

Heritage statement
to support planning application for
demolition of existing agricultural building and
erection of new agricultural storage building
at Holkers Farm, Whins Lane, Read

RVBC application no: 3/2026/0197

June 2026

STEPHEN HAIGH

B u i l d i n g s A r c h a e o l o g i s t

11 Browcliff Silsden Keighley West Yorkshire BD20 9PN

www.stephenhaigh.co.uk

07986 612548

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage statement supports the current planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) for a new agricultural building at Holkers (or Houlkers) Farm¹, and was commissioned by the applicant through his agent Gary Hoerty Associates. The application site does not contain or directly adjoin any heritage assets, but the council have noted its proximity to the grade II listed Houlker's Farmhouse, whose significance the development has the potential to affect through changes to its setting. The writer visited the site on 10 June 2026.

2 Location

- 2.1 The site (NGR: SD 76598 35064) lies on the south side of Whins Lane, in an elevated position above Read's village centre, from which it is separated by pasture fields. A traditional dry-stone wall runs along the south side of the lane. The land falls away to the south, ultimately down to the River Calder.
- 2.2 The site forms part of the same property as a barn at the farm, currently undergoing conversion. To the north of Whins Lane and set back from it is Holkers Farmhouse, which adjoins Holkers Fold and a terrace of two dwellings projecting to the south at right angles, while further west are domestic garages and a terrace of three more dwellings facing directly onto the road.

3 Existing site



Photo 1: Existing building: north-east end

¹ 3/2026/0197

- 3.1 The site currently contains a dilapidated modern agricultural building which faces east towards the barn, and has sides of Yorkshire boarding. There is an established area of hardstanding to the west, on which it is proposed to erect the replacement building.

4 Proposal

- 4.1 Details of the new building are shown on the proposal drawing by Gary Hoerty Associates (Pol/886/3722-04). It would be sited parallel to and below the level of Whins lane, and would face south. The rear elevation would be clad with Yorkshire boarding above a stone plinth, and the roof would be zinc.

5 Relevant heritage assets

Listed building: Houlker's Farmhouse

- 5.1 Only one designated heritage asset is relevant. "Houlker's Farmhouse" is a grade II listed building which stands some 35m to the north-east of the site². It is described in the list entry as mid 18th century, of two storeys, and having a few distinguished architectural features to its front elevation. The house is set well back from the road behind its front garden.



Photo 2: Holker's Farmhouse, from Whins Lane

² National Heritage List, entry 1317733 <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1317733>

- 5.2 A recent heritage statement³ noted that “The building is significant as a house that dates from before 1850 that is relatively intact and so meets the criteria for statutory listing. It retains a stone slate roof, and its main internal feature is the oak staircase. None of the windows is original and the ground-floor window openings at the front have been reduced in width.”
- 5.3 The farmhouse’s setting is formed chiefly by its front garden and adjoining dwellings to the east, and the more open land to its rear. Also important is its relationship with the stone barn and other traditional farm buildings on the south-east side of Whins Lane, with which it formed a functional group until recently.

Non-designated heritage asset: Barn at Holker’s Farm

- 5.4 The planning officer’s report regarding the recent prior approval for the conversion of the barn to a dwelling⁴ noted that it was considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. The building is stone-built and believed to have 18th century origins, but was extended to its present size in a number of phases, the most recent of which dated from the 1930s.

6 Impact of proposal on settings of heritage assets

- 6.1 Initially, the form and condition of the existing building at the site mean that the replacement of this unsightly, derelict structure would have a positive impact.
- 6.2 Additionally, when compared to the existing structure, the location of the proposed building lies slightly further away from both the farmhouse and the barn, on a site of hardstanding which has historically been in use for the farm’s agricultural operations. The proposed building stands well apart from the barn and the traditional core of the farmstead, and is sufficiently distant from the listed farmhouse so as not to affect their settings in any way.
- 6.3 The fall in ground level to the south-east of Whins Lane, together with the existing traditional dry-stone boundary wall running alongside, also mean that the effective height of the proposed building on the north-west elevation in relation to buildings on the upper side of the road would be much reduced.

³ JWRC Conservation 2025 *Proposed Repairs, Houlkers Farm, Whins Lane, Read BB12 7RB Heritage Statement*

⁴ RVBC planning ref: 3/2025/0398



Photo 3: Site of proposed new building, illustrating detachment from settings of barn and listed farmhouse

6.4 In conclusion, it is considered that no harm to the identified heritage assets through changes to their settings would occur from the development, and so the application is entirely acceptable in terms of any impact on the historic environment.

Stephen Haigh, MA
Buildings Archaeologist
15 June 2026