



GMAAS
Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service

Local Heritage Listing Project

**Saddleworth West and
Lees,
Oldham**

**Gazetteer of
Validated Candidates**

June 2025

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Site Location: Saddleworth West and Lees, Oldham

Prepared for: Oldham Council

Document Title: Local Heritage Listing Project: Saddleworth West and Lees Gazetteer

Document Type: Gazetteer

Version: Version 3 (Validated)

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Date: September 2024

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Date: October 2024

Approved By: Validation Panel
Date: June 2025

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OLDHAM LOCAL LIST – SADDLEWORTH WEST AND LEES

Historical Overview of Lees

Lees was a conglomeration of hamlets by the 14th century, all linked ecclesiastically with the township of Ashton-under-Lyne. Farming was the main industry of this rural area, with locals supplementing their incomes by hand-loom weaving.

Lees had obtained a reputation for its mineral springs by the beginning of the 19th century, but local ambitions to develop the settlement as a spa town were thwarted by rapid urbanisation resulting from the growth of the factory-based textile industry. Lees expanded as a mill town during the later 19th century, a process that was stimulated by neighbouring Oldham's boom in cotton spinning; Lees boasted a total of 11 new cotton mills by the end of the century, by which date it had become a thriving township with urban district status being granted in 1894.

A socially active community with significant political and cultural contributions developed in Lees during the 19th century. The settlement's architecture, green spaces and memorials continue to anchor it as a site of heritage, identity, and everyday community life in Oldham.

Candidates for Local Listing in Saddleworth West and Lees

Property Name and Photograph

St Edward's Church and Sunday School – HER 19014.1.0



Property Address	Spring Lane, Lees, Oldham, OL4 5AJ
Significance	<i>Historic Interest:</i> Dating to 1900, the building is first shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st Revision 1:2500 map of 1906, where it is identified as St Edward's Roman Catholic Church. <i>Architectural Interest:</i> Large, two-storey building in coursed stonework with two projecting gables on the front elevation fronting Spring Lane. Southern gable has a projecting chimney breast rising the full height of the building and projecting slightly above the roof apex. The central area between the gables is filled with a later single-storey extension. <i>Local Interest:</i> The dual-purpose building served parish education until 1981, when the primary school moved to modern premises on Rowland Way. The old school (ground floor) became the Parish Hall, hosting local groups and community clubs, while the former chapel was later repurposed as a function room with kitchen/bar access <i>Aesthetic Value:</i> Contributes to the historic character of the Lees Conservation Area, with similar stone coursing as other terraced forms further north along Spring Lane. <i>Social/Communal Value:</i> The building remains in its original use and has served the local community for nearly 100 years and can be expected to have communal value. <i>Landmark Status:</i> Situated at the junction of Burton Street with Spring Lane, the building is a prominent local landmark.
Score	9

Property Name and Photograph

St Thomas' Leesfield School – HER 19015.1.0



Property Address	West Street, Lees, Oldham, OL4 5AT
Significance	<i>Historic Interest:</i> The school dates to 1929. <i>Architectural Interest:</i> In plan the building has two distinct blocks: a front portion with three sections as viewed from West Street: a central element across three bays with squared eaves and a set-back pitched roof; and two flanking elements with second storey bay-turreted features and pitched roofs at right-angles to the central portion; and a rear block formed of a single transverse block with pitched roof. Original wrought-iron water goods with date 1928 visible on front façade. <i>Local Interest:</i> School Inspectors had recommended that St Thomas Leesfield CE primary School had separate Infant and Junior Schools and so a new building was opened on West Street in 1903 to house the infants. The present building was erected on the same site in 1929. <i>Aesthetic Value:</i> Contributes to the historic character of the Lees Conservation Area, with similar stone coursing as other terraced forms on West Street. <i>Social/Communal Value:</i> The school remains in its original use and has served generations of the local community for more than a century and can be expected to have communal value. <i>Group Value:</i> The school has a group value with the Grade II listed St Thomas' Church. <i>Landmark Status:</i> The building is a notable landmark of the local streetscape.
Score	9

Property Name and Photograph	Stamford House – HER 19016.1.0 
Property Address	Lees New Road, Oldham, OL4 5PP
Significance	<i>Historic Interest:</i> A large villa that is identified on the Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1:2500 map of 1894, within its own grounds with a driveway leading from Lees New Road to the front of the property on the southern-facing elevation. <i>Architectural Interest:</i> The property has a broad L-shaped plan, is of two storeys and of stone construction. Southern elevation has two large projecting triple-windows at ground level flanking a central entrance. Windows have stone casements and mullions, door has an arched frame detail. Second storey has double arched windows in bays 1 and 3, flanking a central rectangular window. Hipped, pitched slate roofs throughout, central squat chimney on the apex, and a taller stack off-centre over the north-facing hipped elevation. <i>Local Interest:</i> Stamford House reflects the prosperity of Lees in the late 19th century. <i>Aesthetic Value:</i> Retains original scale and massing and the plot has its boundary walls mostly intact, affording a positive contribution to the historic character and aesthetic quality of the area.

	<i>Group Value:</i> Stamford House has a group value with other villa properties of the period, including Ormdale on Lees New Road. <i>Landmark Status:</i> It occupies a prominent position at the junction of Lees New Road with Knowls Lane.
Score	9