



CATLEY LANE HEAD

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

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INTRODUCTION

Conservation area appraisals are produced in order to identify the special architectural and historic character of significant areas, to guide development and to inform effective management plans. This document gives an overview of the history and character of Catley Lane Head area in order to provide a framework for controlled and positive change in the hamlet. The settlement is located in north-west Rochdale and is situated in Green Belt; it is therefore already protected from harmful development to some extent. Conservation Area status helps to further protect the heritage of this well preserved and relatively sensitively restored hamlet by bringing attention to its unique landscape and architecture as well as providing the local community with strong sense of identity and pride.

This conservation area appraisal is based on site visits, the Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Area Heritage Appraisal written by Jenny Wetton in 2015, archive materials, information from local residents and guidance documents provided by Historic England.

Planning policy context

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on local planning authorities to survey and keep under review their district for areas which are of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance, and to designate those areas as conservation areas. This duty is an on-going requirement of local authorities.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the local planning authority should “recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance”.

Rochdale Borough has conservation and design policies to sustain and enhance its heritage assets and to ensure new development respects the historic environment. These policies can be accessed on the Council's website: www.rochdale.gov.uk/planning.

“Priority will be given to the practical conservation and enhancement of those features of the built environment which are the most valuable, in particular: Conservation Areas ... such buildings, areas and features of architectural and historic merit will be protected from adverse development or demolition and positive measures will be taken or supported, wherever possible, to facilitate their continual upkeep and beneficial use”

Catley Lane Head has been identified as an area of architectural and historic significance. The designation of this area as a conservation area is proposed in order to protect its significance and character for the future.

Conservation area designation gives the local planning authority extra controls to preserve the special character and appearance of the area, including:

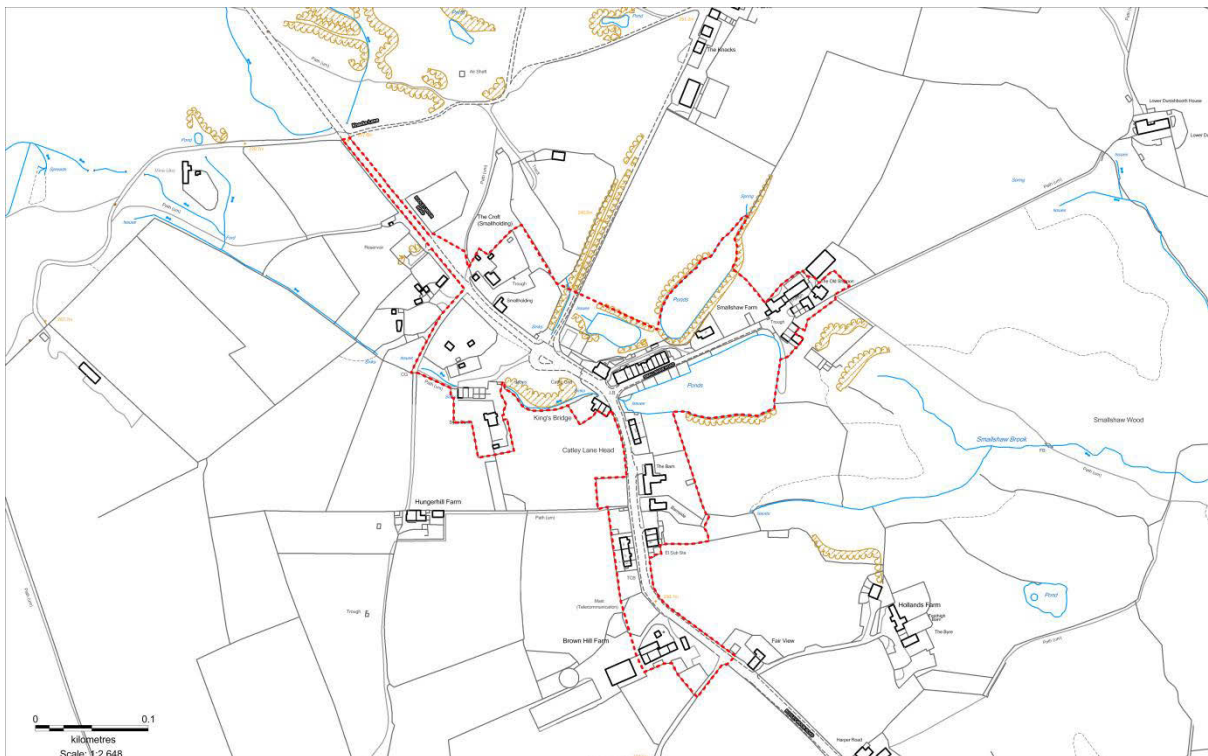
- The demolition of buildings and boundary walls
- Alterations and extensions to dwelling houses
- Alterations and extensions to commercial, retail, educational and hospital buildings
- Advertisements
- The installation of satellite dishes and microgeneration equipment on walls, roof slopes and chimneys that face and are visible from highways
- Work to any tree with a trunk of more than 7.5cm in diameter (measured 1.5m from the ground)

These controls are not intended to prevent the changing needs of communities; however it is important that any changes are sensitive to the character and heritage of the area.

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Brief overview of Catley Lane Head

The historic Pennines hamlet Catley Lane Head sits within the rural landscape of north-west Rochdale and is the gateway to Rooley Moor. It contains one listed building (Smallshaw Farm) and a number of significant buildings that add to the character and show the development of the hamlet. The rural setting of the hamlet contributes to its unique character.



The conservation area border

The conservation area includes Brownhill Farm in the south, the listed Smallshaw Farm in the east and a significant section of Rooley Moor Road up to Knacks Lane in the north-west. The conservation area also includes three ponds, a stream, features such as setted roads and dry stone walls, and a number of vernacular houses.

LOCATION AND CONTEXT

Historic development & significance

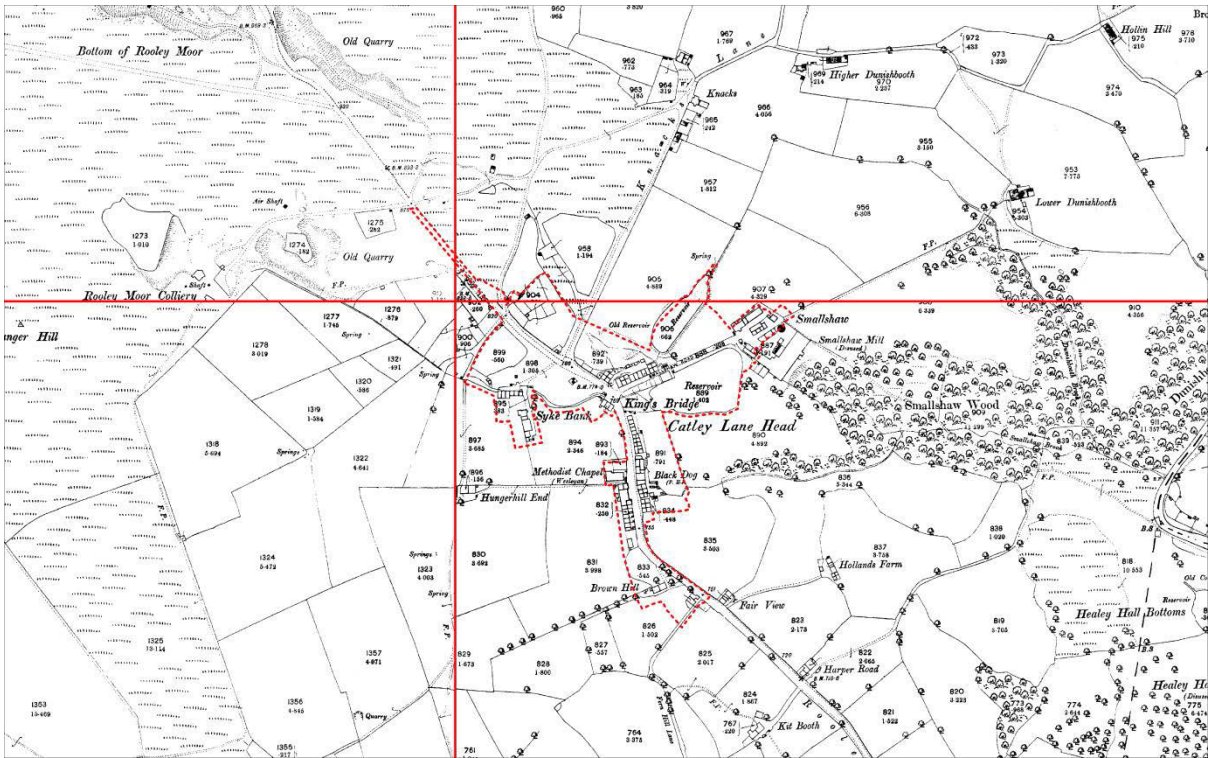
The first record of housing in the Catley Lane Head area dates from the 16th century, but many houses that are still in existence today were built between the 17th to the 20th century. Historically the population consisted of miners, quarrymen, and factory operatives employed in the Smallshaw Mill. From 1845 onwards a Sunday School was active in the hamlet then known as Lanehead (Handley). A new chapel was built in 1857 and enlarged with an additional storey in 1872.



Methodist Chapel and Sunday School visible on the right (now demolished). Source: Private collection.

The area faced economic decline during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and some public buildings, including the chapel, have been demolished (Wetton, 2015). It is difficult to give exact dates for these key transformations in the hamlet due to a lack of records, but many of these developments can be read from historic maps.

CATLEY LANE HEAD



1893. The late 19th century layout is very similar to the present day. Fairly little has changed in Catley Lane Head. Source: Touchstones

CATLEY LANE HEAD

Timeline of landmark events

13th Century Likely construction of Rooley Moor Road.

The road begins in Catley Lane and divides the hamlet in two. It appears to have been built to provide a route across the moors from Spotland to Rossendale, possibly in the 13th century (Wetton, 2015. Nevell, Ilradil, 2003).

19th Century Smallshaw Mill

This cotton mill was built by Jacob Tweedale & Sons in the nineteenth century (Handley). During the time the mill operated there were also two active coal pits in the area.

1845 Lanehead Sunday School opened.

1857 Construction of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel and Sunday School.

1860s Construction of the Cotton Famine Road

1872 Extension of the chapel

17th-20th Century Main housing development

1960s Demolition of the Methodist Chapel

The focal point of the hamlet, the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel was demolished around 1960. Several cottages and the Black Dog pub have also been demolished over the years.



Terraces on Rooley Moor Road in 1959 (Source: Private Collection) and the same road in 2016



731 and 733 Rooley Moor Road. Source: Touchstones

CATLEY LANE HEAD

1980s Highway improvements on Rooley Moor Road, including the bus turning circle.

In the 1980s the Council improved Rooley Moor Road and constructed a bus turning circle just to the North of Catley Lane Head.

Buildings were also altered, for example cottages 731 and 733 Rooley Moor Road were converted into one house (Wetton, 2015).



Construction of the bus turning circle in 1982 and the circle in 2016

1990's-2000's New buildings

There are only few modern buildings in the area. A modern dwelling on Rooley Moor Road uses traditional stone and is not seen as a negative development.

25 Smallshaw Road stands out as the red brick walling is out of character with the local vernacular materials.



A modern building on Rooley Moor Road



25 Smallshaw Road

The area today

Catley Lane Head is a quiet hamlet with the majority of buildings quite sensitively restored and in residential or agricultural use. The area is characterised by vernacular architecture and materials as well as its rural setting (Wetton, 2015). Some harmful architectural elements have been added, such as uPVC windows and modern dormers. In some cases houses also include contemporary conservatories which are generally seen as neutral rather than detrimental to the heritage value of the area. Public functions such as the chapel, pubs and a local shop have disappeared and the buildings have either been demolished or converted into residential use.

The landscape is diverse with former quarries, smallholdings and grazing land surrounding the settlement and leading to open moorland. Rooley Moor Road (also known as the Cotton Famine Road) leads across the moor to the north. There are three well maintained reservoirs surrounded by landscaping by private landowners. These once fed the former mills in the area (now demolished).

Popular leisure activities in the area include fishing, hiking, ornithology, running, mountain biking and horse riding.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

The key assets of the conservation area are:

- The rural setting
- The use of sandstone as a building material including walling and roofing
- Dry stone walls with details such as water troughs and openings
- Vernacular buildings and detailing typical of the Pennine range
- Stone setts, kerbs and flags
- Evidence of the former industry including the mill ponds and workers cottages
- Tangible evidence of a typical rural Pennine settlement, including the remains of the Methodist Chapel with a section of flagstone boundary wall, and architectural details of a local shop within one of the houses.
- Rooley Moor Road, a former pack horse route well known as the Cotton Famine Road

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

The relationship between spaces

The relationship between the built environment and open spaces is critical to the character of the conservation area. Connections between public and private spaces, natural landscapes and farmland define the atmosphere of the hamlet. The moorland landscape is divided by historic dry stone walls that display a number of interesting details such as water troughs and stone gate posts. Reservoirs and the former quarry spoil give context to the former industry in the area. Private gardens and farmland are contrasted by natural spaces that are accessible for anglers, walkers and explorers. Historic pavements meet tarmac roads and the setted Cotton Famine Road leads up to the hills. Some spaces have a negative impact on the area including the concrete bus turning circle created in the 1980s which creates an eyesore in this vernacular rural landscape.



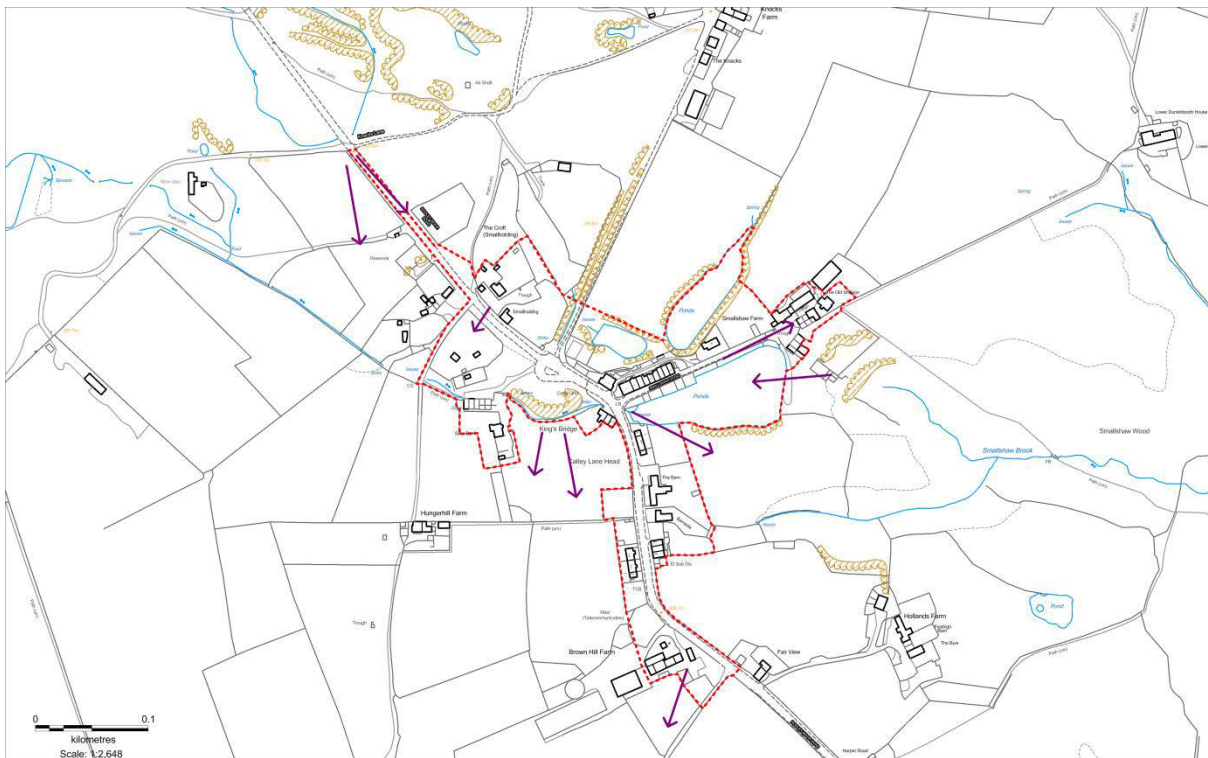
Housing on Smallshaw Road, the reservoir and gardens demonstrate the mix of spaces

Topography and setting

The close relationship between the surrounding landscape and the conservation area is critical to its particular character and significance. The dramatic setting of Catley Lane Head is integral to its uniqueness and sense of place. The open moorland rises away from the settlement to the north and the landscape falls to the south towards Rochdale and Manchester. To the west of the settlement is a gentle escarpment and to the east the Pennine range is visible for miles past the nature reserve and wooded valley Healey Dell. The geology of the area is carboniferous sandstone with a mixture of flags, sandstone, mudstone and siltstone overlaid in places with glacial deposits including clays, sand and gravel. The landscape is scattered with bogs and springs. Rooley Moor road crosses the moor and provides views across Rochdale and beyond.

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Key views and vistas



A view from Knacks Lane down Rooley Moor Road towards Rochdale

As Rooley Moor Road rises up the slope of the Moor, there are panoramic views above and below Catley Lane Head and from Fern Hill and Knacks Lane. It used to be said that you could see the fireworks at Belle Vue in Manchester on a clear night. From the road, there are also attractive views to East and West, towards vernacular farm buildings in the middle distance. The centre of the hamlet has quite an enclosed character although the gaps in development afford views across the fields (Wetton, 2015).

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Rochdale viewed from the Southern edge of the conservation area



A view from the main fishing spot next to Smallshaw Farm

CATLEY LANE HEAD



A view from Rooley Moor Road towards Hunger Hill Farm (outside the conservation area border)



Smallshaw Farm viewed from Smallshaw Lane

CATLEY LANE HEAD



View towards one of the reservoirs

Architectural character

There is very little in the built environment which detracts from its distinctive local character. Typical building types are the vernacular stone terraced houses and farm buildings. Many have local stone slate roofs, although some have been replaced with Welsh slate or concrete tile roofs. The few 20th century additions are constructed in stone (with one exception of a brick detached house). Typical terraces in the hamlet are either built up to the street, fronting onto well-preserved historic stone pavements, or fronted by small gardens with low stone boundary walls with a variety of copings (Wetton, 2015). Many of the unlisted buildings in Catley Lane Head are of architectural interest and would be regarded as undesignated heritage assets. These buildings vary in age and show the development of the hamlet.

Traditional building materials

The vernacular building materials used in Catley Lane Head form a key component of its heritage and clearly show the local geology.

- Stone slate roofs
- Dry stone walls
- Sandstone
- Painted timber was traditionally used for windows
- Stone setted roads

CATLEY LANE HEAD

Significant structures, roads, elements, buildings



A section of the Cotton Famine Road

Cotton Famine Road

To the north of the hamlet, beyond the cattle grid and bus turning circle, lays a long setted section of Rooley Moor Road with stone kerbs and drainage channels at the sides. The width of the setted road from the Ding Quarry entrance to Catley Lane Head varies from 4.5m to 5.5m with the number of setts across the road varying from 12 along the narrow sections to 24 at Catley Lane Head. By averaging the width of the road, the total number of setts has been estimated at 327,600.

The first official mention of the road was in 1729, when Godman quotes the Lancashire Quarter Session as recording: 'The Court doth enlarge the time to the inhabitants of Catley Lane for the repairs of the highway in Spotland from Spotland Bridge to Gorse Hill Leach 'till the Midsummer sessions.' (Wetton, 2015). The road is known as the 'Cotton Famine Road' because of its links the American civil war. During this war the import of cotton ceased, resulting in many mills stopping production and workers becoming redundant. Many large public works projects, including the construction of this road, were commissioned to provide work for mill workers and ensure that they had an income.

The Cotton Famine Road is an important part of the heritage of this hamlet, with important links both nationally and internationally.

CATLEY LANE HEAD

Smallshaw Farmhouse

This Grade II listed building is built on a three unit plan with a projecting two storey porch, a rear wall fireplace and chimney stack and a 20th century lean-to addition to the left gable. It retains windows of 4 lights (now 2), 6 lights and 4 lights with recessed ovolo-moulded mullions, and hoodmoulds with spiral stops. The central window has a king mullion. The upper floor has flat-faced mullions of 3, 4 and 3-(with mullions removed) lights. The porch has a moulded door opening with inscribed lintel (1622 ICM.....H) and slightly overhanging upper storey separated by a moulded band. There is an attached barn with a full-height cart entry, stone paving in front of the house and associated farm buildings across the yard.



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Brownhill Farm

Brown Hill Farm is a laithe house (barn and house under one long roof) with what appears to be an earlier wing which may date from the 18th century. This wing has two infilled 3-light mullioned windows and an infilled doorway with a stone surround of large blocks on the north elevation and a similar doorway on the south elevation. The wing has been converted to a barn and the house is now in the central section (Wetton, 2015).



Brownhill Farm

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Terraced houses

The hamlet itself contains a number of short terraces. Numbers 725-733 Rooley Moor Road are partly constructed from narrow coursed stone and may date from the 18th century. The rest are built of larger blocks and may be later; one retains a small stone outhouse built against the boundary wall. The short terrace opposite at 780-784 is dated 1848 and retains



725-733 Rooley Moor Road

stone window and door surrounds and stone chimneys. To the north of number 784 is a two-storey building with a monopitch roof which may be a former workshop and retains two stone window surrounds on the first floor, although a large doorway has been inserted under a modern steel joist. A local resident remembers this being used as a garage, although it is likely that it had a previous use.



784 Rooley Moor Road



Barnside, a modern dwelling in natural stone

Barnside is a modern building constructed from stone in contemporary style, designed to complement the local vernacular.



Terraces on Smallshaw Road

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The Doldrums, at 812-818 and Kings Bridge (dated 1885) at 761-765 are further examples of short 19th century terraces, with stone door surrounds and stone window lintels and sills; they are believed to have been built for quarry workers. There is a well in the wall opposite numbers 812-818 which is fed from the village well located behind Barnside and marked on the 1910 map. Number 1 Smallshaw Road is similar in style, although it is a detached house. Numbers 7-23 Smallshaw Road is another terrace, although built in two phases of which 9-23 are earlier, lower in height and with simple stone detailing. Number 7 was originally constructed as two houses, of which one had a shop on the ground floor, and has corniced doorways with a taking-in door at the side converted to a window. Smallshaw Road is bordered by a stone wall with flat copings while the wall on the south side has two infilled stiles which would have provided access to the reservoir (Wetton, 2015).

Historic walls



Dry stone walling showing half round tooled copings



Infilled gateway



A ginnel



Traditional flag wall typical of the Rochdale area



Stone Gate post with evidence of the former gate

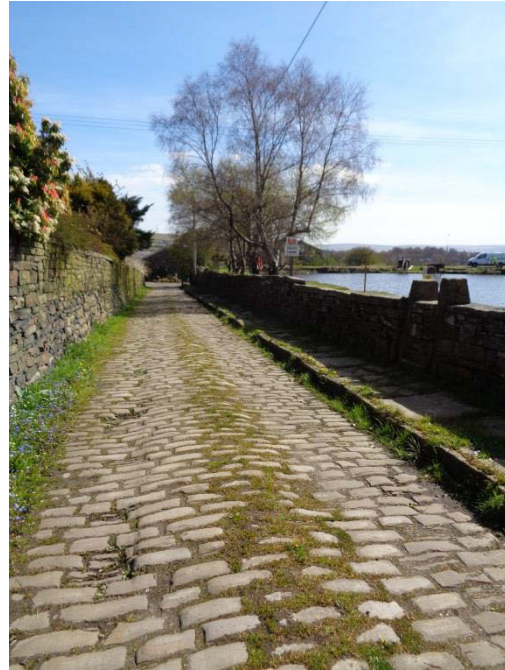


Water trough built into the wall

Paving



Wide pavements built using local stone flags



Paving on Smallshaw Road



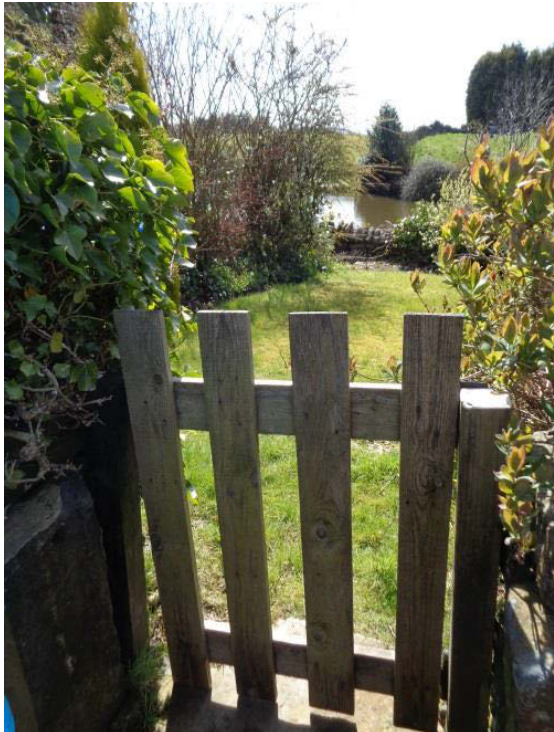
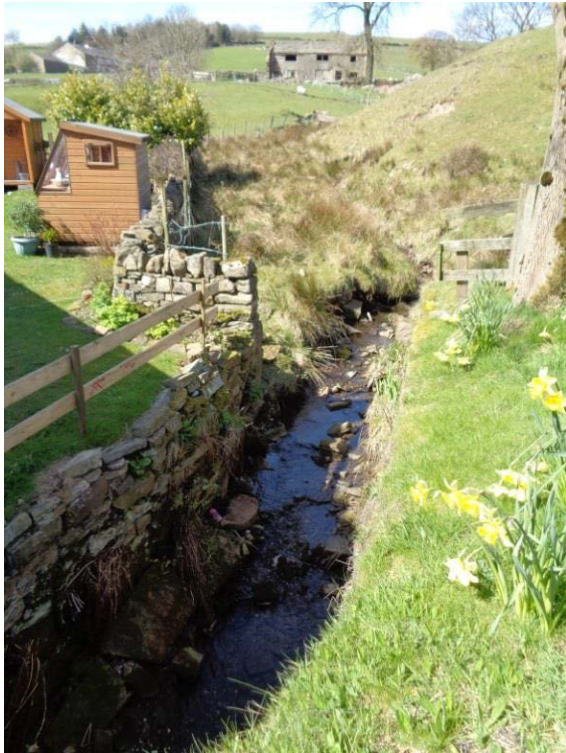
Paving on historic Cotton Famine Road



Road quality and use of materials varies

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Gardens, green spaces and biodiversity



There are a variety of green spaces. A stream running through the hamlet, well kept private gardens and farmland create an interesting landscape. All these features contribute to the character of the hamlet.

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Farming

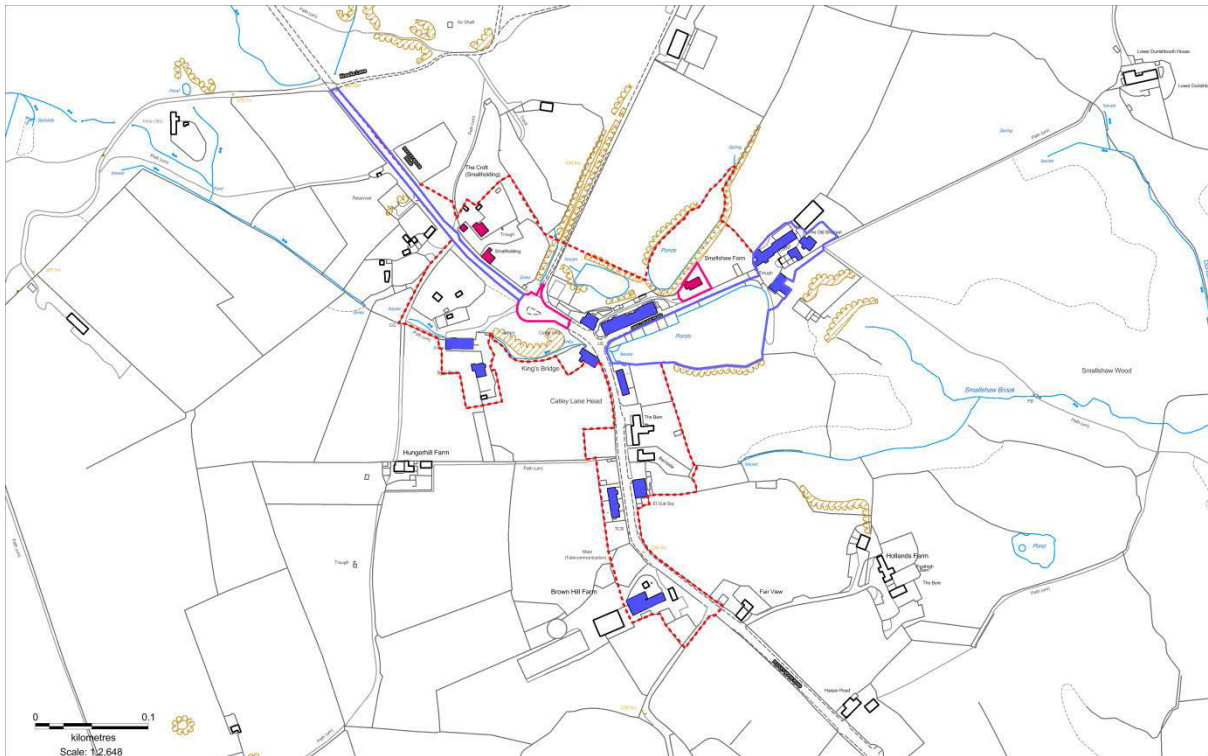


Farming continues to be an important part of the hamlet's daily life. Smallholdings and allotments also feature within this area.

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CHARACTER APPRAISAL

General character and plan form



Positive (blue) and negative contribution (pink)

The majority of buildings in Catley Lane Head are well restored using acceptable materials and elements, however there are some negative contemporary additions as well as ruins that can be seen as problematic and need improvement. One of the aims of creating a conservation area is to prevent further harmful development.

Positive contribution



Historic and contemporary elements

Historic walls, footways and setted roads form an interesting relationship with contemporary gardens situated between terraced houses on Smallshaw Road and one of the ponds.

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Preservation of historic elements

This historic shop (images below) has been converted into residential use but still retains several historic features such as the street sign, post box and stone detailing around the former shop window.

A number of other historic details can still be found on buildings, such as the remains of a boot scraper and date stones



Shop at 7 Smallshaw Road, 1958. Private Collection, and the same building in 2016



A boot scraper on Smallshaw Road



Negative contribution

Abandoned and deteriorating structures and roads

Even though the majority of structures in the hamlet are in active use, there are some historic buildings that are deteriorating including the barn at the Grade II listed Smallshaw Farm which has a collapsing roof and the brick building above which appears to have been an electric substation.

Some unadopted roads are poorly maintained and deteriorating.



Inappropriate materials and structures

It is increasingly typical to see uPVC windows used on historic buildings. This modern material harms the character of a conservation area, particularly when the configuration is different to the original windows.



Dormers on historic terraces



Use of uPVC windows

A number of dormers have been built on terraces on Smallshaw Road. These detract from the historic character of the buildings.

There are very few modern buildings in the settlement. The modern buildings on Rooley Moor Road are regarded as neutral as they use materials that complement the vernacular buildings within the hamlet.

However, there is also one modern dwelling on Smallshaw Road constructed from red brick which is out of character with the vernacular of the hamlet.



A modern red brick building

SWOT Analysis

Buildings in Catley Lane Head are generally in good condition and well maintained but there are examples of the use of inappropriate materials. Weaknesses and opportunities for improvement should be identified.

Strengths:

- The rural character of the hamlet
- Low vacancy rates
- Survival of historic details
- The historic Rooley Moor Road (setted Cotton Famine Road)
- Well preserved vernacular architecture from the 17th to the 19th century
- Rural landscape with the remains of local industry
- Dry stone walls and other significant local features such as flag walling, stone setts and pavements and a historic street pattern
- Views over Rochdale and the moors

Weaknesses:

- Use of UPVC windows: majority of windows have been replaced with modern examples, with designs out of keeping with the character of the historic buildings.
- Some stone slate roofs have been replaced with concrete tiles, and dormers have also been inserted. In some places concrete walls have been built in a predominantly stone hamlet.
- Some stone pavements and areas of stone setting on the historic roads have been replaced with asphalt and concrete (Wetton, 2015)
- Concrete bus turning circle
- Derelict structures, including the barn at Smallshaw Farm and former garage on Rooley Moor Road.
- Clutter, particularly on the site of the smallholding east of Rooley Moor Road between Smallshaw Road and Knacks Lane, where a number of small derelict structures, small buildings, sheds and trailers create an eyesore

Opportunities (reinstatement of historic materials, restoration of derelict buildings, removal of clutter):

- Creating a bus stop/turning circle that uses traditional materials
- Replacing patches of tarmac on the Cotton Famine Road with setts
- Reinstatement of historic materials
- Restoration of derelict buildings

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- Removal of clutter

Threats:

- Inappropriate development within the conservation area
- Inappropriate development within the setting of the conservation area. Because of the extensive views from the hamlet the setting extends for some distance into the hills.
- Further piecemeal alteration and removal of historic detailing such as roof coverings, windows, road surfaces and walling

CONCLUSION

This appraisal determines that there is special architectural and historic interest in Catley Lane Head, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. The production of a conservation area appraisal has been necessary in order to guide the design and layout of future development projects within or in the valuable rural setting of the Conservation Area.

Catley Lane Head demonstrates vernacular architecture which reflects the historic industries along the line of historic routes. The evolution of the hamlet is still evident in the built environment and landscape, with mill ponds, former workers housing and farmland. The area is still evolving. The general character of the conservation area is typified by its use of vernacular architecture and materials, its rural setting and the historic Cotton Famine Road. The plan form of the settlement seen today is a direct result of this relationship between the development of industry in the area and built environment, with mill ponds forming a focal point of the hamlet.

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