

Conservation Response.

Date: 11/07/2023.

File/Application ref: HPK/2023/0118.

Case Officer: Rachael Simpkin.

Proposal: 'Demolition of existing mill outbuildings and conversion/erection of 25no. dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping and highways works'.

Address: Land at Holehouse Mill, Marple Road, Chisworth, Derbyshire, SK13 5DH.

Dear Rachael,

Holehouse Mill, Marple Road, Chisworth.

HER no: 4103.

Type: Building.

NGR: SJ999 922.

Monument types:

- Cotton Mill. 1800AD-1811AD.
- Mill Pond. 1800AD-1811AD.
- Watermill. 1800AD-1811AD.

Appearing on the first edition OS map, it is in the same valley as Kinderlee Mill.

Kinderlee Mill, Marple Road, Chisworth.

HER no: 4105.

Type: Building.

NGR: SJ995 923.

Monument types:

- Cotton Mill. 1804AD-1804AD.
- Gas Holder. 1804AD-1882AD.
- Mill Pond. 1804AD-1882AD.
- Ropewalk. 1804AD-1882AD.
- Watermill. 1804AD-1882AD.

Appearing on the first edition OS map, illustrated in identical plan to which remains today.

Lee Vale Mill, Marple Road, Chisworth.

HER no: 3676.

Type: Monument.

NGR: SK003 926.

Monument types:

- Cotton Mill. 1700AD-1882AD.
- Ropery. 1896AD-1921AD.

Appearing on first – third edition of 25" OS map.

Three historic mills, two remaining extant form strong historic associations in this small area. Evidence of a smithy is also recorded in this vicinity. These elements create a strong sense of place for the area, and additionally; social, historic, aesthetic and evidential values.

Historic OS maps dated 1899 show all three in situ with respective buildings as noted in the HER records. The Ropewalk at Holehouse and ancillary buildings denoted by number '2' and number '3' on page 14 of the Heritage Statement, are seen on the map The Ropewalk and extensive outbuildings lie approximately within a few hundred yards of the neighbouring mill to the west at Kinderlee.

The historic ground plan shows the mill buildings and pond to be laid out in a juxtaposed fashion and set back from Marple Road and the core of the hamlet.

The Ropewalk building seen today is typical of a High Peak industrial building with humble elevations, uniform fenestration at first floor and of the vernacular material palette.

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The proposal:

The Design and Access Statement shows in the document title a proposed 23 units are envisaged, though this does not align with the application title. Later on page five of the Design and Access Statement, 25 are again proposed. Can the correct number of units be confirmed.

The local vernacular has been taken into account to a degree. However, my initial thoughts as follows:

- 3B6P. No chimneys. This is bizarre and creates discontinuity. Inclusion of chimneys encouraged.*
- 4B8P. No chimneys. Advice as above. *
- Mill Conversion; Skylights to the front elevation, I suggest they be on the rear elevation.
- Mill Conversion; ground floor rear elevation glazing or bifold doors look very odd, confusing the building's identity with that of a type of odd terrace.
- Dark grey windows and doors. This is not a traditional colour and is very generic. I don't agree that it is elegant. *
- * - See below.

Other issues of concern:

- * - Proposed street scenes show what feels to be unusually massive houses for a site with historically modest architectural scales. Ropewalk buildings removal and replacement with large plain dwellings and covering up of the stream/river with decking – units 1-12. I don't see this as an enhancement and appears underutilised. A lot of the features affording the sites' historic identity and former use sits within these elements. I think perhaps there is more interest and desirability where industrial architecture is turned modestly contemporary to reside within.
- I would like to see heights of the dwellings denoted in section against the Mill building.
- I don't feel it is made clear what historic fabric survives at the Mill building. Any machinery or freestanding items are acknowledged to be understandably lost. There is no schedule of repair or replacement of fabric, features or traditional elements for this building.
- Mill Pond, what 'maintenance' is proposed?
- Extensive hardscaping, parking, driveway and open plots at 15-18 fairly unimaginative and their placement feels at a conflict with uniformity of 1-14.

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To conclude; the scheme I feel does not quite take advantage of the site's historic interest and similarly affording qualities within its context, that contribute to the setting of the Conservation Area. The scheme looks to create a stand-alone Mill building, disconnected from its former past, leaving what I believe to be not much remaining legibility of the areas historic values.

The wider vicinity is fairly sparse and remote, and the interesting footprint of the site in relation to the other Mill site counterparts (as identified above) evoke a sense of place through these historic associations, and contribute to the vernacular elements of the area. I believe there is an opportunity to create slightly more bespoke and interesting design elements to enhance the setting and surviving traditional architecture. This will therefore mitigate creating just a generic collection of new dwellings much alike anywhere else.

Regards,

Miss E Holland.
Conservation Officer.