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HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING GARAGE TO FORM 1 DWELLING

1. Introduction

This heritage assessment has been prepared to support the proposed change of use of an existing garage located between Salley Street and Higher Calderbrook Road in Littleborough, Rochdale. The proposal includes the conversion of the garage into a habitable space without any extensions or new openings. The existing garage door will be replaced with bi-folding doors, and heritage-style roof lights will be introduced into the roof to provide natural light and amenity to a proposed bedroom.

2. Site Description

The existing garage is situated in a rural or semi-rural context within Littleborough, a town in the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale. The area features a mixture of residential and agricultural buildings, with some historic structures. The garage is part of an established residential setting, and its architectural character reflects the building traditions and materials common in the area having been recently approved by Rochdal Planning Department.

3. Planning Context and Significance

The proposed site lies within a locality of local heritage interest. It is important to consider the broader historical and architectural context of the area when assessing the potential impact of the proposed development. While the building itself may not be a listed structure, the garage is within proximity to several buildings of historical value, and any development must respect the character and significance of the surrounding area.

Key Heritage considerations:

Proximity to Heritage Assets: The garage is located near traditional buildings that may be considered heritage assets. These structures contribute to the area's character and significance.

Local Heritage Significance: The broader area likely has elements of local heritage value, contributing to the sense of place and the town's historical development.

4. Proposed Changes and Impact on Heritage Value

a. Replacement of Garage Door with Bi-Folding Doors

The replacement of the existing garage door with bi-folding doors represents a relatively minor alteration in terms of building structure. The bi-folding doors would be constructed of aluminium; a recognised acceptable material for windows and door proposals within heritage areas and Conservation areas.

Impact on Character: The bi-folding doors can be designed in a way that preserves the original character of the garage while modernizing its functionality. Care has been taken to ensure that the size, design, and material choice respect the existing building's proportions.

Material Selection: The use of aluminum for the bi-folding doors will help mitigate any adverse impact on the garage's heritage value. The proposed material choice must be compatible with the surrounding buildings to maintain visual harmony.

b. Introduction of Heritage-Style Roof Lights

The introduction of roof lights, designed in a heritage style, serves the dual purpose of providing natural light and improving the amenity value of the proposed bedroom in the roof space. These roof lights are proposed to be placed within the existing roof structure without the need for new openings or significant changes to the roofline.

Impact on Historic Roof Design: The heritage-style roof lights should be carefully positioned to avoid disrupting the visual integrity of the roof. Roof lights should be subtle, with low-profile, traditional glazing materials that match the style and materials of surrounding buildings.

Visual Impact: The roof lights should not be overly prominent and should blend harmoniously with the existing roof structure. The goal is to minimize any disruption to the roof's historic design while improving the internal functionality of the space.

c. No Extension or New Openings

The fact that no extensions or new openings are proposed helps mitigate the potential for significant impact on the building's heritage value. The existing external walls and overall structure will remain largely unaltered, ensuring that the character of the original building is preserved. The absence of new openings maintains the visual consistency of the building's form and massing.

5. Mitigation Measures

While the proposed alterations are relatively minor, the following measures could be taken to ensure that the change of use has minimal impact on the heritage value of the site:

Material Selection: As noted, the materials for the bi-folding doors and roof lights should be compatible with the local architectural style, with an emphasis on traditional, high-quality materials such as timber, metal, or traditional glazing for the roof lights.

Design Detailing: The bi-folding doors should be designed to fit within the existing garage opening, ensuring that the proportions of the building remain consistent. Similarly, the roof lights should be installed flush with the roofline and designed to be as discreet as possible.

Monitoring and Review: If there are concerns regarding the visual impact of the changes, a review of the final designs by a conservation officer may be appropriate to ensure that the alterations align with local heritage policies.

6. Conclusion

The proposed change of use for the existing garage is not expected to have a significant adverse impact on the heritage value of the building or the surrounding area. The proposed alterations—replacement of the garage door with bi-folding doors and the introduction of heritage-style roof lights—are both relatively minor and are designed to preserve the overall character of the structure. The proposed change of use reflects that of the existing established residential use within the area.

By using appropriate materials and ensuring that the design remains in keeping with the building's original character, the proposals will enhance the amenity value of the garage without detracting from any historical significance within the area. The fact that no extensions or new openings are being created further minimizes any potential impact on the building's heritage value.