

***Shaw Cavanagh/AIM Engineering Ltd***

***Design and Access Statement***

***Salem Mill, Hyde Bank Road, New Mills***



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## **Contents**

### **Section 1: Introduction**

### **Section 2: The Proposal**

### **Section 3: The Application Site and Surrounding Area**

### **Section 4: Design Matters**

### **Section 5: Access Matters**

### **Section 6: Conclusion**

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Site Edged Red Plan of Salem Mill Site



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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates to accompany a planning application submitted on behalf of Shaw Cavanagh to convert and redevelop Salem Mill site, Hyde Bank Road, New Mills for residential use. The application site is identified on the location plan attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 DCLG Circular 01/2006 advises that a 'Design and Access' Statement must support a planning application to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal, and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way. Statements provide an opportunity for developers and designers to demonstrate their commitment to achieving good design and ensuring accessibility.



## **2. The Proposal**

### **Scheme Summary**

- 2.1 The investment will create new homes for 15 households (Use Class C3). The proposal comprises of two interdependent elements. The existing four storey former mill is to be retained and converted into six apartments (1no. 1 bed apartment, and 5no. 2 bed apartments). The existing low grade 1970s extensions to the mill will be removed and the remainder of the site redeveloped for residential use. The new mews houses proposed will cross-subsidise and therefore facilitate the retention and conversion of the mill. The new build accommodation will provide 4 no. 2 storey 3 bed houses and 5 no. 2 storey 2 bed houses. The proposal also incorporates integrated car parking and the layout includes 2 garage and 18 car spaces.

### **Pre-application Discussions and Negotiations**

- 2.2 The proposed development as illustrated by the plans, elevations, and sectional drawings which form part of the planning application has evolved as a result of discussions with representatives of the local authority from the departments of planning, conservation and highways.
- 2.3 The application design has been developed over a period of several months during which time regular meetings have been held to debate and discuss the architectural approach and design with officers. Over this consultation period, the design has been developed as more detailed matters were discussed and further valuable advice received from the officers mentioned above.
- 2.4 The scheme that is being presented to the Council is the culmination of a great deal of discussion and is being submitted on the understanding that the scheme has broad officer support.



### **3. The Application Site and Surrounding Area**

#### **The Application Site**

- 3.1 The application site occupies approximately 0.2 hectares and is located next to the River Sett. The site contains part of Salem Mill which is likely to include surviving fabric dating from the Salem Mill of 1789, one of the earliest cotton mills in New Mills. Although the building has been heavily modified over the years to accommodate new uses, the four storey mill remains an important reminder of the early phase of the industrial revolution when water powered mills were developed in the gorges of the River Goyt and River Sett. The later 1970's additions are of no architectural merit.

#### **New Mills Conservation Area**

- 3.2 The four storey part of the property lies within New Mills Conservation Area. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal prepared by High Peak Borough Council as supplementary planning guidance on 19 June 2001 noted that the four storey mill made a 'significant' contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The same document concluded that the remaining low rise structures that are attached to or abut the mill and lie beyond the Conservation Area had a 'negative' impact on the Conservation Area setting.
- 3.3 The New Mills Conservation Area Character Appraisal was recently updated and adopted by the Council for development control purposes in July 2008. Salem Mill is located within Character Area 2 'Lower High Street and the Old Bridge' of the Conservation Area. Having regard to the immediate area in which the mill is located, the document advises at Para 2.14 that, *'The old High Street Bridge was once the focus of the first New Mills community, with roads spanning out from the early river crossing'*. Salem Mill still dominates what survives of this area and Paragraph 2.18 notes that parts of the Salem Mill site (ie the four storey mill) make a 'significant contribution' to the character of the Conservation Area. The appraisal recognises, however, that the area



is in need to investment, noting at Para 2.14 that the east bank around Salem Mill '*has an air of neglect and decline which spoils it from being an attractive riverside area close to the town centre*'.

## Character of Surrounding Area

- 3.4 The application site lies at what remains of the 18<sup>th</sup> century settlement with its early river bridge and informal street patterns. Later the town developed along High Street and Meal Street towards higher and flatter land. Here the commercial centre developed along Market Street and later, due to the construction of high level bridges (required for transport routes to cross the Torrs) Union Road. Because development pressure moved away from the valley bottom and Salem Mill, the early part of the settlement survived subsequent redevelopment. The church above the mill site has been lost, leaving Salem Mill as the largest surviving building from the early phase of development.
- 3.5 The application site sits on higher land in the valley bottom and a meander of the river loops around the former Mill site. Multi-storey Salem Mill has been divided into two buildings. This application relates to the eastern mill building which is owned by AIM Engineering. To the west of the application site is the other part of the mill which is understood to be in commercial use with an apartment conversion above. Also to the western boundary of the site are No's 2,4,6 and 8 Salem Cottages, a terrace of four C18th cottages. These are in residential use. Salem Cottages are built from gritstone with slate roofs. They have small gardens to the front and to the rear is a road which also provides access to the former mill buildings.
- 3.6 The character of the area is shaped in part by the topography of the valley. Early development was unplanned and organic with buildings generally being located on flatter land. To the west of the Salem Mill the valley sides accommodate sporadic development. Building plots are irregular and buildings of varying height clustered



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together in linear terraces. Dwellings often step down the valley side and ridge heights vary. There are two and three storey dwellings and the roofscape is varied and interesting. The local buff and light gritstone is the predominant material for walls. This is supplemented by render on some buildings. Blue/black Welsh slates and to a lesser extent local sandstone roofing slates are the main roofing materials.

- 3.7 To the east of the site there is little neighbouring development and the site is surrounded by steep valley sides. A burial ground serves as a reminder of the church which once occupied higher land in this part of the Valley.



Above: From Hyde Bank Road the 1970s additions detract from the Conservation Area.





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Above: The new mews housing will reflect the scale of existing houses in the valley.



Above: The application site gives this potentially attractive area a run down feel.





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Above: Salem Cottages have a poor relationship with the mill, particularly the yard.



Above: The proposal will retain the four storey historic mill which is under threat.



## 4. Design Matters

### The Importance of Good Design

- 4.1 PPS1 sets out the overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. Good design plays a fundamental role in achieving this. PPS1 states that *'Good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning. Planning authorities should plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes. Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted'*.

### Design Philosophy

- 4.2 The design philosophy which underlies the scheme is to convert and reuse the building of historic interest and complement this with new buildings following the demolition of all existing low grade buildings and extensions. The design approach to the infill buildings is to create characterful new mews homes that complement, but do not replicate the retained heritage building. Attempting to replicate the design of the existing mill building in the new build is avoided since this would devalue the existing mill. The new infill buildings therefore take a contemporary form that is rooted in the local vernacular of the area, with their own character, identity and presence.



## Layout

- 4.3 Layout refers to the juxta positioning of buildings, routes and open spaces within the development and the way they are laid out in relation to buildings and spaces outside the development.
- 4.4 The layout of the site is largely pre-determined by the retention and conversion of the existing mill, the industrial legacy of the site and the continued use of the existing access. The opportunity is also taken to improve the amenity of Salem Cottages. These influences have shaped the layout of the scheme which has been designed to take these considerations into account.
- 4.5 It was agreed with officers that the proposed scheme should take the form of an enclosed courtyard with the new buildings abutting the retained mill and then continuing around three sides with an opening in the south western corner to permit continued access from Hyde Bank Road.
- 4.6 This arrangement was also a logical response to the existing topography since once cleared of the steel framed structures the site is a level area of ground enclosed to the north by the river, and to the east and south by rising ground retained by an existing stone wall.
- 4.7 The actual amount of new floor-space is largely determined by the desire to create a continuous built form, balanced by the need to provide each of the new houses, and the properties formed from the converted mill, with the requisite car parking provision.
- 4.8 The character of the central space is robust consisting of the access road with car parking spaces to either side and footpaths to each dwelling. Soft landscaping in this area was not deemed appropriate.



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## Scale

- 4.9 Scale refers to the size of the development, including the height, width and length of each proposed building.
- 4.10 The dimensions of the existing four storey mill are retained by the conversion and alterations are not proposed. The retained multi-storey mill will remain visually dominant with all new mews houses having lower ridge and eaves heights. All the proposed mews homes are two storey, in response to the scale of the existing terrace of cottages (Salem Cottages) to the east of the site. The height of the mill continues to dominate the site visually and the mews houses are subservient to it.

## Appearance

- 4.11 Appearance refers to aspects of a building or place which affect the way it looks, including the exterior of the development
- 4.12 The tone for the detailed design of the proposal is set both by the retained mill and the general character of the immediate environs. Fenestration is punched into solid and roof heights contrast and add interest. The varied use of stone and render gives a feeling of organic and unplanned growth which typifies this part of the area.
- 4.13 The repaired mill building will incorporate both restored natural stonework, and render, beneath a natural slate roof, with new timber windows of sectional detail sympathetic to those which exist currently.
- 4.14 The new mews houses will also incorporate the same palette of materials, featuring stone, render, natural slate roofs, and timber (stained or painted) windows and doors.
- 4.15 Since the proposal is for a residential development the inherent human scale is naturally in accord with the domestic character of the area. Considerations of aspect, outlook, and privacy together with the inclusion of a number of different of house types help to





avoid undue repetition in elevational treatment. For this reason the elevations comprise of areas of natural stone juxtaposed with stretches of painted render in order present a variety of external appearance.

## Landscaping

- 4.16 Landscaping refers to the improvement or protection of the amenities of the site and the area.
- 4.17 Formal soft landscaping is not generally a characteristic feature of historic mill sites within the Conservation Area, although the steeper sloping land surrounding mill buildings is often colonised by vegetation, simply because these areas are unsuitable for beneficial use.
- 4.18 It was decided with the planning and conservation officers that the courtyard, as the public face of the development, should only incorporate hard surfacing. It is acknowledged, however, that as part of the regeneration of Salem Mill it will be important to create a comfortable residential environment for the new dwellings. To the rear of the properties private gardens areas are therefore proposed. These broadly correspond with the existing green embankment area.
- 4.19 Landscape features of a domestic scale are avoided within the public realm where a hard landscape will predominate. Since flood prevention measures demand that the floor levels of the new buildings are set some way above the existing ground, a degree of modelling will be necessary which is achieved by the use of tarmac for roads and car parking spaces. All pedestrian paths will be finished in block paving.
- 4.20 The hard landscaped courtyard will complement the scale of the mill and new mews homes. In this way the industrial legacy of the site, setting of the buildings and character of the Conservation Area will be respected.





## Relationship with Surrounding Buildings

- 4.21 Salem Cottages currently look directly into the mill yard at the rear. The occupiers do not enjoy a pleasant aspect and any noisy B2/B8 activity, particularly in the yard (eg power tools, servicing, outdoor working etc) will be at odds with the quieter residential use of Salem Cottages. The conversion and redevelopment of the mill for residential purposes will resolve the current unsatisfactory relationship. The new layout takes into account Salem Cottages and enhances their setting.

## Summary

- 4.22 The above appraisal demonstrates that the scheme design accords with High Peak Local Plan Policy GD4 'Character Form and Design' which advises that planning permission will be granted for development provided that it is sympathetic to the character of the area in which it is located by way of its scale, siting, layout, density, form, height, proportions, design, materials, elevations, fenestration and landscaping.



## **5. Access Matters**

- 5.1 Access matters cover accessibility for all routes to and within the site, as well as the way the development will link up to surrounding transport networks beyond the site.

### **Accessibility within the Development**

- 5.2 As noted above the application site is generally level although some ground modelling will be required for reasons of flood prevention.
- 5.3 No steps are required through with level access being provided into each property by virtue of gently graded footpaths.
- 5.4 The above access arrangements are considered to comply with the High Peak Local Plan Policy GD8 'Access Needs' which encourages developers to provide buildings that are accessible to meet the needs of disabled people.

### **Links Beyond the Site**

- 5.5 The site is located within a 5-8 minute walk of the centre of New Mills. Future residents would enjoy easy access to the services and facilities that are located here, including education, retail and religious provision. The Bus station in New Mills can also be reached on foot and is located on Union Road. Services operating here are comprehensive and are noted in the table below.

| <b>Bus Service</b> | <b>Route identifying key destinations on the route</b>             |
|--------------------|--|
| 051                | Buxworth, Chinley, Hayfield, Thornsett, New Mills                  |
| 60                 | Disley, New Mills, Whaley Bridge, Chapel en le Frith, Horwich End, |



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|                |  |
|----------------|--|
|                | Kettleshulme, Rainow, Hurdsfield, Macclesfield Bus Station   |
| 61             | Glossop, New Mills, Buxton   |
| 62             | Chapel en le Frith, Hayfield, New Mills, Marple  |
| 62A            | Hayfield, New Mills, Marple  |
| 64             | Macclesfield, New Mills, Glossop   |
| 67             | Tideswell, New Mills, Manchester   |
| 69             | Hayfield, Chapel en le Frith High School   |
| 358            | Stockport, New Mills, Hayfield   |
| 360            | Stockport, Hayfield  |
| 389            | New Mills, Alsfield Way  |
| Skyline<br>199 | Buxton, Peak Dale, Dove Holes, Chapel en Le Frith, Whaley Bridge, New Mills, Newton, Disley, Hazel Grove, Stepping Hill, Stockport Bus Station, Manchester Airport |

- 5.6 New Mills Newtown Railway Station can be accessed using the Number 60 Bus Service, or is 15-20 minutes walk from Salem Mill. From Newtown Station, Manchester City Centre is a one hour train journey and Stockport half an hour. Services are frequent. Central New Mills Railway Station is also accessible from the site.
- 5.7 High Peak Local Plan Policy TR1 'Transport Implications of New Development' states that the Council will grant permission for new development that reduces the need to travel. The redevelopment of this site which is within the urban area will contribute towards this objective. The proposal will also comply with TR5 'Access, Parking and Design' which promotes development that makes safe and appropriate provision for access by all forms of transport and where the design has proper regard to the parking, access, manoeuvring and servicing.



## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 This Design and Access Statement has demonstrated that the designer has demonstrated a firm commitment to achieving good design and ensuring accessibility. The design and access proposed is in accordance with the development plan and there are no material considerations which indicate that the scheme should not receive the full support of the Council.



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## **Appendices**

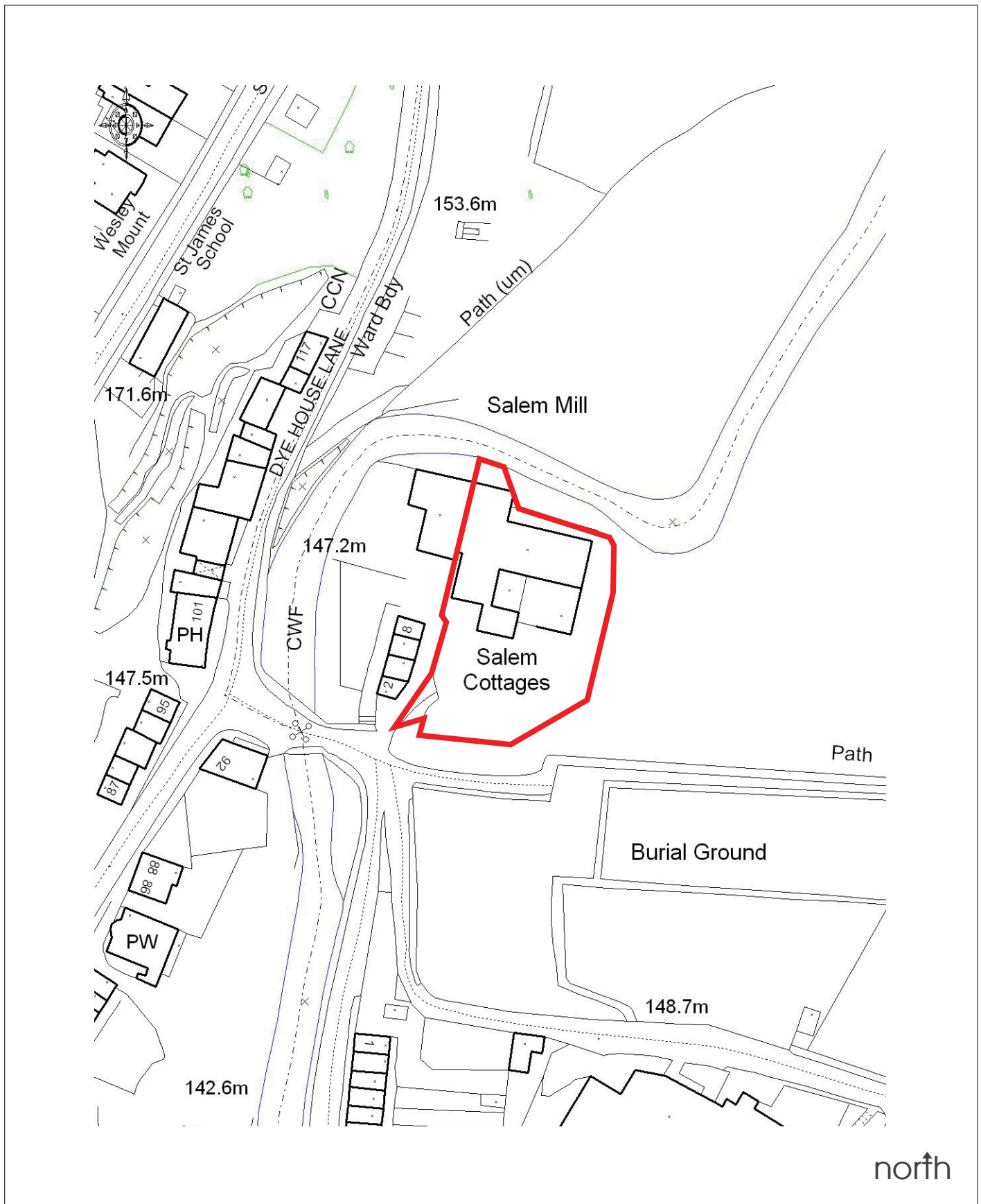




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## **Appendix 1: Site Edged Red Plan of Salem Mill Site.**

# Appendix 1: Site Edged Red Plan for Salem Mill Site



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Key



Site Edged Red

client:

AIM Engineering Ltd

job no:

08/551

dwg no:

001

scale:

1:1250

date issued:

November 2009