Historic England

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23 June 2023

Dear Mr Hirst

Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2021
& T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990

NEWSOME MILLS, HART STREET, NEWSOME, HUDDERSFIELD, WEST YORKSHIRE HD4 6JF
Application Nos 2023/91301 & 2023/91300

Thank you for your letters of 9 June 2023 regarding the above applications for listed building consent and planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the applications.

Summary

Newsome Mill is an iconic local landmark and important physical reminder of the West Yorkshire textile industry. The complex is listed at Grade II in recognition of its national significance. Historic England is supportive of the proposals for the redevelopment of the site and we particularly welcome the detailed proposals for the listed buildings on the site. There are several heritage benefits to the proposals and some less than substantial harm as a result of the proposed loss of the former Mill Manager's Office. We recommend the benefits and harm are weighed up in determination of the application, in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF. If your authority is minded to grant consent for the proposals, we recommend materials are agreed in consultation with your specialist Conservation Officers.

Historic England Advice

Newsome Mills is a grade II listed, integrated textile mill complex comprising of a main mill block with attached clock tower and bell, weaving sheds, Tuscan archway, ancillary and administrative buildings.

The mill complex, constructed from hammer dressed stone, was erected in the late 19th century following the loss of the earlier woollen mill established by John Taylor in

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1827. The new mill was described at the time of opening as “a splendid block of buildings, mills and weaving sheds of great extent and admirable arrangement.” The existing buildings operated as a worsted mill under the partnership of Taylor & Littlewood until its closure in 1983 having provided employment for generations of mill workers. A number of buildings were subsequently demolished including the chimney, boiler house and more recently weaving sheds.

The surviving buildings continue to be a prominent feature on the Huddersfield skyline. The structures form the major part of a significant worsted textile complex of the second half of the 19th century, an industry which was an important specialism within the nationally important textile industry. The clock tower in particular is an iconic landmark visible from many locations across the town and contributes strongly to the considerable communal value of the mill. In addition the clock tower and the attached archway are of architectural interest, being well executed and decoratively detailed, as well as being the centre around the remaining buildings are grouped.

Having lain vacant for over 10 years, the mill suffered significant damage following a fire in November 2016 resulting in the partial demolition of the main range and last weaving sheds. Whilst the clock tower, archway, lodge and office building remain, the structures are exposed and in a deteriorating condition.

Historic England provided detailed advice on the previous scheme which was granted consent for Newsome Mills. The current application is consistent with the aims of the previous application, and includes detailed proposals for the listed buildings, which we welcome.

It is proposed to demolish the former Mill Manager’s office due to its poor structural condition. A structural survey has been submitted to support this proposal. The loss of the office building would cause less than substantial harm to the overall significance of the listed complex. This is mitigated to an extent through the landscaping proposals which would mark the location of the office and incorporate salvaged architectural elements.

Overall, we are supportive of the scheme. The proposals would repair and incorporate the majority of the remaining fabric elements of the listed buildings. The new-build units take inspiration from the historic character of the site and respect the setting of the listed buildings. The loss of the former mill office would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed buildings, but there are also many heritage benefits to the proposals. We recommend this harm is weighed against the benefits of the scheme, in accordance with paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

If your authority is minded to grant consent for the proposals, we recommend materials are agreed with your specialist Conservation Officers. We are comfortable with the

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principle of a lightweight cladding material for the new construction within the mill range, as we have seen this used to good effect elsewhere. The success of this approach is in the quality and finish of the materials to ensure they complement the retained stonework. We have some concerns about the proposals for a variety of different coloured panels across the elevations and suggest the differentiation would need to be subtle if this approach is adopted. Otherwise, it may be best to have a high-quality finish in one complementary colour across the facades, or a coating that reflects the light in different ways, to achieve the impression of dimension to the surface.

Recommendation
Historic England supports the applications on heritage grounds.
We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the applications to meet the requirements of paragraphs 199, 200 and 202 of the NPPF.

In determining these applications you should bear in mind the statutory duty of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Your authority should take these representations into account in determining the applications. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us. Please advise us of the decisions in due course.

Yours sincerely
Emma Sharpe

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