

HERITAGE & CONSERVATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Heritage, Conservation & Design Team Officer	Catherine Fenghour
Date	23 May 2025
Application Reference	25/00189/HOUS
Address	Syke Bank Farm, Rooley Moor Road, Rochdale, OL12 6BN
Proposal	Two Storey Side extension

Heritage Assets Impacted

Designated Heritage Assets	☒	- Catley Lane Head Conservation Area
Non-Designated Heritage Assets	☒	- Syke Bank Farm

Summary

Amendments required before this scheme can be supported.

Assessment

The application site is a detached house within the Catley Lane Head Conservation Area. This Conservation Area was first designated in 2017. Catley Lane Head is a historic Pennines Hamlet to the north-west of Rochdale. The Conservation Area retains the rural setting in which it historically developed.

The application site, Syke Bank Farm is identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal, as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. It is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, holding some architectural and historic interest. Syke Bank Farm is present on the first edition OS map dating from 1851:



In 1851 Syke Bank Farm was larger than it is today, as evident on the above map. The building remained of a similar size into the 20th century, as shown on 1928 OS map below:



It is not clear when the range to the south fell into disrepair. However, by the time of the 1977 planning application (77/D05506 refers) the southern portion of the building is not present on the maps. In the aerial photograph from 2003, the majority of the building appears to have been

lost. This is how the site is viewed today, with only small elements of the external walls remaining.



In 2012, a planning application was made for the conversion of Syke Bank Farm and the cottages to the north into residential dwellings 12/55885/FUL. The heritage statement submitted as part of this planning application states that the building was originally used as the farm house before later being used for agricultural storage purposes. The 2012 application sought to convert it back into a dwelling house. The structural report submitted with this application includes a number of photos of the buildings prior to being converted. These are helpful as they show scarring on the southern gable end, which may have been the ridge line of the building now demolished. The photos also show that little of the walls remained in 2012.



Photo 2

The current planning application is for a two-storey extension to the existing farmhouse. This follows on from two previously withdrawn schemes for a similar extension. Several concerns were raised with the previous schemes and suggested amendments were put to the applicant. These are summarised as:

- Reduce the massing of the extension – setting it back with a lower ridge line (noting that the scarring on the original building, which indicates a previous subservient structure)
- Retain glazed link but maintain the height
- Review the position of the windows – perhaps including a feature window on the side elevation
- Review material palette – using a lighter colour for the cladding.

This new application includes an updated heritage statement, and the design of the proposals has been revised. The overall height of the extension has been reduced. This is welcomed. However, I have some concerns with the revised scheme:

- The proposed extension directly abuts the existing dwelling, and the glazed link previously included has been omitted. While windows are proposed along this junction, these do not provide an adequate visual break with the existing house, with the result being an awkward junction with the main dwelling. If a contemporary approach is proposed, some form of link should be reinstated to provide adequate visual separation
- The proposed fenestration along the front elevation should be reviewed as the different styles proposed at ground, first and roof level result in a lack of cohesiveness in the design.
- The fenestration along the rear elevation needs revision – the rooflights should line up with the windows at ground floor level

- The stone parapet along the side elevation gives the extension a somewhat unbalanced appearance. This element should be reviewed.
- I am not convinced by zinc cladding in this location, noting that the material palette of the locality is dominated by stone walls, with stone and slate roofs. While there is no objection to the principle of an alternative material being introduced, I am concerned that a zinc cladding could appear overly industrial in this rural setting. I previously suggested a natural cedar as an alternative cladding, as this is likely to have a softer appearance.

As it stands the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset and the Conservation Area. While there are no heritage objections to the principle of a two-storey extension, amendments are required to achieve an acceptable scheme.

Re-consultation

Please reconsult in the event amended plans are received.