

Heritage Statement

Date 04-05-2023

PROPOSAL:

Change of use and listed building consent for the conversion of existing workshop/garage and associated car parking for tithe barn and the converted workshop/garage.

ADDRESS:

Tithe Barn
212 Lower Lane
Rochdale
Lancashire
OL16 4PT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Format

This statement has been prepared in connection with the proposed conversion to residential use of the C19 barn that adjoins the grade II listed Tithe Barn. The purpose of the appraisal is to assess the significance of the listed building and how this significance might be affected by the planned changes. The document has been prepared in accordance with the general guidelines set out in the English Heritage publications Informed Conservation and Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance and in particular responds to heritage policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012).

1.2 Methods of Research and Investigation

Inspections of the site were carried out in April 2023 in order to assess its physical nature. Background research has also been conducted to fully ascertain contextual matters appertaining to the sites history. The scope of this research has, in accordance with the NPPF, been proportionate to the nature of the proposed works, with particular emphasis placed upon the special architectural and historic interest of the site and those planning policies that affect/control change.

2.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Location

The Site is situated off Lower Lane, approximately 420m to the north of the M62 motorway, between a residential suburb of Rochdale and the Kingsway Business Park. The area was once rural in character but today it is characterised by 20th century suburban development to the north, west and south of the Site. The buildings National Grid reference is SD 91152 11362.

2.2 Site Description

The site is surrounded by modern housing and some open grassland which forms part of the Kingsway Business Park which has undermined its rural setting.

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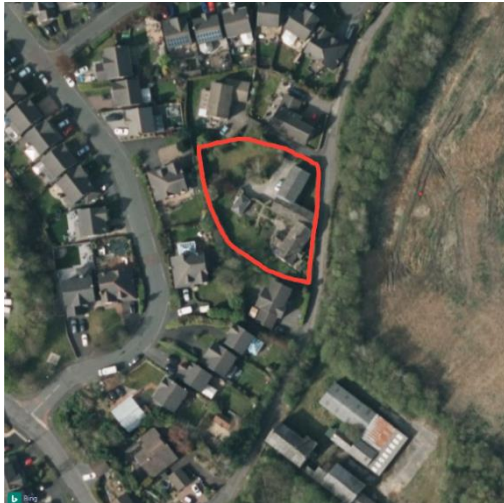


Figure 1. Site Plan (Google Earth)

2.3 Description

Within the site there are three buildings which are joined together. They comprise The Cottage which is adjoined to the Tithe Barn on the south side. The Tithe Barn in the middle. The third barn which is referred to by the present owner as “The Workshop” is adjoined to the Tithe Barn on the North side.

Listed building consent was previously granted on 17th December 2002, reference 02/D40677.

Planning permission was previously granted on 17th December 2002, reference 02/D40676.

The same plans are now being re submitted because the planning permission has lapsed.

The Cottage was restored mainly between 1970 – 1981.

Tithe Barn was rebuilt and re roofed. Stone flags over the roof. Two exposed oak king post roof trusses remain. All other timber was replaced. Reclaimed dressed stone was used for rebuilding the walls. New openings were made to the east and west elevations. The large barn door opening was replaced with four tall windows which are arched on the north elevation.

The “workshop” barn was re-roofed; the majority of the purlins and rafters were replaced. Reclaimed blue slate tiles over it. The window on the east side was originally smaller in size. It has been altered and has 3 glazed windows each with an arch. Stone heads, cills and jambs. On the west side at ground floor level there are two window openings which have stone lintels and cills. There is a door opening with a stone lintel and a modern timber stable door.

The proposed planning application for the “workshop” barn requires additional window openings and a door on the east as well as the west elevations and a door on the north elevation. The joinery and stonework will be sympathetic to that seen on the 17th century Cottage (farmhouse) The existing modern render will need to be replaced with a traditional lime render. The roof will use the same slate tiles.

See photos of farmhouse and barns.

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C17 Cottage (farmhouse) facing East photo taken in 1975



C18 Tithe Barn facing East photo taken in 1986.



C18 Tithe Barn facing North photo taken in 1981.

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C17 Cottage and C18 Tithe Barn facing south photo taken in 1981.



C17 barn "The Workshop" facing East photo taken in 1981



C19 barn "The Workshop" facing West photo taken in 2023.

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3.0 HERITAGE APPRAISAL

3.1 Brief Historic Background

The Farmhouse, Tithe Barn and Barn are shown roughly in their current plan form upon the Ordnance Survey map of c.1890 seen here:



Historic England listing Entry Number: 1068496

“House and adjoining barn, said to be a Tithe Barn. Probably mid C17 with C18 barn and C20 alterations. Hammer-dressed stone, now mostly rendered, with graduated stone slate and slate roofs. 3-unit 2-storey house with 2-storey porch and barn/stable wings to right, now partly converted for domestic use. 2-storey porch has moulded door surround with obtuse-angled lintel, a 2-light chamfered mullion first floor window (mullion removed) with arched lights and a coped gable with kneelers and ball finial. All windows have been altered, formerly having had chamfered and double- chamfered mullions. Ridge chimney stack. Similarly altered and C20 window openings to rear and barn. Interior: Beams with stepped stops. Timber-framed crosswall includes a door with shaped lintel. King-post roof trusses to barn.”

3.2 Heritage Values

An appraisal of the heritage values associated with the C19th barn has been carried out, with particular interest in how these might be affected by the changes proposed. The appraisal process relates to the range of heritage values as outlined by English Heritage (2008), which come under the following headings: evidential value; historic value; communal value; aesthetic value. The purpose of assessing these values is to develop a clearer understanding of the site’s significance – whether physically manifest (e.g., architectural features) or in some other less tangible form (e.g., historical associations) - to enhance the objective appraisal of proposals for changes. In essence this follows the approach generally advocated by English Heritage, whereby necessary change in the historic environment is intelligently managed.

3.2.1 Evidential Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests that - Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence of about past human activity.

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The barn offers some physical evidence of farming on the site, albeit this evidence has been eroded by past change and alteration. The barn interior no longer displays all the characteristics of its original function as a cowshed with a hayloft over it. Owing to past alterations and changes in openings etc., the buildings evidential value is relatively low. No features of the barn are mentioned in the farmhouse listing, which would appear to acknowledge the buildings limited special interest.

3.2.2 Historical Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests that - Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative.

The historical value of the barn is partly derived through its function and partly through its association with the farmhouse. Its existence bears testament to the historical development of farming in the area and the socioeconomic composition of the later C18th – C19th community. The barn does not possess unusually high levels of historical value in this regard, but its existence explains the existence of the farmhouse (and vice versa)

3.2.3 Communal Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests that: Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for how it figures in their collective experience or value.

Minimal communal value can be attributed to the barn. It is essentially a functional farm building, without communal purpose or meaning. Communal enjoyment of the farmhouse and its attached barns can be experienced when walking past them along Lower Lane.

3.2.4 Aesthetic Value

English Heritage (2008) suggests that: Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.

The C19th barn is a vernacular building, a product of traditional construction technologies using available materials.

in a manner that suited the environment and specific needs of the user at the time. The barn was constructed circa 1850 using brick and finished with a lime render.

3.3 Statement of Significance

Evidentially, the barn acts as a physical reminder of later C19th farming buildings and is representative of the local vernacular tradition. It provides us with a historical connection to the farming communities of old and allows us to interpret an aspect of the socio-economic development of the local region. Communally the building possesses little if any heritage value, aesthetically it is a vernacular form with modern C20th features.

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4.0 ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED WORKS

4.1 General Principles

Given the consideration of significance included in section 3.0 above, it is possible to develop a more objective assessment of those proposals which are deemed to have a potential effect on the heritage asset. General guidance on assessing proposed changes to listed buildings is given in chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework, or NPPF (2012). This advocates conserving the significance of listed buildings and the need to understand significance before proposing change, the overall intention being the avoidance of harm. An analysis of the NPPF policies in respect to the proposed scheme is given below in 4.2.

4.2.1 The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

The proposed conversion seeks to sustain the use of a building and make it suitable for habitation. In the context of the proposals, the significance of the listed building will not be eroded to any major degree and the overall aesthetic values of the site will be enhanced by materials. Building conversion can rarely occur without compromises being made, mindful that changes of use are themselves a compromise initiated to keep buildings in active use. The changes which will be visible externally will be to joinery associated with window and door openings. They will be sympathetic to the style of the C17 Farmhouse joinery.

4.2.2 The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.

The building is essentially a private structure situated on a private site. Its potential for bestowing the social and cultural benefits referred to in the policy driver are limited, albeit as an historic feature of the landscape the farmstead does at least contribute to the visual enjoyment of the local environment. The proposals will not be detrimental to this enjoyment.

4.2.3 The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

No new development as such is proposed, other than conversion/change of use with some external alterations to the barn. The design is intentionally low impact in nature and represents a minimal intervention approach to achieving the aim.

5.0 Summary & Conclusion

Maintaining active use is a fundamental philosophy of building conservation, and finding new uses is a common need where buildings are no longer used for their original purpose. Such has been the case for numerous agricultural buildings across the country over the last fifty years, with residential conversion proving a viable and sustainable option which enables change of use without eroding rural character. Now that the barn at Tithe Barn needs a new purpose, proposals have been put forward to convert it to a dwelling and given that the barn is a listed building the potential impact upon heritage significance has been addressed in this heritage statement.

The findings of the heritage statement may be summarised as follows:

- The barn is a suitable candidate for residential use, being capable of conversion with only minimal impact upon its rural character.

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- The design of the proposed conversion conserves the significance of the listed building and secures a sustainable long-term use for a building.
- Compromises are needed to facilitate the change of use, including reconfiguration of interior space, upgrading fabric to satisfy current building regulations and provision of some new openings to allow light and better placed openings for access. These comprises can be absorbed by the building without unduly harming the significance of the listed building.

The proposals represent a well-conceived and innovative conversion scheme, which acknowledges and responds to the significance of a site. It fulfils policy requirements and, if executed in a careful and high-quality manner on site, should prove to help sustain and enhance a designated heritage asset for many years to come.

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