
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

OUTWOOD GATE FARM, RADCLIFFE, BURY

SEPTEMBER 2022



1. Introduction

- 1.1 Townscape have been instructed to compile this heritage statement to support a planning application for a new development and to assess the heritage interest in the building known as Outwood Gate Farmhouse, a large late 19th century house, forming part of a wider farm stead which is now derelict and ruinous.
- 1.2 Townscape are Chartered Town Planning and Heritage Consultants who serve public, private and community sector clients. We specialise in all aspects of our historic environment, heritage, planning and wider urban design. Townscape is led by myself, Mr Jason Kennedy. I have over 25 years experience of working in town planning and have gained a detailed knowledge of the subject. I am a Full and Chartered member of the Royal Town planning Institute (MRTPI) and a full member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC).

2. Location and historical context of site

- 2.1 The application site comprises of Outwood Gate Farmhouse located on Ringley Road West approximately 0.5mile from the settlement centre of Radcliffe, set in a semi-urban context yet with open outlook. The site is bounded to the north and west by newly constructed large dwellings and wider urban development and small local centre facilities. To the south the site is generally open field views screened intermittingly by mature trees.
- 2.2 The building is predominately rural in character with a single pitch roof. The building dates approximately from approx. 1830-40. The building in plan form is a variation on the double pile/small house typology with offset front door providing for larger parlour and passage running from front to back with offset staircase. The building has large ground floor rooms with fireplace, with small kitchen to rear and is repeated on the first floor. Very little historical/documentary evidence exists to the former farm stead other than its use as a farm.
- 2.3 The building is, detached, constructed in engineering brick (English garden wall bond) under a slate roof and is two storey with end chimneys to its gables. The property has no definitive architectural design or identity with little or no ornament other than fanlight to main front entrance and brick voussoirs to window openings. The rear of the property is covered in a cement dash render and side gable in a tar/bitumen finish.
- 2.4 The building has a number of later extensions including later single roof lean too side garage extension and rear porch both 20th century. The building has replacement windows/doors throughout. Internally the building is unremarkable with no fixtures or fittings of any note other than fireplace openings with surrounds dating from the 1930-40's. In addition to the farmhouse, the farmyard is a collection of scattered brick and later 20th century concrete buildings. All farmyard buildings are derelict with compromised structural integrity.
- 2.5 The external areas of the building are formed as overgrown garden area to its frontage with low brick wall, with surrounding areas made up of mature trees and shrubs. Beyond the

farmhouse the farmstead is unrecognisable other than a collection of ruinous brick buildings with limited interest. It is clear the farm has not operated for quite some time.

The setting to the building is its semi-rural character and open aspect.

- 2.6 Historic Map regression indicates that the building dates from at least 1844 probably 1830-40 and was isolated with limited additional development.

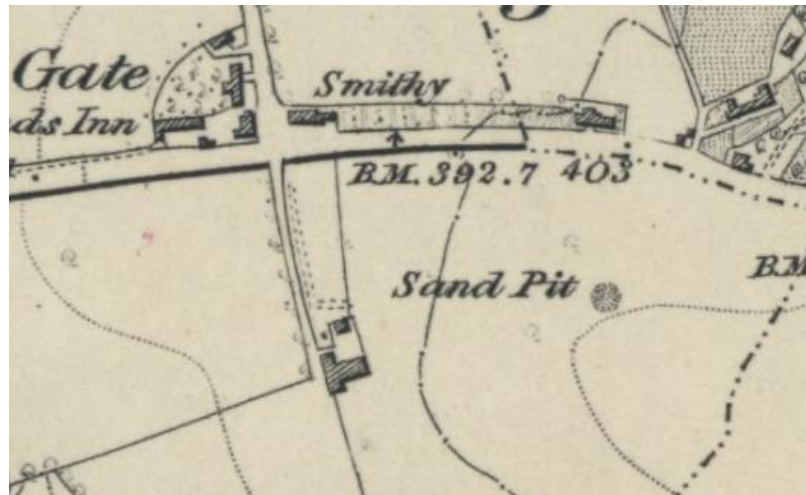


Fig.1 OS extract 6in 1844

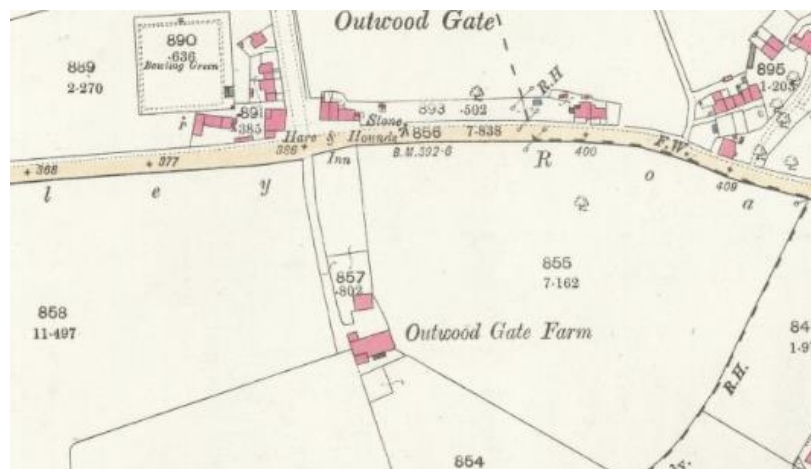


Fig. 2 OS extract 25in 1891

3. Significance assessment and criteria as a non-designated heritage asset

- 3.1 Due to the properties age, scale and architectural expression, it may be suggested that the property may be considered as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) and therefore holds a degree of significance. Understanding significance is a key principle for managing change to heritage assets and is embedded within current government policy in the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework, 2019). A key objective in the NPPF is 'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.'

- 3.2 The NPPF advises that the more significant the heritage asset, the greater weight should be given its conservation. English Heritage issued Conservation Principles in 2008 to explain the importance of understanding what is significant before making changes to a historic building. English Heritage set out four main aspects of significance: evidential (or archaeological), historical, aesthetic and communal. Measuring significance is not an exact science; it relies on a combination of comparative analysis, an understanding of the building's development and architectural history and the setting. Assessments depend on using judgment in relation to the quality of the original design and fabric and the level of alteration. There are four main categories of significance that can be measured:

Exceptional – an asset important at the highest national or international levels, including scheduled ancient monuments, Grade I and II* Listed buildings and World Heritage Sites. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be wholly exceptional.

High – a designated asset important at a national level, including Grade II listed buildings and locally designated conservation areas. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be exceptional.

Medium – an undesignated asset important at local to regional level, including buildings on a Local List (non-statutory) or those that make a positive contribution to a conservation area (may also include less significant parts of listed buildings). Buildings and parts of structures in this category should be retained where possible, although there is usually scope for adaptation.

Low – structure or feature of very limited heritage value and not defined as a heritage asset. Includes buildings that do not contribute positively to a conservation area and also later additions to listed buildings of much less value.

Negative – structure or feature that harms the value of heritage asset. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered, taking account of setting and opportunities for enhancement.

In accordance with the NPPF Outwood Gate Farm is considered to be of Low/medium interest.

- 3.3 **Significance of Outwood Gate Farmhouse-** If a building is considered to be a building recognised as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) which ordinarily should be contained within a local list held by the Council, which provides an assessment of the building in accordance with good practice. Bury Council have an online published draft local list¹ in which the farm is listed but no further details to its significance.
- 3.4 For a building to be considered or determined suitable as a NDHA, it is good practice to evaluate the building against agreed criteria. A list of criteria has been produced by Historic England;

¹ <https://www.bury.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=14898>

Advice note 7 as updated Local Heritage Listing². The criteria include 10 categories which identify the special qualities of heritage assets. It is necessary for a building/structure to meet some of the criteria to be considered a non-designated heritage asset. I have provided commentary on the suitability of The Bobsleigh Hotel in meeting the objectives of the criteria.

Criterion		Description
1.	Age	The age of an asset may be an important criterion and the age range can be adjusted to take into account distinctive local characteristics.
2.	Rarity	Judged against local characteristics.
3.	Aesthetic Value	Intrinsic design value relating to local styles, materials or distinctiveness and local characteristics.
4.	Group Value	Groupings of assets with a clear visual, design or historic relationship.
5.	Evidential value	The significance of a local heritage asset of any kind may be enhanced by a significant contemporary or historic written record.
6.	Historic Association	The significance of a local heritage asset of any kind may be enhanced by a significant historical association of local or national note, including links to important local figures.
7.	Archaeological Interest	Archaeological interest if the evidence base is sufficiently compelling and if a distinct area can be identified.
8.	Designed Landscape	Relating to the interest attached to locally important designed landscape, parks and gardens.
9.	Landmark Status	An asset with strong communal or historical associations, or because it has especially striking aesthetic value. May be singled out as a landmark within the local scene.
10.	Social & Communal Value	Relating to places perceived as a source of local identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence often residing in tangible aspects of heritage contributing to the collective memory of a place.

² <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/heag018-local-heritage-listing/>

My response to the suitability of Outwood Gate Farm being considered as a NDHA in accordance to in force planning policy is as follows:

Criterion		Description
1.	Age	The building dates from the mid 19 th century and its age provides limited significance and historical merit. Whilst the farmhouse is shown on the 1 st edition 6in OS Map of 1844, the building itself is evidently not much earlier than say 1835-40.
2.	Rarity	The building type is not rare, neither nationally nor locally. Farms of a similar age are widespread. Some are still used for their original purpose therefore are of more interest whilst others have been converted to new uses. Outwood Gate Farm has ceased trading as a farm and all buildings/structures on site are ruinous and at an advanced stage of dereliction. The fact that the farmhouse is not used for its original purpose adds weight to its lack of interest.
3.	Aesthetic Value	The aesthetic value is principally as an example of its type as a variation on the double pile plan form/small house. There is no distinguishing architectural language to the building and its decorative form is limited to mid 19 th century design. The building does provide a low level of architectural interest however, this is reserved to its principal front facing elevation. The later extensions and alterations have made little concession to the overall aesthetic value.
4.	Group Value	There is no group value to the building itself other than as part of a former farmstead.
5.	Evidential value	There is no evidential value to the building. It was constructed and used for a sole purpose.
6.	Historic Association	There are no publicly accessible records or evidence to suggest that the property has any direct historical associations with any local or national figures of note or key events.
7.	Archaeological Interest	There is no known, published records or evidence to support any archaeological interest.
8.	Designed Landscape	Not applicable. The building is not located within any formal or otherwise recognised landscape or formal designed garden.
9.	Landmark Status	The building by virtue of its setting, location, appearance is not a locally recognised landmark building.
10.	Social & Communal Value	The building is architecturally, historically and aesthetically limited and examples are widespread. The building is not designed in any local style unique to Bury, therefore any local identity or social and communal value is minimum.

3.5 Summary of significance:

- The front facing elevation provides a degree of interest but is plain and altered. Rear elevations and side elevations are of less interest– Low/medium significance *due to level of alterations*
- Later additions and extensions in particular to the rear – Low/poor significance
- Internal plan form with no fixtures or fittings of note – Low significance
- Setting, no landscape, or formal gardens of any note, former farmhouse with no discernible rural character setting – Low significance

3.6 Taking account of the building's consideration as a NDHA, I conclude that on heritage grounds, the building has low significance and does not meet the minimum criteria to be considered as a NDHA. In addition, given the overall condition of the building and how its wider farmyard context has been lost which otherwise would have sustained greater heritage interest.







4. Understanding of proposed development assessment of proposed works and their impact on the NDHA

4.1 This impact assessment relies on the understanding of the structure identified as Outwood Gate Farm. A brief understanding of the building and its significance has been discussed in the heritage statement.

4.2 This impact assessment is a judgment on the proposal works which include the following;

- Replacement of the existing building with a single residential development of 4 bedrooms over 2.5 storeys, to be constructed in brick with a slate roof and landscaping to the front area of the replacement property.

4.3 Analysis and impact of proposed works

The main original building is proposed to be replaced with a residential development occupying the site and slightly larger footprint. The proposed replacement building will be brick construction with traditional pitch roof at 2.5 storeys with dormers. Despite the existing buildings limited significance, the replacement building will retain the site with an enlarged footprint.

4.4 In assessing the impact of a proposal which entails the impact on a non-designated heritage asset, this assessment draws on a number of key guiding documents where applicable; such as English Heritage Conservation Principles, 2008 and Historic England Guidance, Historic Environment - good practice advice in planning - Note 3, The Setting of Heritage Assets, March 2015, where required. However, the scope of the works doesn't fall into the category of impact upon the setting of a heritage building or conservation area.

- 4.5 I have also considered the impact of the proposal upon the heritage asset by relating directly to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which reflect Bury Council Planning Policies EN1 and EN2.
- 4.6 This report provides an appropriate level of assessment for this case. The NPPF advises that when considering the impact of a proposal great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be. More weight is therefore given to assets of national importance such as listed buildings, than to local heritage; and more weight should be given to features and elements of high significance than those of lower importance. I have judged that the building does not meet the minimum criteria to be considered as a non-designated heritage asset and therefore its significance is low/medium and the overall works are balanced in accordance to the impact upon a NDHA.
- 4.7 With respect to the level of harm in relation to this proposed development. I consider the building doesn't qualify to meet the minimum criteria to be considered a NDHA due to its overall condition and the lack of wider context in that the farm is no longer functioning and associated agricultural buildings are derelict. Therefore the level of harm is modulated to reflect this status and overall the works proposed are to be slight positive. The proposed development should be assessed against general planning policies contained within Bury Council local plan.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 This report has provided for a brief heritage assessment of Outwood Gate Farmhouse, which is located on open land off Ringley Road West, Radcliffe.
- 5.2 The works proposed the replacement of the existing derelict farmhouse are providing for a residential development which is to be characterfully designed. The lack of significance of the existing building merits its replacement and therefore there is no demonstrable harm as a result of the proposed development. The balance of the acceptability of the proposed development is therefore outside the controls of heritage planning and to be based upon other aspects of the local plan and the NPPF. The proposals are informed, with an understanding and regard for the existing building, its context and its relative significance in accordance to current heritage planning policies. The significance of the building has been assessed and the resulting impact commented upon.
- 5.3 Government policy, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, requires that proposed changes to the historic environment are based on a clear understanding of the significance of any heritage asset and its setting, providing information so that the likely impact of proposals can be assessed.
- 5.4 The heritage assessment provided in this report is carried out in accordance with the historic environment policies in the NPPF and local planning policy and is intended to aid the assessment of any resulting planning application. I have briefly outlined the historical

development of the building, its character and any significance. I have outlined the scope of the proposed works and commented on the likely impact upon the building and any mitigating factors.

- 5.5 The crucial test contained within the NPPF is whether there is any harm resulting from the proposed that is outweighed by the public interest and benefits of a proposal. My conclusions have found that the proposed works will result in a slight positive impact. Even though the building has a low level of interest and is proposed to be replaced, the development site retains a semi agricultural character more so its location rather than collection of recognisable agricultural buildings, its presence in a semi-rural location and the sites reuse as a modern farmhouse will result in a slight positive impact. I believe the proposals strike a balance between the limited architectural and historic interest of the structure that is proposed to be replaced balanced against the development outcomes of the site.
- 5.6 I conclude that the proposals as set out will not present any detrimental impact in accordance with national planning policy. The building has a low level of significance and does not meet the minimum criteria to be recognised as a NDHA therefore its replacement is acceptable.

Mr Jason A Kennedy BSc, Dip TP, MA, MRTPI, IHBC
Director
Townscape Chartered Town Planner & Heritage Consultant Ltd.
September 2022
www.townscape.org.uk