



Historic England

Ms Jillian Rann
Kirklees Council

Direct Dial: 01904 601957

Our ref: L01594315
24 November 2025

Dear Ms Rann

Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2021

TURNBRIDGE MILLS, QUAY STREET, HUDDERSFIELD, HD1 6QT Application No. 2025/91645

Thank you for your letter of 24 June 2025 regarding the above application for listed building consent. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Historic England Advice

Significance

Turnbridge Spinning Mill was built between 1871-73 in a functional style with some Italianate features. It has largely preserved its internal layout which allows us to understand the cast iron, fireproof construction methods and how the building would have been used for different stages of the cotton processing. It was unusual for cotton to be milled in this area, as most mills processed wool.

The Spinning block has a strong relationship with the adjacent listed chimney (GII), the listed mill to the south of Quay Street (GII), the scheduled Turn Bridge, as well as several other former industrial buildings which make up a clear group of buildings associated with the cotton processing at the Spinning Mill.

These collectively create a strong industrial character which is visually dominated by the mass and scale of the two mill buildings.

Impact

The proposal seeks to demolish the whole of the Spinning Block to make way for both a new build and a turning circle. The proposal would cause a high level of harm to the significance of the Turnbridge Spinning Mill. This harm is considered to be substantial in NPPF terms.



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The proposal would also cause a moderate amount of harm to the Turn Bridge, mill south of Quay Street, and the listed chimney as the loss of the mill would erode the immediate setting of the group of designated heritage assets through a loss of understanding of the industrial context in which these buildings are set within. This harm is considered to be a moderate amount of less than substantial harm in NPPF terms.

Policy

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that, irrespective of the level of harm caused to the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be awarded to its conservation.

As per paragraph 213 of the NPPF, where any amount of harm would be caused to the significance of a designated heritage asset this requires clear and convincing justification for the harm caused:

- In the case where substantial harm would be caused to a GII listed building, this should be exceptional.

Paragraph 214 states that where substantial harm would be caused to the significance, local authorities should refuse consent unless the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the significant harm to significance, or if all of the following are achieved:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 215 states that where a proposal would cause less than substantial harm this harm should be weighed against the perceived public benefits of the scheme and were possible securing its optimum viable use.

Aspinall Verdi Report



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The LPA has commissioned Aspinall Verdi to consider the sequential options and viability work carried out by the Applicant.

Whilst we acknowledge that the Aspinall Verdi report concludes that the options put forward for assessment by the Applicant would likely all be unviable, this report has raised some concerns as to whether the application and supporting documents, , have fully satisfied the conditions of paragraph 214 of the NPPF. The Report has made assessments and recommendations according to the sections of paragraph 214 parts a) - d) and we will consider those below.

A) The Nature of The Asset

In the report it states that the information provided 'does not evidence that "all reasonable uses of the site are prevented"'(paragraph 10.8).

It goes on to explain that whilst the site had been marketed for c.15 years, Building B was not Listed at this time and therefore concluded that 'As a result of this, within the options presented, the retention of the heritage asset was not perceived as a priority' (paragraph 10.12). The Report goes on to advise that a new, more holistic assessment should be undertaken '...with an emphasis on exploring the retention of the Listed assets' (paragraph 10.12).

B) No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing

The Report acknowledges that during the marketing exercise there was some interest from a third party although this fell through, however it is not clear why. It is not clear whether marketing was targeted at not for profit or charitable organisations which will be explored below.

C) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible

Paragraph 214 (c) of the NPPF refers to confirming that "not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible". Aspinall Verdi commented that 'No such organisations/entities registered interest during the marketing period; however, it is not clear whether the marketing efforts were actively directed at charities or other organisations that may specialise in the restoration of heritage buildings. It is also worth noting that funding is available to such organisations' (paragraph 10.18).



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Part (c) of paragraph 214 of the NPPF also considers 'conservation by grant funding'. The Aspinall Verdi report advises that there are alternative funding avenues available to third parties and/or to themselves (paragraph 10.21).

Crucially however they state 'Given that the owners consider the complex north of Quay Street as a potential liability, the complex could be sold to a third party which may be interested in taking forwards a scheme, which includes renovation of Building B, which is well placed in the Station to Stadium corridor and with proximity to the University' (paragraph 10.23).

D) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

The report goes on to state that 'Hirst's Mill, is in use at the moment, and whilst it may be in poor condition, it nevertheless is delivering benefits in terms of the jobs and services that the current occupiers are providing' (paragraph 10.26).

Historic England Position

After considering the content of the Aspinall Verdi Report, Historic England consider that in the proposal's current form the conditions of paragraph 214 of the NPPF have therefore not been fully met. We would support the Report's recommendation that a new, holistic assessment is carried out with an emphasis on retaining the listed structure (para 10.12).

We agree that alternative funding streams, including third-party ownership which may have access to additional funding streams, should be considered to achieve the overall goal for this area of Huddersfield whilst also retaining this nationally significant heritage asset.

We note that the listed mill is presently providing benefits via the jobs and services that the current occupiers are providing and therefore the loss of these jobs and services should be weighed by the local authority in the decision-making process.

In conclusion, in light of further information which has been provided, it has not been demonstrated that paragraph 214 has been satisfied in full therefore we cannot support this application. Given the substantial harm caused to the significance of the mill due its total loss we recommend that alternative options are explored, seeking to retain this nationally significant building.

Next Steps

Historic England recognises the importance of bringing economic development to the centre of Huddersfield and the role this site could play within the West Yorkshire Investment Zone. Bringing modern economic activity into this historic industrial site



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would be a fitting continuation of that history and something local people could be proud of. However, we believe there is real scope for accommodating these plans within the site without such significant level of harm to the nationally designated heritage.

We consider that the regeneration of this area should be led by heritage assets and we would support a scheme which looks to retain and celebrate the important industrial heritage of Huddersfield.

Recommendation

We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the application to meet the requirements of paragraphs 212, 213, 214, and 215 of the NPPF.

In determining this application you should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 16(2) 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 and seek amendments, safeguards or further information as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Yours sincerely

Alexander Harrison

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

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