

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Heritage Statement

Cowley Brook Farm, Higher Road, Longridge, Lancashire

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application relating to Cowley Brook Farm, located on Higher Road, Longridge, Lancashire. The purpose of this document is to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on heritage assets, in accordance with national and local planning policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The statement identifies any designated and non-designated heritage assets within the site and its wider setting, evaluates their significance, and considers the effect of the proposed development on that significance.

2. Site Location and Description

Cowley Brook Farm is situated in a rural setting to the northeast of Longridge. The site comprises a working or former agricultural holding, including farm buildings, associated structures, and surrounding agricultural land.

The immediate context is characterised by:

- Open countryside and pastoral farmland
- Traditional agricultural buildings and dispersed rural dwellings
- Field boundaries defined by hedgerows, drystone walls, and tree lines
- A generally tranquil and undeveloped landscape

Higher Road serves as the primary access route and reflects the rural nature of the area.

3. Legislative and Policy Context

This assessment has been prepared with regard to:

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
- Local planning policies relevant to Ribble Valley Borough Council (or the relevant authority)

The NPPF requires that the significance of heritage assets be understood and that any harm resulting from development be clearly justified and weighed against public benefits.

4. Identification of Heritage Assets

4.1 Designated Heritage Assets

A review of available records indicates that:

- There are no designated heritage assets (such as listed buildings, scheduled monuments, or registered parks and gardens) within the immediate site boundary (subject to confirmation via Historic England and the local authority database).
- There may be designated heritage assets within the wider area, including listed farmhouses, historic barns, or structures within Longridge and surrounding rural settlements.

4.2 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Cowley Brook Farm itself may be considered a non-designated heritage asset due to:

- Its historic agricultural function
- The presence of traditional farm buildings that may date from the 18th or 19th century (subject to verification)
- Its contribution to the historic rural landscape character

Additional non-designated assets in the vicinity may include:

- Traditional farmsteads and agricultural buildings
- Historic field patterns and boundaries
- Local vernacular architecture typical of Lancashire

5. Assessment of Significance

5.1 Architectural and Historic Interest

The significance of Cowley Brook Farm derives from:

- Its representation of traditional agricultural practices in Lancashire
- The form, layout, and materials of the farmstead, which may reflect historic farming arrangements
- The use of local materials such as stone and slate

Any surviving historic fabric (e.g., original walls, roofing structures, openings) contributes to its architectural value.

5.2 Setting and Landscape Value

The farm's significance is enhanced by its setting within an open rural landscape:

- The surrounding fields and boundaries reflect historic land use patterns
- The visual relationship between buildings and countryside contributes to its character
- The absence of urbanising features reinforces its heritage value

5.3 Group Value

Where multiple buildings form a coherent farmstead, there is additional significance in:

- The spatial relationship between structures
- The functional hierarchy of buildings (e.g., farmhouse, barns, outbuildings)

6. Impact of the Proposed Development

The proposed development has been assessed in terms of its impact on identified heritage significance.

6.1 Direct Impact on Built Fabric

- Where alterations or extensions to existing buildings are proposed, these may result in some loss or modification of historic fabric
- Such impacts can be minimised through sensitive design, retention of key features, and use of appropriate materials

6.2 Impact on Setting

- New development has the potential to affect the rural setting of the farmstead
- Careful siting, scale, and landscaping will reduce visual intrusion
- Retention of open views and landscape features will help preserve the agricultural character

6.3 Archaeological Potential

- The site may have some archaeological potential due to its rural and historic use
- Any groundworks should consider the possibility of below-ground remains, although the level of risk is likely to be low to moderate

7. Mitigation Measures

To ensure that heritage impacts are minimised, the following measures are recommended:

- Retention and repair of historic structures wherever feasible
- Use of traditional and sympathetic materials
- Design that reflects the scale and form of existing buildings
- Landscaping to integrate new development into the rural setting
- Recording of any historic fabric that may be altered or removed (if required by condition)

8. Conclusion

This Heritage Statement concludes that Cowley Brook Farm has local heritage significance as a traditional agricultural site contributing to the rural character of the Longridge area.

The proposed development, if implemented sensitively and in accordance with the recommendations set out above, would result in less than substantial harm (if any) to heritage significance. Such harm can be mitigated through careful design and material choices.

Overall, the proposal is considered to be consistent with the objectives of the NPPF in conserving and enhancing the historic environment while allowing for sustainable development.