

Design & Access Statement: Stid Fold Barn

Introduction:

This design and access statement is prepared for the proposed conversion of Stid Fold Barn just off Barn Field Lane, Wardle, Rochdale, OL12 9PN, into a single three bed dwelling with a single storey extension.

The application is made on 1st March 2026 by Adam and Sabrina Smith at 82 Birch Road, Wardle, Rochdale, OL12 9QN with permission from the existing owners, Walter and Christine Nutthall of Stid Fold Farm at the same address as the barn. The barn conversion is intended to become Adam and Sabrina's permanent family home for them and their two children.

Pre-application advice was sought prior to planning permission and so much of this statement will refer to such advice and discussions. A Heritage statement was also sourced and is included within the application documents (Ref: Stid Fold Barn Heritage Statement). The design and access statement will also take segments from this heritage statement.

Existing Site: (add green belt and detail from pre-app)

The barn lies within the farmstead of Stid Fold Farm and is set back off Barn Field Lane. The barn is a traditional stone built barn used for housing animals, most commonly cattle and sheep but has also been used for hay storage as well as farm machinery and equipment storage. The barn has an existing mezzanine floor either side of the archway.

The farm activities have diminished and so the barn is now unused. The barn has varying state of dis-repair, with some movement to the gable ends, windows with broken and blown out glass, some failed roof purlins and rafters and blown roof tiles as well as two decaying timber doors.

The wider site comprises of a mix of grassland, hardstanding, rubble and rocks with various discarded farm machinery, timber and stone. Some of the hardstanding is overgrown with field grass. There is a ruin to the east of the barn. The boundaries of the site are comprised of traditional stone built walls and galvanised steel farm gates.

There is existing access to the site just north off Barn Field Lane via a galvanised steel farm gate. This access way has and continues to be used by multiple vehicle types including tractors and cars.

The barn is considered to be curtilage listed as it lies within the vicinity of Stid Fold Farm which is a grade II listed building (Grade II, List Entry No. 1203416). Listed building application is also submitted for the proposals. More details are given within the Heritage statement which forms part of this application (Ref: Stid Fold Barn Heritage Statement)

Use:

It is proposed to convert the existing stone barn into a single three bedroom dwelling with a single storey extension to the east elevation along with light landscaping to facilitate 2 car parking spaces and garden area. The applicants, Adam and Sabrina are self builder's and intend to live in the house as their permanent residence with their two children. The children both attend St James Primary school in the village of Wardle. The conversion of the barn is seen to be supported within the pre-application advice received from Rochdale LPA and within the Heritage statement as it secures the long term viable use and maintenance of a curtilage listed agricultural building and in accordance with the NPPF objective of conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The use is also supported by local councillor Ashley Dearnley who has supported by attending the pre-application advice meetings.

Access to the site remains north off Barn Field Lane via a galvanised steel farm gate.

Scale

The curtilage of the site has been reduced in line with pre-application advice and is to encompass the natural boundaries and use areas of the site around the proposed dwelling.

A single storey extension to the barn is proposed which has been reduced from a double storey extension in line with pre application advice from Rochdale LPA. This single storey extension is a modest increase in volume of approximately 19%. The Heritage Statement (Ref: Stid Fold Barn Heritage Statement) sections 4.4 and 4.5 read as:

“4.4 The extension is clearly subordinate to the historic barn in scale, height and form and is read as an ancillary addition rather than a competing structure. Its siting and reduced mass ensure that the legibility of the original agricultural building is preserved in both close-range and longer views.”

“4.5 As revised, the extension is considered to result in no more than a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the curtilage-listed barn and its setting.”

The existing stone barn has a ridge height of 7.4m and eaves height of 5.4m. These heights of the proposed conversion are to remain unchanged. A single storey extension is proposed to the east elevation with a pitched roof design to match that of the existing building, the extension of the listed property to the south of the site, the porch to Stid Fold Farm west of the site and roof lines of the dwelling south west of the site. The ridge height of the extension is proposed at 3.8m with eaves height of 2.7m. This low pitch roof design is in keeping with the low pitch of the existing barn roof, serves to minimise the volume increase of the overall design and maximises the solar exposure to the north facing roof elevation which increases the sustainability of the overall proposal by maximising the use of solar panels which are applied to the extension only.

The width of the dwelling in the overall proposal remains unchanged at 8m with an overall length of 15.4m

Appearance

As stated in section 3.2 of the Heritage Statement (Ref: Stid Fold Barn Heritage Statement)

“3.2 The design has been developed in direct response to pre-application advice and seeks to retain the agricultural character and legibility of the barn through restrained intervention, subservient extension design, and careful treatment of openings, materials and internal layout.”

The existing stone barn utilises the existing stone brickwork as the finished exterior material. The stone brickwork will be cleaned and re-pointed where required using lime mortar to match the existing mortar. The extension is to be clad in high quality black charred timber also known as Shou Sugi Ban. This is a natural material and provides a recessive finish with a clear visual distinction between historic and new fabric which is again supported in the Heritage Statement (Ref: Stid Fold Barn Heritage Statement) in section 4.6.

The existing stone barn will retain its stone tile roof appearance with the existing tiles being re-used where possible and like for like tiles being sourced where required. The extension roof will be finished with black integrated solar panels with black metal surround and trim. It was determined to be important to utilise renewable energy where possible to support the sustainability of the new dwelling but this has been limited to the extension only. The heritage statement captures this with the following comments in section 4.7:

4.7 “No solar panels are proposed on the historic roof; instead, integrated solar technology is confined to the extension roof only, avoiding intervention in historic fabric and limiting visual impact.”

The windows on the existing barn are of timber frame build finished in black to ensure material consistency with the historic windows. The design has been created in such a way to ensure no new openings to the principal elevation. The design also seeks to minimise new openings in line with pre-application advice from Rochdale LPA with only 4 new openings. The openings on the existing barn have been orientated in a non-symmetrical manner, again in line with pre-application advice. The Heritage Statement (Ref: Stid Fold Barn Heritage Statement) sections 4.8, 4.9 and 4.10 comment:

“4.8 All existing openings within the historic barn are retained and reused as windows or the principal entrance, minimising intervention in historic masonry.”

“4.9 New openings are limited to four in total, are not located on the principal (front) elevation, and are deliberately arranged in a non-symmetrical manner to avoid domestication and to reflect the irregularity typical of agricultural buildings.”

“4.10 This approach ensures that the external appearance of the barn remains agricultural in character and that its historic form and function remain legible.”

The barn makes use of the principal archway as it's main entrance and opens up the historic archway to the back with glazing infill. The doorway is of black timber build surrounded by glazing on either side and archway above with glazing infill also to the archway at the rear. The glazing supports the open feel of the barn whilst allowing it to be domesticated as a dwelling. The mezzanine on the interior is set back from both archways in line with the pre-application advice and seeks to preserve the openness of the barn at both of these archways. There is an existing mezzanine to the left and right of both sides of the archway which will be replaced to form the first floor living areas.

Layout

The layout of the site and dwelling is driven by the existing barn. The single storey extension is positioned to make use of the natural boundaries and preserves historical access to the fields behind it.

Access

The access to the site remains unchanged from its historical use with access just off Barn Field Lane by car or by foot. The route up to the dwelling is gradually sloped but without steps or stairways and as such provides high levels of accessibility. The ground is a mixture of grassland, embedded with stones, rock and gravel which has a slightly uneven but comfortable standing.

There is ample room for car parking at the front of the dwelling and 2 car parking spaces to SPD guidelines are proposed in gravel at the front of the site (Ref: Stid Fold Barn – Parking)

The site is already serviced by local council supplied waste and recycling collection vehicles and the royal mail.

[public right of way path will be maintained]

Landscaping

Landscaping has been kept to a minimum to preserve the agricultural look and feel of the proposal. Gravel car parking spot is proposed to meet SPD guidelines and pre-application advice from Rochdale LPA. This location has been chosen with good proximity to the front door but is also behind the existing storage units to the south of the site to minimise the visual impact when seen from the road. The area east of the barn extension will seek to make use of the existing hardstanding stone paving to the

east of the barn which will provide a space for sitting out and provide good footing in the garden area. The existing hardstanding paving across the front of the principal elevation will be exposed, bringing it back to it's original appearance before being allowed to become overgrown.

The site will be generally tidied up from existing debris and litter which is seen across the site.

Sustainability

A predicted energy assessment has been obtained for the development of the property and it has achieved an A rating for both Energy Efficiency and Environmental Impact Rating. Please see file submitted (S39317 – Design V2 Report).

The proposal intends to use solar panels across the roof of the extension to provide a source of renewable energy and minimise grid sourced power where possible. The proposal also intends to make use of Air Source Heat Pumps to provide both heating and hot water to the property. The property is also proposed to meet the latest build regulations with regard to insulation and air tightness which further improve the sustainability of the property. No gas or oil connections are to be used with electrical power the only source of energy for the property.