any previous extensions carried out under permitted development rights or with planning permission. In general terms, the Council may allow an extension to be up to a third of the volume of the original dwelling. However, **each proposal will be considered on its own merits** and even an increase up to a third may not be appropriate in certain situations (e.g. if the site is a particularly sensitive area or if there are other amenity issues).

4.26 If an addition to an already converted building is required, **the extension should be a subsidiary element of the original building. Extensions should be small scale, of a simple design and unobtrusive. Acceptable designs could include single storey, lean-to gable end or flank extensions.**

4.27 **Proposed materials and finishes to walls and roof should be identical or similar to the existing.** Features such as windows and doors should also be complimentary in scale to existing.

Part 6 Garages And Outbuildings

6.1 Garages are normally considered an urban element and it is not normal practice for garages to be constructed in the Green Belt. The use of existing buildings for use as garages or outbuilding should be considered ahead of any new building. **Where garaging and other buildings are required, the design should be subservient to and closely related to existing buildings.**

To summarise the above, acceptable developments should :-

1. Not harm the openness of the green belt.
2. Not be a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling.
3. Not injure the visual amenities of the Green Belt or be conspicuous from or within the Green Belt.
4. Be proportionate to the size of the original dwelling.
5. Be a subsidiary element of the original building. Extensions should be small scale, of a simple design and unobtrusive, and
6. Proposed materials and finishes to walls and roof should be identical or similar to the existing.
7. Each application will be dealt with on its merits.

The design and appearance of the proposed garage as outlined in part 3 and 4 of this statement complies with the list 1 to 7 above.

Referring back to paragraph 4.25 from SPD8, a general rule is that extensions are allowed up to one third of the volume of the original dwelling. Planning permission 96/31738 approved a two storey extension that was constructed in 1996/97. Its volume is 167m³ compared to 343m³ for the original dwelling. This represents an increase of 48%. However, the extension is at the rear of the property which is not visible from any part of the green belt or surrounding properties, and the LPA would have concluded that there was no harm to the green belt in this case. It also complies with the list 1 to 7 above. The volume of the garage to be removed is 41m³ and for the proposed garage is 60m³ of which part is below the surrounding ground level. This represents an additional 6 % volume above the original dwelling, and part of this will be below the surrounding ground. The increase is therefore insignificant and will not harm the Green Belt.

Design

The LPA's primary UDP policy for design is EN1/2

EN1/2 - Townscape and Built Design.

The Council will give favourable consideration to proposals which do not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the particular character and townscape of the Borough's towns, villages and other settlements. Factors to be considered when assessing proposals will include:

- the external appearance and design of the proposal in relation to its height, scale, density and layout;*
- the relationship of the proposal to the surrounding area;*
- the choice and use of materials;*
- access and other design features for the mobility impaired;*
- the design and appearance of access, parking and service provision;*
- landscaping, including the use of natural landscape features, and open space provision;*
- the use of lighting.*

Justification. The appearance of proposed developments and their relationship to their surroundings are material planning considerations to be taken into account when assessing development proposals. The Borough has a large diversity of settlements both old and modern with differing social and economic conditions. The established character of many parts of the Borough could be harmed by insensitive development out of scale with and unrelated to the street scene. Development proposals should respect desirable precedents in the surrounding area. In particular, attention should be paid to established architectural detail, important roof lines, and the provision of interesting facades, where appropriate, together with the use of quality materials, colours and detail to create

interest in the built environment. The Council is prepared to work closely with developers to achieve a satisfactory design from the earliest planning stages. The focus is on good design rather than stifling experiment, originality or initiative. However, there is a desire to retain much of the traditional appearance of particular parts of the Borough.

This policy is expanded upon in the additional guidance within the Development Control Policy Guidance Note 16 (Design and Layout of New Development in Bury) and SPD 6 (Alteration and Extension of Residential Property), parts of which apply to the site.

The proposed garage meets the standards applied within EN1/2 and the supporting guidance.

7.Conclusion

The proposed garage is in-character with that the conservation area and is a minor structure that will have no impact on heritage significance. Although it involves a slightly larger volume than the existing structures at number 83 it will have little or no impact on the Green Belt. It follows the policies for good design.

It meets both national and local planning policies.

M Nightingale Dip TP, Dip Arch Cons
November 2025
07487590113