



GMAAS
Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service

Local Heritage Listing Project

Medlock Vale and
Bardsley,
Oldham

Gazetteer of Validated Candidates

June 2025

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Site Location: Medlock Vale and Bardsley, Oldham
Prepared for: Oldham Council
Document Title: Local Heritage Listing Project: Medlock Vale and Bardsley Gazetteer
Document Type: Gazetteer
Version: Version 3 (Validated)

Author: Ian Miller
Position: Director
Date: June 2024

Signed:



Approved By: Validation Panel
Date: June 2025

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OLDHAM LOCAL LIST – MEDLOCK VALE AND BARDSLEY

Historical Overview of Medlock Vale and Bardsley

Medlock Vale holds historical and social significance as a transitional area linking Oldham with surrounding towns like Failsworth and Ashton-under-Lyne. Named after the River Medlock, which flows through the area and played a vital role in powering early mills and shaping the valley's settlement patterns, the area historically supported the growth of local industry during the 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly in textiles and engineering.

Medlock Vale includes key communities such as Fitton Hill and Bardsley, and has long served as a residential zone for workers employed in Oldham's mills and factories. In modern times, the ward has become a focus for regeneration and community development, with schools, health centres, and housing initiatives aimed at improving local quality of life. While it has faced socio-economic challenges, the area remains historically significant as a representation of Oldham's industrial past and its post-industrial efforts at renewal and community development.

Bardsley forms part of the Medlock Vale ward of Oldham and is a historically rich area situated near the boundary with Ashton-under-Lyne and the Tameside borough. It originated as a rural township in the ancient parish of Ashton-under-Lyne. The name 'Bardsley' is thought to derive from Old English, likely meaning 'clearing of Beorn's people' or 'Beorn's lea (meadow)', indicating Saxon roots and early agricultural use. In the 19th century, Bardsley maintained much of its rural character even as neighbouring Oldham rapidly industrialised. It was known for its farmland, scattered cottages, and farmsteads, and remained somewhat isolated from the textile-fuelled urban sprawl that engulfed other parts of Oldham. However, with the expansion of railways and road networks, and particularly the construction of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway, the area gradually became more connected and influenced by nearby industrial centres.

Candidates for Local Listing in Medlock Vale

Property Name and Photograph	Falcon's View – HER 18089.1.0 
Property Address	Copster Hill, Oldham, OL8 4HF
Significance	Historic Interest: The building is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:10,560 map of 1848, and as a short terrace of three cottages on the more detailed 1st Edition 1:2500 map of 1894. This shows a rectangular plan form with the middle cottage having a rearward element.

	Architectural Interest: A detached building is of two storeys with a gable roof. The main roof and that of the lean-to single-storey rearward element are in slate. Elevations are all in white render. The exterior of the building retains a strong sense of the original/historic appearance of the built form. Local Interest: Falcon's View is one of the oldest buildings in Copster Hill. Aesthetic Interest. Falcon's View makes a positive contribution to the aesthetic quality and historic character of Copster Hill. Group Value: Falcon's View has a group value with other 19th-century buildings in the locale, such as the Falconer's Arms. Landmark Status: The building's elevated position, orientation and appearance provide Falcon's View with a local distinctiveness that affords some landmark value.
Score	9

Property Name and Photograph

Oldham Hulme Grammar School – HER 18090.1.0



Property Address

172 Chamber Road, Coppice, Oldham, OL8 4BU

Significance	Historic Interest: Oldham Grammar School was founded in 1611 by several charitable individuals including Laurence Chadeton. The school was closed in 1865 but was re-founded under the Endowed Schools Act 1869. The building was ready for occupation by spring 1895. Architectural Interest: A grammar school designed by John Whittaker Firth in 1893-95. The original building is in a red brick with slate pitched roofs with red clay ridge tiles. The most prominent, higher pitched roof has an ornamental ventilation tower atop the roof ridge. Local Interest: The first headmaster of the new era was Samuel Ogden Andrew, who later achieved acclaim as a translator of Homer. Aesthetic Value: Overall, the building has considerable aesthetic value, although this is greatest for the original built form and in views of the 'front' (south-west) elevation. Group Value: The school has a group value with the encompassing terraces of 19th-century dwellings. Social / Community value: The building remains in the original school use that has existed on this site for over 120 years and is likely to have considerable community association. Landmark Status: This is a large and notable built form within the area serving a community use.
Score	10

Property Name and Photograph	Earl Mill – HER 6303.1.0 
Property Address	Dowry Street, Hathershaw, Oldham, OL8 2PF
Significance	Historic Interest: Built originally in 1860 and rebuilt in 1891. Ceased production in 1933. Architectural Interest: Designed by the notable architect PS Stott. The brick-built spinning mill is four-storeys high and 22 x 4 bays. Five-storey tower at the north-west corner and a smaller tower at the south-west corner. "EARL" legend on main tower. Large rectangular brick-arch windows. Corner pilasters. Engine house and rope race attached to the south side. Local Interest: The mill was used as army barracks during the Second World War. Aesthetic Value: The mill has considerable aesthetic value in its own right and makes an important contribution to the character and aesthetic quality of the historic textile-manufacturing townscape. However, it needs to be acknowledged that more recent change that has taken place at the building currently detracts from this aesthetic value.

	Group Value: The mill has a strong group value with the nearby Bell Mill and Heron Mill as key elements of the textile-manufacturing townscape. Social / Community Value: The mill employed several generations of local people and some will have a personal association with the mill, contributing to their sense of place. Landmark Status: The mill is a notable landmark feature on Dowry Street and forms part of an important cluster of mills.
Score	11

Property Name and Photograph	Site of 'Fairbottom Bobs' – HER 11337.1.0 
Property Address	Across River Medlock from Waggon Road, Park Bridge, Oldham
Significance	Historic Interest: A Newcomen atmospheric steam engine (thought to have been purchased from Norbury Colliery) was installed in 1765 to pump water from the cannel coal pit at Fairbottom. Local Interest: The abandoned engine was spotted by Herbert F Morton, agent for motor car magnate Henry Ford, and was taken to Ford's museum in Dearborn, Michigan, where it was restored and is still on display. It is probably the world's second oldest surviving steam engine. The base of the chimney and the remains of the boiler, cottages and stables survive on site. Aesthetic Value: The surviving foundations provide testament to the rich industrial heritage of the site and contribute to its aesthetic historic quality. Rarity Value: Site of one of the few remaining examples of a Newcomen atmospheric engine, although the engine itself is now in Dearborn Museum, US. The only site of such an engine to have been the subject of modern archaeological excavation.

	Archaeological Value: The site has been subject to several intrusive investigations but still has considerable potential to retain below-ground remains of archaeological interest. Landmark Status: The site is well known regionally as a site of great historic interest.
Score	9

Property Name and Photograph	Daisyfield Inn – HER 18091.1.0 
Property Address	14 Keb Lane, Bardsley, Oldham, OL8 2TE
Significance	Historic Interest: The footprint of the building is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:2500 map of 1894. It is marked as a 'beer house' on the 1:2500 map of 1954 at which time the public house still retained the bowling green that showed on the 1894 map. Architectural Interest: A detached, two-storey (plus attic), double-fronted public house. The pub is brick-built, with a slate-covered gable roof, with stone used for window sills and lintels.

	Local Interest: The Daisyfield Inn is the last surviving public house in Bardsley and the first in Oldham to be listed as an asset of community value. Aesthetic Value: The building has positive intrinsic aesthetic value and makes a positive contribution to the historic character and aesthetic quality of the area. Social / Communal Value: The pub has served the local community for well over a century and several generations of local residents will have personal association with the building, providing them with a sense of place. Group Value: The pub has a group value with the adjacent terraces of workers' housing that cumulatively represent the later 19th-century townscape. Landmark Status: The pub is a notable feature of Keb Lane.
Score	9

Property Name and Photograph	Bardsley Fold Farm – HER 18092.1.0 
Property Address	Ashton Road, Bardsley, Oldham, OL8 3HX
Significance	Historic Interest: The farm is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:10,560 map of 1848 and is one of the oldest surviving buildings in Bardsley. Architectural Interest: The detached, double-fronted farmhouse is of stone construction with a gable roof with stone roof covering. The principal elevation appears to be the south-western elevation with its symmetrical frontage with central doorway. Notwithstanding some recent changes, it retains a strong sense of its original form and appearance. Local Interest: The building provides an important reminder of the historic agricultural character of Bardsley.

	Aesthetic Value: The farmhouse retains aesthetic value despite recent change and makes a useful contribution to the setting of the adjacent listed building, particularly due to its siting and stonework elevations. Group Value: The farmhouse has a group value with the adjacent Grade II listed Bardsley House. Landmark Status: The building is a notable feature of the local streetscape, affording it some landmark value.
Score	9

Property Name and Photograph	Valley Aqueduct – HER 18093.1.0 
Property Address	Knott Lanes, Bardsley, Oldham
Significance	Historic Interest: Canal aqueduct built around 1797 to carry the Fairbottom Branch of the Ashton Canal across Knott Lanes. Architectural Interest: The structure comprises a stone arch with curved stone wing walls and a stone parapet on the towpath side, providing an impressive example of a late 18th-century canal aqueduct. Local Interest: The aqueduct spans the former coach road between Ashton-under-Lyne and Oldham. Aesthetic Value: The aqueduct makes a very positive contribution to the aesthetic quality and historic character of the former canal corridor and Daisy Nook Country Park. Group Value: The aqueduct has a strong group value with other canal related structures and any nearby contemporaneous built form.

	Landmark Status: The aqueduct is a notable feature of the former canal route through Daisy Nook Country Park.
Score	10

Property Name and Photograph	Honeywell Lane Methodist Chapel – HER 18094.1.0 
Property Address	Honeywell Lane, Hathershaw, Oldham, OL8 2AA
Significance	Historic Interest: The foundation stone of the chapel was laid in September 1877, and the building was opened in March 1878. The chapel flourished in the years following the First World War, and a new building was built on the side of the existing one in 1928. Architectural Interest: The chapel provides an interesting example of a Victorian Methodist chapel. Local Interest: The chapel belonged to Oldham Methodist New Connexion Circuit, later known as Oldham (Union Street) Circuit. Aesthetic Value: The chapel and its adjacent Sunday school make a positive contribution to the aesthetic quality and historic character of the Late Victorian / Edwardian townscape Social / Communal Value: The chapel has served the local community for more than a century and several generations of local residents have personal associations with the building.

	Group Value: The chapel has a group value with the adjacent Sunday school and surrounding streets of contemporary housing. Landmark Status: The chapel is a notable feature of Honeywell Lane, affording it some value as a local landmark.
Score	10

Property Name and Photograph	Honeywell Lane Sunday School – HER 18095.1.0 
Property Address	Emma Street, Hathershaw, Oldham, OL8 2AA
Significance	Historic Interest: The Sunday school was probably established at the same date of the adjacent chapel, which was opened in March 1878. A new infants room was built in 1888. Architectural Interest: The simple building takes a rectangular plan form, and is of brick construction with a slate gable roof. The gable elevation overlooking Emma Street contains three arched windows (the central being the tallest) with stone sills. Local Interest: The school was one of the first buildings to be erected on Emma Street and is amongst the oldest surviving buildings in Hathershaw.

	Aesthetic Value: The Sunday school and the adjacent chapel make a positive contribution to the aesthetic quality and historic character of the Late Victorian / Edwardian townscape. Social / Communal Value: The Sunday school served the local community for more than a century and several generations of local residents have personal associations with the building. Group Value: The Sunday school has a group value with the adjacent Methodist chapel and surrounding streets of contemporary housing. Landmark Status: The school is a notable feature of Emma Street, despite the increased prominence of the adjacent chapel.
Score	9