

Consultation Response from KC, Conservation and Design		
2021/91638 Land at Hart Street, Newsome, Huddersfield, HD4 6LS		
Reserved matters application pursuant to outline application no.2016/91479 (appeal no. APP/Z4718/W/17/3173711) for erection of 22 dwellings		
Date Responded:02.06.21	Responding Officer: NG	Responding Ref:

Heritage context and impact.

I note that this site has been subject to a series of development applications and was granted conditional Outline Planning Permission on Appeal for the erection of 22 units, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2016/60/91479/E, dated 24 May 2016. This was subject to conditions which included reserving all matters of design and layout.

The heritage impact issues relating to the development of the mill pond have been previously examined. It was determined in the previous applications (and by the Planning Inspector) that the Outline development would have no significant adverse impact on the setting of the nearby grade-II listed mill. Thus, the removal of the former mill ponds and their redevelopment for housing would change the area's character but would not result in the loss of any local heritage assets of sufficient importance sufficient to preclude a residential development of the site.

The ponds are physically separate from the listed mill complex and have been in separate ownership for some time. The ponds are not mentioned in the listing of the mill and a request to list the ponds in 2007 was rejected by English Heritage, as it concluded that (despite the evident association) the physical separation from the mill buildings made it hard to assign group value and the northern mill pond (with concrete walls) has no architectural interest.

The application that led to the previous planning appeal was an Outline with all matters reserved. The conclusion was to grant consent, while noting that the then submitted plans were "merely illustrative" insofar as they relate to the reserved matters. However, it was concluded that a residential development would have no direct or indirect adverse impact on any identified heritage assets on the site, or the nearby designated heritage assets.

Townscape character and appearance.

The Heritage Statement submitted to support the previous Outline application no.2016/91479 (appeal no. APP/Z4718/W/17/3173711) noted that the development site had been derelict and overgrown for many years and postulated that, "*a sympathetically designed and well constructed residential development*" would be locally supported as it would, "*lift the immediate area and in so doing assist the possibilities of the regeneration of the nearby Listed Mill buildings*" (page 9, April 2016).

The above may well be true but, while the current proposals broadly reflect the access and developable areas of the previous Outline consent, they do little to demonstrate that the development would be sufficiently sensitively designed to meet the design quality objective.

The mill pond site comprises a broadly rectangular level-space, with its narrower end flanking Newsome Road. The main body of the site accommodates two large rectangular concrete edged reservoirs, formerly used in association with the Newsome Mill building.

The Naomi Road flank of the site, extending to Newsome Road includes a TPO (reference 18/95/g1) which contributes significantly to the character of the site and encloses the extant scrub habitat. The proposed layout appears to accommodate the retention of these important site features, although the application is not supported by any landscape plans, or an arboricultural assessment or any analysis of the Wildlife and Biodiversity potential of the site. These are considered to be fundamental to the successful integration of the proposed housing layout into the streetscape to ensure that the residential layout makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area in accordance with NPPF paragraph 127 and Local

Plan Policy LP5 Design.

The open space and stand of trees contrast to the industrial and residential streetscapes which enclose the site along Naomi Road, Newsome Road and Hart Street. Thus, the site currently retains a valuable visual relief and a wildlife habitat in this urban area. Therefore, it was established by the previous consent that the development of the site could accommodate residential without significantly compromising the intrinsic character or appearance of the wider area, incorporating the tree group and habitat. The current application suggests that this remains the intention but the details remain inadequate to determine how the site's retained characteristics would be successfully incorporated within the eventual development.

As a detailed Planning application, it is important that the impact and quantum of development (i.e., the housing units, outbuildings, parking court, boundary treatments and access arrangements) are unambiguous and demonstrably avoid erasing the visual relief and verdant character of the site. Consequently, the details of the integration of the significant, extant landscape features, as well as their future management are considered to be essential factors to be considered in this detailed application. These details are necessary to ensure that the development is based on best practice design and does not prejudice the character of its surroundings or lead to an inaccessible enclosed 'island site, in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF and the Kirklees Local Plan.

I would suggest that the applicants are advised that the submitted details are inadequate to meet the information requirements of a 'Reserved Matters' application and that the plan form needs to be reconsidered to address the following layout design issues as a minimum.

1. Poor arrangement of units 14.15.1,6 to the corner of Hart Street and Newsome Street. This is a prominent location and would merit greater design consideration to positively address the corner.
2. Poor outlook for units 19-22 as they essentially look into a service yard and rear fencing.
3. Unnecessary over-reliance upon on-street parking, effectively creating two parking courts in the body of the site which would dominate the site's character.
4. Lack of detail of boundary treatments on all edges, including the Newsome Street frontage and the former lane/alleyway which services the properties fronting Ruth Street.
5. Lack of detail of the cross-site access from Naomi Road to Hart Street. It is unclear whether or how the parking areas and cul-de-sac ends will provide cross-site pedestrian access and, if not, how the edge of Naomi Street would be enclosed.
6. Lack of details of the cross-site accessibility from Newsome Road. It is unclear how the 'public open space' will be enclosed and its relationship with development.
7. The proposed on-site parking arrangements are contorted and would result in the body of the site effectively becoming dominated by a hard surface car-park, which would diminish the value and useability of the public open space.
8. No detail of the layout and purpose of the public open space (habitat? Play space?). No details of how the public open space would be designed, integrated into the development, managed or maintained.
9. There are no street trees on the roads and the proposals lack details of surface materials and apparent domination of hard-surfaced parking.

I would, therefore, suggest that the application lacks the necessary detail to demonstrably accord with the requirements of the NPPF paragraph 127 and 130, as well as Kirklees Local Plan policy LP24 Design and thus should not be approved in the current form.