

PROPOSED WORKS AT HOLLANDS FARM

ROOLEY MOOR ROAD, SPOTLAND, ROCHDALE



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

GARRY MILLER
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GARRY MILLER HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is a heritage consultant, architectural historian and published author who has spent more than 40 years studying and working with buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. The book was described as ‘scholarship as its best’ by *Country Life* (June 2003), and ‘well analysed and presented’ in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004); and was widely cited in the 2006 *Buildings of England* volume on Liverpool and Southwest Lancashire. Extensive research on the houses of Georgian and Regency Liverpool has also been undertaken, with a view to future publication. Following the success of his Douglas Valley book, Garry Miller established his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings, in particular the heritage assessments required to support planning applications affecting the historic environment. His area of operation encompasses the North West, Midlands, North Wales and parts of Cumbria and North and West Yorkshire. Several local authorities have cited his assessments as examples of best practice, and reports on more than 150 buildings or sites are produced annually.

THIS REPORT

Date of issue: October 2024

Purpose: for planning submission

Text: Garry Miller

Site survey: Peter Miller

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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report supports proposed works at Hollands Farm, which stands off Rooley Moor Road in the Spotland district of the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester.

The property is a modest, altered moorland farmhouse with attached barn, the latter now converted to two separate dwellings. The property is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.

An application has been submitted to Rochdale MBC for replacement of modern conservatory structures at the property. The heritage issue arising is the potential impact upon the significance (heritage interest and value) of the application property. The scope and purpose of this report is to identify this significance and how the proposal affects it.

The site is recorded in 1609, but the present building is late 18th or early 19th century with considerable later alteration. It is a laithe house, a typical Pennine form, with dwelling and barn in the same range; blocked long mullioned windows indicate loomshops once existed on the first floor of the farmhouse.

As a non-designated asset, the application property is significant in the local context only, and in relative terms its significance is accordingly low. Owing to extensive and unsympathetic alteration over time, this significance resides primarily in its historical interest rather than that of its fabric. This historical interest stems primarily from the site, recorded in 1609, being much older than the present building; its former role as a laithe house, a building type frequently associated with moorland farming; and its participation in the textile cottage industry that preceded the beginnings of the factory system in the late 18th century. The devaluation of its architectural interest has resulted from successive changes over time, including alterations to windows and the addition of front and rear conservatories.

The proposal involves removal of the modern conservatories and their replacement by a small open porch to the front and a single-storey extension at the rear. The proposal also involves two small conservation-style rooflights on the front elevation and three on the rear.

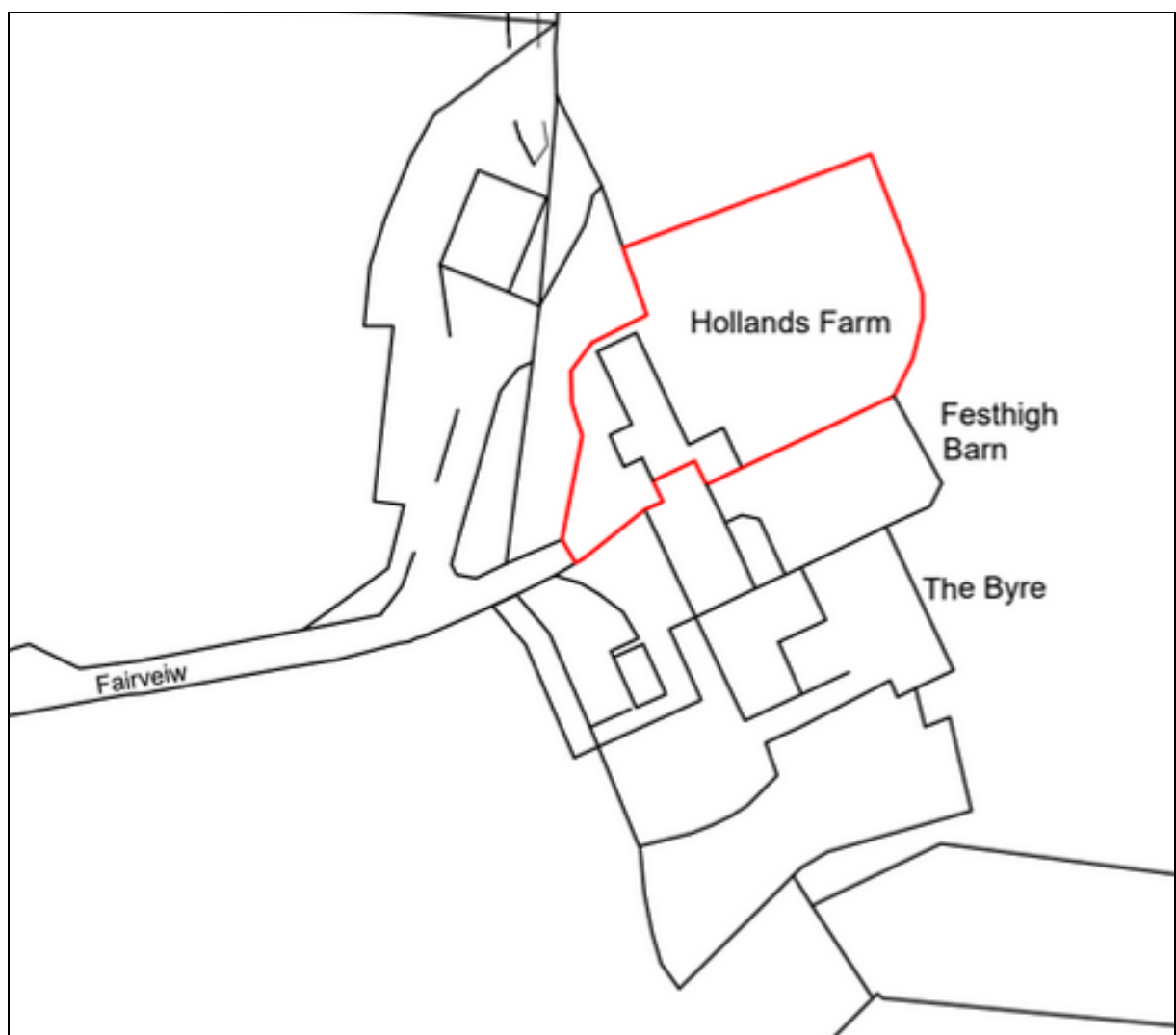
The proposal will have a positive effect upon the non-designated building as it will remedy the unsympathetic works of the past. The proposed porch is a simple, light-touch structure that is appropriate to the host building; its removal will better reveal the front elevation, thus enhancing its appearance. The rear extension is similarly more appropriate in materials and design than the conservatory that currently exists. While its addition involves opening up a window in the rear elevation to allow access from the main house, this is not considered harmful as the window is modern. The rooflights meanwhile are a minor alteration that will not detract from the appearance of the property in any way.

As this is a non-designated heritage asset, national planning guidance requires simply a balanced planning judgement on the proposal, as opposed to those affected designated assets, in which there is a requirement to at least preserve their significance. In making this balanced judgment, the present application should be considered favourable as it preserves the historical interest that represents the core significance of the application building while enhancing the appearance of its principal front elevation.

The application therefore merits approval without delay.

2: THE SITE

The application property is Hollands Farm, which is located off Rooley Moor Road, in the Spotland district of the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale, Greater Manchester. The property is a modest, altered moorland farmhouse with a long attached barn that has now been converted to two separate dwellings.



Map 1. Location of the application building



1. The application property, a modest former farmhouse with attached barn



2. The farmhouse and barn in their moorland setting, viewed from access track off Rooley Moor Road

3: THE PROPOSAL/SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

3.1 Proposed development

An application has been submitted to Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council for replacement of modern conservatory structures at the property.

3.2 Designation

The property is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council.

3.3 Heritage impact

The heritage consideration arising from the proposal is its potential impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the application building.

3.4 Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 200 of Chapter 16 (*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*) the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised, December 2023) states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the particular significance of the heritage asset. The scope and purpose of this report is therefore to identify the significance of the application building, and to assess how this will be affected by the proposal.

In accordance with paragraph 200, the level of detail is considered proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset, and no more than necessary to understand the impact of the proposal.

This report is to be read in conjunction with other documentation submitted in support of the application, and supersedes any previously-submitted heritage assessment.

3.5 Report structure

This is as follows:

1. A concise, proportionate description of the application building (Section 4)
2. A summary of its heritage significance (Section 5)
3. A summary of the planning policy context in which the application will be determined (Section 6)
4. Evaluation within this context of the proposal's impact upon the significance of the application building (Section 7).

4: THE APPLICATION PROPERTY

4.1 Historical summary

The site is likely to be of earlier origin than the present buildings. A survey of the manor of Spotland in 1626 records that ‘*a tenement known as Hollands*’ was among lands held by freeholder Henry Hopwood, as of a deed dated November 1, 1609 (1). The present building is however of much later date, either late 18th or early 19th century. It is a *laithe house*, a building form typical of the Pennine moorlands and consisting of a long range incorporating both house and barn. Its long, linear footprint is recorded by the OS edition of the mid-1840s (Map 2, below), with little change four decades later (Map 3). During the 20th century however the building was substantially extended, a process which had begun by 1908 (Map 4) and had considerably accelerated by 1962 (Map 5). Further alterations have taken place in more recent times, for example the partial demolition and conversion of the barn to a dwelling, granted in 2004.

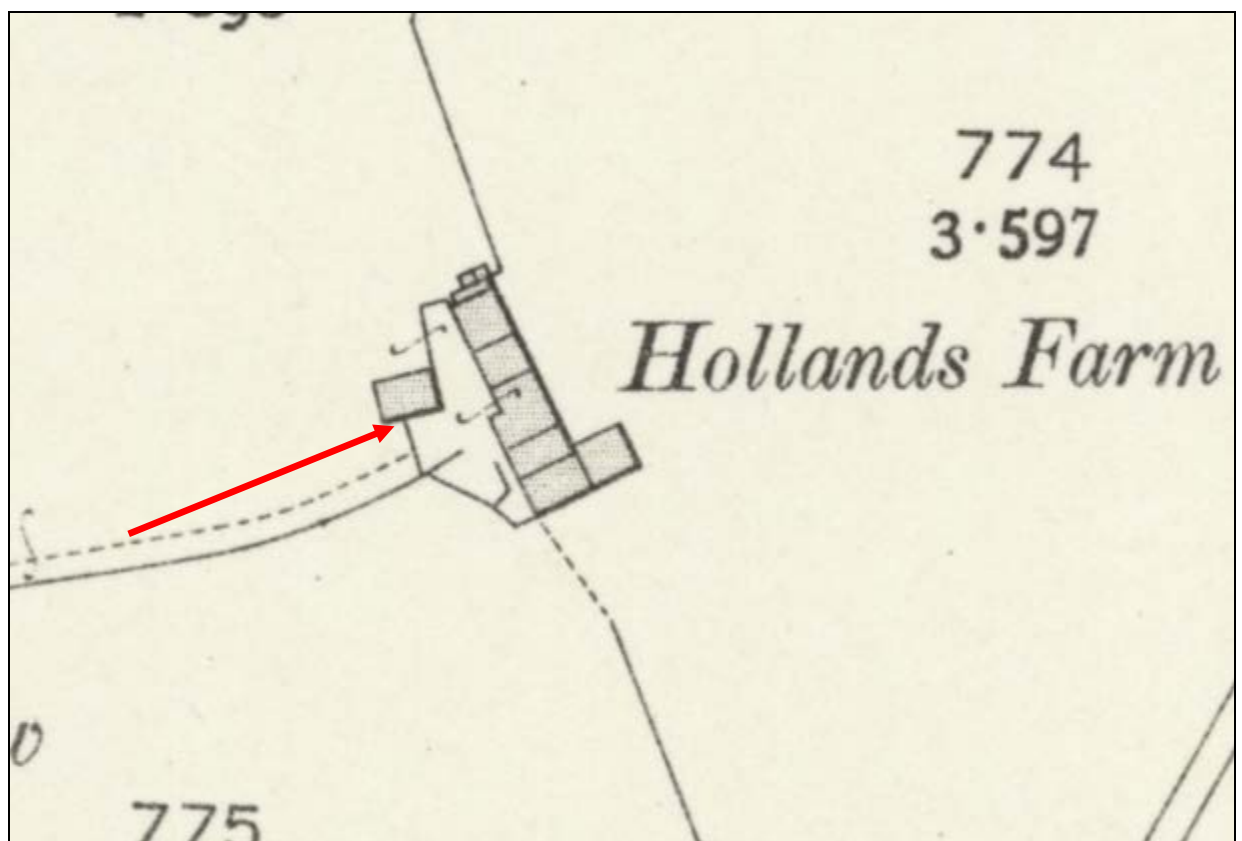
(1) Henry Fishwick, *History of the Parish of Rochdale* (1889) p92



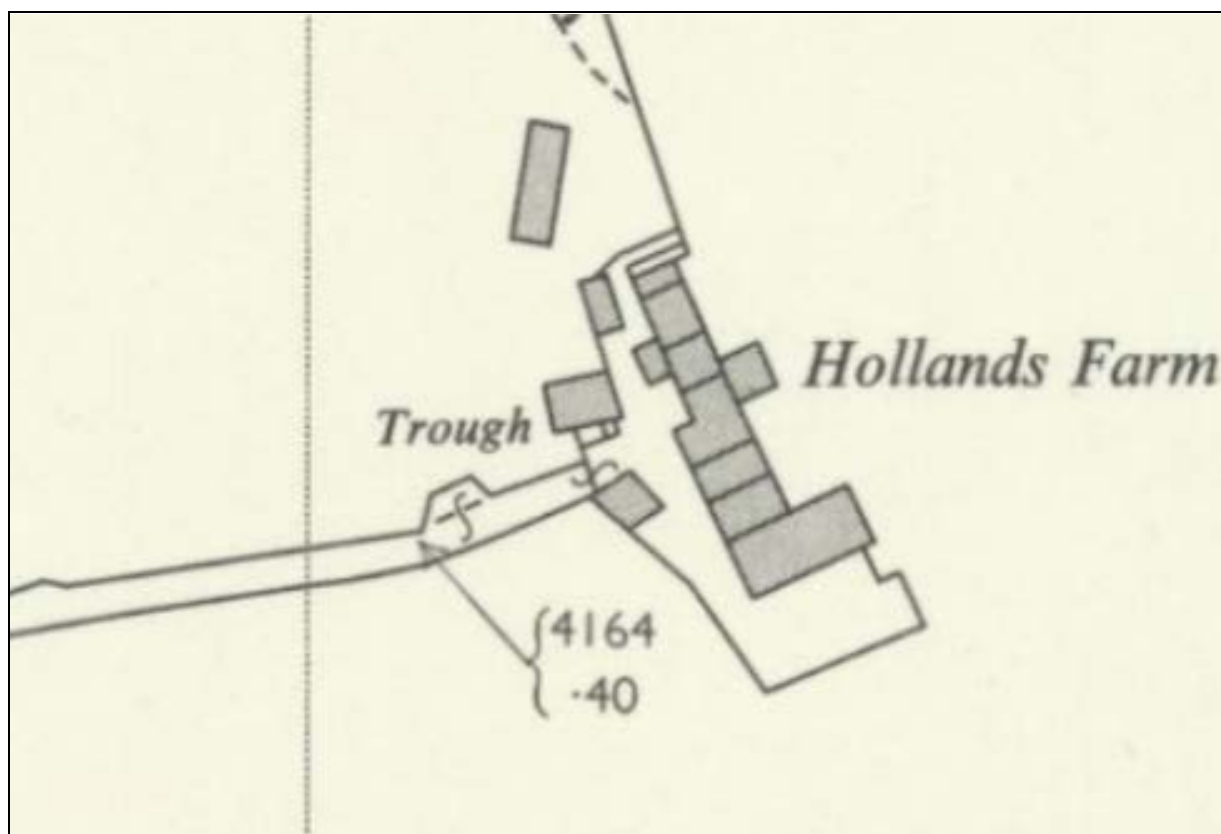
Map 2. The long, linear footprint of the house as recorded by the six-inch OS map surveyed 1844-1848



Map 3. The 25-inch OS map surveyed 1890 records little change



Map 4. The edition of 1908 shows the process of extension had begun



Map 5. Substantial additions had been made by 1962

4.2 Present appearance

The entire property, both house and barn, has been significantly altered in recent decades. The house element has a symmetrical front, and is most likely late 18th or early 19th century; the barn may be slightly later. Remains of long mullioned windows on the upper floor of the house, to both front and rear, suggests loomshops within and that the occupiers were involved in the pre-industrialisation cottage textile industry. These have now been blocked or altered, and the main ground floor windows in the front elevation, along with the doorway, appear late 19th century. All other windows are altered or modern, with no original framing remaining. Much of the frontage is masked by an unsympathetic probably late 20th century lean-to conservatory, while at the rear is a further conservatory, built in the angle between the farmhouse and a projecting rear extension. Both these structures appear notably out of place in a traditional building of this type.



3. Blocked windows indicate first floor loomshops originally existed



4. The attached barn has been altered to form two separate dwellings



5. The modern conservatory obscures the front of the building



6. Rear conservatory is similarly out of keeping with the traditional character of the property

5: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE APPLICATION PROPERTY

5.1 Rationale

Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimise conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary as:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

5.2 Summary

As a non-designated asset, the application property is significant in the local context only, and in relative terms its significance is accordingly low. Owing to extensive and unsympathetic alteration over time, this significance resides primarily in its historical interest rather than the interest of its fabric. This historical interest stems primarily from the site, recorded in 1609, being much older than the present building; its former role as a laithe house, a type frequently associated with moorland farming; and its participation in the textile cottage industry that preceded the beginnings of the factory system in the late 18th century. The devaluation of its architectural interest has resulted from successive changes over time, including alterations to windows and the addition of the front and rear conservatories.

6: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides the guidance on how applications affecting the historic environment are to be determined. Paragraph 203 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*

In the case of non-designated heritage assets, paragraph 209 requires simply a balanced planning judgment that weighs any harm or loss against the significance of the application property.

Locally, Policy P2a (Protecting and Enhancing Character, Landscape and Heritage) of the Rochdale Core Strategy, formally adopted on October 19, 2016, states that key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, will be conserved, enhanced and promoted, including consideration of their wider settings.

7: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

7.1 Summary of the scheme

The proposal involves removal of the modern conservatories and their replacement by a small open porch to the front and a single-storey extension at the rear. Also sought are two small conservation-style rooflights on the front elevation and three on the rear.



7. Front and rear elevation as proposed

7.2 Its effect

The proposal will have a positive effect upon the non-designated building as it will remedy the unsympathetic works of the past. The proposed porch is a simple, light-touch structure that is appropriate to the host building; its removal will better reveal the

front elevation, thus enhancing its appearance. The rear extension is similarly more appropriate in materials and design than the conservatory that currently exists. While its addition involves opening up a window in the rear elevation to allow access from the main house, this is not considered harmful as the window is modern. The rooflights meanwhile are a minor alteration that will not detract from the appearance of the property in any way.



8. Ground floor window to be opened up is modern

7.3 Concluding statement

The application property is significant locally for its historical interest rather than that of its altered fabric. As it is a non-designated heritage asset, national planning guidance requires simply a balanced planning judgement on the proposal, as opposed to those affected designated assets, in which there is a requirement to at least preserve their significance. In making this balanced judgment, the present application should be considered favourable as it preserves the historical interest that represents the core significance of the application building while enhancing the appearance of its principal front elevation.

The application therefore merits approval without delay.