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Our ref: P00478926

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Dear Mr Dowd

Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2015 & T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

**LAND AT MALT KILN BROW, CHIPPING, LANCASHIRE, PR3 2GP
Application No 3/2015/0766**

Thank you for your letter of 21 September 2015 notifying Historic England of the above application.

Summary

The initiative to regenerate and re-use Kirk Mill and the adjoining Main Mills complex is welcome and has potential to secure a long term use for a listed building which is vacant and clearly at risk of further deterioration. We support the proposed use and the principle of converting the Mill, however we recommend that aspects of the scheme, outlined below, are given further consideration.

Historic England Advice

The above application relates to five parcels of land in and around the village of Chipping in Ribble Valley. Four of the development sites are located on the northern edge of the settlement, within the Kirk Mills Conservation area and its immediate setting.

This is a hybrid application and seeks detailed consent for the conversion of Kirk Mill into a hotel and the redevelopment of the Main Mills complex for a series of uses including a spa, hotel, kids club, a trail head centre and seven holiday cottages. The application also seeks outline planning permission for two areas of residential development at The Hive and Malt House Brow, comprising forty six dwellings.

The proposals have potential to affect the significance of several designated heritage assets, particularly Kirk Mill and the related conservation area. The mill was developed in several phases from 1785 and is considered, in the applicant's comprehensive Heritage Assessment, to be a rare survival of a largely intact water-powered mill in



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Lancashire. The southern front elevation is the only surviving part of the original Arkwright-type mill and is assessed as being of high significance in the Heritage Assessment. Later phases replaced much of the original mill, however each phase is legible in the floor plan and elevations and adds to the understanding of the mill as it was expanded and remodelled. The power source evolved during the early phases with a succession of larger water wheels being accommodated, and an early C19th phase possibly being associated with the installation of a steam engine. The engine house is expressed on the southern elevation with a 32 light window which is assessed as having high significance.

The mill is located in a narrow steep sided valley, cut into the surrounding rolling agricultural land. The landform has strongly influenced the settlement pattern with a clear distinction between the small cluster of mill buildings confined to the narrow valley and the farmstead, known as Old Hive, in an isolated position in the farmland to the west. Immediately north of the mill is the mill pond and race which make a highly significant contribution to the character and appearance of the industrial settlement.

The principle of re-using Kirk Mill is clearly welcome. The vacant and, to an extent, derelict condition of the mill dominates the conservation area and the constructive re-use of the building could be highly beneficial. Similarly the redevelopment of the vacant Main Mill complex, which overshadows the conservation area as a whole, with a contextual bespoke design could significantly enhance the character and appearance of the area. The introduction of a mix of complementary uses should have potential to regenerate the site and benefit the settings of both the Kirk Mill and Chipping Conservation Areas.

We therefore support the principle of the scheme. However there are aspects of the detailed design which we recommend should be addressed to minimise the harm to Kirk Mill:

- The proposed three storey glazed circulation space to the south elevation of Kirk Mill would obscure key elements of the elevation, including the two storey 32-light window to the engine house. It would dominate the only remaining part of the original Arkwright-type mill from 1785, in contrast to the proposals to remove the C20th dust extraction tower which would clearly enhance the elevation. We recommend that the vertical circulation core is reduced to the minimum width against the elevation to minimise the harm caused. For example, if the reception could be incorporated within the single-storey orangery and the stairs could wrap around the lift core (retaining the 32 light window) the floor-plate of the circulation core could be considerably reduced.
- The proposed orangery would extend the full length of the ground floor of the original south elevation, obscuring parts of the building and adopting an architectural approach and materiality that have potential to confuse the historic



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phases of the building. We see no conservation benefit in relating door openings to the original mill elevation which also results in a busy and repetitive design. We recommend a contemporary approach is taken to the architectural language of the orangery. For example, a more asymmetric arrangement using larger glazed openings with a solid wall separating the orangery from the entrance reception, with a simpler roof design, (such as the kitchen extension at [Silverhome, Lake District <http://www.cumbriacrack.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/SilverholmeManor.jpeg>](http://www.cumbriacrack.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/SilverholmeManor.jpeg)), would help differentiate between historic and modern elements. In this instance greater simplicity is likely to be the key in creating a successful design.

- The steep pitch and dominant roof form to the proposed spa hotel on the Main Mills site could have potential to overwhelm the domestic scale of the existing cottages that form part of the context for the mill. The local planning authority (LPA) should ensure that the proposed roofscape will sustain and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

In determining applications LPAs should give great weight to the conservation of heritage assets. Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their setting while Section 72 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. From a planning policy perspective the application incorporates a thorough heritage assessment (NPPF 128) which should enable the LPA to understand the impacts of the scheme on the significance of the relevant heritage assets (NPPF 129). While the scheme undoubtedly has potential to resolve a fundamental regeneration challenge within the Kirk Mill Conservation Area the NPPF requires LPAs to consider the desirability of sustaining and enhancing significance. Further, the NPPF also requires opportunities to be sought for new development to enhance or better reveal the significance of heritage assets (NPPF 137).

Recommendation

We recommend that amended proposals are brought forward to address the above points to enable the regeneration of the application site to be achieved while minimising harm to the designated heritage assets affected by the proposals.

We would welcome the opportunity of advising further. Please consult us again if any additional information or amendments are submitted. If, notwithstanding our advice, you propose to approve the scheme in its present form, please advise us of the date of the committee and send us a copy of your report at the earliest opportunity.



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Yours sincerely

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