

HERITAGE STATEMENT

**HOLLINS HOUSE FARM
247 HOLLINS LANE
WHITEFIELD
BURY
BL9 8AS**

PREPARED BY

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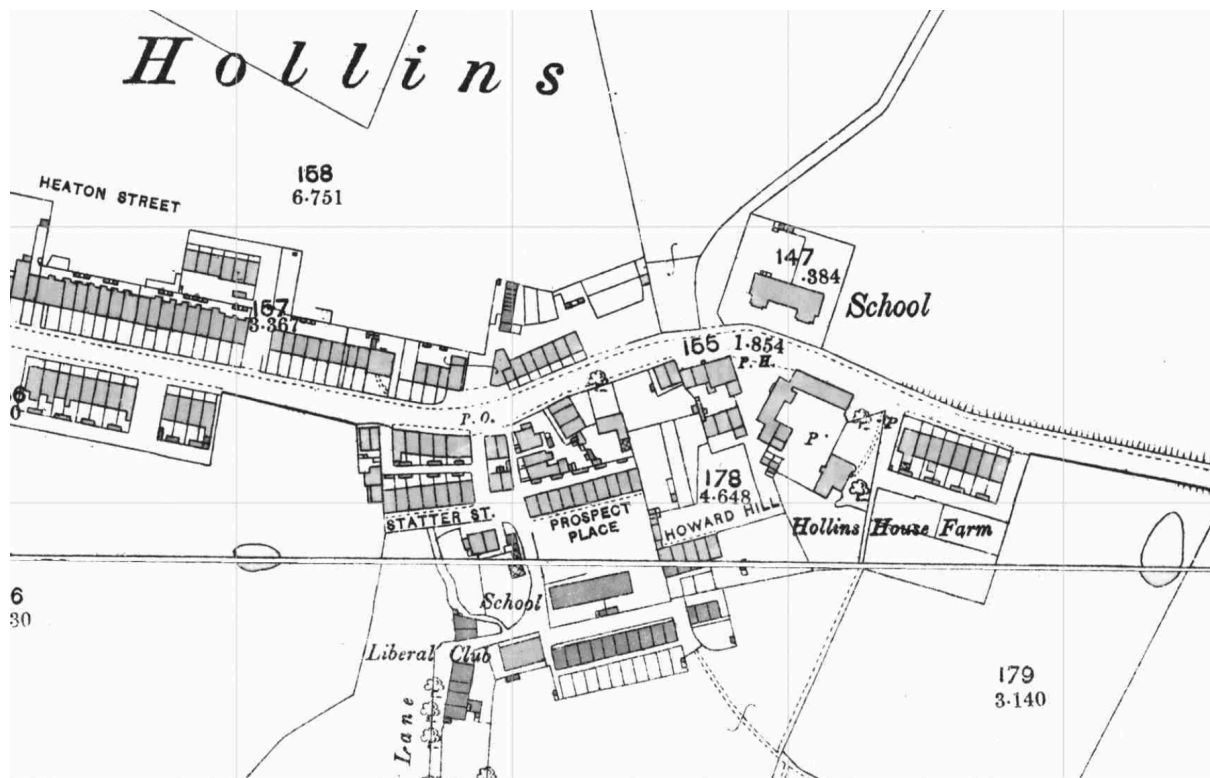
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1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

- 1.1 I'm instructed to provide a heritage statement in relation to proposed development to convert dilapidated former farm buildings into residential use.**
- 1.2. The farm was included on the local planning authority's draft list of non-designated Heritage Assets in 2017**
- 1.3. The inclusion of the property on the local list has necessitated the requirement for a heritage statement to be prepared to accompany the planning application.**
- 1.4. This heritage statement has been prepared to comply fully with the requirement of Paragraph 189 National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The level of detail is proportionate to the heritage asset's importance. It is also of sufficient detail to understand the impact of the proposal on Significance.**
- 1.5. The farm buildings appear to have evolved from the middle to late period of the 19th century and as with all farms of this period the buildings have been adapted for different types of farming activity and when the farm ceased to function as a farm other uses have been given to the buildings**
- 1.6 The farm buildings comprise of an older barn which has an orientation axis of north to south with the northern end facing Hollins Lane. This barn particularly on the south end has undergone significant alteration work with the original part having been demolished. To the north of the farmyard along the back edge of Hollins Lane is a single storey former cow shed with an east – west axis. This barn has been extended in the 20th century to the west side. Also, the roof line of the entire building appears to have been raised in the 20th century with the upper parts of both gable walls having been rebuilt.**
- 1.7. The farm has undergone a number of changes, but it is likely in the latter part of the 19th century early 20th century there would have been increased demand locally for dairy and milk products and with the farm being located on the edge of the urban area . It would have been well placed to meet this demand. However small local producers probably had a limited period of time where demand for their products was reasonably good. This is probably illustrated by comparing the OS plans for 1891 and 1910. During that period the cow shed built at the back of Hollins Lane was extended to the west and this is likely to have been in response to the increased levels of demand. Holdings such as Hollins House farm would have been in competition with dairying farms spread across the north west and based upon historic research that I have undertaken in the past dairying farms in North Wales for example were expanded significantly to provide greater levels of production to serve the expanding industrial areas of Lancashire. Fast transportation links with railway connections improved the efficiency of the larger operations very much to the expense of small dairying farms such as Hollins House**

Farm which because of the location near to the Pennine areas would also be in competition with other hill farmers from a wider area.

- 1.8 The First World War with greater need for home grown produce and dairying products enabled many farms to struggle on, but after 1919 these holdings really could not compete with the larger operations that enjoyed economies of scale enjoyed by the larger bulk producers.
- 1.9. Evidence of a declining farm activity can be seen in 1920 with the development of the Bury Golf Club course on land to the south of the farmstead. It appears quite probable that the golf course was developed on part of the farm since on the 1891 and 1910 OS maps the southern end of the enclosed farm yard had a south facing opening and this is a common feature with regard to farmyards with the open southern aspect allowing access but also the warmth of the sun to be directed into the yard and to the openings in the buildings.
- 1.10. I would suggest that 1920 being at the end of the First World War would tie in very well with the decline of the farm operation. It is possible that the farm may have continued on a different and much reduced basis after this date because farming was often practiced as a hobby and being located close to the urban area this is highly likely that the occupier could obtain work in a factory or other form of employment in the urban area and could work the hobby farm in leisure time to produce very small scale produce for home consumption or very local markets. This would appear to be the case here.
- 1.11 The barn with the north - south axis is older than the north range and this appears to be a building that has undergone considerable change. There is some possibility that it may have been a threshing barn although little evidence of this survives other than the projecting side doors. Threshing barns on some farms hold very little heritage interest because they were only in operation for this use for a limited time only. Technology in the 19th developed very quickly and this use was quickly replaced with the advent of mobile threshing machines which made the traditional barn redundant. If there was a threshing barn use this is likely to have been very low key and, in any event, it would be cheaper for a small-scale farmer to employ a mobile contractor as advancements in machinery in the 19th century facilitated this. A further point to note that arable crops were likely to be for animal feeds and of a limited scale and thus a further reason for employing mobile contractors.
- 1.12. The farmhouse has undergone significant alteration /extension and has no heritage value.



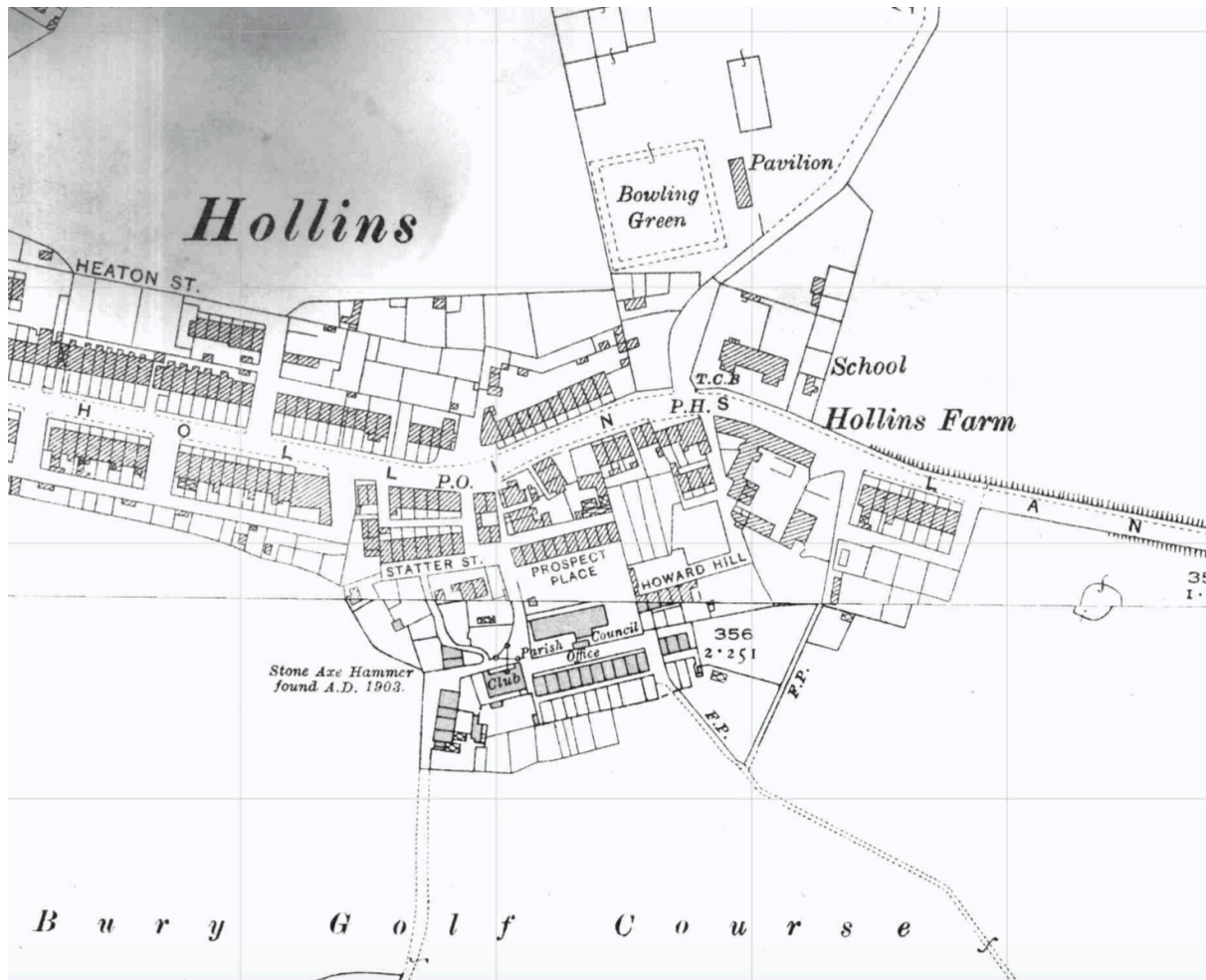
1891

This shows the farmstead with open end of the farmyard to the south. The scale of the buildings suggest a low scale operation



1910

This shows the range fronting Hollins Lane to have been extended to the west but there are other additional farm buildings in the opening to the south and this is a strong indication that the dairying capacity of the farm had increased since 1891.



1930

The golf course to the south was established 1920 -21 and is likely to have taken some of the farmland and therefore the decline of the farm as a commercial entity is likely to have dated from this time.

2. THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FARM BUILDINGS

- 2.1 The farm buildings are in very poor condition. The scheme will involve rebuilding the southern end of the main barn which is in very poor condition.**
- 2.2. I would suggest that the farm buildings have not been in commercial use since the 1920's and thereafter only possibly as a hobby or very low scale farm. The large north – south barn is unlikely to have been in use for its original purpose much after 1870**
- 2.3 Both buildings have been significantly altered . The roadside former cowshed has had a modern corrugated sheet roof added but the side and gable walls have been raised in height possibly in the latter half of the 20th century. This was most certainly undertaken after the building was no longer in use as a cow shed and therefore some of the significance has been lost.**
- 2.4. With regard to the other barn this was a threshing barn although it is unlikely to have been used for that purpose for any length of time.**
- 2.5. The buildings have some level of local historical value in so far as they are illustrative of a small-scale farm which was involved in mixed farming operations but with a predominance in respect of dairy farming /livestock. The north south barn retains the Winnowing doors on the side elevations and even though this is unlikely to have been used as a threshing barn it does create some added interest. In all probability the barn would have been used for feed preparation and also feed / straw storage with the extended cow house being the main area of operation.**
- 2.6. The buildings are located in a prominent position and therefore have local interest as they contribute to the character of the area.**

3. IMPACT OF THE SCHEME

- 3.1 The buildings are in a dilapidated condition and this is primarily because they are not in beneficial use. Clearly the farm use has long since gone and other uses are not of a sustainable nature.**
- 3.2. The conversion to residential use is considered to provide the optimum use and there should be no particular issues from a planning or historic building viewpoint with this use.**
- 3.3 As mentioned the original farm has local historic interest and this will be enhanced by the retention of the buildings with a new invigorated sustainable use. The scheme is therefore considered to have significant levels of public benefit particularly as the buildings date back to before the urbanisation of the immediate area.**
- 3.4. The scheme very cleverly retains the canopy above the winnowing entrance, and it is easy to read the converted building in terms of its original layout. The threshing area is also highlighted by the opening between the units and this is a good design picking out the individual parts of the barn which can be read within the context of the scheme.**

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The scheme provides a long- term sustainable use for these dilapidated buildings with the development being respectful to the historic past of the former farmstead which is likely to have ceased as a commercial farm sometime around 1920. The scheme therefore has considerable public benefits.

4.2. The application will need to be considered within the context of Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) which states

“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 assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”

4.3. I’m not certain of the status of the local planning authority’s list of locally listed buildings particularly whether the list has been formally ratified and properly forms part of official policy matters for the determination of planning applications. This appears to be possibly a “grey” area but in this particular scheme of conversion should not prove to be controversial since the conservation and heritage benefits are considerable in terms of enhancement of the heritage asset irrespective of whether it is formally regarded as being a non -designated heritage asset or not.

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