PROGRESSIVE

**Black Rock House, Waingate, Linthwaite**

# Conversion into 3No Apartments - Heritage Statement



## 1. Executive Summary

1.1 Black Rock House is a Grade II listed mid-19th century building originally used for domestic accommodation with a weaving workshop on the top floor. It is significant due to its origins as a workshop dwelling, as the home of the owners of the later Black Rock Mills and the home of the artist, suffragette and peace campaigner Florence Lockwood. The site falls within the Linthwaite Conservation Area.

1.2 This report sets out the impact of the proposed development upon the significance of the site and the character and appearance of the conservation area. Given the very poor condition of the building and the sympathetic nature of the proposals, there are no changes that would result in 'substantial harm' to the listed buildings as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework. This report finds that any harm is outweighed by the fact that the scheme is sustainable development that will prevent the listed buildings falling into further dereliction. It secures a viable and appropriate use for the site, securing its future and keeping it in long-term use. The reinstatement of important historical features – roof, windows and doors - is highly beneficial to the heritage significance. The social, economic and environmental benefits to the scheme also outweigh the adverse heritage impacts.

1.3 This report finds that the proposals preserve the key special qualities of the listed building and enhance the contribution that the site, currently an eyesore, makes to the character and appearance of the Linthwaite Conservation Area. There are no conservation grounds for refusal of consent.

## 2. History and Description of the Site

2.01 Black Rock House is a mid-19th century detached building that was originally attached at its north-west corner to the south-east corner of the end terrace building of the terrace containing 18 Waingate. It was, however, structurally independent. It was probably built by the Lockwood family, who lived there from around the mid-19th century until at least the early 20th century and probably longer. It was built as a domestic residence for the family but included a weaving 'loft' on its top floor. This presumably fell out of use as a workshop when Josiah Lockwood built Black Rock Mills adjacent.

2.02 The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that warps were made up at Black Rock House, whilst the weaving was out-sourced to local houses, although Liddington (2006) claims that Charles Lockwood wove by hand in the top storey of the house. According to the Conservation Area Appraisal, the mending of the cloth was then carried out back at Black Rock House and skilled workers undertook the finishing and scouring.

2.03 The most significant historical figure to have lived at Black Rock House is Florence Lockwood (b.1861), daughter of a Navy doctor who married widower Josiah Lockwood and moved to his house at Black Rock in 1902. Josiah was a self-made manufacturer who lived at Black Rock House, adjacent to his later mill where he was a Director of woollen manufacturers Charles Lockwood & Sons Ltd. Florence was a trained landscape artist who painted in the former weaving workshop of Black Rock House (Liddington 2006), benefitting from the excellent light levels gained from the long mullion type windows designed when it was used for weaving. Lockwood became very well known in the area for her active participation in the women's suffrage movement in Huddersfield and met with the nationally acclaimed Pankhurst's and Millicent Fawcett. From c.1913, she also became a peace campaigner (despite her husband's firm producing large numbers of uniforms for the British forces). Florence Lockwood's art, usually depicting the Colne Valley, was popular during her lifetime and her paintings and drawings were shown at exhibitions for the Huddersfield Art Society. Her work is remembered today from her surviving diaries, an autobiography entitled '*An Ordinary Life*' and her artworks, some of which are displayed in art galleries in the local area.

2.04 The last use of Black Rock House was reputedly a mill shop and office associated with Black Rock Mills.

2.05 Black Rock House is a substantial three-storey property with coursed stone walls, which originally had a pitched stone slate roof covering. The main entrance (and principal elevation) to Black Rock House is to the west. The frontage to the west is double-fronted with a centrally placed door with flanking pilasters, frieze and cornice. These are restrained in their design, as is the rest of the external design which has mullion windows with stone surrounds. Of greatest interest are the second floor windows, which form three sets of four-light mullioned windows, typical of the domestic weaving industry.

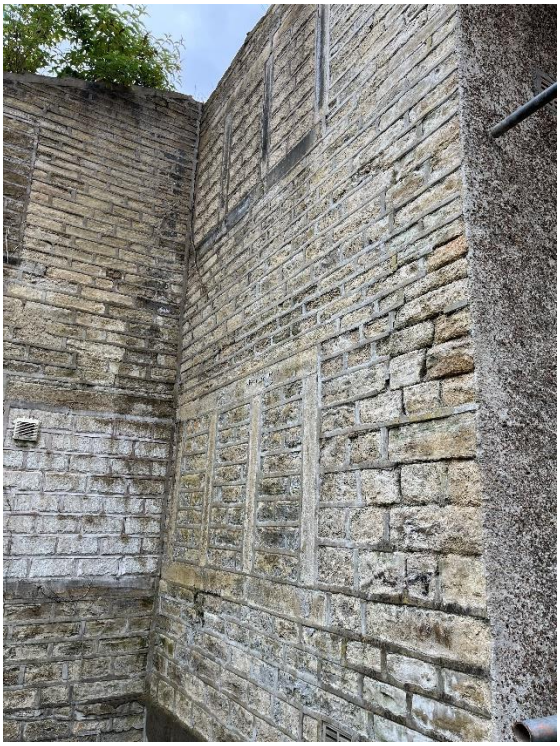
2.06 Black Rock House was listed Grade II in 1985 and the listing description reads:

*'Mid C19. Hammer dressed stone. Pitched stone slate roof. Large stack to each gable. moulded stone brackets to gutter. Coped gables. 3 storeys. West elevation symmetrical, 3 bays. Ground floor; Central doorway with simple squared pilasters, frieze and cornice. Panelled door with fanlight. Two 2-light stone mullioned windows (large). First floor; Three 2-light stone mullioned windows. Second floor; Three 4-light stone mullioned windows. South gable has later windows.'*

2.07 Internally the house has suffered since it became disused. The ruinous condition of the building precluded internal access as it is not considered safe to enter. However, a brief visual inspection of the interior of the building from the entrance did not reveal any historic internal decorative features. It is clear that the walls have been underpinned for stability recently but no other conversion works have taken place.



*Internal view of the building from 2024*



*Historically blocked up windows to east elevation, probably from when the extension was erected*

**Rear Extension to Black Rock House**

2.08 The extension to Black Rock House is later in date and has a blue slate roof (originally with a long row of rooflights). It lacks the design details seen on the earlier buildings, such as the external treatment of windows. However, it does not display the more regularly coursed stone with fine joints characteristic of later 19th century buildings onwards in this area and most likely dates from the third quarter of the 19th century. It is shown on the 1892 Ordnance Survey map. It is connected to Black Rock House via a single bay three-storey link block with a ground level entry and external stairs to the first floor, below which are two stores of former outdoor WCs. It was probably added to provide a manufacturing workshop and consists of a large open first floor space above a ground floor (that is sunken into the rising topography). The first floor is effectively at ground floor level to the north and east and a large access opening on the north gable end has been blocked. The east wall could be reached via a series of stone steps from the yard to the rear (east) of the terrace. The roof structure/loft is well ventilated with external louvres and voids.

2.09 Internally the structure is dangerous, so access is not possible. An earlier heritage statement states that the northern room of the ground floor was likely used for storage only as the walls are unfinished exposed stonework and being part sunken into the ground means that there is only limited light and ventilation. The first floor is a large open space with a rectangular footprint and no internal subdivisions. It can be accessed internally from Black Rock House via the link block and externally there are two doors in the east elevation suggesting the presence of a former partition wall. The walls have been painted. A loft has been added at a later date. Above this, the roof structure is a queen post roof with three trusses and some original or historic timberwork such as the purlin by the rooflights. However, much of the timberwork has been renewed. The single bay link building has an undivided ground floor room which is now open to Black Rock House and is open to the extension.



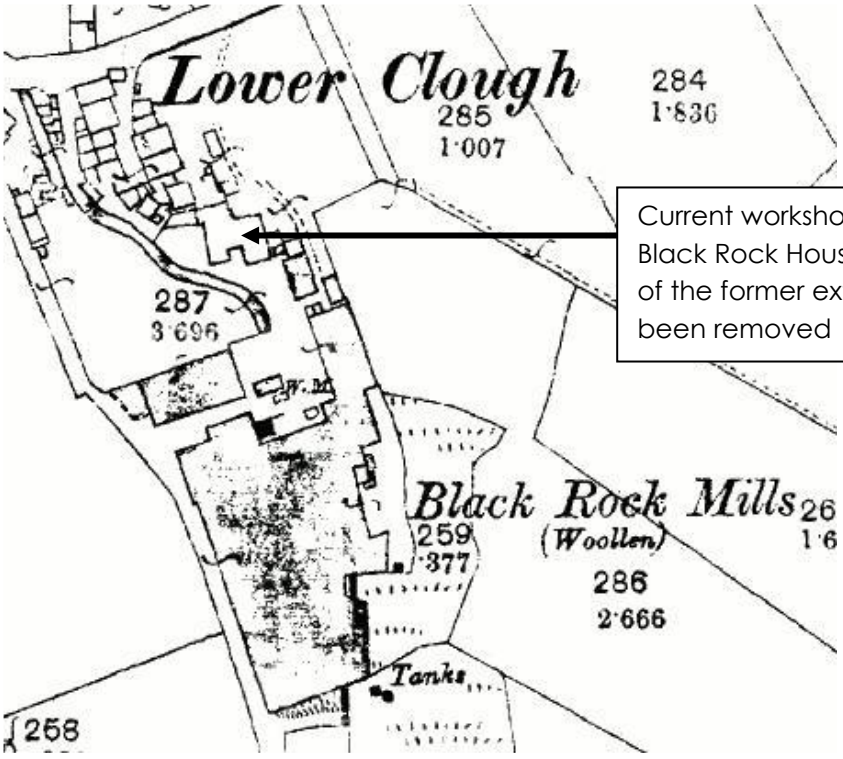
*East elevations of the former workshop. A corbel table on the east wall and bricks under the roof line of the north elevation suggest that the roof may not be original or has been altered in the past.*

## 3. Historic Maps



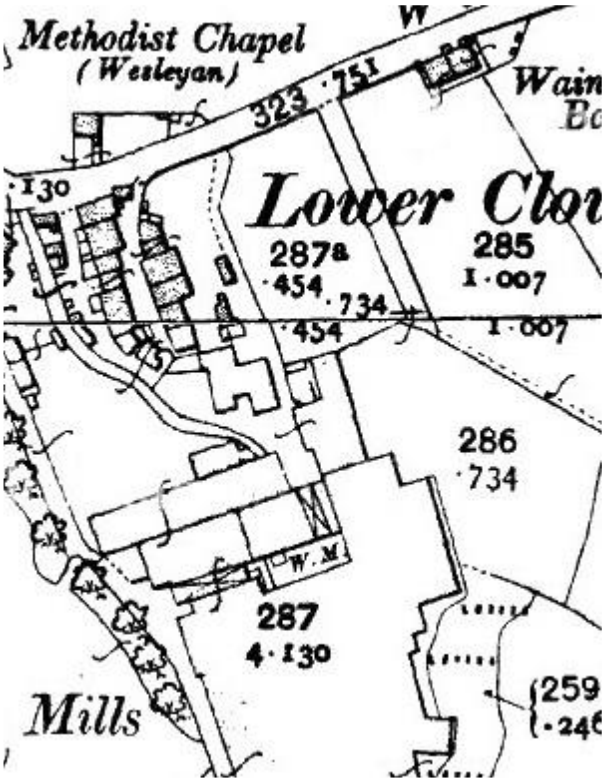

Original Extensions to Black Rock House

*Ordnance Survey map, 1854: shows a group of buildings around a short street, leading south from Waingate and terminating in Black Rock House. 18 Waingate was part of a terrace on the eastern side of a narrow lane with another terrace on the opposite side (demolished in the c.1960s). Buildings (since demolished) are shown extending the surviving terrace to the north of 18 Waingate and to the south attaching to the corner of Black Rock House, which formerly had a series of wings, largely grouped around a rear courtyard*

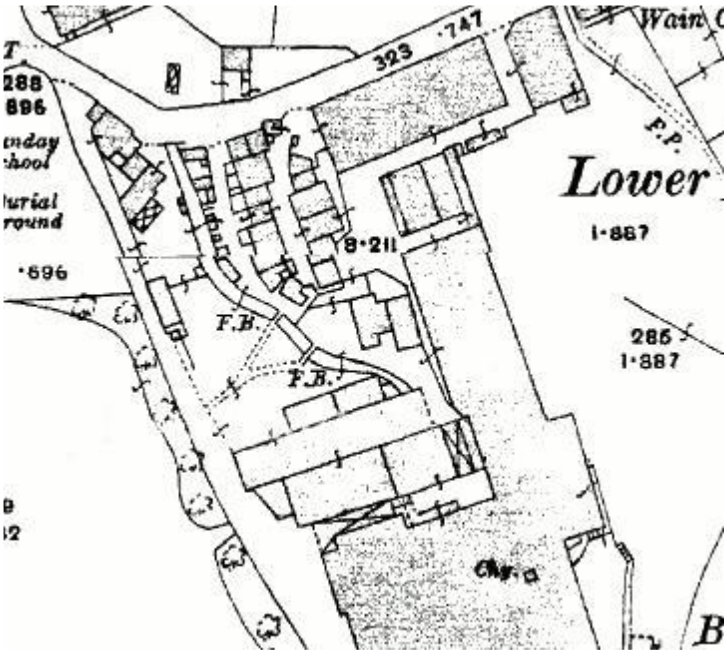



Current workshop extension to Black Rock House is shown. Most of the former extensions have been removed

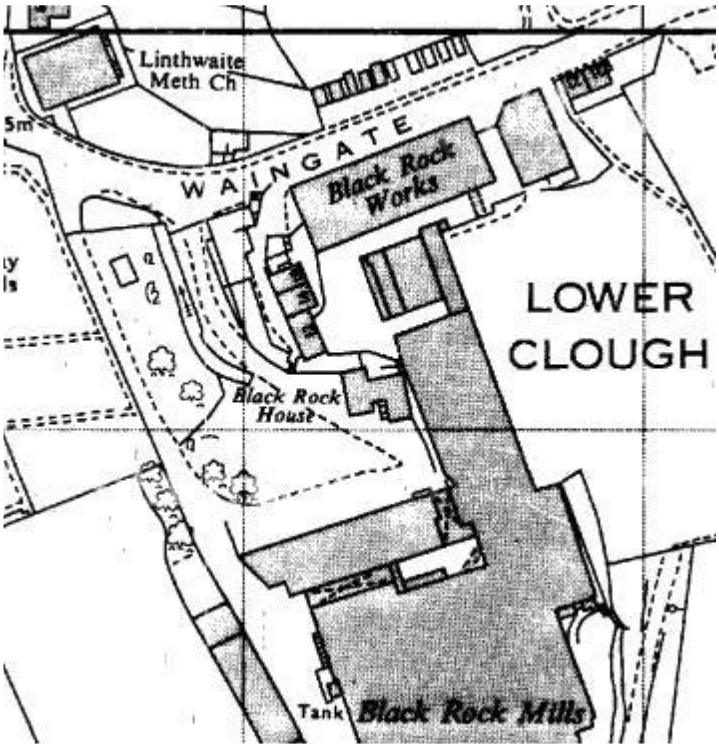
*Ordnance Survey map, 1892: most of the wings to Black Rock House have been replaced with the current extension to the east (which survives today). There is a further building attached to its east elevation that does not survive today. Given the steep terracing of the landscape here this building may have been set at a higher level. Note the construction of Black Rock Mills.*




*Ordnance Survey map, 1906. The building attached to the east elevation of the workshop to Black Rock House has been removed or reduced in size. There is a building above the workshop to the east*




*Ordnance Survey map, 1917-1918 showing a slight reduction in the northern extent of Black Rock House and the expansion of the mill buildings to the east of the application site. The terrace, that includes 18 Waingate, has been reduced with the loss of the southernmost building that butted up to Black Rock House*




*Ordnance Survey map 1978-1992: records the external stairs to the link block at Black Rock House, the reduction of the terrace containing 18 Waingate with buildings removed at the north end and the clearance of the western terrace (a process that had begun in the 1960s if not earlier as the 1968 map only partially records the terrace.*

## 4. Assessment of Significance

4.1 The significance of the application site is considered to derive primarily from the elements described below.

4.2 Handloom weaver's cottages were probably the earliest workshop type dwelling to emerge as a distinctive building type with a distinct architectural vocabulary (Palmer, Nevell & Sissons 2012, 214). Such buildings are a physical expression of the growth of the Woollen domestic based textile industry of the late 17th and early 18th century, particularly in West Yorkshire and south-west England. There was a shift from cloth manufacturers operating at home or in small workshops to larger integrated mills during the 19th century. 18 Waingate and Black Rock House illustrate their pre-factory cottage industry roots as both were built as workshop dwellings i.e. they have upper floor windows with distinctive multi-light mullion windows that provided the light levels needed for weaving in these workrooms. Below was domestic accommodation. This arrangement is characteristic of the Colne Valley. Its survival at the application site contributes to the preservation of the industrial heritage of the area and illustrates the small-scale 'hand production' stage of the woollen industry. These ***illustrative historical heritage values*** strongly contribute to the significance of Black Rock House.

4.3 Historic images of the site, in particular the illustration by Florence Lockwood dated 1903 and reproduced below and cartographic evidence, illustrates the historical development of the site which has high illustrative historical heritage values.



*The approach to Black Rock House , past 18 Waingate and terrace, as sketched by Florence Lockwood in 1903. Although the elevational treatment is not entirely consistent with the fabric evidence today, such as the location of the doorway to No.18, this image captures the essential character and appearance of the site and former street scene in the early 20th century. The end building of the terrace was demolished in the mid-late 20th century as were the buildings on the other side of the street*

4.4 There is no known architect, craftsman or designer of note associated with the construction of Black Rock House. Instead, the associative historical heritage values of the site lie in the association of Black Rock House with former inhabitant Florence Lockwood. Lockwood was an important suffragette, peace campaigner, activist and painter in the Huddersfield region and her war diaries and paintings survive. The house also derives some significance as it was the dwelling and workplace of the Lockwood family who built and ran Black Rock Mills. The other buildings have no known significant historical associations.

4.5 Externally the character of Black Rock House retains its original restrained design intention despite the loss of a number of original/early wings and extensions. Although its domestic character and features are important, the workshop windows to the top floor are especially significant as they illustrate its origin as a workshop dwelling and are a highly characteristic feature that strongly contributes to the buildings *historical and aesthetic heritage values*. Although of lesser interest when compared to Black Rock House, the addition of the workshop extension in the mid-late 19th century and the removal of earlier

wings/extensions illustrate changes to its workshop arrangements and their possible expansion prior to the erection of Black Rock Mills and are therefore of local interest. The extension retains the simple character of a non-domestic workshop.

4.6 In design terms the significance of the site residences in the vernacular character of the buildings and evidence of handloom weaving. Within Black Rock House however, nothing survives. There are no internal features of interest within the workshop extension to Black Rock House with the exception of parts of the roof trusses where some original fabric may survive amidst later renewal. However this is now in a dangerous and ruinous condition.

4.7 The setting of Black Rock House has considerably changed since their original construction with the loss of the former residential and mill complex context, and the construction of a high retaining wall to the south. It instead appears somewhat isolated within a landscape that is overgrown with self-seeded vegetation and contains building platforms and retaining walls from some former buildings here. Consequently, the buildings derive limited significance from their immediate setting.

**Contribution of the Site to the Significance of Linthwaite Conservation Area**

4.8 Black Rock House contributes to the history, development and character of the conservation area in that it is an example of weavers' dwellings. The conservation area appraisal notes that there "are several fine examples of earlier weavers' cottages surviving in Linthwaite" (page 12).

4.9 The loss of the western terrace has exposed to greater view the west front of Black Rock House. The very poor condition of the building and immediate landscaping is currently a detrimental feature in the conservation area.

**Summary Statement of Significance**

**4.10 Black Rock House has been designated as being of national historic and/or architectural interest on the basis that they are Grade II listed buildings. Its significance resides primarily in its historical heritage values, in particular the association with the pre-factory and pre-mechanised woollen industry and with Florence Lockwood. However, given the poor state of preservation at the buildings today, it is questionable whether they are still of national significance. All internal fixtures and fittings have been lost, as has 0the historical floor plans and the buildings have been considerably changed during the 19th and 20th centuries.**

**4.11 The extension to Black Rock House dates from the mid-late 19th century and is not an original part of Black Rock House. Whilst clearly a workshop, it lacks the distinctive character of the workshop dwellings and displays a plain and simple form. It has also been altered externally and internally, in particular with blocked historical openings and later inserted openings and a possible renewed roof cover. Internally the roof structure has been partially renewed and other than the purlins and part of the trusses there are no original internal features. For these reasons, the extension is not considered to be of more than local interest, but nevertheless it makes a slight contribution to the conservation area and to the setting of Black Rock House.**

**4.12 The derelict building and overgrown landscape setting is an eyesore within the conservation area and the condition of the site detracts from the character and appearance of the conservation area. The buildings are at serious risk from further deterioration and ultimately complete collapse and ruination.**

## 5. Heritage Impact of the Proposed Development

5.1 The proposals summarised below respond to the current condition of the site and its heritage sensitivity. The building within the application site is in a derelict state with windows and doors boarded up, partial collapse of roof and floors can be seen from the outside. The grounds around the buildings are heavily overgrown with self-seeded vegetation. The external walls of Black Rock House have been underpinned and can be retained, but the rear extension is in poor condition.

5.2 Black Rock House will be converted into three two-bedroom apartments. The later link will be retained and workshop be removed. Soft landscaping will be provided by communal grassed and planted areas and private amenity space gardens within the footprint of the rear workshop. Access to the building will be via adjacent private parking bays and via the existing external steps.

**Change of Use**

5.3 The change of use of this former residence, latterly offices, seeks to revert the building back to their original residential use (minus the cottage industry use). This accords with the aims and intentions of national and local planning policies.

**Form and Fabric**

5.4 It is proposed that repairs required to Black Rock House will use matching materials in order to be in keeping with the historical fabric. The reuse of historical fabric wherever possible is good conservation practice that limits the heritage impact.

5.5 It is proposed that the later workshop to Black Rock House will be removed as part of the conversion and refurbishment works. This will provide an open aspect to the rear of the original property and provide private amenity space. The loss of the workshop, while resulting in some adverse impact to the significance of Black Rock House, make a relatively minor contribution to its significance. They are later additions that have been previously altered internally and externally with changes to openings, floor plan and widespread loss of historical fixtures and fittings. The non-domestic nature and character of the former workshop makes it very difficult to convert to a domestic use.

**Character and Appearance**

5.6 The main elevation to Black Rock House will be repaired using like for like materials and kept as is. However, in order to create three apartments within this large property, openings are required to the rear elevations for light and access. These will be the current blocked up openings and openings to a new external wall at the north of the link building. The floor plan has been lost, and so the harm to the plan from the proposals is limited.

**Setting**

5.7 The restoration of access from Waingate and creation of parking spaces and amenity space is critical to the viability of the scheme and is appropriate to what is a residential development. It is not out of character and will not result in an adverse impact.

5.8 The works to restore 18 Waingate and its attached terrace has been carried out to an extremely high standard, and these already in the unfinished state are more positive than previously. The proposal for Black Rock House will also improve the setting.

**Impact on the Linthwaite Conservation Area**

5.9 The application site is the last part of a larger scheme for new build residential development across the site of Black Rock Mills and lies within a village context. A residential use for the site is therefore complemented by the residential development in the setting and residences in the wider conservation area. It is an appropriate use that will make a positive contribution to the area.

**Character and Appearance**

5.10 The transformation of this derelict and overgrown site, currently an eyesore within the conversation area, will significantly enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area while retaining the special characteristics of the historical building.

**Public Benefits**

5.11 There are clear public benefits associated with the change of use in that it brings back into domestic use a vacant, derelict and deteriorating building. The proposals are key to securing the sustainable long-term viability and survival of the listed building and the building works would create local employment for building firms while the final dwellings address a local housing need. The public benefits are therefore social and economic, but also environmental as this is a sustainable development that reuses existing fabric.

## 6. Conclusion

6.1 This heritage statement has been prepared in connection with the proposed rebuild, refurbishment and reuse of the Grade II listed building at Black Rock House that falls within the Linthwaite Conservation Area.

6.2 The proposed re-development involves the repair and conversion of Black Rock House with the removal of its workshop extension alongside landscaping works in order to create parking and amenity spaces.

6.3 None of the highly significant features and elements that contribute to the special interest of the listed buildings or the character and appearance of the conservation area will be lost and the changes have been designed to respond to the current character and appearance of the existing buildings, reusing existing fabric wherever possible.

6.4 Given the very poor condition of the building and the sympathetic nature of the proposals, that respond to the significance of the heritage assets, there are no changes that would result in 'substantial harm' to the listed building as defined in the NPPF. However, the loss of the extension to Black Rock House, alterations to the floor plan of Black Rock House and introduction of new openings to the buildings, while necessary to the success and viability of the scheme, will result in some harm. This report finds that the harm is to elements that are not key to the significance of the site and is outweighed by the fact that the scheme is sustainable development that will prevent the listed building falling into further dereliction. It secures a viable and appropriate use for the site, securing its future and keeping it in long term use. The reinstatement of important historical features is highly beneficial to the heritage significance. The social, economic and environmental benefits to the scheme also outweigh the adverse heritage impacts.

6.5 In conclusion, this report finds that the proposals preserve the key special qualities of the listed building and enhance the contribution that the site, currently an eyesore, makes to the character and appearance of the Linthwaite Conservation Area.

6.6 This report concludes that the proposed re-development accords with those sections of the National Planning Policy Framework that relate to heritage assets and the historic environment, while bringing wider public benefits. This is a highly sustainable location with good transport links and the proposed domestic activity is sustainable development in-line with the strong presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF. There are no conservation grounds for refusal of consent.