DC Admin

From: Cllr Harry McCarthy
Sent: 19 December 2025 18:40
To: DC Admin; Farzana Tabasum
Cc:
Subject: 2025/92882 - Former Cellars Clough Mill, off Manchester Road, Marsden, HD7 6LY

Hello,

I am writing as a Colne Valley ward councillor to provide comments regarding Citu's planning application on the former Cellars Clough Mill site.

I am not opposed to the principle of development on this site. This is a formerly developed brownfield site, and it is right that these sites are prioritised over greenfield developments.

The site is currently an eyesore, largely due to the inappropriate building practices of the previous developer, who abandoned the site and left a mess. This application provides an opportunity to clean up the site, build much needed affordable housing and fix the issues caused by the previous developer.

However, there are outstanding issues with the proposed development that need to be addressed before I can give my support, and that I feel should be dealt with to tackle the concerns of the local community.

Fisher's Footbridge

The previous developer caused damage to this footbridge – which carries Public Right of Way COL/181/70 – by taking stone from the mill pond retaining wall, which caused damage to the bridge's supporting pier.

During a pre-application meeting, ward councillors were informed that the footbridge would be repaired and maintained as part of the development. If the developer is no longer planning to do this, we would consider this to be a breach of trust, and it would reflect poorly on the developer's commitment to the wider community.

I believe that the developer should commit to repairing the bridge. The bridge provides an important pedestrian link for the local community, along with the associated health and wellbeing benefits.

A full structural assessment of Fisher's Footbridge should be carried out prior to the development beginning. The developer should also submit details of a scheme of inspections and maintenance. The previous planning permission included a condition mandating a regimen of maintenance for the bridge, and improvement works to the steps leading up to the bridge.

If the bridge is beyond repair, then the structural assessment should clearly set out the reasons as to why this is the case, and what the developer plans are to provide an alternative walking route

Water supply to neighbouring properties

The developer has stated that their intention is to divert the water supply for Sandhill Cottages, which currently runs along Fisher's Footbridge, and create a new supply for these properties. The developer has committed to maintaining the old supply until any switchover is ready.

I welcome the developer's commitment and believe it should be strengthened by a formal planning condition.

Mill pond

Water has been seen flowing from Cellars Clough Mill Pond through the retaining wall and on to the canal towpath. This water flow could damage the existing retaining all above the towpath and result in land instability or possibly the collapse of the mill pond towards the canal.

The canal towpath has recently been resurfaced between Marsden and Slaithwaite, providing a safe and accessible walking, wheeling and cycling route from this development to nearby amenities in the Colne Valley. The retention of this route should be prioritised.

I believe that a condition to repair and seal the mill pond walls, and to implement a scheme of maintenance is appropriate and necessary.

Canal towpath retaining wall

Works near to the canal towpath retaining wall should not adversely impact the stability of the retaining wall.

The risks of leakage from the canal should be addressed. The Canal and River Trust have provided suggested wording for a condition to this effect which I support.

Affordable and social housing

Since the introduction of right to buy by Margaret Thatcher's government in the 1980s, there has been a chronic shortage of social housing in Britain, and the Colne Valley is no exception to this trend.

I believe that social housing should be a priority given the severe lack of homes for social rent in the Colne Valley.

I welcome the council's Strategic Housing team's proposal that social housing is provided.

Furthermore, I would like to explore prioritising those with a local connection to the Colne Valley in the housing allocation policy for properties on this site.

Sparth Reservoir

The Canal and River Trust have highlighted the absence of a risk assessment of the potential impact of a breach at Sparth Reservoir.

The submitted Flood Risk Assessment fails to consider the potential impact of such a breach.

This is a significant omission that must be rectified before planning permission can be granted.

Drainage and flooding

The development seeks to discharge surface water via a connection to the culvert that takes water from Sparth Reservoir to the River Colne.

If there is insufficient capacity to accommodate additional surface water drainage from the site, then this could adversely impact public safety and residual flood risk.

The Canal and River Trust have put forward a suggested planning condition detailing the capacity of the existing culvert and its capacity to accommodate future flows from the development in additional to the existing flows from Sparth Reservoir. I believe this condition should be implemented.

Environment

It is positive that the onsite watercourse to the West of the site and the associated reedbed habitat are to be retained in their entirety.

However, we do need to see the details of this commitment and the mechanisms by which the habitat would be maintained.

Traffic and pedestrian safety

The vehicular access to and from the site is from Manchester Road, which is a busy thoroughfare from Marsden to Slaithwaite, and further onwards to Oldham and Huddersfield. The site entrance is also close to the junction between Stubbin Lane and Manchester Road.

Appropriate highways safety improvements should be put into place to ensure safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. This could include widening the access road near the junction with Manchester Road, the introduction of a pedestrian crossing, and the partial reduction of the speed limit, among other possible interventions.

Construction management

This site lies close to residential properties and the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, which is a popular walking route.

The application should submit a comprehensive construction management plan that minimises disruption to the local community and protects the surrounding environment.

Site name

The proposed name ‘Marsden Island’ does not reflect the industrial heritage of the local area.

The proposed development lies on the site of the former Cellars Clough Mill.

I believe that the name ‘Cellars Clough’ should be retained as an acknowledgement of the Colne Valley’s textile manufacturing past.

Summary

While I recognise that development on this site may be appropriate, we believe the concerns outlined above must be adequately addressed through appropriate planning conditions and commitments

from the developer. I request that the planning officers and the planning committee gives these matters full consideration when determining this application.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these points further if required.

Kind regards,

Harry McCarthy
Labour & Co-operative Councillor for Colne Valley
Facebook | **Bluesky** | **Instagram**

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