

Officer Report

Case Reference: PL/2026/0608
Location: MAWRODE FARM, MOOR ROAD, LITTLEBOROUGH, OL15 9QH
Proposal: Replacement electricity cables under the driveway and up the side elevation of Listed Building
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Bob Melling

SITE

The application relates to Mawrode Farm barn which is Grade II listed. The dwelling was originally built as a barn and its vernacular form is simple and compact, with a ridge running parallel to the front and catslide roof to the rear. The building lies adjacent to Mawrode Farm (not listed) and is accessed from Moor Road.

PROPOSAL

Consent is sought for the removal of the existing overhead electricity service cable to the building and the installation of a new underground-fed service cable. The new cable will be fixed to the external wall of the property and protected by a cable guard to approximately 1.8m above ground level. The applicant has stated that the cable and guarding (at low level) can be painted to match the existing finish colour of Mawrode Farm.

RELEVANT HISTORY

08/D50304: First Floor Extension To Listed Building. Approved February 2008.

07/D49432: First Floor Extension To Dwelling. Approved December 2007.

99/D36344: Alterations To Listed Building To Form Dwelling Grant subject to conditions. Approved October 1999.

99/D36343: Alterations To Listed Building To Form Dwelling. Approved October 1999.

98/D35501: Alterations And Extensions To Listed Building Including Demolition Of Lean To Extension And Outbuildings. Approved August 1998.

98/D35500: Alterations To Barn To Form Dwelling Including Demolition Of Outbuildings And Lean To Extensions And Erection Of Single Storey Extension And Detached Double Garage. Approved August 1998.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Chapter 16 – Conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment

Places for Everyone (PfE):

JP-P1 – Sustainable Places

JP-P2 – Heritage

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

P2 – Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

P3 – Improving design of new development

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 – Defined Urban Area

PUBLICITY

Press Ad: 07.10.2026

Site Notice: 06.09.2026

Neighbour Letters: 01.09.2026

Weekly List: 14.09.2026

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Conservation and Design: I have no issues with the proposal on the basis that it is for replacement cable runs. The cables and cable guard should be fixed into mortar joints, not masonry and should be colour coded to match the stonework. The stonework should be made good and using lime / appropriate stone.

REPRESENTATIONS

N/A

ANALYSIS

In accordance with Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, when determining applications for Listed Building Consent, or planning applications affecting a listed building or its setting, the Local Planning Authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting, and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Policies HE4, HE5 and HE6 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026) are relevant to the assessment of this proposal. Policy HE4(1)(b) advises that development proposals affecting the significance of heritage assets, including any contribution made by their setting, should avoid harm wherever possible or, where this cannot be achieved, minimise harm and conserve significance. Policy HE6 requires substantial weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and advises that where a proposal would result in harm to significance, that harm should be weighed against any public benefits arising from the proposal.

The proposal comprises the installation of a replacement electricity cable and associated cable guard on the side elevation of the listed building. The installation of this equipment would introduce additional modern features onto the elevation and require intervention into the fabric of the building. As such, the proposal would result in a degree of visual clutter which would detract from the architectural interest of the gable elevation, including the traditional muck passage and associated openings. Consequently, the proposal would result in a low level of harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset. The identified harm would be less than substantial.

In assessing the extent of that harm, regard has been had to the comments of the Conservation Officer. The submitted information confirms that the cable and cable guard would be colour matched to the existing stonework, thereby reducing their visual prominence. In addition, the proposed cable route has been designed to follow existing wire runs as closely as possible, allowing existing fixing locations to be reused where practicable and minimising intervention into the historic fabric of the building. The Conservation Officer has also advised that the cable and cable guard should be fixed into mortar joints rather than the stone masonry itself and that any affected areas should be made good using appropriate lime mortar and matching stone where necessary. These measures can be secured by condition and would further minimise the impact of the development on the significance of the listed building.

The proposal would also facilitate the removal of the existing overhead electricity service cable. This would reduce the prominence of modern infrastructure associated with the building and would provide a modest enhancement to its appearance.

Having regard to the statutory duty under Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the identified less than substantial harm is afforded considerable importance and weight. Nevertheless, the harm is considered to be at the very lowest end of the less than substantial spectrum and, when weighed against the public benefit arising from the removal of the existing overhead service cable, is considered acceptable. Subject to conditions requiring the cable and cable guard to be colour matched to the stonework, fixed within mortar joints, and any disturbed fabric to be appropriately made good, the proposal would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and would accord with Policies HE4, HE5 and HE6 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026).

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

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Condition(s) (3)

- 1 The works must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this consent.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The works shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans hereby approved:

- Location Plan dated 07/08/2026
- Proposed Cable Layout. Dwg no. 60006675-1. Rev 0
- Mawrode Barn, Temple Lane, OL15 9QH. Dwg no. EW.A3.43612
- Plan showing cable to be disconnected submitted to the Council on 16/09/2026
- Method Statement by SP Electricity North West
- Heritage Statement of Significance by SP Electricity North West
- Design and Access Statement (DAS) by SP Electricity North West

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of works in accordance with the policies contained within the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan, the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 3 The cable and cable guard hereby approved shall be fixed within mortar joints and not into the stone masonry. The external cable and cable guard shall be colour matched to the stonework of application property. Any disturbed stonework or mortar joints resulting from the installation shall be made good using appropriate lime mortar and matching stone where necessary and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and to ensure compliance with Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.