

Project: Mixed Use Redevelopment
Washpit Mills

Document: Design, Access and
Planning Support
Statement

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ONE17

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Introduction

This statement has been prepared by One 17 Architects in support of a revised planning application for the redevelopment of the Washpit Mills former Westwood Yarns textile mill site between Green Lane and Choppards Lane to the south of Holmfirth in the Holme Valley in West Yorkshire.

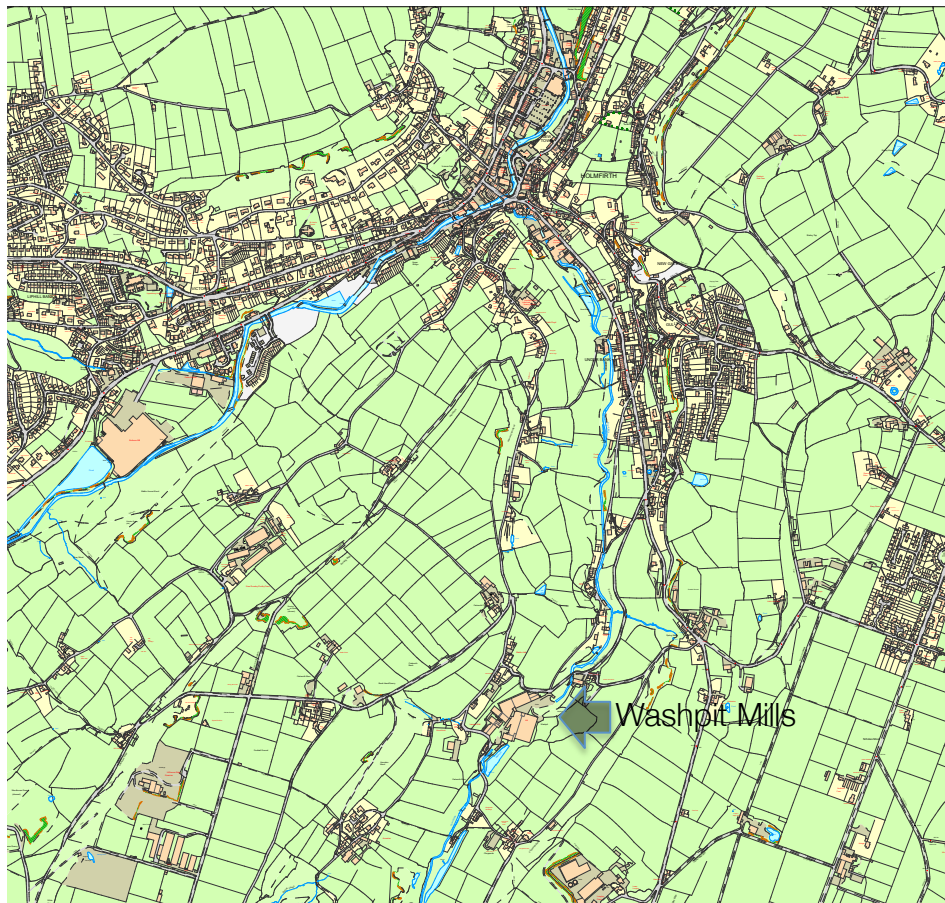


Figure 1: Washpit Mills lies to the south of Holmfirth

A first application lodged in late summer 2016. An appeal against non-determination was subsequently lodged but was dismissed on appeal. An LBC application in respect of the listed mill within the complex was similarly dismissed. The redundant textile complex is to be converted to a mixed-use development of residential, workshop units, leisure etc with a combination of retained, converted buildings and new construction as was the case with the original application. However, a number of changes to the scheme have been

made that respond to comments made by the appeal inspector and to discussions held with officers and local councillors between the appeal decision and this current application. Details of the changes are dealt with within later sections of this report.

Between the two main planning applications an application for a Certificate of Lawful Use in respect of the existing building on the northern edge of the site was submitted and approved. The extent of the site covered by the Certificate is identified by a blue outline on application drawings.

The Site

The site is a former textile mill and comprises a range of buildings, some of which are to be demolished and some of which are to be converted. Figure 2 shows the main elements of the site.

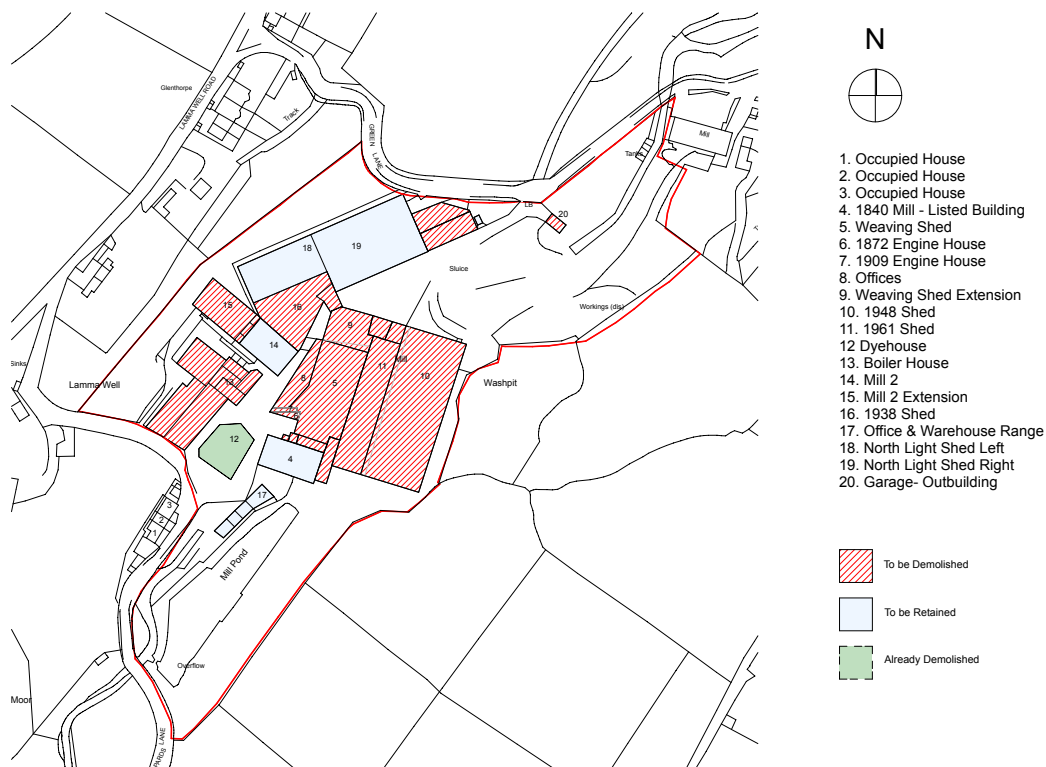


Figure 2: Site as Existing

The site is within the cleft of a steep sided valley giving significant changes in level across the site: a full topographic survey is included as part of the planning package.

Planning Framework

On the Kirklees UDP map the site sits within Green Belt. See figure 3. It is also within a Site of Scientific Interest (SSI)

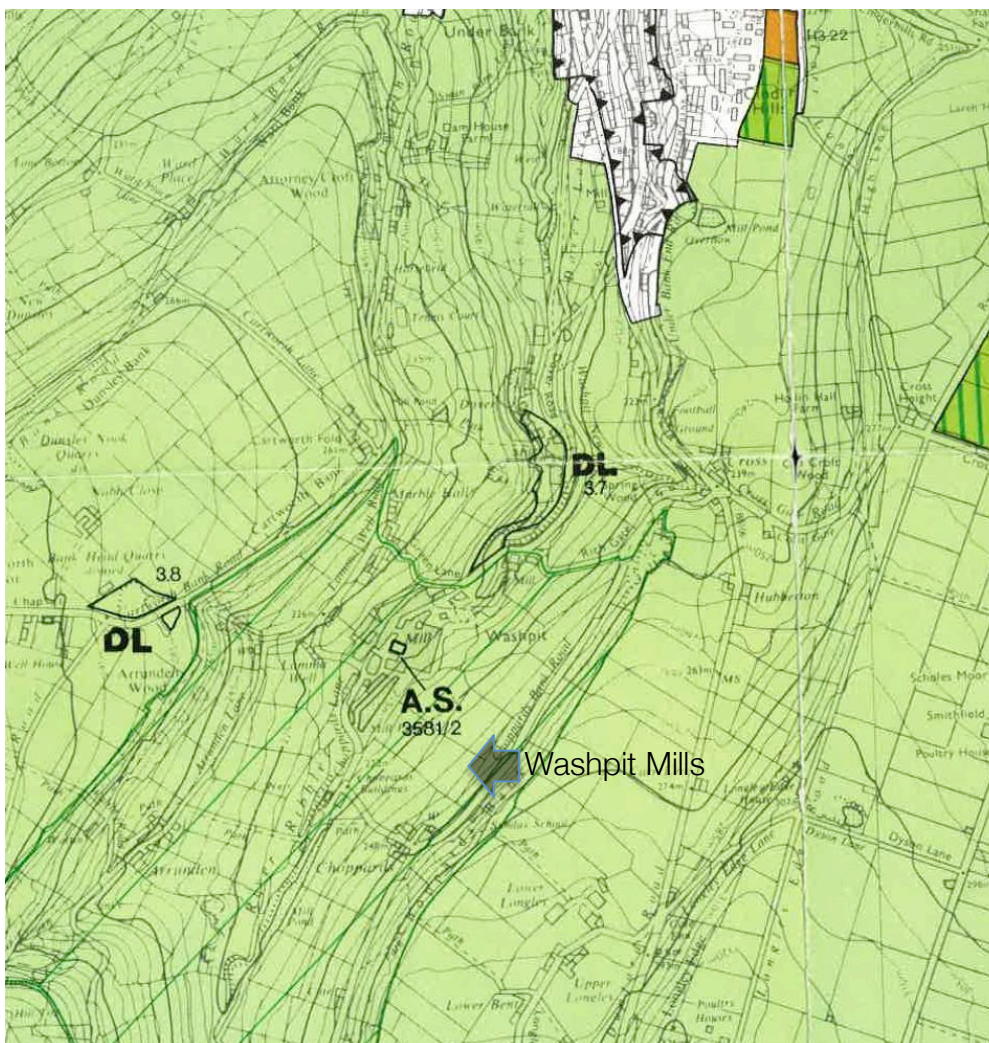


Figure 3: extract from Kirklees UDP map

As the site is within Green Belt there is a general presumption against development except in particular circumstances. Paragraph 90 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the principle of the acceptability of (i.e. not inappropriate) conversion of existing buildings within Green Belt:

90. Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. These are:

- mineral extraction;
- engineering operations;
- local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction; and
- development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

The proposal scheme involves some reuse and some demolition and replacement building. The site is a coherent and discrete building group within the green belt. The redevelopment of the site will have no greater impact on the openness of the green belt than the existing development nor will it adversely affect the SSI designation. The Appeal Decision report confirmed that the proposal scheme would not adversely affect the openness of the green belt.

The impact on the heritage asset that exists within the site is dealt with in a separate Heritage Impact Statement.

Layout

The layout of the scheme is determined by:

- the buildings to be retained,
- the footprint of the buildings to be demolished,
- the line of the culvert to be reopened,
- the topography of the site and
- the importance of permitting a route through the site between Green Lane and Choppards Lane.

The different elements of the scheme (residential, commercial/industrial, leisure etc) are separated in such a way as to maximise the benefits for each and to safeguard the amenities of residential properties in particular. See Figure 4.

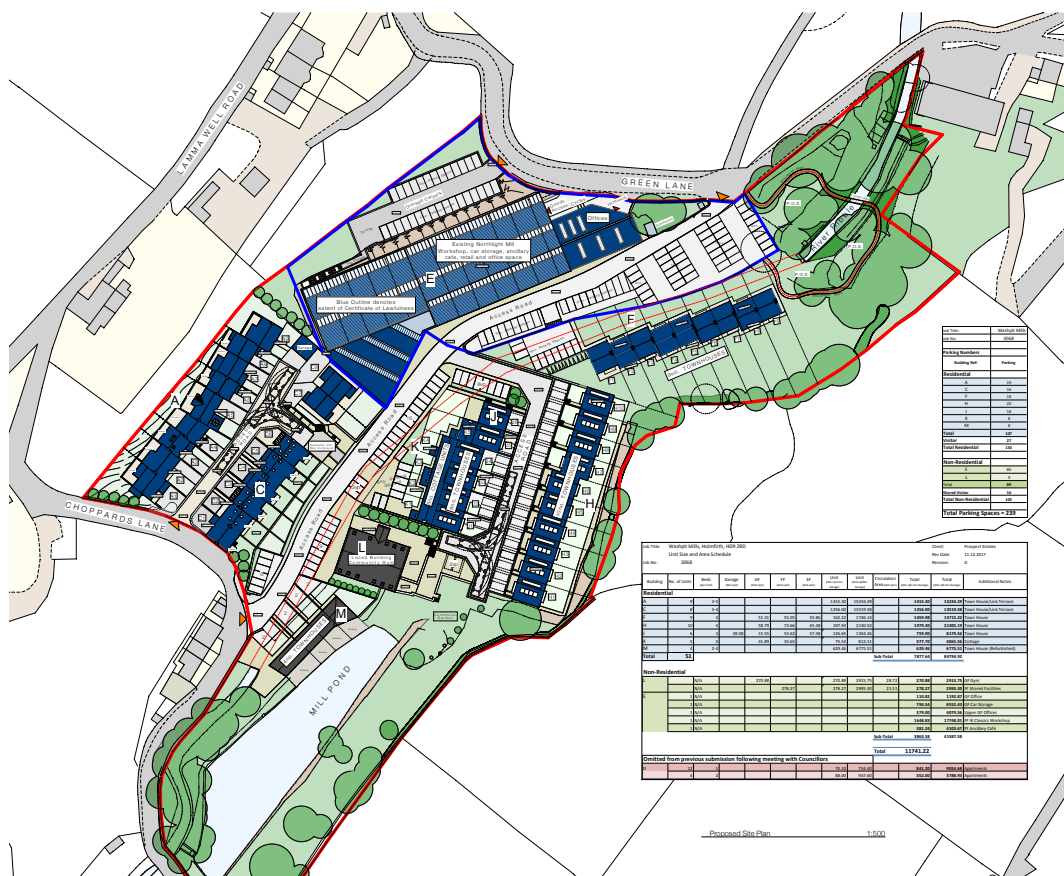


Figure 4: Site Plan as Proposed

Scale

The scale of the proposal scheme relates closely to the scale of the existing buildings on site. The non-residential elements are generally minor (in terms of scale) adaptations of existing buildings, thus retaining the existing scale.

Where new residential elements are proposed on areas where existing buildings are to be demolished, these follow the scale of West Yorkshire vernacular weavers' cottages as found in nearby hamlets and villages, being two and three storeys, generally in terraces.

Amount

The amount of accommodation proposed is set out in Figure 5, taken from the site plan shown in Figure 4. Note the accommodation omitted, shown at the bottom of the table, which followed discussions with officers and local councillors.

Building	No. of Units	Beds (per Unit)	Garage (GIA sqm)	GF (GIA sqm)	FF (GIA sqm)	SF (GIA sqm)	Unit (GIA sqm Exc Garage)	Unit (GIA sqft Exc Garage)	Circulation Area (GIA sqm)	Total (GIA sqm Exc Garage)	Total (GIA sqft Exc Garage)	Additional Notes
Residential												
A	9	3-5					1415.30	15234.29		1415.30	15234.29	Town House/Link Terrace
C	8	3-4					1256.00	13519.58		1256.00	13519.58	Town House/Link Terrace
F	9	4		51.31	55.05	55.86	162.22	1746.14		1459.98	15715.22	Town House
H	10	4		58.79	73.66	65.48	197.93	2130.52		1979.30	21305.19	Town House
J	6	3	38.08	15.55	53.62	57.48	126.65	1363.26		759.90	8179.56	Town House
K	5	2		41.89	33.65		75.54	813.11		377.70	4065.56	Cottage
M	4	2-4					629.46	6775.51		629.46	6775.51	Town House (Refurbished)
Total	51									Sub-Total	7877.64	84794.92
Non-Residential												
L		N/A		270.88			270.88	2915.75	28.72	270.88	2915.75	GF Gym
		N/A			278.27		278.27	2995.30	21.51	278.27	2995.30	FF Shared Facilities
E	1	N/A								110.82	1192.87	GF Office
	1	N/A								794.54	8552.43	GF Car Storage
	1	N/A								379.00	4079.56	Upper GF Offices
	1	N/A								1648.83	17748.01	FF IK Classics Workshop
	1	N/A								381.24	4103.67	FF Ancillary Café
										Sub-Total	3863.58	41587.58
										Total	11741.22	
Omitted from previous submission following meeting with Councillors												
D	12	1					70.10	754.40		841.20	9054.68	Apartments
	4	2					88.00	947.60		352.00	3788.93	Apartments

Figure 5: Schedule of accommodation

Design/Appearance

The scheme aims to present a mixed redevelopment with some existing buildings refurbished and improved to demonstrate the longevity and flexibility of many early industrial buildings associated with the textile industry. These buildings will root the redevelopment firmly in the industrial heritage of the site. There will be extensive areas of local coursed walling stone and slated pitched roofs retained with traditional repetitive 'punched hole' windows in these buildings. Small subsidiary modern elements are inserted at salient points to point up the refurbishment process and provide a contemporary counterpoint to the vintage buildings.

New replacement buildings (mainly residential) take their design cues from the local vernacular residential forms of weavers' cottages using two and three storey terraced forms. Traditional cottages that are more often than not roofed with a single continuous pitched roof having the ridge running along the length of the block; some new buildings follow this pattern and some have sawtooth 'northlight' pitched roofs echoing the typical sawtooth northlight roofs of many of the more contemporary weaving sheds of the area. Sheds to be demolished as part of the scheme carried just such roof forms.



Figure 6: some housing has traditional continuous ridges



Figure 7: sometownhouses have 'northlight' roofs for variety

The listed mill building (the original building on the site from which the whole complex developed) is to be converted to use as a gymnasium for site residents and workers. Please refer to the separate Listed Building Consent documents.



Figure 8: Listed Mill to be converted to community gymnasium

The mill building is listed and arguably the most important on the site. The impact of the proposals on this heritage asset is dealt with in a separate document.

Occasional isolated buildings reduce the overall scale of the new scheme, giving a more human environment than the existing industrial site. This is further enhanced by the pond, the public open space and the river that appears in parts of the site.

The design aims to demonstrate the long term viability of such a redundant industrial site through careful refurbishment and selected demolition and rebuilding. The rural location, the presence of water and the ability to mix residential, leisure and employment uses to mutual benefit, all present a rare opportunity to design on a scale and in a context that would defeat a less imaginative proposal.

Landscaping

The site benefits greatly from its setting within the stunning Holme Valley landscape, recognised for its quality by the SSI designation within the Kirklees UDP. Within the site there are areas of mature trees, a large mill pond and the watercourse that feeds it. An area of public open space is included within the site boundary.



Figure 9: the superb landscape setting of Washpit Mills. The mill pond is at the bottom of the picture.

Landscaping works within the site therefore involve:

- Cleaning up the existing mill pond to create an attractive water feature
- Improvement of areas of natural landscape within the site that do not lend themselves to development

- Improving hard landscaping between and adjacent to buildings in keeping with the aesthetics of the retained and new buildings
- Creating a specific area of Public Open Space

The landscaped areas immediately surrounding the mill pond, the area at the north-eastern end of the site and the eastern boundary provide opportunities for careful management to restore these to high quality natural landscape typical of surrounding areas. Landscaping of domestic or highly controlled 'civic' character would be inappropriate in such a setting.

Access

There is existing highways access to the site connecting to the wider road network and substantial amounts of domestic and commercial traffic related to the site have relied on the highway network for decades.

Parking provision is made within the site for all new uses and the site layout provides a link through the site between Green Lane and Choppards Lane.

Within the site all buildings will be accessible in accordance with current Building Regulations requirements.

A separate highways report accompanies the planning application. However it should be noted that both the Inspector's report on the appeal decision against non-determination of the original application, and subsequent discussions with both officers and local councillors concentrated on concerns regarding the quality of surrounding highway infrastructure and the impact of the proposal upon it.

Two specific changes with regard to access have been made in the current scheme as compared with the previous one:

- The mix of accommodation has been altered, removing the proposed hotel/restaurant and substituting townhouses where conversion of a building to apartments was originally proposed
- Specific works to create a higher standard footpath along Washpit New Road to link the site with Dunford Road where there are bus stops giving access to the wider area. This is shown in drawing no. 3068 (0-) 238 Rev.A

Other minor changes to the layout arise from the granting of a Certificate of Lawful Use in relation to the existing building at the northern edge of the site. The extent of the area covered by the Certificate is indicated by a blue boundary line on application drawings.

Healthy, Active, Safe Lifestyles

In recognition of Policy PLP 47 of the Kirklees Publication Draft Local Plan (PDLP) we offer the following comments in respect of the proposal:

- The site sits within extremely high quality green belt landscape offering immediate access to the countryside
- The site contains a mill pond with adjacent communal garden and a separate area of public open space through which a section of the River Ribble runs
- The listed mill is proposed as a gymnasium/fitness facility dedicated to residents and workers of the site

- Many of the residential units have gardens large enough to accommodate the growing of fruit and vegetables.
- The location naturally encourages walking and cycling and there is good access to the local bus service. This in turn connects the site with the numerous sports, recreation and cultural facilities within Holmfirth and its surroundings including a swimming pool, tennis courts, cricket clubs, bowling clubs, playing fields of various kinds, music, exhibition and theatre venues.