

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT THE FARMHOUSE,
LITTLEBOROUGH.**

**PRODUCED FOR PLANNING SUBMISSION
FOR Mr and Mrs Knight**

Second Issue for PLANNING 06 11 2023

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Prepared by
DEP Landscape Architecture Ltd
2 Commercial Street
Manchester



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment LVIA has been prepared in support of a planning application for the proposed redevelopment of The Farmhouse in Littleborough on behalf of the applicants Lisa and Tim Knight. The report has been prepared by DEP Landscape Architecture Ltd, Chartered Landscape Architects. It has been produced to help establish the landscape and visual baseline in which to make an assessment of potential impact of the development proposals on the local landscape character and visual amenity and provide mitigation measures where required. Please refer to the methodology in the back of the appendix which has been used to inform the assessment, this has been based on the GLVIA guidelines.

2.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks planning approval to demolish an incongruous existing round extension, garage and annex, and introduce a replacement new extension above ground with a garage and pool below ground. Please refer to the architects planning brochure for more detailed descriptions of the development proposals and for detailed drawings, elevations and visuals of the existing and proposed plans for comparison.

3.0 SITE CONTEXT

The Farmhouse is located north of Hollingworth Lake in Littleborough within the metropolitan county of Greater Manchester. It is set on the south western side of Cleggswood Hill and has extensive views looking south over Hollingworth Lake and towards Rochdale to the south west. It is accessed off a long sweeping gated driveway from Rakewood Road which is shared by four other properties. These form one large barn conversion which sits immediately north east at the front of the site.

The red line boundary for the proposed development site comprises the private driveway which leads down to the front of the farmhouse. The site comprises the main house itself and existing extension, garage and annex. There is a timber outbuilding to the north west of the site, and a patio terrace and managed areas of lawn to the south west and south of the farmhouse. The field to the south of the site outlined in blue lies within the ownership of the client but does not form part of the planning application. This would continue to be managed as hay meadow.

The house sits into the south western face of a hillside. The finished floor level of the main house is 195.58. The highest point at the top of Cleggswood Hill is 207.00 which in combination with the barn conversation at the back of the farm house limits views looking north towards the south Pennines. The main focus of view is from the front of the property which looks south down onto Hollingworth Lake and the wider surrounding landscape out towards Rochdale and Manchester Pennine Fringe.



FIGURE 1 - RED AND BLUE LINE BOUNDARIES AND PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION POINTS

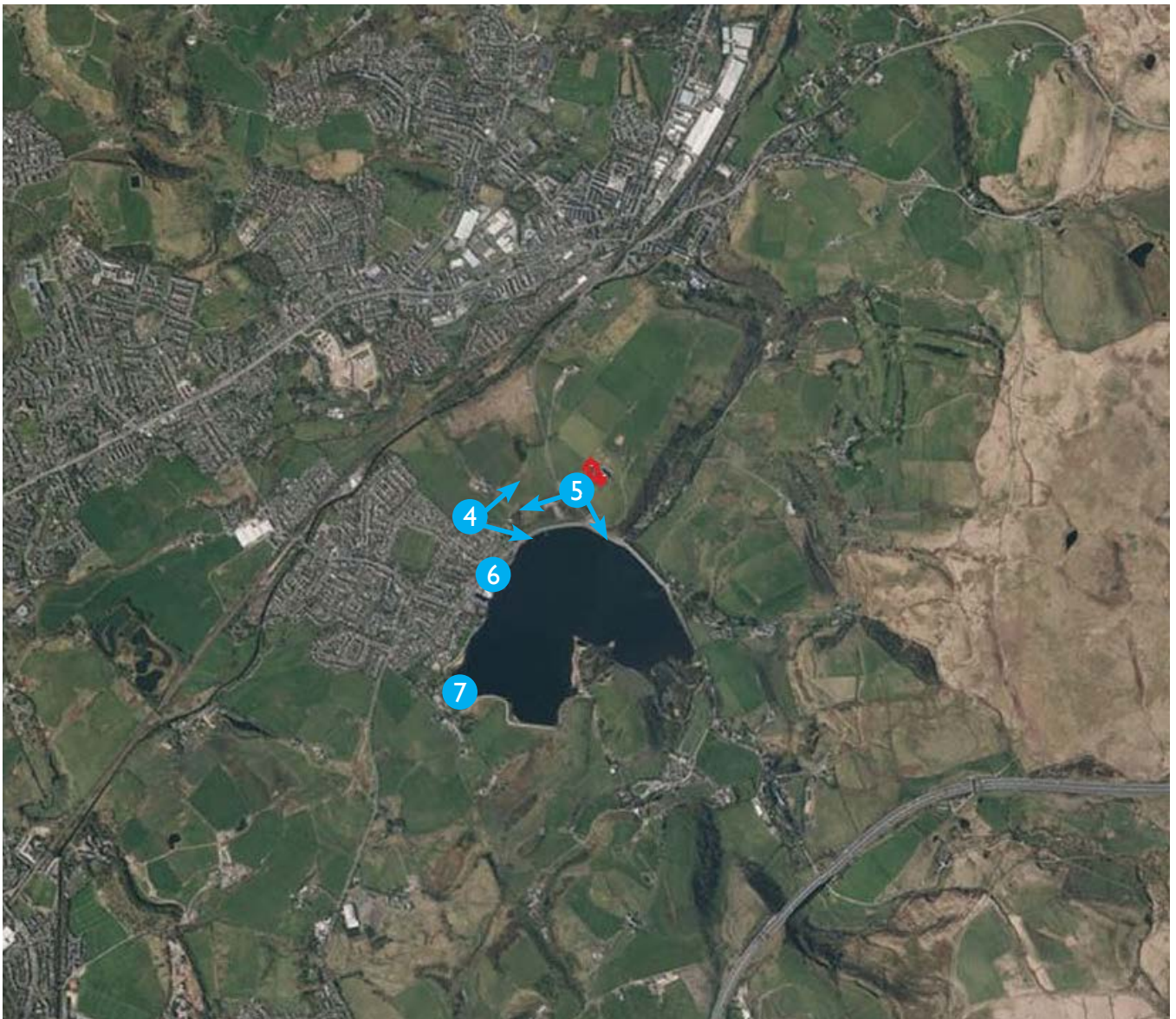


FIGURE 2 - WIDER SITE CONTEXT AND PHOTOGRAPH LOCATION POINTS



SITE CONTEXT 1 - THE SOUTHERN ELEVATION OF THE FARMHOUSE WITH THE NEIGHBOURING CONVERTED BARN IN BACKGROUND



SITE CONTEXT 2 - THE NORTHERN ELEVATION OF THE FARMHOUSE WITH THE EXISTING EXTENSION AND GARAGE



SITE CONTEXT 3 - THE TIMBER OUTHOUSE AND SLOPING LAWN WITH THE NEIGHBOURING BARN IN THE BACKGROUND



SITE CONTEXT 4 - THE SOUTH PENNINES OPEN MOORS IN THE DISTANCE AS A BACKDROP TO THE FARMHOUSE



SITE CONTEXT 5 - VIEW FROM THE BACK OF THE FARMHOUSE LOOKING DOWN TOWARDS HOLLINGWORTH LAKE AND ROCHDALE



SITE CONTEXT 6 & 7 - THE SHOPS AND RECREATIONAL WALKING ROUTE AROUND HOLLINGWORTH LAKE

4.0 STUDY AREA

The extent of the study area for the LVIA has been guided by the potential visibility of the development in the context of the immediate and wider surrounding landscape. The extent of the area is dependant on the nature of the development and its potential to impact the local landscape character and views from surrounding receptors. A desktop study has been undertaken and a site visit carried out to determine the likely extent of visibility of the development proposals.

Due to the nature and location of the development there are several close and midrange views of the site within a 1km radius which includes those from the adjacent residential properties, various receptors southwest and southeast of the site, and ones around Hollingworth Lake. The study area has been extended to 2km for the purposes of the landscape character assessment and includes the edge of the South Pennines in which the site is located.

The initial baseline assessment which helped to set out the extents of the study area and viewpoint receptors formed part of the pre-application submission to Rochdale Borough Council. This was approved by the council as an acceptable area and sufficient range of viewpoints in which to make an assessment. Only minor changes to the baseline figures and viewpoints have been carried out following the initial pre-application submission.



FIGURE 2 - STUDY AREA

5.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

The proposed development site and study area falls within the administrative boundary of Rochdale Borough Council. The current adopted plan is the Core Strategy which was adopted on the 19th October 2016 and is the lead document in the Local Plan. The 1996-2016 Local Plan - the Unitary Development Plan is still in place as the current plan until the new Allocations Development Plan is adopted.

The following landscape allocations and associated policies within the current adopted Local Plan have been identified and will be used to establish the baseline assessment to help establish potential landscape impacts and inform the development proposals. Please note that this is not an exhausted list of Planning Policies but has been used as a guide to help understand the extent of Green Belt and other land allocations in relation to its value, quality and sensitivity.

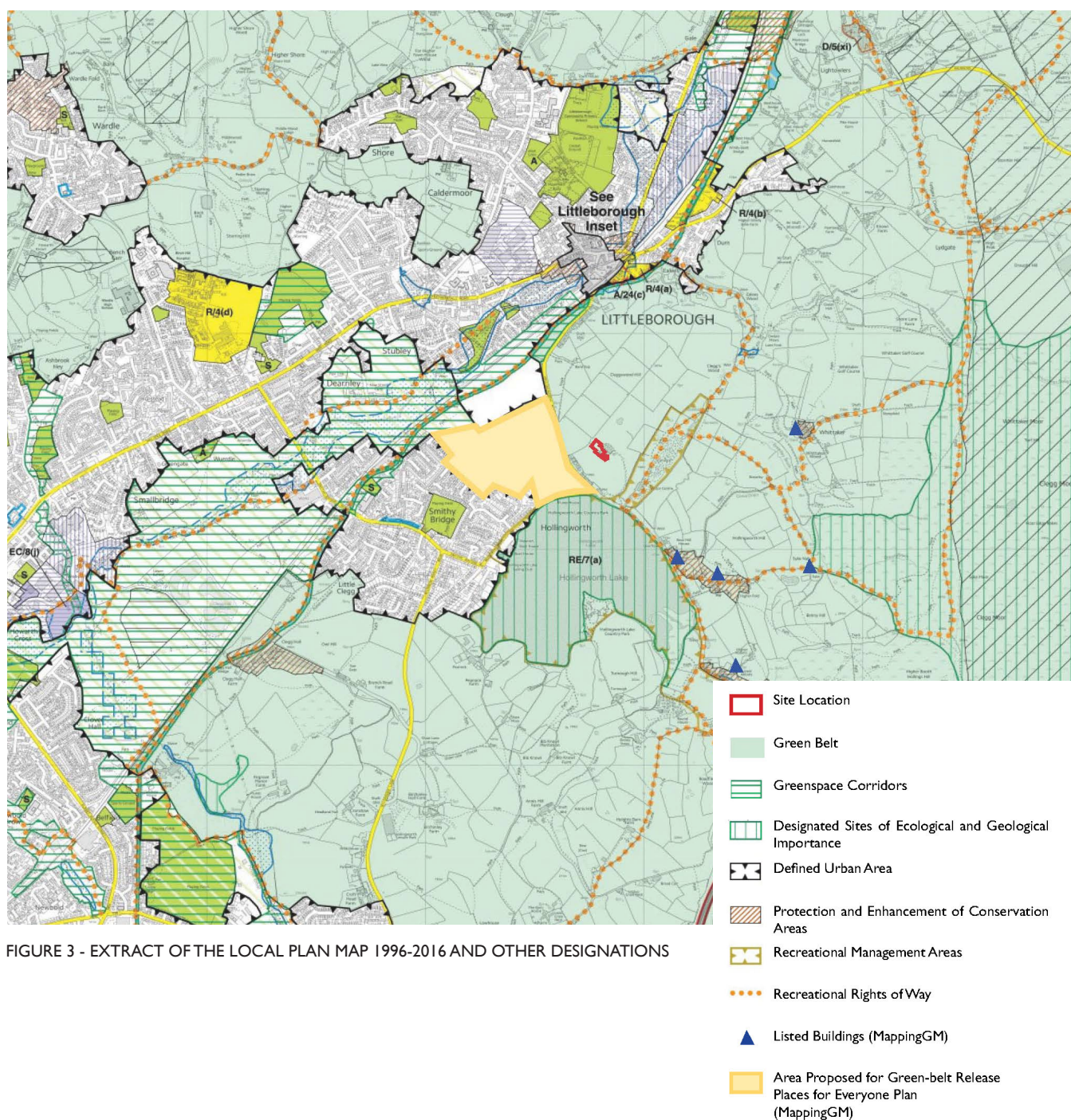


FIGURE 3 - EXTRACT OF THE LOCAL PLAN MAP 1996-2016 AND OTHER DESIGNATIONS

ROCHDALE CORE STRATEGY - ADOPTED OCTOBER 2016

Policy G4 - Protecting Green Belt land

The site lies within Green Belt which looks to prevent neighbouring towns from merging and to prevent encroachment into the countryside. Development will be restricted to those limited types of development which are deemed not to be inappropriate by National Planning Policies unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

Within the NPPF the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Green Belt serves 5 purposes:

- (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.

Policy G6 - Enhancing Green Infrastructure

To the west of the site between Green Belt and the urban extents of Rochdale areas of land have been allocated as Green Space Corridors. The purpose of this policy is to enhance the Green Infrastructure to support local communities, housing and economic development by protecting against flooding and other climate change impacts.

Policy G7 - Designated Sites of Ecological and Geological Importance

This designation relates to Hollingworth Lake to the south of the site. The policy looks to ensure that sites and features of biodiversity and geodiversity importance are given full and appropriate recognition and protection. Opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity, creating new sites and features of interest and improving opportunities for public enjoyment will be supported. No development should result in a net loss of biodiversity or geodiversity interest in the borough and overall development in the borough should result in a net gain.

Defined Urban Areas

Smithybridge on the edge of Hollingworth Lake to the south west of the site has been allocated as a defined urban area within the local plan as is Littleborough and Wardle to the north and north west of the site.

Policy P2 - Protecting and Enhancing character, landscape and heritage

These relate to some small pockets of land which lie on the edge of the wider study area. This policy looks to protect and enhance the boroughs character, the distinctiveness of its town centres, housing areas, countryside, and the landscape quality.

6.0 OTHER DESIGNATIONS

Public Rights of Way

There are several Public Rights of Way which are highlighted on the Ordnance Survey Map. This will be discussed further within the visual assessment as views from these paths, towards the direction of the site are an important consideration of the visual assessment. There are no designated PROWs across the site itself or on Cleggswood Hill.

Listed Buildings

Several listed buildings have been identified in the local area, these include cottages, barns and folds within the surrounding countryside. The Farmhouse itself is not listed nor are the converted barns immediately adjacent to the site. However the Conservation Officer has identified the Farm House should be treated as a non-designated heritage asset as it contributes to the landscape surrounding Hollingworth Lake.

Protected Wildlife

All three buildings were assessed as having Moderate bat roosting potential but following nocturnal bat surveys no bat roosts were identified during the survey, so there is not anticipated to be an impact upon roosting bats during development.

Green Belt Release

Within the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework several fields between the existing residential houses on the northern edge of Smithybridge and Hollingworth Road have been identified as a potential for Green Belt release within the Places for Everyone Plan. It is understood that this is due to be adopted in the near future.

7.0 BASELINE - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

A baseline for the landscape character has been taken from regional and local published documents which includes the National Character Area Assessments and the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment. These regional and local documents both help provide a baseline assessment of the site and surrounding landscape character to assess existing landscape quality and its sensitivity to change.

The site lies within the National Character Area NCA 36: Southern Pennines and Local Character Area LCA 29: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennines Foothills. To the south of the site on the opposite side of Rakewood Road and including Hollingworth Lake the landscape has been classified as NCA 54: Manchester Pennine Fringe and LCA 28: Rough Hill to Brun Moor (Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West/South Pennines)). The distinctly Urban areas which include Smithybridge to the west of Hollingworth Lake and Littleborough to the north west of the site are not included in the LCA descriptions.

The key characteristics of the site and wider landscape will be taken from all four published character area descriptions and subsequent site visit. This will help provide a baseline for the key landscape characteristic of the site and wider landscape(s) and establish the quality of the landscape(s) and sensitivity to change. The key characteristics from each published character area description that is relevant to the site and 2km study area have been extracted and listed below.

Please refer to the Landscape Character Area Map on Figure 4.

7.1 NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS

NCA 36: Southern Pennines

Large-scale, open, sweeping landscape with high flat-topped hills providing extensive views, cut into by narrow valleys with wooded sides.

Mosaics of moorland vegetation on the plateaux, including blanket bog and heathland, supporting internationally important habitats and assemblages of upland birds, invertebrates and breeding waders.

Enclosed upland pastures and hay meadows enclosed by drystone walls on the hillsides, and narrow valleys with dense gritstone settlements in the valleys, with steep slopes often densely wooded, providing strong contrast with open moorlands.

Many reservoirs on the moors, supplying drinking water to adjacent towns, wintering and breeding habitats for birds and high quality recreation experiences.

Medieval villages and smallholdings on the higher shelves of land above the valleys, small fields and dense network of lanes and paths.

Local stone buildings, with stone flags on roofs, bring a high degree of homogeneity to towns, villages, hamlets and farmsteads.

Prominent features, including Stoodley Pike, Darwen Jubilee Tower, Rivington Pike, wind farms and communications masts, visible from afar.

NCA 54: Manchester Pennine Fringe

Transitional zone between elevated, open moorlands and densely populated urban areas on lower ground.

Elevated vantage points provide extensive views across the adjacent Manchester Conurbation NCA.

Several rivers flow through the area from the Pennine uplands, linking with adjacent lowland areas.

Field boundaries include dry 'gritstone' walls at higher elevations and hedgerows at lower elevations.

Limited semi-natural habitats include broadleaved mixed and yew woodland, lowland dry acid grassland, lowland meadows, lowland heathland, and purple poor-grass and rush pasture, which are often fragmented.

Extensive evidence of 18th- and 19th-century stone and brick-built industrial buildings, including mill lodges and reservoirs originating from the woollen and cotton industries.

Much of the countryside is influenced by recreational use from adjacent urban areas and the diversification of farmland, giving the area a distinct urban fringe character.

High population densities across a belt of industrial towns, with busy transport networks and motorways. Almost half of this NCA is classed as urban.

7.2 LOCAL CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS

LCA 29: Rochdale and Oldham South Pennines Foothills

The strongly undulating landform punctuated by distinctive hills and carved by intricate stream valleys.

The undeveloped skylines, including both wooded and open skylines. Some hill summits are punctuated by monuments which form landmarks in the wider landscape.

The distinct field pattern of enclosures demarked by a mixture of gritstone walls and hedgerows.

The sparsely settled traditional rural character of the landscape, with scattered farms and houses and occasional settlements constructed of a local stone vernacular.

Pockets of upland habitats amongst the pasture fields. Locally designated habitats including broadleaved woodland, wet grassland and wetlands (including Hollingworth Lake SBI).

Areas of woodland including tracts of ancient woodland along stream corridors.

The undeveloped backdrop and the sense of separation that the landscape provides between distinct settlements.

Views to and from the surrounding South Pennines which overlook the landscape.

Important recreational value of the landscape with important networks of public rights of way and destinations including Hollingworth Country Park.

Features relating to the industrial heritage of the area including chimneys and mill buildings.

Long views afforded from higher ground which reach across Greater Manchester and to the surrounding uplands.

Pockets of tranquillity and remoteness despite the close proximity of urban development.

Landscape Opportunities within LCA 29

Within the published landscape assessment the following list provides guidance and opportunities within landscape character area LCA 29. This information will be fed into the design development and proposed mitigation measures to ensure the development is in keeping with the character of the landscape;

Avoid areas of the landscape with distinct or complex landforms.

Ensure that the sense of separation the landscape provides between distinct settlements is retained.

Retain the role of the landscape as an undeveloped backdrop to existing development.

Reinforce and strengthen the stone wall and hedgerow network, using local gritstone for walls and locally prevalent and climate resilient species for hedges. Any new boundaries should reflect local characteristics, including the planting of a new generation of hedgerow trees.

Utilise areas of undulating landform and woodland cover to integrate new development into the landscape.

Protect areas of semi-natural habitat including woodland, grassland and heathland which are locally designated as Sites of Biological Importance. Seek to enhance these where possible and provide linkages to form robust habitat networks.

Utilise the screening effects of existing woodland to integrate development into the landscape where possible.

Ensure that any development is in keeping with the form, density and vernacular of existing buildings. Avoid any large scale development to retain the sparsely settled character of the landscape.

Protect the setting of important heritage assets within the landscape.

Retain the distinct visual character of the landscape, including views to monuments on skylines which form local landmarks (including Tandle Hill War Memorial and Peel Tower), church spires and chimneys.

Design-in the introduction of SuDS to any new development, addressing any changes in hydrology (and subsequent knock-on effects such as increased diffuse pollution from agricultural run-off).

LCA 28: Rough Hill to Brun Moor (Open Moorlands and Enclosed Upland Fringes (West/South Pennines))

The large scale uplands shaped by glaciation into locally distinctive landforms and carved by intricate stream valleys which contrast with the broad landscape.

Internationally and nationally important mosaic of semi-natural habitats including heather moorland, blanket bog, acid grassland and wet and dry heathland.

The strongly rural character, with much of the landscape traditionally managed by sheep grazing.

The sparsely settled landscape, with settlement mostly limited to scattered farms, occasional rows of houses and small historic villages constructed of a unifying gritstone vernacular which are nestled into the stream valleys.

The distinct regular field pattern of small irregular fields and regular shaped Parliamentary moorland intakes enclosed by gritstone walls.

Evidence of the past industrial heritage of the area throughout the landscape, including old mills and chimneys and disused quarries and mines – some now restored for the benefit of recreation/seminatural habitat.

The importance of the uplands for recreation activity, with large areas of the moor providing Open Access Land and many of the reservoirs forming visitor destinations. The landscape is accessible by a number of Rights of Way.

Expansive, panoramic views from the uplands, including views across Greater Manchester.

The prominent and mostly undeveloped skylines which are widely visible from across the Greater Manchester urban conurbation.

The landscape's strong sense of remoteness and isolation (particularly on the unenclosed moorlands) which contrasts with the vast urban conurbation of Greater Manchester.

8.0 LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL

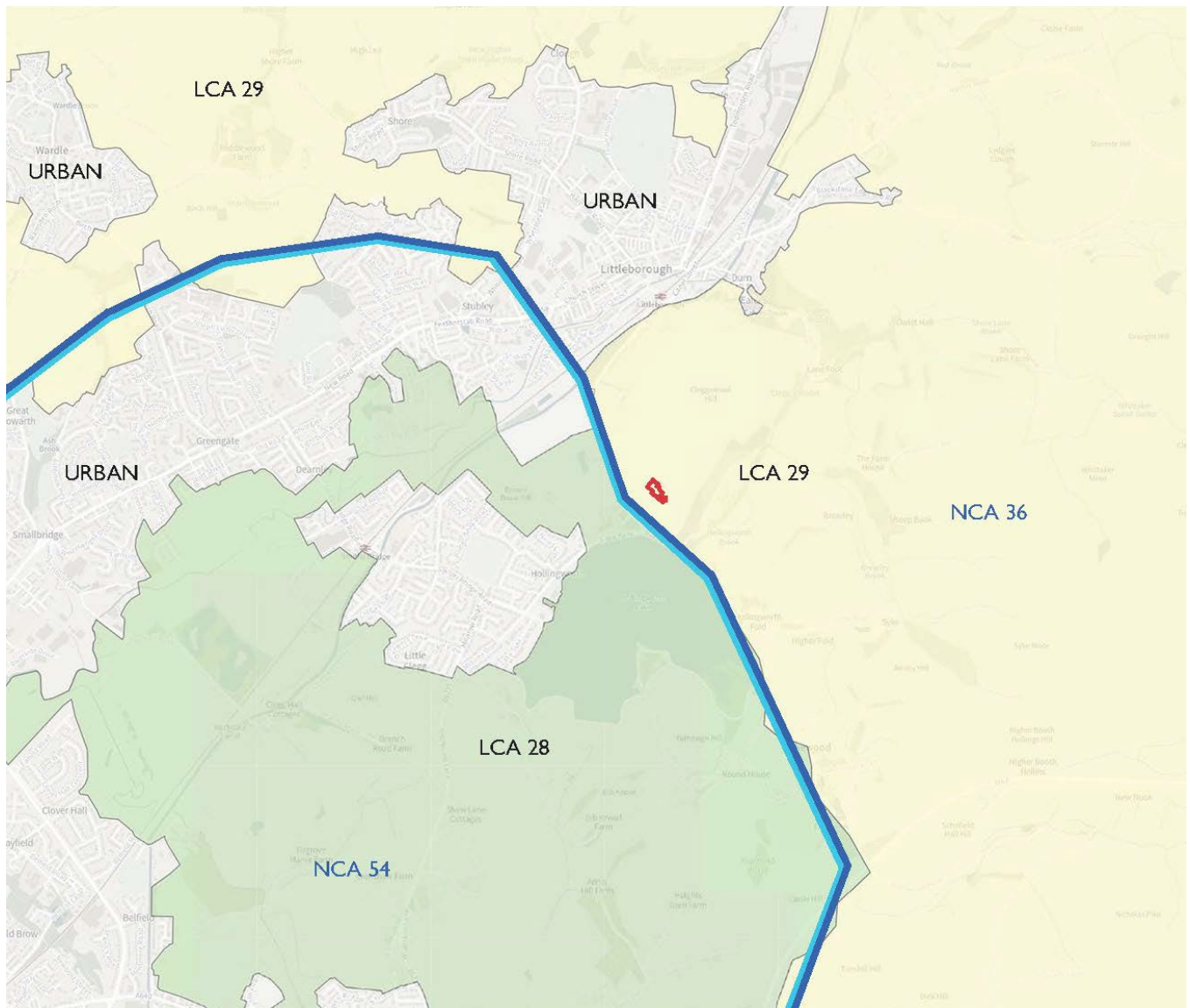


FIGURE 4 - PUBLISHED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA MAP

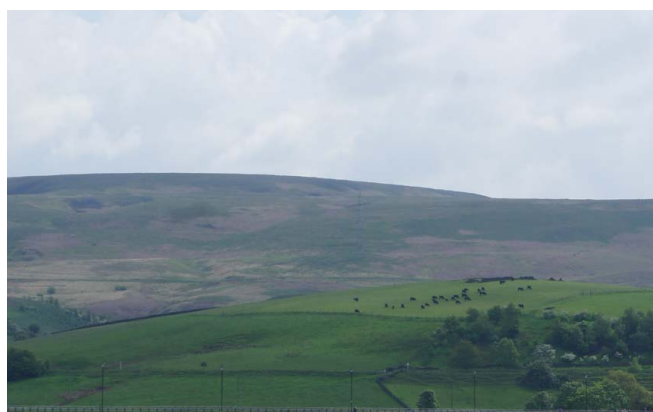
A site specific character appraisal for the site and wider landscape has been carried out as part of the landscape assessment following a site visit and desk top research. Having a detailed understanding of what key characteristics makes up the local landscape character will help inform the assessment as to the landscape value, landscape quality and its sensitivity to change.

8.1 KEY CHARACTERISTICS

For the purposes of this appraisal the key characteristics and elements which contribute to the character of the landscape that were noted during the site visit have been identified below and when combined with the published landscape character assessments help to build a comprehensive baseline character description of the local landscape;

Open Moorland

These comprise the mosaic of moorland vegetation which includes blanket bog and heathland which sit on the elevated hills in the distance behind the site (as shown in the image on the right) within the Pennine foothills. These hills are largely unpopulated and provide a dramatic undeveloped backdrop to the landscape and distinct contrast to the adjacent upland pastures in the foreground.



Enclosed Upland Pastures

The enclosed upland pastures and hay meadows comprise an undulating landform which is in contrast to the adjacent open moorlands in the far distance. This landscape provides a transitional zone between the more remote open moorland and the urban conurbations on the edge of Rochdale. It is managed by sheep grazing and field boundaries are defined with drystone walls and hedges.



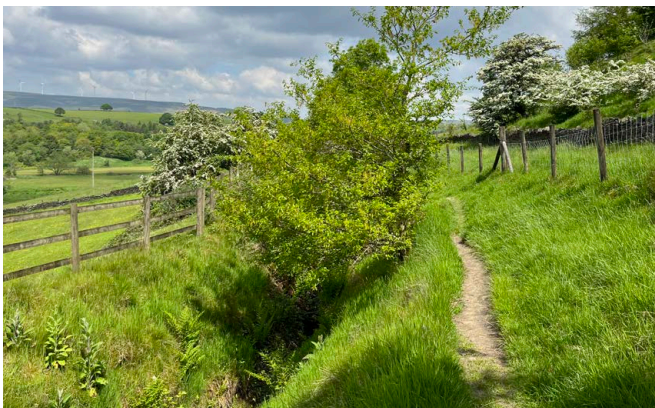
Woodland and Vegetation

There are some linear band of woodland vegetation which follow Stream corridors and contours around the base of local hills, like the trees at the bottom of Cleggswood Hill to the east of the site. Some field boundaries comprise overgrown hawthorn hedges and their are remnant hedge trees and larger native deciduous species along dry stone walls and old field boundaries. The remainder of the soft landscape comprises open moorland, pastures and hay meadows.



Footpaths and Recreation

Hollingworth Lake provides a high quality and accessible recreational resource. The Rochdale way and Pennine Bridleway traverse through this landscape and along with the extensive network of PRow provide important recreational value and makes the immediate landscape and wider landscape accessible from the adjacent urban areas. The lake also provides boating activities and helps to promote tourism in Smithy Bridge.



Scattered Farmsteads and Homes

Within the south Pennines and on the edge of the Manchester Pennines Fringe (excluding the densely populated urban areas) the landscape is sparsely settled and traditional in Character. Older buildings are constructed from local stone with stone flag roofs. Properties nearer the edge of Smithy Bridge and Hollingworth Lake are more suburban in character.



Hollingworth Lake

The lake provides a valuable recreational resource and tourism for Smithy Bridge. Car parking, facilities and level hard surfaced footpaths make this an accessible landscape. The north and western banks are more urbanised in character being close to urban areas. The open water habitat provides a visual focus in the landscape and valuable wetland habitat. There are open views across the lake into the wider landscape.



Urban Areas

Distinct urban/suburban character to the surrounding villages on the edge of Manchester conurbation including Smithy Bridge and Littleborough. These are connected and accessed through a network of local roads. Elevated vantage points provide open views across the landscape towards the more densely populated urban areas of Rochdale and Manchester.



The Site

The two-storey detached farmhouse is made of natural stone with a modern single storey side annexe which is of a curved built form with a flat roof that is incongruous with the traditional farmhouse style. The annexe provides a garage at the front of the house which is accessed from a sloping tarmac driveway. The house sits on the side of Cleggswood Hill with a steeply sloping hay meadow at the front within the clients ownership. Mature trees have established to the west and east of the house.

There is a timber out building to the north west which sits at the top of a formal sloping lawn this is screened by the trees to the west of the main farmhouse. Behind the house there is a converted barn which comprises four residential properties.



8.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

The local landscape key characteristics all combine to form a distinct landscape in which the site is located. As described above the detached Farmhouse is of traditional design and sits within an undulating landscape comprising Upland Pastures and hay meadows. The undeveloped and elevated Open Moors form a backdrop to the north and east of the Farmhouse. The front of the site has extensive views south overlooking the surrounding upland pastures, Hollingworth lake and beyond towards the adjacent Manchester conurbation and Rochdale.

The landscape quality for the upland pastures has been assessed as **Ordinary to Good**. It has strong characteristic features and does provide a distinct sense of place but the landscape is not Nationally recognised, ie it does not form part of an AONB but a few localised areas are designated as Conservation areas and there are several listed buildings/ monuments to the south west of the site. Its value has been assessed as **Moderate** as it is widely used and provides a valuable recreational resource being on the edge of the more densely populated urban areas and the recreational opportunities that Hollingworth Lake provides for the local community and tourism. The sensitivity has been assessed as **Medium**.

The landscape quality for the open moorland to the north of the site has been assessed as **Ordinary to Good**. It has a strong distinct character and forms an impressive backdrop to the landscape in contrast to the undulating upland pastures. This landscape however is not nationally recognised. Its value has been assessed as **Moderate** as it provides a distinct sense of place in the south Pennines landscape. The sensitivity has been assessed as **Medium**.

For the urban areas to the south and west of the site which includes Littleborough, Smithy Bridge and Rochdale the landscape quality has been assessed as **Ordinary to Poor**. The urban grain of the landscape is typical of urban sprawl extending from the original historic roads leading out from the Manchester conurbations and into the wider landscape. The Green Belt and Green Space Corridors look to protect the landscape around these urban areas from development but an area of landscape on the edge of Smith Bridge has been proposed for potential Green Belt Release in the Places for Everyone Plan. In the main these urban areas feel suburban in character but have the advantage of views into the elevated wider surrounding landscape. The landscape value has been assessed as **Low to Moderate**. The sensitivity has been assessed as **Low** as these urban areas given their nature would be tolerant to change in the wider landscape.

8.3 LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The site is located on the side of Cleggswood Hill which provides separation both physically and visually from the open moorland to the north and west of the site. It comprises an existing farmhouse building which has been extended in the past with a flat roof annexe which is incongruous with the traditional farmhouse style. It sits in front of a traditional barn conversion which has been developed into four residential properties.

The proposed development looks to demolish the existing round extension, garage and annex and replace with a new pitched roof above ground extension in traditional stone construction. It would be linked to the main house with glazing to provide separation between old and new. A subterranean pool and garage would be provided below ground and accessible from inside the existing house.

The existing terrace around the back and side of the farmhouse would be improved and extended to accommodate the new extension. Small slot windows would be provided along the south western elevation of the below ground garage extension. Along the north western elevation a grassy embankment looks to help bed the new development into the existing sloping lawn. A reinforced grassed driveway would provide vehicular access from the existing driveway onto the roof of the garage and down into the new subterranean extension via a car lift.

The existing outdoor swimming pool would be removed. The sloping hay meadow at the back of the house overlooking Hollingworth Lake would be retained. The timber out building within the client's ownership would be removed (the end section of the building owned by the barn conversion properties would be retained). The mature trees at the bottom of the slope would be retained.

Minor alterations to the farmhouse itself include the repositioning of sky lights lower down the roof on the southern elevation and into the roof space on the northern elevation. Alterations to the length of the windows on the ground floor and widening of the door to the southern elevation and introduction of windows on the eastern elevation are also proposed.

Based on the development proposals as described above the anticipated magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low** beneficial and **Low** to **Negligible** adverse for the Upland Pastures and the urban landscape. The Open Moorland is more remote from the site and visually and physically separated by the topography of the landscape and the adjacent barn conversation, therefore the anticipated magnitude of change has been assessed as **Negligible**.

The removal and replacement of the existing annex would provide a positive benefit as this has been designed more sympathetically to the original farmhouse. The council have recognised this building as a non-designated heritage asset so the development proposals looks to provide a positive contribution to the character of the farmhouse. The subterranean garage and swimming pool would largely be hidden underground and integrated into the lawn at the side of the extension to the north west of the farmhouse. The removal of the timber out building within the clients ownership would help reduce the overall above ground built form.

The minor changes to doors and windows on the existing farmhouse would not be out of character and does not change the built form. The use of high quality local materials would help to ensure that the quality and value of the building is preserved and the character is maintained.

The unsympathetic stone walls which surrounds the driveway and form the terrace around the existing annex and farmhouse are to be replaced as part of the rationalisation of the external terrace at the back of the house. This would represent a minor change to the southern and western elevation of the house but the construction of drystone walls around the new improved and extended terrace in a local stone construction would provide a positive contribution to the character of the farmhouse and the wider landscape.

The existing trees to the east and west of the farmhouse would be retained as would the formal sloping lawn to the west which would be locally regraded in parts to provide a reinforced grassed driveway over the subterranean garage and landscaped embankment against the north western elevation of the subterranean extension. The sloping hay meadow to the south of the site which falls outside of the red line boundary but within the clients ownership would continue to be maintained.

8.4 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

The landscape effects have been assessed as being **Slight-moderate** for the Upland Pastures in which the site is located, **Negligible** for the Open Moorland to the north and west and **Slight** for the urban areas to the south.

LANDSCAPE	QUALITY	VALUE	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	LANDSCAPE EFFECTS
UPLAND PASTURES	Good/ Ordinary	Moderate	Medium	Low - Beneficial Low/ Negligible - Adverse	Slight-moderate
OPEN MOORLAND	Good/ Ordinary	Moderate	Medium	Negligible	Negligible
URBAN	Ordinary/ Poor	Low/ Moderate	Low	Low - Beneficial Low/ Negligible - Adverse	Slight

9.0 VISUAL APPRAISAL

Visual receptors within the study area with the potential to be affected by the development have been identified below. Several viewpoint receptors have been identified within 1km of the site which currently have close to mid-range views of the site. These have been chosen to provide a board range of views and receptors in the local area.

The topography of the site and surrounding landscape combined with the nature of the development means that views from the north are restricted so the majority of the viewpoints are concentrated southeast, south and southwest of the site. These views were recorded and visited as part of the original baseline assessment and have been represented by photographs taken from the viewpoint location to best represent the view that the visual receptors have towards the direction of the site.

These photographs have been displayed within the appendix at the back of the report and the views and visual receptors have been listed and decribed in more detail below;

- View 1 - Adjacent House and Public House along Hollingworth Road
- View 2 - Properties within the adjacent Barn Conversion 2a (eastern end) and 2b (western end)
- View 3 - Hollingworth Lake Rowing Club and Recreational Walking Route
- View 4 - Brown Brow Hill Farm and PRow
- View 5 - Residential Houses on the edge of Smithybridge and PRow
- View 6 - Hollingworth Hill PRow
- View 7 - Rochdale Way PRow
- View 8 - Hollingworth Lake Recreational Walking Route and PRow

For views >1km, the site appears as a very small element in the context of the wider landscape. Given the nature of the proposed development the changes are considered to be negligible to indiscernible from this distance and would not change the character or quality of these views. Therefore any receptors beyond 1km of the site have not been considered in this assessment.

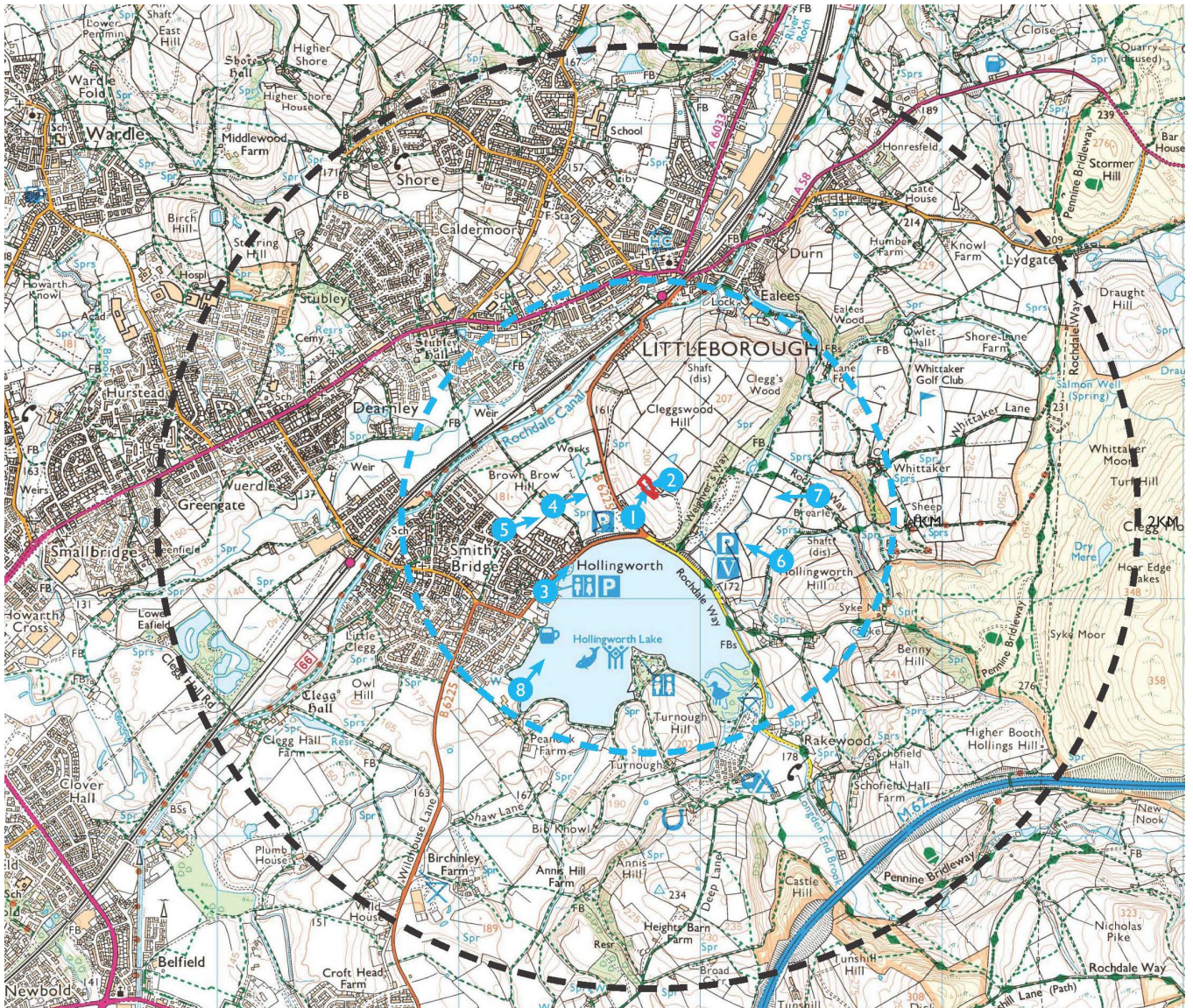


FIGURE 5 - VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS

9.1 VIEW POINTS

The viewpoint locations as described below are shown on Figure 5. The sensitivity of each receptor is considered as part of the appraisal and combines judgements on the susceptibility of the receptor to the proposed development and the value attributed to the receptor. The visual quality has been described for each view depending on the extent of the view and its importance. The magnitude of change has been assessed for each view and a description provided to help demonstrate the potential changes to the view as result of the development.

VIEW 1 - Adjacent House and Public House along Hollingworth Road

This represents a view from the back of the houses to the south of the site which front onto Hollingworth Road. These properties look up the sloping hay meadow towards the back of the site. You can see the farmhouse and existing extension and the rooftop of the adjacent converted barn to the back of the site which both break the skyline. You cannot see the timber out building at the top of the formal sloping lawn to the west of the site. There are no views beyond the site to the open moorlands due to the topography of the landscape.

The receptor sensitivity is high as it represents people in residential properties, however this view would only be from the back of the house and likely from upper floor bedroom windows only so has been reduced to **Medium**. The visual quality has been assessed as **Poor** as they have restricted views from the back of these properties sat into the base of Cleggswood Hill but it is recognised that the view is over a landscape which has been assessed as being of moderate value.

The magnitude of change that the development would present has been assessed as **Low**.

The development would result in a perceptible change to the existing view as the existing extension would be replaced with a new stone pitched roof extension with glazed link more sympathetic to the farmhouse. The replacement of the old extension would have a positive impact on this view. Minor changes to the southern elevation of the farmhouse would include moving the roof lights further down the roof, widening the door with glazing and extending the ground floor windows and would not change the quality of the view or extent of built form. The terracing around the farmhouse and extension would be rationalised and extended to accommodate the subterranean garage and swimming pool under the above ground extension but would be built using local stone in keeping with the farmhouse. A slot window would be installed on the small section of exposed southern elevation of the subterranean garage. The trees to the east and west would be retained.

The potential visual effects would be **Slight-Moderate** as some change would be visible from this view but it is considered to have a neutral impact on the overall visual amenity for the occupiers of these residential properties.

VIEW 2 - Properties within the adjacent Barn Conversion

This viewpoint looks to try and represent views from the four residential properties within the barn conversion which sits in front of the site to the north east. Half of these properties have views from the back elevations past the far eastern elevation of the farmhouse and have open views down to Hollingworth lake (2a) the remaining properties sit immediately in front of the farmhouse and views are obscured by the farmhouse itself and the existing extension (2b). Views of the timber outbuilding are restricted to windows on the side of the end property and is not in the main field of view.

The receptor sensitivity is high as it represents people in residential properties, however this view would only be from the back of these houses with the main setting for these properties facing north out towards the open moorlands of the South Pennines, so the sensitivity in relation to this assessment has been reduced to **Medium**. The visual quality has been assessed as **Moderate** for the properties which have a open view out towards Hollingworth Lake and **Poor** for those properties that have a restricted view because of the farmhouse and existing extension.

The magnitude of change has been assessed as **Low**.

The development would result in a perceptible change to the existing view but this would not change the character or quality of the view. The replacement of the old extension would have a positive impact on this view as it would be more sympathetic to the original farmhouse and from this elevation would offer a reduction in visible built form with having a pitched roof. Two roof lights would be added to the northern elevation of the existing farmhouse but this is not out of character with the roof

lights already installed on the building. The subterranean garage and pool underneath the new extension would not be visible from this view. The trees to the east and west of the farmhouse would be retained. The dying Ash tree closest to the out building, northwest of the farmhouse would be removed for health and safety reasons.

The potential visual effects would be **Slight-moderate** as some change would be visible from this view but it is considered to have a neutral impact on the overall visual amenity for the residential occupiers of the barn conversion.

VIEW 3 - Hollingworth Lake Rowing Club and Recreational Walking Route

This represents a view from the northern edge of Hollingworth Lake which is used by recreational walkers and people undertaking recreational activities. There are extensive views out over the lake which take in the mid range views of the upland pastures in which the site is located and open moorland in the far distance. The site is visible as an elevated building which sits on a hill. The barn conversion in the background is also visible and with the trees to the east and west of the site these combine to break up the skyline. The public house at the bottom of the hill and Hollingworth Road feature in this view.

The receptor sensitivity would be high as it represents people undertaking a recreational activity where the main focus of the view is on the landscape. However this end of the lake sits on the edge of Smithy Bridge and includes a road, formal paths, car parking and visitor facilities which are more urbanised in character so the sensitivity of the receptors within this location has been assessed as **Medium**. The visual quality has been assessed as **Moderate** as there are open views over the surrounding landscape and the wider South Pennines in the distance.

The magnitude of change that the development would present has been assessed as **Negligible**.

A small part of the development would be visible from this view but from this distance the replacement of the existing extension with the new pitched roof annex would not represent a major change to the overall view and the rationalisation and extension to the terracing around the farmhouse to accommodate the subterranean garage and pool would only feature as a small element in the landscape and would not contribute to any perceptible increase in built form. The existing trees to the east and west would be retained and would continue to contribute to the character of the landscape. The sloping hay meadow at the back of the house which is prominent on Cleggswood Hill would be retained and would continue to be maintained as such. The changes to the windows and door on the southern elevation of the existing farmhouse would be hard to discern from this distance.

The potential visual effects would be **Negligible**. The proposed development would not change the character or quality of this view.

VIEW 4 - Brown Brow Hill Farm and PRoW

This represents a view from the PRoW which passes through Brown Brow Hill Farm, it also looks to represent occupiers of the farmhouse. Looking east towards the direction of the site there are extensive views which take in the upland pastures in which the site is located and the open moorland in the far distance. The site is visible as an elevated building which sits on a hill. The barn conversion in the background is also visible and extends the extent of visible built form. These combined with the trees to the east and west of the site break up the skyline. Cleggswood Hill obscures views beyond the site and only the far distant elevated open moorland plateaus are visible in the far distance to the east of the site. The undulating upland pastures comprising hay meadows and grazing land are a prominent feature of this view.

The receptor sensitivity has been assessed as **High** as it represents the farmhouse which is a residential property and people on the PRoW. This is a rural footpath where people's views would be focused on the landscape. The visual quality has been assessed as **Moderate** as there are views over the surrounding immediate landscape and the South Pennines open moorlands in the distance. The hay meadow and hillside in which the site is located is a feature of the upland pastures landscape.

The magnitude of change that the development would present has been assessed as **Negligible**.

Only a small part of the development may be visible from this view but from this distance the replacement of the existing extension with the new pitched roof annex would be hard to discern as it sits in front of the neighbouring barn conversion.

The existing trees would be retained and would continue to contribute to the character of the landscape.

The rationalisation and extension to the terracing around the farmhouse to accommodate the subterranean garage and pool would be hard to discern from this distance and would look to be blended into the existing lawn with a sloping grassy embankment on the western elevation. The sloping hay meadow at the back of the house which is prominent on Cleggswood Hill would be retained and would continue to be maintained as such. The changes to the windows and door on the southern elevation of the existing farmhouse would be hard to discern from this distance.

The potential visual effects that the development would present has been assessed as **Slight**.

VIEW 5 - Residential Houses on the edge of Smithybridge and PRoW

This represents views from the edge of Smithy Bridge which comprises housing on the edge of a very 'suburban' residential housing estate. This view also looks to represent the start of the PRoW which links to Brown Brow Hill Farm. The site is visible as a distant view from this viewpoint location but from this elevation it no longer breaks the skyline and the open moorlands of the South Pennines form an impressive backdrop to the site. The barn conversion in the background is also visible and extends the extent of visible built form at behind the farmhouse. The undulating upland pastures in which this photograph is taken lies on the edge of urban settlement. It is grazed by horses resulting in degradation of field boundaries which reduces the quality of this landscape. These fields have also been identified as potential Green Belt Release in the Places for Everyone Plan soon to be adopted by the council.

The receptor sensitively has been assessed as **High** as it represents people on the PRoW where peoples views would be focused on the landscape. It also looks to represent occupiers of residential properties on the edge of Smithy Bridge. However an argument could be made for the sensitivity to be **Medium** given the dense urban character of these houses on the edge of the residential estate and the distance of the site from this viewpoint. The visual quality has been assessed as **Moderate to High** as their are open views from this elevation over wider South Pennines open moorlands in the distance.

The magnitude of change that the development would present has been assessed as **Negligible**

Only a small part of the development maybe visible from this view but from this distance the replacement of the existing extension with the new pitched roof annex would be hard to discern as it sits in front of the neighbouring barn conversion and the open moors sit elevated over the site making the overall built form less prominent in the landscape. The existing trees to the west and east would be retained and would continue to contribute to the character of the landscape. The rationalisation and extension to the terracing around the farmhouse to accommodate the subterranean garage and pool would be hard to discern from this distance and would look to be blended into the existing lawn with a sloping grassy embankment on the western elevation. The changes to the windows and door on the southern elevation of the existing farmhouse would be almost impossible to discern from this distance.

The potential visual effects that the development would present has been assessed as **Negligible**.

VIEW 6 - Hollingworth Hill PRoW

This represents views from a PRoW which is located to the south east of the site around the side of Hollingworth Hill. This is a rural footpath which connects into the Rochdale Way and the Pennine Bridleway. The view looks over the upland pastures with Hollingworth lake in the middle distance and the surrounding open moorland in the far distance. The site is located on the undulating CleggsWood Hill. The hillside from this elevation is heavily vegetated with woodland vegetation which partially obscures the site. Only the eastern elevation of the farmhouse is just visible in this view with the larger barn conversation sat to the north. The built form does not break the sky line as the elevated open moorlands sit as a backdrop to the site.

The receptor sensitively has been assessed as **High** as it represents people on the PRoW where peoples views would be focused on the landscape. It is a rural footpath which leads into the South Pennines. The visual quality has been assessed as **Moderate to High** as their are extensive views from this footpath over the upland pastures and the open moorlands of the South Pennines in the distance.

The magnitude of change that the development would present has been assessed as **None**.

New windows are proposed to be installed on the eastern elevation of the existing farm house but from this distance it would be impossible to discern. The replacement extension would not be visible as it is on the opposite side of the farmhouse.

There would be **No Visual Effects** on this viewpoint as a result of the development.

VIEW 7 - Rochdale Way PRow

This represents views from a PRow which is located to the east of the site along the Rochdale Way. The view looks onto the upland pastures with Hollingworth lake in the distance to the south. The undulating nature of Cleggswood Hill obscures views of the wider open moorlands from this vantage point. The site is located on Cleggswood Hill which is heavily vegetated on this elevation with woodland vegetation which partially obscures the site. It is also largely screened by the existing barn conversion with only a portion of the eastern elevation of the farmhouse visible.

The receptor sensitively has been assessed as **High** as it represents people on the PRow where people's views would be focused on the landscape. It is a rural footpath which forms part of the Rochdale Way. The visual quality has been assessed as **Moderate** as there are views from this footpath down and up onto the upland pastures but at this particular viewpoint location wider views are obstructed by Cleggswood Hill.

The magnitude of change that the development would present has been assessed as **None**.

New windows are proposed to be installed on the eastern elevation of the existing farm house but from this distance it would be impossible to discern and partially screened by the barn conversion. The replacement extension would not be visible and it is on the opposite side of the farmhouse. There would be no change to the visible built form from this elevation.

There would be **No Visual Effects** on this viewpoint as a result of the development.

VIEW 8 - Hollingworth Lake Recreational Walking Route and PRow

This represents a view from the southern edge of Hollingworth Lake which is used by recreational walkers and people undertaking recreational activities. This recreational route is also designated as a PRow. There are extensive views out over the lake which take in the adjacent upland pastures and the extensive open moorland in the far distance. The site is visible as an elevated building which sits on an undulating hillside. The barn conversion in the background is also visible to the east of the site which extends the amount of visible built form. These features sit within the backdrop of the open moorlands which reduces their prominence on the top of the hill.

The receptor sensitivity would be **High** as it represents people undertaking a recreational activity where the main focus of the view is on the landscape. This section of path has also been designated as a PRow. The southern banks of Hollingworth Lake are more rural in character than the more developed western shoreline adjacent to Smithy Bridge. The visual quality has been assessed as **Moderate to High** as there are open views over the surrounding rural landscape and the wide expanse of the South Pennines open moorlands in the distance.

The magnitude of change that the development would present has been assessed as **Negligible**.

Only a small part of the development maybe visible from this view but from this distance the replacement of the existing extension with the new pitched roof annex would be hard to discern and would not contribute to any perceptible increase in built form. The existing trees would be retained and would continue to contribute to the character of the landscape. The rationalisation and extension to the terracing around the farmhouse to accommodate the subterranean garage and pool would be hard to discern from this distance. The changes to the windows and door on the southern elevation of the existing farmhouse would be extremely difficult to discern from this distance.

The potential visual effects would be **Slight**. The development would not change the character or quality of this view.

9.2 VISUAL EFFECTS

VIEWPOINT	RECEPTOR TYPE	VISUAL QUALITY	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	VISUAL EFFECTS
1	Residential Properties	Poor	Medium	Low	Slight-moderate
2	Residential Properties	Moderate to Poor	Medium	Low	Slight-moderate
3	Recreation	Moderate	Medium	Negligible	Negligible
4	Recreation - PRoW Residential Property	Moderate	High	Negligible	Slight
5	Residential Properties Recreation - PRoW	Moderate to High	Medium	Negligible	Negligible
6	Recreation - PRoW	Moderate to High	High	None	None
7	Recreation - PRoW	Moderate	High	None	None
8	Recreation - PRoW	Moderate to High	High	Negligible	Slight

Due to the elevated nature of the site there are several viewpoint locations identified where the site is visible from within the surrounding landscape and from sensitive receptors such as walkers on a Public Right of Way and occupiers of residential properties. However the changes to the development as described in the visual assessment have been assessed as being **Low** to **Negligible** and in some cases **None** where changes are obscured by the existing built form and/ or because of the distance of the site from the visual receptor.

In some cases the development would result in a perceptible change to the existing view but this would not change the character or quality of the view and the replacement of the old incongruous extension would have a positive impact as it would be more sympathetic to the original farmhouse. The subterranean garage and swimming pool would be built under the new extension and integrated back into the existing sloping lawn to the west. It would largely remain hidden underground with just part of the southern elevation forming the extended and rationalised terracing around the farmhouse.

The trees to the west and east of the site would be retained as would the sloping hay meadow to the back of the site which are prominent key characteristic features in the landscape. Local stone would look to be used which will also help the development sit comfortably alongside the local vernacular.

Highlighted on the table above the overall visual effects as a result of development would result in two **Slight-moderate** visual effects for the residential properties closest to the site of which these have been described as having a **neutral impact** on the overall visual amenity for the occupiers of these residential properties.

The remainder of the visual receptors have been assessed as only experiencing **Slight** to **Negligible** visual effects and two have would not experience any visual effects as a result of the development proposals.

10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In summary the landscape effects have been assessed as being **Slight-moderate** for the Upland Pastures in which the site is located, **Negligible** for the Open Moorland which provides a backdrop to the site to the north and west and **Slight** for the urban areas to the south of the site which includes Smithy Bridge.

The replacement of the existing annex which is incongruous to the original farmhouse with a new extension more sympathetic to the non-designated historical asset would have a positive impact on the appearance of the site. The glazed link would help to enhance the significance of the asset by providing that clear distinction between the old and new. The use of local stone and building materials would also help the development be more in keeping with the local landscape character.

The subterranean garage and swimming pool would largely remain hidden underground with just part of the southern elevation forming the extended and rationalised terracing around the farmhouse. The trees to the west and east of the site would be retained as would the sloping hay meadow to the south of the site which falls outside of the development boundary but remains within the clients ownership. This will ensure that the aspect and character of the development as a traditional farmhouse sat in a prominent position on a hillside within the upland pastures overlooking Hollingworth Lake would be retained.

The above ground development would not harm the 'visual openness' of the Green Belt in which the site is located as the existing extension is just being replaced and the subterranean garage and swimming pool would be hidden from view. The site would remain as a detached farmhouse sat within upland pastures. Therefore the purpose of Green Belt which surrounds the site would be preserved and it would not cause any significant effects on the local visual amenity as discussed within the visual assessment.

The changes that the development would have on the visual amenity of the surrounding properties, recreational users and wider landscape have been assessed as being **Low** to **Negligible** and in some cases **None**.

There would be some perceptible change to the existing views as is the nature of development but this would not change the character or quality of the view and the replacement of the old extension would have a positive impact as it would be built more sympathetic to the historic farmhouse. The subterranean garage and swimming pool would largely remain hidden.

The overall visual effects of the development would result in two **Slight-moderate** visual effects for the residential properties nearest to the site, this would be expected given the closeness of these properties to the site, the nature of development and change. However once the development is complete these have been described as having a **neutral impact** on the overall visual amenity for the occupiers of these residential properties given the positive changes to the replacement extension and the sympathetic design of the subterranean garage and swimming pool.

The remainder of the visual receptors around the wider landscape have been assessed as only experiencing **Slight** to **Negligible** visual effects and two have would experience no visual effects as a result of the development proposals.

Once the development is complete and the landscape around the site including the existing trees, sloping lawn and adjacent hay meadow is continued to be maintained and sympathetically managed then the development will continue to contribute to the character of the landscape and surrounding visual amenity.