

Rear single-storey extension and front porch
5 Engine Lane
Great Altcar
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R.01 Heritage Support Statement



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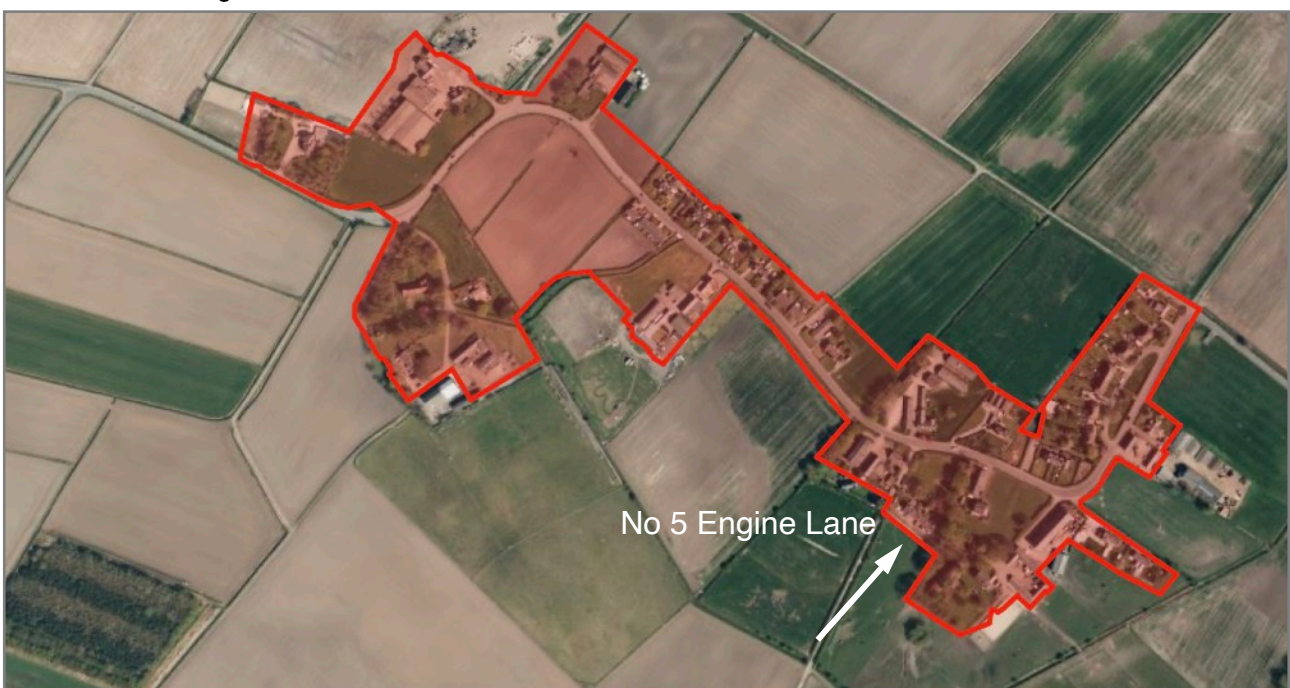
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Introduction

This statement is in support of a planning application for the erection of a single-storey extension to the rear of a mid terrace house following the demolition of an existing outbuilding and for the replacement of the existing front porch of the property, which is located in the Great Altcar Conservation Area. The scope and purpose of this statement is to identify the significance of the building within the Conservation Area and how the proposals may affect the area.



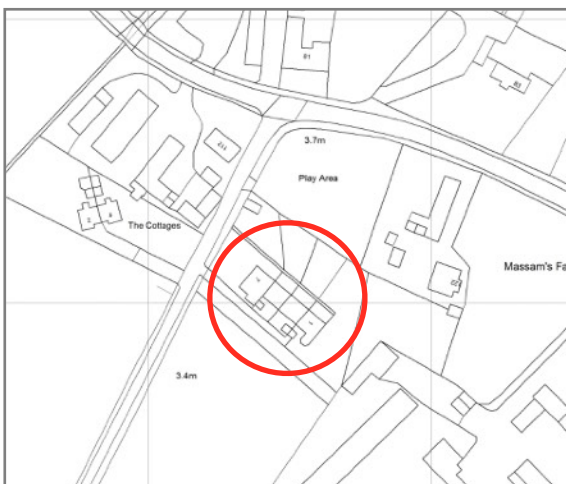
Aerial View of Engine Lane



Aerial View of Great Altcar Conservation Area

Site

The application site relates to a two storey mid terrace property situated within a predominantly rural Green Belt area, which is part of the Great Altcar Conservation Area. The designated area is centred on the section of Lord Sefton Way, between Short Croft Lane and Broad Lane and is an area of architectural and historic interest. The Great Altcar conservation area appraisal, published in 2006, highlights the row of terraced cottages on Engine Lane as major unlisted buildings that positively contribute to the character of the conservation area. The cottages are accessed by an unadopted track which allows the application site to be set well back from the main road. It is not known the precise date of construction of the terrace however, from looking at historical maps, it appears to be post 1927.



Current OS map



Historical map of Great Altcar 1927

The Proposal

The application is for a proposed ground floor rear extension to provide an open plan kitchen and dining area for the family home with patio doors leading to the external grounds of the mid terrace property.

As aforementioned, a replacement front porch has also been included in the application. The proposed porch will be in consistent with the character of the area, thus it will have a pitched natural slate tiled roof consistent with the main roof of the terrace. It also will be of the same size and appearance to the recently approved new porch at N.7.

The proposed rear extension will also be sympathetic to the character of the existing building. It will have a natural slate pitched roof with an area of flat roof necessary to obtain the required head-height within the new space. The proposed materials for both rear extension and front porch will echo those on the existing terrace in respect of shape, size, colour and texture.

Pre-planning application advice was sought, and the comments received have been taken into account and reflected within this current proposal.

Assessment of Heritage Significance

Introduction

This statement has been prepared in accordance with guidance published by Historic England on 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (second edition), guidance published on the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 edition (NPPF) and on the West Lancashire Supplementary Planning Document - Development in the Green Belt (SPD). The aim is to:

1. Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected.
2. Assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s).
3. Assess the effects of the proposed interventions, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance.
4. Explore the way of maximising enhancement and avoiding or minimising harm.
5. Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

According to guidance from Historic England:

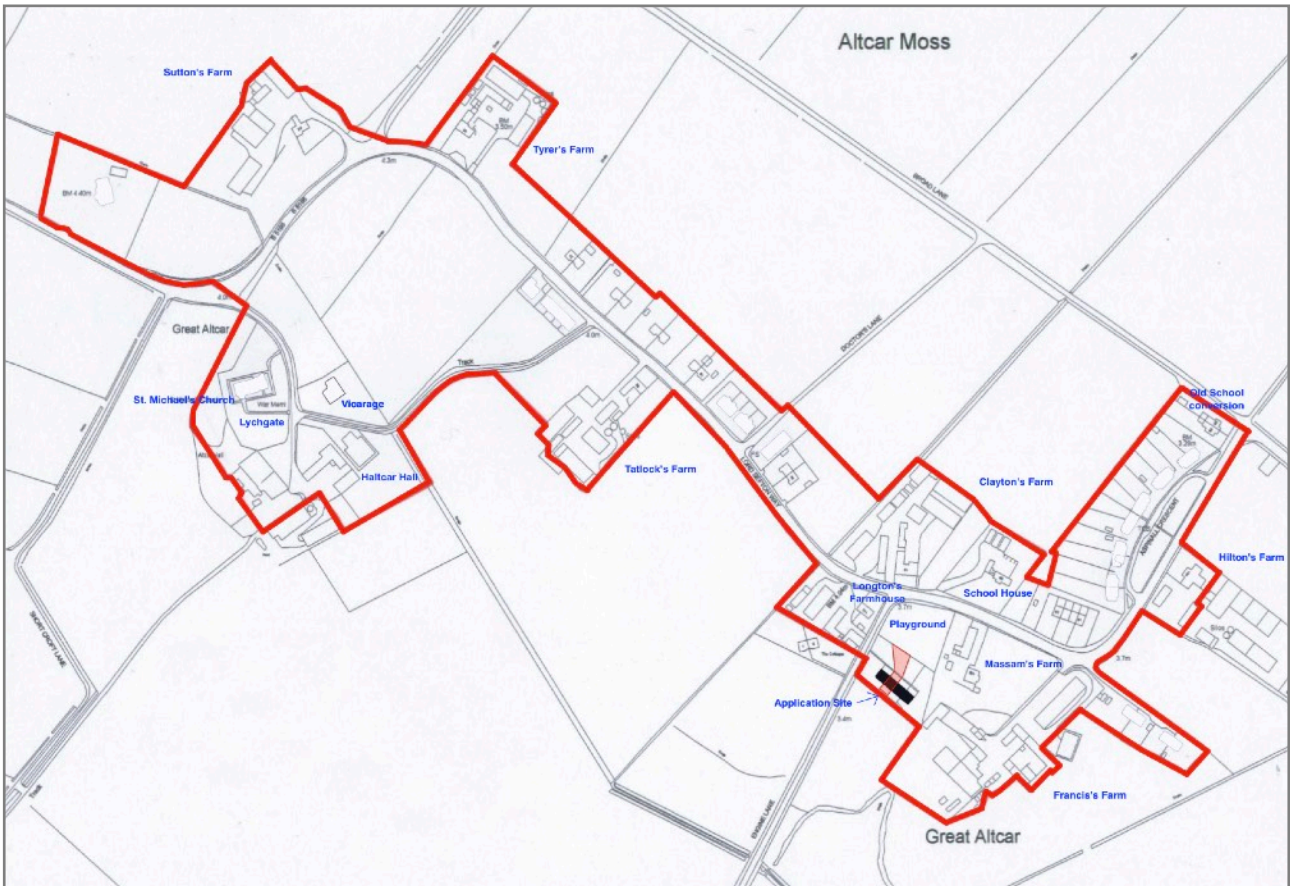
'For developments that are not likely to be prominent or intrusive, the assessment of effects on setting may often be limited to the immediate surroundings, while taking account of the possibility that setting may change as a result of the removal of impermanent landscape or townscape features, such as hoardings or planting.'

Background of Great Altcar Conservation Area

The first written records of the area date from 1086 when Altcar was mentioned in the Domesday Book. At that time the land was assessed as 'waste' and given no value. This may be due to the destruction and desolation caused by William the Conqueror's army. It is recorded that only 90 acres of land were cultivated during that period. It is also documented that in 1228 the area was subject to deforestation with many trees found buried in marsh land. Improvements to the land were later made by monks initially by draining it. This area was acquired by Sir Richard Molyneux in 1500s and belonged to his family descendants until the 1970s.

The Great Altcar Conservation Area was designated by West Lancashire District Council in 1985. The area is situated within the Great Altcar parish covering a 15 hectares stretch of land between Short Croft Lane and Broad Lane. According to the Great Altcar Conservation Area Appraisal published in 2006, the majority of the properties at the time the appraisal was published, were tenanted and owned by the Leverhulme Estate.

The area is predominantly agricultural with many old working farms were still existing up until 2006. The farms were developed in clusters on the slightly higher rises of ground that projected above the marshes. Infill development between the farms started appearing in the mid-nineteenth century with houses built for the agricultural workers. Many of the 'estate' houses in the village were built in the early twentieth century. Private semi-detached residences were a later addition to the area.



Great Altcar Conservation Area within red line

The built up area is only relatively dense around the eastern part of Great Altcar Conservation Area. The rest of the land can be characterised as dispersed ribbon settlement. The school, post office and inn were later additions to the area but were subsequently lost over the years. The church and three buildings previously used as vicarages are situated on the western side of the conservation area.

There are many old fruit trees scattered around the conservation area which would have been part of the old farms. The open space and fields between the houses and farms significantly contribute to the rural character of this part of West Lancashire. Most of the gardens are spacious and open and fields intersperse the buildings. A small playground and a now disused pumping station were situated on the eastern side of Engine Lane where it meets Lord Sefton Way. Other open spaces include the front gardens to the houses on Aspinall Crescent.

The majority of the 'estate' houses have small metal pedestrian gates consistent in style and alternating in height. The cobbled farmyards are a feature of this area and thus it has been recommended they remain as they are. A public footpath leads from the village to the outlying farms to the east.

Listed Buildings

A number of buildings and a lychgate located within the Great Altcar Conservation Area have been identified as being of special architectural or historic interest and have been provided statutory protection through the Listing system. These are:

- St Michael and All Angels Church Grade II* Listed built in 1879
- Lychgate Grade II Listed probably built in 1879
- Dutch Barn at Francis' Farm Grade II Listed built in late 19th Century
- Francis' Farmhouse Grade II Listed built in 1806
- Longton's Farmhouse Grade II Listed



St. Michael and All Angels Church Grade II*



Longton Farmhouse Grade II

Buildings of Historic Interest

In addition to the above listed buildings, a number of other buildings have been deemed to be of historic interest contributing to the character of the conservation area and its attractive appearance.

The 'estate' houses / buildings have an identifiable style of architecture with slight variations depending on the period they were built. This architectural style carries on with the farms to the east side of the conservation area and the Cottages down Engine Lane.

These buildings include:

- Sutton's Farm
- Tyrer's Farm
- Tatlock's Farm
- Four pair of semi-detached properties along Lord Sefton Way

The farm outbuildings, barns and stables (especially those built in brick) together with the unlisted farmhouses have also been considered to have architectural and historic importance as they are indicative of the agricultural character of the area.

Other buildings of historic interest which contribute to the character of Great Altcar Conservation Area include:

- The Old Vicarage on Lord Sefton Way, which is an imposing detached brick built Victorian building with slate roof, Georgian style sash windows with soldier brick arches and a Baroque style dutch gabled porch.
- Altcar Hall Farmhouse, which is a traditional farmhouse built in Flemish bond bricks with soldier brick arches above the ground floor windows on the front facade. This building has quite a wide front elevation, with a subservient side extension. The farmhouse has also been extended at the rear over the years.
- The large barn / stable complex at Altcar Hall Farm is also of interest especially for its surviving cruck frame.
- The row of four terraced cottages on Engine Lane behind the playground are also of interest and have been regarded as 'picturesque' in the Great Altcar Conservation Area Appraisal published in 2006.
- The School House on Lord Sefton Way has been recognised to be of historical interest within the conservation area. The style of this building is of a slightly more defined Victorian Gothic revival than the other properties.
- Two semi-detached brick cottages on Altcar Road (originally a school house building)
- The War Memorial at St. Michael and All Angels Church



The Old Vicarage, 1 Lord Sefton Way



Two semi-detached houses on Altcar Road
(Originally a School House)

Assessment of Impact

This assessment looks at the impact that the new single-storey rear extension and replacement front porch may have on the terraced cottages on Engine Lane, the neighbouring buildings and on the Great Altcar Conservation Area as a whole. This assessment firstly considers the impact on the views of the terraced cottages from the main road and neighbouring buildings and secondly it considers the views out from the other properties within the terraced cottages. It will assess whether or not those views will be adversely affected by the development.

Paragraph 195 of the NPPF states that:

'Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.'

The NPPF describes the term 'Significance' (for heritage policy) as follows:

'The value of a Heritage Asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'



Aerial view of site and neighbouring buildings

Site analysis shows that the proposed intervention to the rear elevation of the terraced property at N.5 Engine Lane would have minimal impact to neighbouring properties at N.3 and N.1. This is due to the fact that the proposed extension is a replacement of an existing outbuilding with an infill to link to the main house.

Moreover, the immediate surroundings would not be affected as the rear elevation of the terrace can only be seen from a private road and from open fields. Longton's Farmhouse, the Grade II Listed building located in the vicinity of the terrace, would also not be adversely affected by the proposal as the proposed rear extension would not be visible from the listed building and it would be relatively difficult to see the replacement front porch.

Furthermore, the distance between Lord Sefton Way and the front elevation of the terrace makes the proposed replacement front porch barely noticeable from any public viewpoint. The proposal would not have detrimental effect upon trees or require the removal of trees which make a significant contribution to a Conservation Area or important green or open spaces.



View of the Site from Lord Sefton Way



View of the Site from Lord Sefton Way at junction with Engine Lane



Aerial view of the terraced cottages

Green Belt Assessment

According to the NPPF:

'The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.'

Green Belt serves five purposes:

1. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
2. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
3. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
4. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
5. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

West Lancashire Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) states that:

'extensions and alterations to buildings in the Green Belt are not considered in national or local planning policy to constitute inappropriate development, providing that any extension or alteration is not disproportionate and therefore, by definition, harmful to the openness of the Green Belt.'

Extensions should also be subservient in size, scale and mass to the original dwelling and never dominate the existing property.

According to the SPD, proposals for an extension to an existing building within the Green Belt should satisfy each of the following criteria:

- The existing building is lawful and permanent in nature;
- The total volume of the proposal, together with any previous extensions, alterations and non-original outbuildings, would not result in an increase of more than 40% above the volume of the original building.
- The design of the extension or alteration is in keeping with the original form and appearance of the building and does not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale or bulk, or by virtue of its location. It should also be in keeping with the character of the area and appropriate in terms of design and materials.

The volume of the original dwelling with associated outbuilding was 312m³

The volume of the proposed extension is 98m³.

The total percentage increase in volume is 31%, which is below the current guideline of 40%.

As the proposal indicates that the replacement porch and single-storey extension would not exceed the 40% volume increase, it is considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt.

Furthermore, as the proposal would be in consistent with the original form and appearance of the exiting building and by virtue of its location on the site, it should not be considered to significantly harm the perceived openness of the Green Belt.

Pre-application Advice

As previously mentioned, the application dwelling belongs to a number of buildings identified as being of historic interest which contribute to the character of Great Altcar Conservation Area and its attractive appearance. Therefore, it was important to seek pre-application advice in order to ensure the proposal would have minimal impact on the heritage asset.

In summary, there was no objection to the principle of development and it was mentioned in the response that the siting and contained nature of the extension would reduce any such perceived impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The pre-application response also informed us that from a site visit, it was noted that a flat roof was installed at N.7 and this was not in accordance with the permission granted. Therefore, as our initial proposal followed the same lines as the adjoining dwelling and also incorporated a flat roof, we were advised that the level of harm would need to be assessed as the Local Planning Authority is required to preserve the character of the conservation area and ensure new development harmonises with the setting of both the existing and surrounding development.

Moreover, as the pre-application response warned us that flat roof finishes are resisted within conservation areas and advised that it would be more acceptable to adopt a lean to type of roof with natural slate tiles and roof lights, we acknowledged the advice and altered the design. Nonetheless, an area of flat roof had to be retained in order to achieve the required head heights. As a result of the roof design alterations, the footprint of the

initial proposal had to be reduced in order to obtain minimal acceptable head-heights within the new open plan family space. The reduced volume of the proposed rear extension allows the proposal to fall within the volume allowance set out in the Council's SPD.

Conclusion

As the site is located within the Great Altcar conservation area as well as the Green Belt designated in the West Lancashire Local Plan, all effort has been made to create a larger living / dining space for the family without causing significant harm to the heritage asset or the openness of the Green Belt.

The proposal is consistent with the style and appearance of the existing building and has been designed in a way which allows it to appear subservient to the existing dwelling and to not significantly compromise the architectural character of the original building.

As most of the proposed interventions to the terrace property would be sited at the rear and will remain largely unseen from any public viewpoint, the special historic and architectural interest of the Great Altcar Conservation Area will be preserved and therefore the new additions should not be detrimental to the heritage asset.

Both proposed rear extension and proposed replacement front porch would be proportionate to the main building and would respect the appearance of the existing terraced cottages, therefore the proposal should not be considered as disproportionate addition to the existing dwelling and would not adversely affect the street scene or detract from the openness or visual amenity of the Green Belt.

Furthermore, the contained siting of the rear extension and its relationship to the main building would allow the proposal not to have any detrimental effects to the Green Belt and therefore should satisfy the NPPF and West Lancashire Local Plan in this respect.