



HERITAGE STATEMENT

SEPTEMBER 2024

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

SLACK FARM, LITTLEBOROUGH, ROCHDALE OL15 9NH

JHA PULMANN

Bridge House, 18A Bridge Street, Milnrow, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 3ND

Extent of Report

This report is prepared to accompany a Planning Application submitted to Rochdale Borough Council referenced 24/00023/FUL.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published on 27 March 2012 and updated on 24 July 2018, 19 February 2019 and September 2023. This sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, the heritage statement is prepared as noted in section 16.

The application proposes rectification works to the existing farmhouse at Slack Farm along with an extension to the property to convert the existing farmhouse dwelling into 5 new dwellings.

Heritage Statement

1. Introduction

- **Applicant Details:** Mr D. Cullen
- **Site Address:** Slack Farm, Littleborough, Rochdale OL15 9NH
- **Planning Application Reference:** 24/00023/FUL

2. Description of the Site

- **Site Overview:**
 - Slack Farm is a historic period farmhouse located on Higher Calderbrook Road, Littleborough. The property, constructed in the early 1800s, is a prime example of traditional rural architecture from this era. Its historical value lies in its embodiment of the agricultural heritage and vernacular building styles typical of the region during the 19th century.(See Figure 1)
 - Originally built as a single dwelling, Slack Farm is now divided into two separate residential units. The structure retains much of its original character, with features such as stone walls, timber beams, and slate roofing that are characteristic of period farmhouses in the area. The layout and design reflect the functional requirements of a working farmhouse, though modifications have been made over time to accommodate its conversion into two homes.
 - The property sits within a rural setting, surrounded by open fields and scenic countryside. Its location, near the Pennines and local conservation areas, enhances its significance as part of the region’s agricultural landscape. Despite its conversion, Slack Farm maintains its strong connection to the local historical and architectural narrative, contributing to the area’s rich cultural heritage. (See Figure 2)
 - This dual residential usage has ensured the preservation of the building, although ongoing conservation efforts may be required to maintain its historical integrity.
- **Heritage Status:**
 - Slack Farm, located on Higher Calderbrook Road, Littleborough, is identified by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) as a non-designated heritage asset. While not formally listed, the property is recognized for its local historical and architectural significance, contributing to the character and history of the surrounding area.
- **Historical Background:**
 - Slack Farm, situated on Higher Calderbrook Road, Littleborough, dates to the early 1800s. It was originally constructed as a traditional farmhouse, reflective of the rural, agricultural landscape that characterized the area during the 19th century. The farm likely served as a working agricultural property, supporting local farming practices that were common in this part of the Pennines.

- The farmhouse was built using locally sourced materials, including stone, which was typical of the region's vernacular architecture. Its robust construction and simple, functional design are indicative of its original purpose as a residence for farm workers or the farm's owner.
- Over the years, Slack Farm has been adapted to meet changing residential needs and is now divided into two separate dwellings. Despite these modifications, the property retains much of its original architectural character and remains an important link to the agricultural history of Littleborough and the surrounding area. Its continued use as a residence helps to preserve its historical legacy within the local community.

3. Significance of the Heritage Asset

Historical Significance:

- Slack Farm holds significant historical value as a well-preserved example of early 19th-century rural architecture in Littleborough. Constructed in the early 1800s, it reflects the agricultural heritage of the region during a period when farming was a central part of life in the Pennines. The farmhouse embodies the vernacular building styles of the time, utilizing locally sourced materials such as stone, and features a simple, functional design typical of working farmhouses.
- The property's enduring presence contributes to an understanding of the area's social and economic history, offering insight into the rural way of life in the 19th century. Its adaptation over time, including its current division into two dwellings, further illustrates the evolution of rural properties in response to changing residential and societal needs. As a non-designated heritage asset, Slack Farm remains an important link to the region's agricultural past and continues to contribute to the local historical landscape.

Architectural Significance:

- Slack Farm is architecturally significant as an early 19th-century period farmhouse that exemplifies the traditional vernacular architecture of the Pennine region. Constructed primarily from locally sourced stone, the building reflects the craftsmanship and materials typical of rural farmhouses of the era. Its robust, simple design was tailored to the functional requirements of a working farm, featuring characteristic elements such as stone walls, timber beams, and a slate roof.
- Although the property has been divided into two separate dwellings, it retains much of its original architectural integrity. Key features like the traditional stone construction and its farmhouse layout provide a clear link to its historical origins. The preservation of these elements makes Slack Farm an important example of the rural architectural heritage of Littleborough, contributing to the area's distinctive historical landscape.

- **Cultural or Communal Value:**

- Slack Farm holds communal value as a historical landmark within the local community of Littleborough. As a 19th-century farmhouse, it serves as a tangible reminder of the area's agricultural roots and rural way of life. Its presence

contributes to the collective identity of the region, fostering a connection to the local heritage and the development of the surrounding landscape.

- **Aesthetic Value:**

- Slack Farm possesses significant aesthetic value, harmonizing with the rural landscape of Littleborough and the surrounding Pennine countryside. Its traditional stone construction, slate roof, and simple farmhouse design blend seamlessly with the natural environment, reflecting the vernacular architecture typical of the region. Positioned amidst open fields and rolling hills, the farmhouse contributes to the picturesque quality of the landscape, enhancing its scenic charm and reinforcing the area's agricultural heritage. This integration of natural and built elements makes Slack Farm a visually appealing and culturally significant part of the local landscape.

4. Proposed Development

- **Description of the Proposed Works:**

- The proposed works involve the further subdivision of Slack Farm, which is currently divided into two separate dwellings, to create a total of five individual residential properties. The existing footprint of the building will be extended to accommodate the additional dwellings while ensuring the design is sympathetic to the historical and architectural character of the original farmhouse. (*See drawings M24-32-104, M24-32-105*)
- The extension will include the construction of additional living spaces, designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing structure. Traditional materials, such as locally sourced stone and slate roofing, will be used to maintain visual consistency with the original building. Careful consideration will be given to the layout and external appearance of the new units, ensuring that the extension does not overpower the original structure or disrupt the farmhouse's relationship with the surrounding rural landscape.
- Internally, the conversion will create five self-contained units, each with modern amenities while retaining key architectural features where possible, such as exposed timber beams and stone walls, to preserve the property's historical character. The design aims to provide high-quality residential accommodation while respecting the building's heritage significance and its contribution to the local area.
- Landscaping and external works will also be undertaken to create private outdoor spaces for each dwelling and enhance the overall setting of the development, ensuring it remains in harmony with the surrounding environment.

- **Rationale for the Works:**

- Justification for the proposed development, outlining its necessity and how it meets the objectives of the planning policy and the applicant's requirements.
- The rationale for further subdividing Slack Farm into five individual properties is rooted in the desire to ensure the long-term preservation and sustainable use of this historic building, in line with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF emphasizes the importance of securing viable uses for

heritage assets, particularly non-designated heritage assets such as Slack Farm, to ensure their continued contribution to the local environment and community.

- By increasing the number of residential units within the existing property footprint and through a sympathetic extension, the proposed works will make more efficient use of the building, ensuring it remains economically viable and well-maintained for future generations. This approach aligns with Paragraph 197 of the NPPF, which encourages proposals that sustain or enhance the significance of heritage assets and put them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- The conversion will be carried out with great respect for the architectural and historical significance of Slack Farm. The use of traditional materials and careful design will ensure that the extended footprint blends harmoniously with the original structure, preserving its rural character and aesthetic value within the landscape. By facilitating the ongoing use of the building, the works will prevent the risk of neglect or decay, which could arise from underuse or lack of maintenance.
- Furthermore, the proposal offers significant public benefits, as it will ensure the preservation of an important local heritage asset while providing additional high-quality housing in the area. This sustainable approach to development balances the need for modern accommodation with the responsibility of conserving the historical integrity of the property, in line with the NPPF's guidance on heritage conservation and sustainable development.
- In summary, the proposed works will enhance the long-term sustainability of Slack Farm by securing its continued use, safeguarding its heritage significance, and ensuring that it remains an integral part of the local landscape and community.

5. Impact Assessment

- **Impact on Historical/Architectural Significance:**

- Whilst extending the existing building footprint, the design has minimal impact on the historical and architectural significance of the farmhouse. By utilizing traditional materials and architectural styles that reflect the original design, the proposal aims to preserve the essential character and integrity of the building. Careful consideration will be given to the preservation of key architectural features, such as stone walls and timber beams, ensuring they remain visible and intact. The proposed works will not only maintain the farmhouse's historical context but will also enhance its viability as a residential property, allowing it to be actively used and maintained, thereby safeguarding its heritage for future generations. Overall, the development seeks to balance modern residential needs with the conservation of Slack Farm's rich historical legacy. Existing window openings will remain where possible with some being used to form the new entrances into the sub divided dwellings, keeping the proportions of the original farmhouse.

- **Impact on the Setting of the Asset:**

- The proposed subdivision of Slack Farm into five individual properties will be carried out with careful consideration of the setting of the asset. By maintaining the existing footprint and incorporating sympathetic extensions, the development will preserve the farmhouse's relationship with its surrounding rural landscape. The use of

traditional materials and architectural elements will ensure that the extended structure complements the historic character of Slack Farm, preventing any adverse visual impact on the property or its setting. Additionally, the development will enhance the aesthetic appeal of the area by improving the site's landscaping and creating private outdoor spaces for each dwelling. This thoughtful approach will reinforce the farmhouse's prominence within the landscape while ensuring that it continues to be a valued part of the local heritage and community.

- **Assessment Against Local/National Heritage Policy:**

- The proposed subdivision of Slack Farm into five individual properties has been assessed against relevant local and national heritage policies, including the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council's local planning policies. The NPPF emphasizes the importance of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and the proposed works align with this objective by ensuring the ongoing use and preservation of Slack Farm, a non-designated heritage asset. The design incorporates traditional materials and respects the original architectural features, thereby adhering to local conservation policies that seek to protect the character and integrity of historical buildings. This development proposal demonstrates a commitment to balancing the need for modern housing with the responsibility to conserve the area's rich heritage, ensuring that Slack Farm remains a valued part of the community's historical landscape.

6. Mitigation Measures

- **Measures to Minimize Harm:**

- To minimize any potential harm to Slack Farm's historical and architectural significance during the proposed subdivision into five individual properties, several mitigation measures will be implemented. Firstly, the design will prioritize the retention and preservation of original architectural features, including stone walls, timber beams, and any distinctive elements that contribute to the farmhouse's character. Careful attention will be paid to the selection of materials for the extensions, ensuring they are compatible with the existing structure and reflect traditional craftsmanship.
- Secondly, the layout of the proposed works will be designed to enhance rather than disrupt the original footprint of the farmhouse, maintaining its historical context within the rural landscape. The landscaping will also be thoughtfully developed to preserve the visual integrity of the setting, incorporating native plants and features that complement the historic character of the property.
- Moreover, a thorough assessment of the construction methods will be conducted to minimize disruption during the building process, with strategies in place to protect the existing structure and surrounding environment. Engaging with local heritage consultants throughout the development will further ensure that best practices are followed, effectively balancing the need for modern residential accommodations with the preservation of Slack Farm's historical legacy. These measures collectively aim to safeguard the significance of the asset while enabling its continued use and relevance in the community.

- The proposed development at Slack Farm incorporates several efforts to preserve its significant features while accommodating the creation of five individual properties. Key strategies include:
 - **Sensitive Design Choices:** The design of the extensions will be carefully planned to complement the original farmhouse rather than overshadow it. This includes maintaining the scale and proportions that reflect the architectural style of the early 19th century, ensuring that any new additions are visually harmonious with the existing structure.
 - **Use of Traditional Materials:** To honour the historical integrity of Slack Farm, traditional materials such as locally sourced stone and slate roofing will be utilized in the proposed extensions. These materials not only match the original construction but also contribute to the authenticity of the building's character, helping to maintain a cohesive aesthetic throughout the property.
 - **Retention of Architectural Features:** Efforts will be made to retain and restore significant architectural features within the existing structure, such as original windows, doors, and exposed timber beams. Where alterations are necessary, they will be executed in a manner that preserves these elements, ensuring they remain a visible part of the property's heritage.
 - **Alternative Development Approaches:** The development will prioritize minimal disruption to the existing structure and its surroundings. For instance, the layout will aim to utilize the existing footprint as much as possible, reducing the need for extensive new construction that could detract from the character of Slack Farm.
 - **Landscape Integration:** Landscaping will be designed to enhance the setting of Slack Farm, incorporating native flora and creating private outdoor spaces that respect the historical context. This approach aims to reinforce the farmhouse's connection to its rural environment while ensuring that the new residential units blend seamlessly into the landscape.
- By implementing these strategies, the development proposal aims to preserve the historical and architectural significance of Slack Farm, ensuring that it remains an integral part of the local heritage while accommodating modern residential needs.
- **Enhancement Opportunities:**
 - The proposed development of Slack Farm into five individual properties presents several opportunities for enhancements that can benefit both the heritage asset and the surrounding community. Key enhancement opportunities include:
 - **Restoration of Historical Features:** The development provides an opportunity to restore and highlight original architectural elements that may be currently in disrepair, such as traditional windows, doors, and decorative stonework. This restoration will not only preserve the farmhouse's historical integrity but also enhance its visual appeal.
 - **Sustainable Practices:** Incorporating sustainable design elements, such as energy-efficient insulation, renewable energy sources (e.g., solar panels

discreetly integrated into the roof design), and water-saving fixtures, will modernize the property while reducing its environmental footprint. This approach aligns with contemporary conservation practices and enhances the long-term viability of the heritage asset.

- **Landscaping and Outdoor Spaces:** The proposal allows for the creation of thoughtfully designed outdoor spaces that enhance the setting of Slack Farm. This includes native plant landscaping that complements the rural aesthetic and the development of communal gardens or green spaces for residents. Such enhancements promote biodiversity and provide opportunities for community interaction and recreation.

7. Conclusion

- **Summary of Impact:**

- In conclusion, the proposed subdivision of Slack Farm into five individual properties represents a thoughtful approach to preserving and enhancing this significant heritage asset while addressing contemporary housing needs. The development will maintain the historical and architectural integrity of the farmhouse by utilizing traditional materials, respecting its original design, and retaining key architectural features.
- The impact on the setting of the asset will be minimized through sensitive design choices that harmonize with the surrounding rural landscape, ensuring that the character of Slack Farm is preserved and celebrated. By implementing sustainable practices and enhancing outdoor spaces, the proposal aims to promote environmental responsibility and community interaction.
- Overall, the proposed works are designed to balance the need for modern residential accommodation with the commitment to safeguarding the historical legacy of Slack Farm, ensuring its continued relevance and significance within the community for future generations.

- **Compliance with Policy:**

- The proposed subdivision of Slack Farm into five individual properties demonstrates strong compliance with both local and national heritage policies, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council's planning guidelines. By prioritizing the preservation of the farmhouse's historical and architectural features, the development aligns with the NPPF's emphasis on sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.
- The thoughtful integration of traditional materials and design choices reflects adherence to local conservation policies that protect the character and integrity of historic buildings. Moreover, the proposal's commitment to sustainable practices and community engagement supports broader policy objectives aimed at fostering resilient and vibrant communities while respecting the past.
- Overall, the development is designed to ensure that Slack Farm continues to serve as a valuable heritage asset within Littleborough, reinforcing its historical context while accommodating modern residential needs. This balanced approach illustrates

a commitment to responsible development that respects and enhances the cultural significance of the area, ensuring compliance with applicable heritage policies and contributing positively to the community's character and identity.

- **Commitment to Preservation:**

- In summary, the proposal reflects a strong commitment to the preservation of this historic farmhouse and its surrounding environment. Through careful design choices, the use of traditional materials, and a focus on restoring significant architectural features, the development prioritizes the safeguarding of Slack Farm's historical and architectural integrity.
- This commitment extends beyond mere compliance with heritage policies; it encompasses a broader vision of ensuring that the farmhouse remains a vibrant part of the community. By creating a sustainable and viable residential space, the proposal aims to secure the long-term preservation of the asset while enhancing its value to current and future generations.

8. Appendices

- Photographic Survey:



Figure 1 – Plan View of Slack Farm.



Figure 2 – View of Slack Farm nestled within the landscape.



Figure 3 – View of Slack Farm nestled within the landscape.



Figure 4 – View of Slack Farm front elevation showing the current residential split.



Figure 5 – View of the front elevation showing the current defects and disrepair of the property.



Figure 6 – View of the front elevation showing the split in volumes between the single and 2 storey elements.



Figure 7 – View of the rear of the property showing the local coursed stone materials.



Figure 8 – View to the rear of the property showing the retaining wall to the embankment.



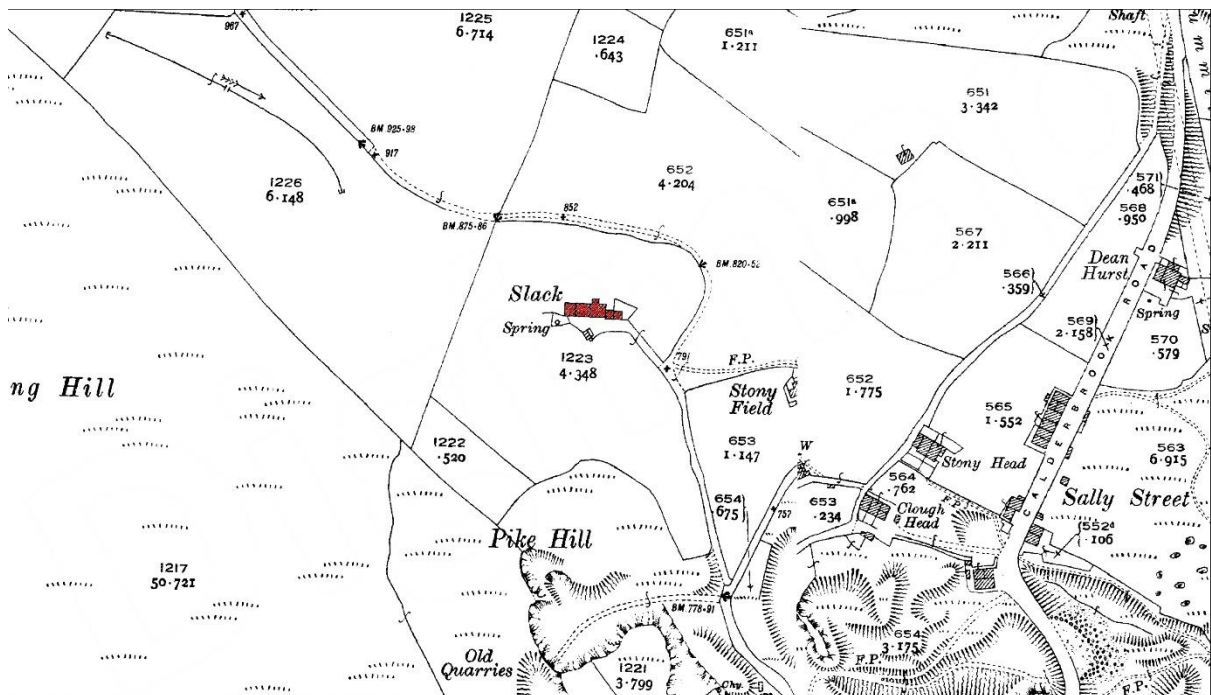
Figure 9 – View inside the dwelling showing signs of disrepair and issues with damp.

- **Historical Documentation:**

- Slack Farm can be seen on historic maps available as early as 1890 and still occupies most of the same footprint today.



OS Historic Map 1890.



OS Historic Map 1930.



OS Historic Map 1960.

- **Site Plans and Elevations:**

- Refer to existing and proposed submitted plans.
 - M24-32-100 – Location Plan
 - M24-32-101 – Existing Site Plan
 - M24-32-102 – Existing Floor Plan
 - M24-32-103 – Existing Elevations
 - M24-32-104 – Proposed Floor Plan
 - M24-32-105 – Proposed Elevations
 - M24-32-106 - Proposed Site Plan