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Heritage Impact Assessment

Proposed Two-Storey Side Extension Syke Bank Farm Catley Lane Head Conservation Area



1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared to accompany the planning application for a proposed two-storey side extension within the Catley Lane Head Conservation Area. The purpose of this document is to assess the impact of the proposal on the historic character of the area and demonstrate how the scheme contributes positively to the conservation area while aligning with relevant conservation policies and guidance. The site is located within a predominantly agricultural landscape, which has informed the choice of traditional materials and design approach to ensure the development respects the area's rural character.

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2.0 Site Description & Heritage Context

The site is situated within the Catley Lane Head Conservation Area, a designated area recognised for its historical and architectural significance. This conservation area is characterised by its agricultural heritage, with many properties originally constructed as farmhouses or small rural dwellings. Traditional stone-built properties, dry-stone boundary walls, and narrow winding lanes define the built environment, reinforcing the historic rural setting. The open countryside and surrounding green spaces contribute significantly to the character of the area, maintaining a strong visual and historical connection to its agricultural past.

There are no listed buildings on or immediately adjacent to the site, and no specific heritage constraints have been identified. However, as part of a designated conservation area, the site is subject to planning policies that seek to preserve and enhance the area's special architectural and historic interest. The proposed extension has been designed to complement these surroundings, ensuring that its scale, form, and materials remain in harmony with the existing dwelling and the wider conservation area. The use of locally sourced natural stone and slate has been carefully selected to reflect the predominant materials used throughout the conservation area, reinforcing its connection to the historic built environment.

3.0 Significance of the Heritage Asset

The Catley Lane Head Conservation Area is significant due to its well-preserved rural character, its collection of traditional buildings, and the sense of place created by its historical development. The conservation area has evolved over time, shaped by agricultural activity, and many of its buildings still retain features that reflect this history. The presence of stone-built dwellings with traditional pitched slate roofs, timber doors, and small multi-paned windows contributes to a consistent architectural language that defines the area's identity.

The site itself contributes to this heritage value by maintaining a visual and physical link to the rural surroundings. Its existing structure is a traditional stone-built dwelling, which sits comfortably within the conservation area. Any alterations to this property must respect its architectural character and the broader conservation objectives. The proposed extension has been carefully designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing building while enhancing its functionality in a way that remains sympathetic to the area's historic context.

4.0 Assessment of Impact of the Proposal

The proposed two-storey side extension has been developed with careful consideration of its impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The extension has been designed to be proportionate to the existing dwelling, ensuring that it does not dominate or overwhelm the original structure. The height and width of the extension have

been determined to maintain a balanced and cohesive appearance, ensuring that it remains subservient to the main house.

The use of natural stone walls to the lower section of walls and the standing seam zinc panels to the upper walls and roofing provides a visual continuity with the agricultural setting, reinforcing the historic character of the area.

The choice of materials has been directly influenced by the agricultural heritage of the conservation area. Natural stone, sourced from local quarries, has been selected to match the existing dwelling and to ensure the extension blends harmoniously with its surroundings. The roofing material will be high-quality slate, consistent with the traditional roofing used throughout the area. Timber windows and doors will further enhance the traditional aesthetic while ensuring durability and sustainability in line with contemporary construction standards.

The proposed extension has also been designed with consideration of the wider setting and the conservation area's overall setting. By setting the extension back slightly, the original dwelling remains the dominant feature, ensuring that the new addition does not detract from the existing architectural composition. The relationship between the building and its external spaces has been maintained by retaining existing boundary treatments and enhancing the landscaping to soften the visual impact of the extension. The reinstatement of the site boundary will further reinforce the rural character and maintain a strong sense of enclosure in keeping with the historic setting.

Concerns raised in previous planning objections regarding the overuse of hardstanding materials and site boundary confusion have been addressed comprehensively within the revised proposal. The extent of hardstanding has been minimised to ensure that natural green spaces remain a key feature of the site. Existing paving will be retained where possible to ensure an appropriate balance between functionality and visual compatibility with the conservation area. Clarification of the site boundary has also been included within the updated application to avoid any ambiguity and ensure a clear understanding of the proposed development footprint.

5.0 Justification & Mitigation Measures

The proposed extension has been carefully developed to respect the historical and architectural significance of the conservation area while meeting the practical needs of modern living. The choice of materials, scale, and design has been informed by the surrounding agricultural setting, ensuring that the extension enhances rather than detracts from the conservation area's character. In response to conservation concerns, a number of mitigation measures have been included in the proposal.

Firstly, the extension has been designed to maintain the visual and spatial integrity of the original dwelling, ensuring that it reads as a natural and complementary addition. The use of traditional construction materials reinforces the authenticity of the design, while careful attention has been given to detailing, including the use of recessed window openings and traditional stone coursing techniques. Landscaping enhancements, including the retention and reinforcement of natural green spaces, will further integrate the extension within the rural setting.

Additionally, a commitment to sustainability has been incorporated into the design, ensuring that traditional aesthetics are combined with energy-efficient construction techniques.

The use of breathable lime mortar will allow the stonework to age naturally over time, further blending the extension with its surroundings. Low-energy timber-framed windows and high-performance insulation will ensure that the building meets modern sustainability standards without compromising its heritage character.

6.0 Conclusion

The proposed two-storey side extension represents a high-quality, sympathetic addition to the existing dwelling, designed to complement the historic character of the Catley Lane Head Conservation Area.

By incorporating locally sourced natural stone to the lower sections and the use of predominantly agricultural materials to the upper sections, the extension respects the area's rural heritage while providing necessary improvements to the living space. The scale and positioning of the extension ensure that it integrates seamlessly with the existing building, maintaining the integrity of the conservation area's architectural language.

The agricultural setting of the site has played a significant role in shaping the design approach, reinforcing the historical connections between the built environment and the surrounding landscape. The proposal enhances the historic character of the conservation area and aligns with conservation policies, ensuring a positive planning outcome. The sensitive integration of materials, landscaping, and boundary treatments demonstrates a commitment to preserving the area's heritage while delivering a practical and well-considered development.

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