


Urban Design Response			Officer	Stephen Kilmartin
Description:	Kirk Mill Chipping			 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Application Ref:	2014/0183	Case Officer:	S.W	
Response Ref:	2014/0183/UDR/02	Consult Date:	23/07/14	
Meeting Date:	N/A	Issue Date:	24/07/14	
OFFICER REFERENCE ONLY				

A - 'Kirk Mill Hotel' General Comments/Observations

N.B All comments to be read in conjunction with statutory/non-statutory responses and comments From A. Dowd Conservation & Design Officer.

01. I have fundamental concerns regarding the proposed alterations/additions to the south facing elevation of Kirk Mill. The proposed 'orangery' element, in terms of horizontal proportioning appears to visually dominant the primary elevation and appears to obscure a large amount of historic fabric/features. The elevational language of the orangery element also appears to conflict with and undermine the inherent value of the primary elevation through its materiality, elevational repetition and relationship/alignment with the elevation/proportions found on the existing elevations.

The element of the façade behind the orangery is in a poor state of repair with few historic features of importance. This area of the façade has had a number of modern additions and alterations. The proposal aims to remove these modern additions such as the metal shutters to provide an attractive access route connecting both the orangery and original mill building. The materiality of the mill façade will be celebrated by use of a glazed roof window link between the orangery and mill building.

Great care has been taken to ensure that the orangery is a sympathetic addition to the mill building through a proposed palette of high quality complimentary materials. The orangery elevation will be primarily sandstone to match the existing mill. Glazing will then be used in the form of the clerestory windows to sensitively differentiate between the existing and the modern addition. The apertures in the orangery elevation follow a repetition similar to that evident on the existing south façade of the mill. It was a conscious decision that the windows did not directly line up with the windows on the south elevation of the mill as this was to denote a new addition to the building.

It is noted that the alignment of the windows in relation to the existing apertures was intentional. However I do not consider that this element alone is sufficient to 'denote the new addition' and maintain, that due to the similar language and solid mass of the Orangery to that of the mill, that it undermines the inherent character and importance of the building. Given the proposed solid to void ratio I would consider that a structure that benefits from a higher level of transparency could potentially conflict less with the inherent elevational character of the Mill.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned issues I still consider that the overall scale, forward projection and footprint of the orangery element fails to be subservient to the Mill which will be further compounded by the projecting roof overhang being of detriment to the character of the Mill.

02. Whilst I am not adverse to contemporary additions in such situations, I am of the opinion that the level of development proposed and the solid mass of the orangery fundamentally undermine the character of the existing mill and remained unconvinced by the approach taken. I also do not consider that the recessed lead panel alone provides sufficient visual delineation between the original/rebuilt fabric of the building and that of the proposed orangery. Concerns also exist

regarding the extents of the orangery and that it will result in the loss of openness to the building frontage/forecourt area which clearly currently contributes to the overall setting of the building.

There is a history of single storey buildings ancillary to the cotton mill on the footprint of the proposed orangery. The current openness therefore gives a slightly false impression of the historic character of the mill. Without the addition of the orangery, the bar is simply too small to work operationally. The fenestration of the orangery has been carefully designed to provide openness to the façade whilst offering the occupants views out onto the river. A glazed strip will offer visual delineation between the orangery and the mill building at ground level.

Comments as per point 01. It is noted that a 'glazed strip' will offer 'visual delineation' at ground floor, given this strip is located within the western extents of the orangery's interface with the mill I am unconvinced that it is adequate or well-conceived given it will be largely hidden from view at all times.

My original observations clearly make reference to the 'recessed lead panel' (Dwg: 05024 B1_04_002 Rev B) Key Point 10. Given the scale of the orangery and circulation core I still consider that this small recessed transitional panel fails to provide adequate visual delineation which is compounded by the forward projection of both aforementioned elements.

03. The circulation core (SSG Curtain walling) when read in conjunction with the orangery element clearly dominates and undermines not only the lower levels of the primary elevation but also that of the upper floor. The 'glazed-bay' element is clearly proportionally wider than the south-east wing to which it is attached, will be higher in terms of eaves level (which has not been reflected on the proposed east elevation) and will match the aforementioned wing in its forward projection. In my opinion, despite the level of transparency afforded to this element, it clearly dominates the Mill and would appear as an overtly unsympathetic commercial addition that fails to relate or respond to proportions inherent to the south facing elevation.

A vertical circulation element is required within the building to mediate between the varying levels across the building floor plate. It was decided that positioning the vertical core externally was the most sensitive option so as to keep as much of the internal existing fabric intact as possible.

The circulation core is an elegant sympathetic addition to the south elevation, its transparent nature will ensure that the rhythm of the mill façade and historical features can be visible and enjoyed externally. The scale of the circulation core has been considered carefully so as to provide a hierarchal order to the entrance to the building without dominating the façade as a whole.

It is recognised that a circulation element is required given the nature of the proposed use. It is still considered that the scale of this element dominates the primary elevation and options should be explored to relocate this element or reduce its scale. Please note that my original comments also make mention of the glazed core element not being accurately reflected on the proposed east facing elevations, no response has been received.

04. I have noted that the applicants Design & Access Statement makes mention of minimising illumination of the overall area to minimise nocturnal light pollution and the erosion of the rural setting. Given the glazed-bay serves a primary circulation core it is assumed that this would require either permanent or low-level illumination with sensory activated lighting. In either case I have concerns regarding the light-pollution that would be resultant from this element and the level of visual dominance it would be afforded during nocturnal hours, it is also noted that due to potential levels of luminescence this could be visible upon approach from the south and Church Raikie/Malt Kiln Brow being of detriment to the setting and character of the area.

The purpose of the glazed core is to act as a marker for the scheme, clearly denoting an entrance point. Lighting used in the circulation core will be suitable for its setting and will be minimal during the nocturnal hours.

Given the rural setting and nature of the proposal I query the necessity for, or appropriateness of a 'marker for the scheme'. The response in relation to illumination levels fails to address in any meaningful manner my original concerns and the statement that illumination will be 'suitable for its setting' is ambiguous and does not provide clarity or demonstrate that nocturnal illumination levels have been fully considered.

05. No details have been provided in relation to the west facing elevation of the glazed lean-to.

This is a party wall and consists of an existing stone wall.

This was noted and observed following my initial site visit hence my original comments. Elevations are still required to enable an assessment of how and where the lean-to roof element interfaces with the west elevation of the Mill.

06. Detailed clarification will be required with regards to the public realm/surfacing treatment to the frontage of the Mill, should consent be granted I would envisage this could potentially be dealt with through condition but given the status of the building/area a preliminary detailed proposal should be produced to allow for accurate assessment at this stage. Clarification will also be required as to whether issues such as danger of falling have been considered and if any measures of protection will be required in relation to the brook.

A balustrade is proposed to the edge of the brook, Kirk Mill side. This is indicated in Elevation 02 05024_B1_04_002 and the section BB 05024_B1_05_002. The balustrade will be glazed so that the setting of the brook can be enjoyed from the orangery/bar.

This was noted hence my original comments. Elevational details of the proposed balustrading have yet to be provided with the balustrading shown appearing to be indicative/suggestive only.

07. The arrangements for the storage and collection of commercial waste should be clarified.

Throughout the design process we have consulted with the bar, hotel & restaurant operator Living Ventures. Their significant experience in running specialist operations has dictated the strategy for storage and collection of commercial waste.

The primary site refuse points are detailed on page 125 of the Design and Access Statement. Collections of waste will be a management issue that will involve private commercial collections at agreed set times to minimise disturbance to neighbouring residents.

I am aware that an indicative location was provided on page 25 of the D&A Statement, given the ambiguity of the proposed waste storage locations and pick-up arrangements clarification was sought as to how these issues had been considered.

It is indicated that waste will be picked up from an area to the south-east of the hotel/spa which appears to be located on a grass verge, clarification is sought in relation to where waste will be stored prior to collection, if externally, then locations should be clearly indicated and details of any structures to visually conceal/screen waste-storage receptacles should be provided/conditioned. Furthermore it appears that waste will be stored in an area to the south of the trailhead centre which appears to be located within an area of woodland/planting.

B - Hotel/Spa General Comments/Observations

01. It is noted that the Hotel/Spa proposal appears to provide no facilities to allow potential guests/users of the spa to procure refreshments/food. Clarification is sought as to whether the intention is for the 'Mill Hotel' to provide facilities that will cater for this and site-wide as I also have concerns that the commercial kitchen/prep room for the 'Wedding Venue' is relatively small in comparison to the capacity of the venue.

The Mill Hotel will offer guests the opportunity to procure refreshments/food. There will be the opportunity to include a small refreshment area offering coffee/tea in the reception of the Hotel/Spa. Throughout the design process we have consulted with bar, hotel & restaurant operator Living Ventures with regards to the size of kitchen/prep spaces. Therefore, all kitchen/prep and back of house spaces have been agreed to be suitable from a commercial operational perspective.

Noted, although in my experience the kitchen/prep areas appear rather limited given the overall capacity of the venues/facilities combined.

02. The public-realm element fronting both 'The Barn' and the Hotel complex appears to be largely undefined. Whilst I welcome transitions in the surfacing I have a concern that the area, by virtue of its size and open nature is likely to be utilised for informal parking by users/guests.

The main event space will not be used for parking. Access has been provided for the occasional requirement for equipment drop-off such as marquee/market stall structures. Vehicles will be primarily parked in the main car park.

Noted.

03. Clarification is sought as to whether the public realm to the north and south elevations of the Hotel/Spa have been designed or are intended to act as informal parking-bays as the area of hard surface to the southern extents of the Hotel appears to be excessive. Where it is intended that areas within the complex are to accommodate vehicular parking this should be clearly shown on a revised site-plan.

The area in front of the south elevation has been designed for secondary overspill car parking if it is required. Drawing 05024_MP_00_104 clearly shows car parking bays for all formal areas of car parking within the scheme.

Noted. Drawing 05024_MP_00_104 shows all car parking bays to the east of the application site, however the drawing does not indicate that the areas to the north or south of the Hotel/Spa are intended to accommodate 'overspill parking'. All overspill areas should be indicated.

04. The Steam Room, Sauna and Spa element of the Hotel appear to be located in the single storey glazed-link portion of the building. Clarification is sought that extract has been considered and will be dealt with via the Plant Room ventilation above the pool element.

Yes this would be the case.

Noted.

05. The main pool/plant building appears to introduce what could be considered as an incongruous and alien mansard roof-form that appears to hint at a 'Scandinavian' approach. Whilst I can understand the design intention may be for this to appear as a 'utilitarian' structure I consider that given the level of visual prominence it will be afforded the elevational language and roof-form be reconsidered.

This element of the scheme is a key place maker in the scheme and therefore has been purposefully designed so that it creates a strong visual connection from the Mill. There is a significant amount of planting existing and proposed that will provide a degree of the screening that will break up the form of the building at street level. The form of the building is a modern interpretation of the local vernacular; it has been carefully designed so that the plant space is concealed.

Noted.

06. At present the pool element it is likely to dominate the overall context/setting of the Mill and that of the residential/domestic scale of the existing and proposed cottages, no composite streetscenes have been provided to allow for direct scale comparisons to be made or to demonstrate that the inherent scales within the vicinity have informed the overall design & scale

The landscape architect Camlin Lonsdale has produced a series of visual impact studies these can be found attached at the end of this document.

The visual impact studies had been considered, due to the limited view-points provided it is considered that composite street-scenes/cross-sections would be an invaluable tool for direct scale comparisons to be made/assessed.

07. I am unconvinced that the practicalities of the outdoor pool have been considered. There appears to be no provision for hard surface routes around the pool area that would allow guests/users to access the pool.

The pool will be accessed from the pool building, suitable landscaping will be provided where necessary.

The only point of access appears to be a doorway that leads to an external grassed area. It is likely that users will require an element of hard surfacing to approach the pool and similarly to exit the pool, it is therefore practical to assume that there will be a requirement that the pool is likely to be bounded by a hard surfaced area, this does not appear to have been considered.

08. No provision for waste storage/collection appears to have been provided for this part of the hotel complex, given the immediate setting I would encourage that any such storage be integral to the built form.

Detail on the waste storage/collection areas are shown on page 125 of the Design & Access statement.

Noted. Please refer to point A-07 above.

C - Barn/Cottages General Comments/Observations

01. I have concerns regarding the treatment of the existing 'Barn', in particular the domestication of its primary (south-west) elevation. I consider the timber panelled infill to the main sliding door area to be wholly inappropriate which is further reinforced by the introduction of what appears to be a

standard window/door arrangement. A bespoke solution should be considered that maintains the character and inherent value of this element.

To be fit for purpose the south west elevation of the barn will require apertures in the façade. The design of the façade is the result of the local vernacular where precedents of barn conversions are numerous. Timber was chosen for the infill for a number of reasons:

- its inherent natural quality
- its association with agricultural buildings
- the existing sliding door to the barn is timber
- the scale of the original sliding door can be appreciated through use of a contrasting material.

Noted. It is still considered the timber infill panel is poorly considered in terms of its appearance/detailing and not in relation to its materiality.

02. The timber clad element of the 'cottages' should also be reviewed in light of the above comments.

As above.

Noted. Please refer to point C-01 above.

03. Whilst I understand the footprint of the 'Barn Cottages' has been dictated by the size of existing structures to be demolished the first floor level floorplan appears to be excessive in terms of internal space for a singular bedroom and suggest the overall scale of the cottages could be reduced as a result.

These rooms are designed to offer something unique in the market. The brief from the bar, hotel & restaurant operator Living Ventures was to offer rooms and en-suites of this nature.

Noted. No further comment.

D - Malt Kiln Brow Housing General Comments/Observations

01. I have concerns regarding the location of the Malt Kiln Brow Housing element. The plots appear to be both physically and visually detached in relation to built form and it could be argued that the Brow acts as a clear physical break and delineation between Chipping and the natural 'basin' that the remainder of the proposal is located within. It is considered that development on the brow could visually consolidate the settlement with the Mill complex undermining its setting and value.

A confidential viability report has been submitted with the application, which demonstrates that without the residential element of the proposal none of the development will be possible, as the monies are needed to fund the work to the mill. The value of the self-build plots is significant and is proportionately much greater several times over on a 'per unit' basis than the larger housing element. The inclusion of the 4 plots is absolutely essential. This is a holistic approach, which although containing different elements, are all intrinsically linked.

The submitted Heritage Report and LVIA clearly demonstrates that the proposal will not materially harm heritage values of the place or its setting; rather the proposal will bring significant improvements to the mill itself and indeed the Conservation Area generally, through the removal of unsightly late additions to the mill and unattractive buildings.

The Landscape Officer has acknowledged in their consultation response that the envisaged development within this area would not result in substantial landscape or visual effects. The Malt Kiln Brow proposals are in outline and the Council are able to fully inform the reserved matters

application(s), for example through the provision of landscape mitigation brief. The Council should be resolutely confident that it retains control over the suitability of the properties that will be built here.

Noted. Has the option of relocating the 'self-build' plots into the parcel of land to the south been explored. Whilst I note the viability argument I see no reason why the self-build plots could not be located within a defined parcel on the land to the south along with the remainder of the proposed residential development and I remain unconvinced that this has been explored fully.

Whilst it is accepted that the Local planning Authority could 'retain control over the suitability of the properties' in this location, my primary objection and concern relates to the principle of development in this area. I have a fundamental concern that development within this area would compromise the role the Brow plays in acting as a clear physical break and delineation between Chipping and the natural 'basin' that the remainder of the proposal is located within.

02. I also have concerns regarding the practicalities of the access point to the Brow. The area appears to benefit from a significant change in topography and it is likely additional planting may be required to be removed to achieve visibility splays. It is important to consider that the area of planting in this area clearly contributes to the overall setting of the 'Basin'.

The Malt Kiln Brow site access has been fully considered by SCPI's appointed transport consultant, Curtins, within the submitted Transport Assessment. Furthermore no concerns have been raised by the LCC Highways Officer in relation to this particular element.

Noted. My concerns remain regarding the amount of landscaping to be removed to potentially achieve and maintain visibility splays. I also note the Highways response has requested a more detailed plan for this access point, I will comment further when these are received but the nature, appearance and location of this access point remains a concern.

03. Whilst I appreciate this element is at outline stage (access only) I would have long terms concerns regarding how residential curtilages would be defined and that the development would lead to vehicular parking to forecourts undermining the rural setting of the area.

The Malt Kiln Brow element of the application proposals has been submitted in outline with all matters reserved with the exception of access. The outline nature of the proposals allows the Council to set the reserved matters parameters, therefore ensuring that a scheme of the highest quality can be delivered on the site.

As such, there is no reason why the Urban Design Officer should have long term concerns regarding the definition of residential curtilages. The detailed design of the dwellings can be fully influenced by the Council at the Reserved Matters application stage(s).

Noted. Please refer to comment D-01 above. The long term concerns are valid and it is imperative to be mindful of how curtilages will be defined at this stage. The granting of permission for a principle of development which through necessity may lead to the introduction of numerous unsympathetic and incongruous elements within the landscape remains a material consideration at this stage.

E - General Comments/Observations	
--	--

01. The extents of hard-surfacing in relation to the car park should be reduced and permeable surfacing also considered. I would suggest that parking bays be further broken up/reduced through the introduction of additional intermittent tree planting and/or screening.

Permeable surfacing will be located within the scheme wherever possible. This is evident in the main event space in front of both the barn and hotel/spa with the use of sets with grass spacers.

The main car park has been broken up as much as possible with green space and planting whilst still proposing a suitable amount of car parking for the scheme. Retaining the existing hard standing in the car park area is beneficial for a number of reasons including transport of waste materials from the site being reduced, as well as retaining an element of history of the site.

Noted, I will defer to RVBC's Countryside officer in relation to the extent of landscaping accompanying the parking area. Full details of surfacing and the treatment of the public realm, parking areas and any proposed street furnishings should be requested via condition.

	Officer:	Stephen Kilmartin
--	-----------------	--------------------------