

71908 – Shoulder of Mutton, Holcombe Village, Bury.

Erection of 2 no. timber framed gazebos over part of existing external seating area with new ramped access and stepped access.

The application site is the car park area adjacent to the northeast gable end of the Shoulder of Mutton public house, a grade II listed building. The site is within the Holcombe Village conservation area. The Shoulder of Mutton is part of a core of listed buildings and Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs) at the core of conservation area, and which make a very strong contribution to the special distinctiveness, character and appearance of it.

The proposed development would be within the settings of the Shoulder of Mutton – Grade II listed; 1 and 3 Alba Street – Grade II listed; 24 and 26 Holcombe Village – Grade II listed and Higher House, Moor Lane – Grade II listed and the following NDHAs – 18 to 20 Holcombe Village and Former Barn and Cottage, Higher House, Holcombe Village.

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 210 of the NPPF states 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.

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states 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.

Paragraph 213 of the NPPF states 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.

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that 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.

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Paragraph 219 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

Paragraph 220 of the NPPF states that not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated

either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

Conservation Area

Holcombe conservation area has different elements to its special distinctiveness, character and appearance from its semi-rural moorland character in the west to the built environment core of the village and application site. The built environment is characterised by simple plan form, vernacular development in local stone consisting of two and three storey dwellings and non-domestic premises and their boundary treatments in an ad hoc or piecemeal fashion.

The village at which the Shoulder of Mutton could be considered to be at its heart has changed little and as a key component to the special distinctiveness, character and appearance of that part of the conservation area is sensitive to change.

The proposed gazebos would be constructed from timber slats and posts (colour grey) with plastic screen above 110mm and shingle felt covered pyramid hip roof. There would also be a concrete bund around part of its footprint.

New development within a conservation area must be exceptional and should be expected to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

It should be noted that the application site does not constitute an opportunity site for new development with regard to identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats within the conservation area.

The proposed development and associated works would represent an incongruous, contemporising and urbanising feature within the conservation area by virtue of its design, size, scale, mass and materials and as an alien feature would be totally at odds with the architectural grain of that part of the conservation area not preserving or enhancing its character or appearance.

The proposal would not represent exceptional new development that would enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

As such the proposed development would represent less than substantial harm within the terms of paragraphs 215 and 220 of the NPPF.

From a heritage conservation point of view the applicant has not identified any public benefit that would outweigh the harm identified to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Listed Buildings and Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The built historic core of the village consisting of the heritage assets identified, combined represent a group setting by virtue of their adjacency to each other.

The proposed development would be within the group setting of the heritage assets identified as well as the setting of the Shoulder of Mutton.

The proposal would in part obscure architectural features of the northeast gable of the Shoulder of Mutton, causing a visual jarring and harm to its architectural interest which would lead to an unacceptable loss of significance, which would be contrary to the aims of paragraph 210 of the NPPF in requiring new development to enhance significance and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. It would also harm the way the Shoulder of Mutton would be experienced when approached from Moor Road and Helmshore Road.

The proposal would be viewed within the wider group settings of Higher House, Moor Road, Holcombe Village and Helmshore Road causing harm to their architectural interest leading to an unacceptable loss of significance to the other assets identified.

The harm caused to the settings of the designated and non-designated assets represents less than substantial harm within the terms of paragraphs 215 and 220 of the NPPF.

From a heritage conservation point of view the applicant has not identified any public benefit that would outweigh the harm identified to the special architectural or historic interest of the designated and non-designated assets.

In conclusion the proposal would represent a contemporary, urbanising and incongruous feature in the sensitive historic core of Holcombe Village within the conservation area and the settings of designated and non-designated heritage assets without any public benefit. As such the application cannot be supported in heritage conservation terms.

Conservation Officer

13/6/25