

## Design and Access Statement

Barn conversion to 1no.  
dwelling, and existing  
outbuildings converted to 2no.  
Holiday Lets

Land located at: Syke Road Farm, Syke  
Road, Littleborough, Rochdale



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## **1 Introduction**

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared for our client in support of the full planning application for the conversion of an existing barn to 1No residential dwelling, and the conversion of existing outbuilding into 2No Holiday Lets comprising of the following accommodation:

|                             |                           |              |                    |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Barn Conversion             | 6B/11P + study - 2 storey | 3 Car spaces | 256m <sup>2</sup>  |
| Single Storey Holiday Let 1 | 1B/2P – single storey     | 2 Car spaces | 46.6m <sup>2</sup> |
| Duplex Holiday Let 2        | 1B/2P – 2 Storey          | 2 Car spaces | 65.1m <sup>2</sup> |
|                             |                           |              |                    |

The application site at Syke House, Littleborough, consists of an existing habitable farmhouse, that is attached to a Grade II listed barn, having been first designated in 1986. The listing identifies the building as Barn, Shippon and Workshop adjoining west of Syke House and Farmhouse. Both the Shippon and workshop are derelict, and in need of repair, and the existing Barn houses sheep and a couple of horses.

The farmhouse itself, which is of the mid-19th century, is unaffected by the application.

Our aim under this application, is to create a high-quality family home by converting the existing barn. We will achieve this by providing a unified design that remains on the same footprint and retains the more positive aspects of the previous building's character with a more modern feel, that better responds to the site and its constraints.

It is also intended to convert the existing outbuildings into two new Holiday Lets comprising of 1B / 2Person accommodation; one of these buildings will require a 3metre extension to the rear to allow for a double bedroom.

There are some existing trees to the south of the site; these will remain in place and be kept as part of the natural landscape.

This statement complies with Department of Communities and Local Government document 'Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation' (March 2010) 'Section 6 – Design and Access Statements'; and CABE's 'Design and Access Statements – How to Write, Read and Use them (2007).

The enclosed drawings, figures and diagrams within this document are proposals and are not to scale. Distances and measurements should be sought on the accompanying planning drawings which have been provided as part of the application.

## **2 Context Assessment:**

### **2.1 Physical Context**

The image to the right shows the application site edged red and in its immediate context.

The site is situated approximately 3 miles east of Rochdale Town Centre.

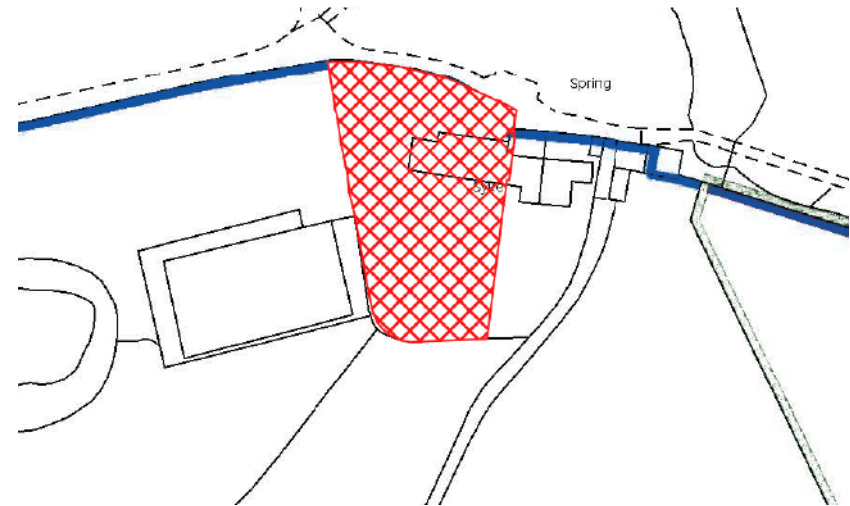
The application building is the barn at Syke House, an isolated moorland farm at Littleborough in the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester. Syke House and the barn are attached and form a long range of buildings located at the end of Syke Road, a winding track crossing the hillside east of and above Hollingworth Lake.

The application site consists of open countryside within the Green Belt and contains large areas of grassland with levels slowly rising towards from the east to the west of the site.

There are existing boundary treatments to Syke Road consisting of low-level stone walls & metal railings. There are few boundary treatments to the rear of the barn.

### **2.2 Social Context**

The main issues that we believe will most affect local residents will be as follows:



- Traffic: there will be a nominal increase in vehicle and pedestrian traffic using Syke Road to access the development site, but the roads and footpaths will be suitable and parking provision for new dwellings is ample, including for visitors
- Our proposals do not create any amenity or privacy issues for existing residents.

### **2.3 Economic Context**

The local economy will receive an initial boost as a result of construction work on the project, once complete there will be a boost to local authority funds via Council Tax contributions. New residents in the area will also mean new customers for local businesses.

### **2.4 Planning History**

The site previously has had the following history of planning applications:

|                                                                                          |          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 92/D28085   Erection Of Dwelling On Site Of Former Cottages (refused)                    | 18/05/92 |
| 95/D32671   Formation Of Equestrian Exercise Area (Retrospective Application - approved) | 27/03/96 |

### **2.5 Planning Policy**

National planning policy guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

This policy guidance proposes, as one of its core themes, a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraphs 11 and 12 state that:

“Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

This National Planning Policy Framework does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. It is highly desirable that local planning authorities should have

an up-to-date plan in place.”

Furthermore, paragraph 14 states that:

“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

For decision-taking this means:

- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
  - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
  - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”

In Section 6 “Delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes”, the NPPF states at paragraph 49 that:

“Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up to date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites”.

In Section 7 “Requiring good design”, paragraph 56 states that:

“The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people”.

Local planning policy guidance is provided by the Kirklees UDP which was adopted in March 1999. As a result of a Direction issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, from the 28th September 2007 some of the policies in the UDP continue to have effect (saved policies) until the Local Development Framework (LDF) is adopted.

The site is identified on the UDP Proposals Map as ‘Provisional Open Land’ (POL) under Policy D5. This policy states that:

“On sites designated as provisional open land planning permission will not be granted other than for development required in connection with established uses, changes of use to alternative open land uses or temporary uses which would not prejudice the contribution of the site to the character of its surroundings and the possibility of development in the longer term.”

Also within the UDP, policies BE1, BE2 and BE12 concern design and amenity issues. Policy BE1 states that:

“All development should be of good quality design such that it contributes to a built environment which:

- i. creates or retains a sense of local identity.
- ii. is visually attractive.
- iii. promotes safety, including crime prevention and reduction of hazards to highway users.
- iv. promotes a healthy environment, including space and landscaping about buildings and avoidance of exposure to excessive noise or pollution.
- v. is energy efficient in terms of building design and orientation and conducive to energy efficient modes of travel, in particular walking, cycling and use of public transport.”

Policy T10 of the UDP considers the highway and accessibility issues in new development –

“New development will not normally be permitted if it will create or materially add to highway safety or environmental problems or, in the case of development which will attract or generate a significant number of journeys, if it cannot be served adequately by the existing highway network and by public transport. Proposals will be expected to incorporate appropriate highway infrastructure designed to meet relevant safety standards”.

The proposed development should therefore be assessed against the relevant national and local planning policies identified above, and any other relevant material considerations.

## **2.6 Planning Appraisal**

Pressure for housing continues to grow, as few sites remain in the UDP that are identified for housing and are undeveloped and even fewer are considered to be available for delivery.

The proposed development is to be in a highly sustainable location, given that the services and facilities of Rochdale Town Centre are within a short driving distance and that the site is close to well-frequented public transport bus & train routes, thereby meeting the requirement of paragraph 49 for “sustainable development”.

The proposed development meets the requirements of paragraphs 14 and 49 of the NPPF in that it represents highly sustainable development and there are no adverse impacts of approving development that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and there are no specific policies in the NPPF that indicate that development should be restricted.

## **2.7 Green Belt**

The site is within the Green Belt and there are no intentions to alter the footprint or the size of the existing Listed barn. The proposals do intend to increase the size of an out building by approximately 3m to allow for a double bedroom to the rear.

However, from every viewing angle the proposals have no visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt as they are screened by an existing 2.2m high existing stone wall

- a) The proposals are not considered to be ‘disproportionate additions’ visually (as per HPPF & PPG Guidance) and should therefore be acceptable in Planning terms.
- b) The proposals are well below the 33% ‘rule of thumb’ volumetric increase
- c) The proposals have no greater impact on the openness of the Greenbelt than the existing development by virtue of surrounding topography & the retained elements of the existing building and are therefore acceptable in planning terms under the Green Belt Policy Partial Redevelopment exception (RBF NPPF paragraph 145, section g)



d) The proposals assist in urban regeneration by recycling derelict / other urban land, thereby achieving one of the five purposes of Green Belt policy and are by virtue of the exceptions rule, not considered to be inappropriate development

### **3 Design**

#### **3.1 Design**

The existing property has sat vacant for many years and has begun to deteriorate, with little to no interest in its occupation or regeneration; The general principle is to internally re-arrange the existing barn layout in order to provide a modern family home.

A brief overview of the proposed works are as follows:

- Rationalise the ground floor layout to provide a comfortable, usable living space; we are providing level access throughout and to the external spaces (making it a home for life)
- Providing an open plan kitchen / dining / lounge area with full height roof void to highlight the oak feature trusses.
- Providing storage space and a suitable new feature staircase up to the first floor.
- Accommodate 5 good-sized bedrooms in total; the primary bedroom is to be on the ground floor along with a guest bedroom, with a further 3no guest bedrooms on the first floor.
- Introduce a new first floor snug area on a mezzanine above the kitchen area.
- Introduce a family friendly utility / boot room.

The existing trusses over the stables will need to be re-configured to allow for increased headroom – as stated by the Heritage Consultant these are not original & some of them will have to be replaced anyway due to them being in poor condition.

We are also proposing to improve the external landscaping in order that it will provide more suitable and usable garden space for the property and work better for a family household, tie the building into its setting, all whilst retaining an attractive setting.

The two new Holiday Lets are to be luxury apartments set within in the beautiful, quiet grounds of Syke farm and yet 10 minutes from Hollingworth Lake. The aim is for these to be the perfect base for exploring the Hollingworth area; the outstanding countryside and the quaint, historic villages, shops, pubs and cafe bars.

The luxury open plan apartments are to contain a fully equipped kitchen, large open plan lounge; dining area; and double bedrooms, both ensuite.

The apartments are to be served by a separate drive at the side of the site with their own parking & amenity spaces.

### **3.2 Amount**

The final proposals have been designed to consider the site analysis work, context assessment and discussions & ideas previously discussed with the client. This background work has led to the following solutions (please also refer to the planning drawings submitted separately as part of this full planning application).

The scheme has been designed to utilise the existing defunct buildings in order to bring back to life the Grade II listed building.

The proposals are to retain, and in some cases, improve all the existing openings on the main envelope for conversion.

The proposed application is a Full Planning Application, and therefore details of the proposed materials, appearance, and hard and soft landscaping, are detailed within the proposed drawings and External Material Statement.

The proposed dwelling will be a high-quality family house, which will exceed all the National Space Standard requirements, and be of a high quality construction which will meet/exceed thermal requirements of the Building Regulations.

As we are utilising the existing building the natural palette of materials already link in with the surrounding buildings and natural environment, and give the dwelling an element of high-quality architectural interest.

Off road car spaces will be provided to each dwelling, with a minimum of 2 for the Holiday Lets and up to 4 for the main dwelling & separate visitor parking spaces. This proposal is above the figures recommended by the highway design guide and would therefore not affect pressure on any on street parking and not jeopardise the existing access on Syke Road.

### **3.3 Layout**

The layout of the scheme has been developed carefully over successive iterations with these final proposals taking into account all of our core design principles such as:

- Access
- Amenity
- Appearance/layout of the surrounding built environment
- Crime and security
- Enhancing a neighbourhood
- Light
- Privacy
- Space

The layout as far as possible has been kept as existing to minimise any disruption to the existing Grade II Listed Building & its curtilage.

The proposed site plan incorporates efficient and practical external waste storage. The designated external bin store areas indicated on the proposed site plan are sufficient for the storage of 4 no. refuse bins containing non-recyclable and recyclable waste to be in accordance with Local Authority current refuse and recycling system and procedures. This will promote recycling whilst maintaining a neat and tidy streetscape.

### **3.4 Scale**

The built environment around the application site is limited. Our proposals have been designed sympathetically to retain & enhance the existing residential style in order to reinforce the local character of the area.

### **3.5 Landscaping**

Within the submission of the planning application, a soft landscaping scheme shows a planting scheme and which is designed to have ecological benefit, and utilises native species for which will provide feeding to the natural habitat.

It is designed that the soft landscaping proposals focus on the left 'buffer' area between the existing barn & the proposed Holiday Lets. Soft landscaping can also be found to the garden areas to the rear of the site.

The hard landscaping proposals are intended to satisfy our core design principles and provide:

- Access to persons with disabilities
- Amenity improvements (via retaining walls/contour alterations)
- Attractive edges/defensible space
- Differentiation between vehicular/pedestrian/public/private areas
- Security to boundaries

The hard landscape proposals (see proposed site plan) provide level access to the principal entrance of the existing building and proposed Holiday Lets. Further, paving surfaces are designed to enable easy determination of public and private vehicular and pedestrian spaces providing an attractive street frontage. The rear perimeter boundaries are to be more of a landscaped boundary that backs on to the openness of the adjacent areas.

The site is surrounded by a number of existing trees, however none of these will be affected by the proposals, and therefore an Arboriculture Report has not been submitted as part of this application.

### **3.6 Appearance**

The design principles laid out the basic tenets from which to base decisions during design development. In terms of appearance the most notable principles were:

- Appearance/Layout of the surrounding built environment
- Enhancing & retaining the character of the existing Grade II Listed Building

Consideration has been made when choosing the external materials and therefore the proposed detailed design would produce a scheme that responds to the existing materials in use in the vicinity.

It is intended to strip the roof to allow for the installation of insulation as part of the thermal upgrade of the building; the existing roof tiles are to be re-used where possible.

The new doors & windows are to be of high quality aluminium.

The existing stone facades are to be jet washed & re-pointed where necessary.

Please refer to the External Materials Statement for details.

### **3.7 Use**

This planning application is for the development of a residential development & Holiday Lets, both planning use class C3. The application site is currently vacant, and would be a social and public benefit to for a much needed residential development.

As the application site lies within an area that already contains residential use, we believe there is sufficient justification for our proposals to be considered as appropriate development and use.

### **3.8 Heritage Impact**

As detailed in the accompanying Heritage Report, *the proposal will put the under-used listed building to sustainable use that will secure its future and the works will have no adverse effect upon the special architectural or historical interest that is the core of its significance.*

## **4 Access**

### **4.1 Vehicular Access**

Access to the site is gained via Syke Road which leads east from Rakewood Road which runs alongside Hollingworth Lake. The access is currently used by agricultural vehicles.

Syke House Farm is situated within a rural setting close to Hollingworth Lake Country Park, yet a short distance from excellent motorway links (M62) providing connections throughout the North.

Syke House Farm is also located within easy reach of Littleborough village which offers a local community feel, boasting independent shops, cafes, restaurants, highly rated schools and its very own train station which provides direct trains to both Manchester and Leeds city centres.

Parking to the dwelling & Holiday Lets will exceed local highway authority standards, with a minimum of 8 no car spaces off the track & a couple of visitor spaces in front of the dwelling.

The Local Authority currently collects the refuse from the site – this will be updated and registered with the Local Authority to collect the additional bin collections from the Barn Conversion and the 2No Holiday lets as follows.

|                            |                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Local Authority Collection | ROCHDALE COUNCIL                                                                                                  |
| Collections                | EVERY WEEK - FRIDAY MORNING                                                                                       |
| Recycling Collection       | WEEK 1 normal Waste, WEEK 2 Paper Recycling, WEEK 3 Normal Waste, WEEK 4 plastic Recycling, Revert back to week 1 |
| Refuse Bin volumes         | ALL BINS ARE 220L and are currently located at front of property SYKE HOUSE                                       |
| Locations                  | SHOWN ON PROPOSED SITE PLAN                                                                                       |

### **4.2 Pedestrian Access**

Pedestrian access into the proposed dwelling will remain as existing. Due to the rural location, there are no footpaths providing access.

The application site is within walking distance (3 miles) to Rochdale Town Centre thus providing excellent amenities for the residents of the site, without the need for any transport & there are several pubs and restaurants in the Hollingworth Lake area. The proposed dwellings will have level access to the principle entrance door.

Cycle access is gained along the same routes as pedestrians and vehicles.

## **5 Conclusion**

This planning application is for the development of a residential development, planning use class C3 on a brownfield site within a predominantly rural area. The proposal involves the re-building a redundant barn, the introduction of two Holiday Lets and improving environmental conditions on site. The application site is currently vacant, and would be a social and public benefit for a much-needed residential & commercial Holiday Let development,

Looking through the history of the site, we believe there is sufficient justification for our proposals to be considered as appropriate development and use.

The new dwelling would contribute to maintaining the Council's five year supply of deliverable housing land. In accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the Framework advises that in such circumstances development should be approved.