



Mr Laurence Hill  
Leeds City Council  
The Leonardo Building  
2 Rossington Street  
LEEDS  
LS2 8HD

Direct Dial: 01904 601961

Our ref: P00499450

22 February 2016

Dear Mr Hill

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

**THE OLD MILL, MIRY LANE, YEADON, LEEDS, LS19 7ER**  
**Application No 15/06800/OT**

Thank you for your letter of 9 February 2016 notifying Historic England of the above application. Historic England has been consulted on this application because it is it meets the requirements set out under regulation 5A(3) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 (as amended). This refers to 'development that would affect the character and appearance of a conservation area where the development involves the erection of a new building or the extension of an existing building, and the area of land in respect of which the application is made is more than 1,000sqm'. The total site area for this application is 3,860sqm.

The proposal is an outline application for the substantial demolition of this historic building and the erection of 23no. new build residential units. Two apartments are to be provided in small retained section of the mill.

**Summary**

Historic England objects to the current application. We support the principle of the redevelopment of the site and we accept that some demolition may be necessary, however in the absence of any supporting structural survey information we consider that the extent of demolition has not been justified. We also question whether sole residential use is the best way of preserving and enhancing the contribution the building makes to the conservation area. A mixed use may be more desirable. Notwithstanding the issue of use we are extremely concerned that the current application does not retain a much larger proportion of this important C18 building and any later phases which contribute to significance. The retention of more of the historic structure, even in sections incorporated into new contemporary structures, should be explored to create an innovative, characterful response to the site and its setting. We therefore object to the scheme in its current form and would be happy to work with the



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applicant and your Conservation Officer on an amended scheme.

### **Historic England Advice**

#### **Significance**

The Old Mill, or T'owd Dog dates to 1792 and was built by Joseph Cawthray as the first steam powered mill in the town. It makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of Yeadon conservation area and is identified as a positive building in the Yeadon Conservation Area Appraisal. The attributes of the mill which contribute to its significance include the landmark prominence of the tower in the valley, the evidence the structure holds of the area's history and development, the local vernacular style it exhibits and its importance in the streetscape.

The Conservation Area was extended in 2012 to include a concentration of surviving mill complexes dating from the 18th and 19th centuries to recognise the importance of the industrial heritage of the town, including Old Mill'.

Surviving mills form an important part of the character of the town. Most survivals date to the mid-late 19th century. This gives the C18 origins of Old Mills particularly strong heritage significance as it one of the first and helped to establish the town as an early centre of industry.

#### **Impact**

The proposed amount of loss of this important historic building would cause serious harm to the conservation area. The proposed layout of the new structures on the site does not pay special attention to the special architectural interest of the conservation area. The proposal to introduce informal groupings of townhouses as shown on the Block Plan would go against the industrial character of the site.

The critical relationship with the adjacent watercourse and the contribution it makes to the setting of the building has not been considered in the application. Key views from the adjacent nature reserve which allow the overall form of the structure to be appreciated should be preserved and enhanced where possible. The amount of demolition proposed would harm and dilute the industrial presence of the structure.

#### **Policy**

The information submitted with the application does not include an assessment of the significance of the heritage asset affected. This means that the application fails to address paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March, 2012). This fundamental omission means that there is no explanation of how the heritage values attached to the building and its setting have been understood and used to inform the design proposals. We advise that a detailed assessment of significance, including phasing plans and using and a heritage values approach should



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be carried out, ideally by a suitably experienced and qualified heritage professional.

Regardless of this lack of assessment, we consider that the application in its current form is contrary to the policies in the NPPF which seek to promote high quality, locally distinctive design and to conserve and enhance the historic environment in a manner appropriate to its significance. In particular we draw attention to paragraphs 61, 64, 132 and 137. The proposed layout and form of new development does not pay special attention to the character and appearance of the conservation area. This is something which your authority is required to consider when carrying out our planning functions under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Para 131 of the NPPF states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Para 132 calls for any loss of significance to a heritage asset to require a 'clear and convincing justification'. We do not consider that the serious harm that would be caused to the conservation area has been justified in this case.

### Position

Historic England objects to the current application. There has been a significant loss of historic fabric with the demolition of many of the mills and dye works in Yeadon conservation area in recent years meaning that it is more critical now to ensure that no further loss occurs without a robust justification that there is no other viable option for the site.

We are unconvinced that the extent of demolition proposed is necessary. There is no structural survey report submitted with the application. We advise that a full structural survey should be undertaken by an appropriately qualified and experienced, conservation accredited structural engineer. The report should assess the potential for as much of the fabric as possible to be retained and incorporated into a new structure. As a matter of principle the retention of as many of the historic buildings on the site in a form which allows their significance to be appreciated should be sought.

We also wish to highlight that in our view an outline application should not be accepted as it does not allow full assessment of detailed matters such as design and materials. These matters will have a major impact on how any new development will affect the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The redevelopment of the Old Mill offers the opportunity to strengthen and reflect local character and distinctiveness, however this has not been achieved in the current scheme.





Historic England

YORKSHIRE OFFICE

**Recommendation**

The application in its current form should be refused as it does not meet the definition of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF. We would welcome the opportunity to work with the applicant and your authority to develop a creative, composite development which understands the significance of the site and retains more of the historic building.

Yours sincerely



**Kerry Babington**

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

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cc



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