

Pre-planning advice

From: Kim Wyatt <Kim.Wyatt@Bolsover.gov.uk>

Sent: Thursday, June 20, 2024 3:01 PM

To: Kipling, Ailsa <Ailsa.Kipling@bolsover.gov.uk>

Cc: Kay, Sarah <Sarah.Kay@bolsover.gov.uk>; Hallam, Rebecca <rebecca.hallam@bolsover.gov.uk>; Dev Control Enquiries <Dev.Control@bolsover.gov.uk>

Subject: PREAPP/00405/24 Demolition of ancillary building, Pleasley Vale

Good afternoon Ailsa,

I refer to your recent request for advice on the option to demolish the ancillary building at Pleasley Mills. My response below considers the potential heritage impacts but please note that there may be other general planning considerations which may need to be considered at a later stage.

The building (referred to as the Stables) lies at the heart of Pleasley Park and Vale Conservation Area on the eastern approach to the Mill complex. The Conservation Area covers a wide area and encompasses the Mill Complex and its associated Estate Village, the extensive wooded area to the north known as Pleasley Park, the continuing gorge and river course through Little Matlock and on to Littlewood, together with the trails along the Archaeological Way and the former Tibshelf Pleasley Railway Line.

The property dates from the mid to late 19th century and is predominantly built in red brick, with gable ends constructed of coursed sandstone with slate roof. Whilst the building is often referred to as the stables the Conservation Area Appraisal 2015 (para 5.75) suggests that the building once formed part of a larger complex of buildings in use as the Mill school. This is evidenced by a number of historic archive photographs of the building. The building has clearly been altered over time (internally and externally) and has had various uses ancillary to the Mill.

There are a number of documents which outline the significance of the Mill complex and the buildings within it, most recently the document prepared by for Bolsover District Council (Pleasley Vale Mills Complex– Statement of Significance prepared for Bolsover District Council by ECUS May 2023). This document provides a clear understanding of the historical development of the Mills and the contribution individual buildings make to the overall significance of the complex. The Conservation Area Appraisal 2015 also provides a comprehensive history of the Vale and a provides a clear understanding of the special character and appearance of the area.

The building is currently vacant and in a poor state of repair and following the structural failure of part of the roof structure, it is being stabilised by a series of external racking shores. A Structural Engineers Report prepared by Cox Borg Consulting dated March 2024 is attached to the submission and in summary identifies the following structural defects:-

- The ridge to the roof has dropped / deflected caused by a failure of the tie cord on the collar tie roof

- Undersized purlins are insufficient to support the rafters
- Wall plate has failed
- Internal ceiling construction of traditional horsehair mixed with lime has failed as evidenced by bowing
- Masonry instability caused by weathering, timber lintel failure and failure of the wall plate

The Structural report has put forward a number of recommendations:-

- Allow for a completely new roof structure or refurbishment of existing roof and replacement/ strengthening of certain structural elements and treatment of the existing timbers
- New wall plates
- Replacement of timber lintels
- Isolated masonry reconstruction and use of helifix remedial ties to stitch isolated cracking

The report does not consider the option of total demolition and does not put forward any costs for the recommended works.

From my understanding of the site and the building there appear to be 2 planning options.

Option 1 – Repair and re-use of existing building

The building could be repaired in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the Structural Engineers Report and depending on the extent of the works this could be classed as like for repair, not requiring planning permission.

Internally, there are no surviving features of architectural or historic interest which does present an exciting opportunity to use the shell of the building for a new contemporary use. Depending on the proposed end use and the extent of alterations proposed, planning permission would be required.

From a heritage viewpoint this is the preferred option and is likely to meet the requirements set out in the policies outlined below.

Option 2 – Application for relevant demolition in a conservation area

If you wish to pursue the application for demolition you will be required to submit a number of documents in support of your application including:-

A Statement of significance and Heritage Impact Statement which should provide / evaluate the following:- (information included in the ECUS study and Conservation Area Appraisal could be used in the preparation of this document)

- A description of the significance of the heritage asset/s affected and the contribution of its setting to the significance.

- Impact of the loss or alteration of property which makes a positive contribution to the special interest, character, and appearance of the heritage asset.
- Justification for demolition of all or part of the heritage asset
- Assessment of public benefits to outweigh harm caused by demolition
- Structural Engineers Report
- Full photographic survey
- Plan of the existing building
- Preliminary ecological survey and depending on the results of this survey you may be required to carry out a Bat survey (which can only be carried out between May and September)

We will be obliged to carry out a number of consultations on the application including consultation with Historic England (as the building is owned by the District Council). If an objection is received from Historic England, we will be required to refer the application to the Secretary of State for a decision.

In heritage terms this is a sensitive site and there are a number of statutory and policy considerations which must be taken into account when assessing any application for demolition (outlined below). It will not be straightforward as the total loss of a heritage asset in a conservation area is likely to result in harm meaning that the onus will be on the applicant to demonstrate that the public benefits of the proposal will outweigh the harm caused.

Considerations

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – section 72 requires that “Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.”

Local Planning Policy: Bolsover District Local Plan (March 2020) **Policy SC16: Development Within or Impacting upon Conservation Areas**

Development proposals within or impacting upon Conservation Areas will be permitted where they preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area and its setting.

Applications will be considered in relation to how well the design and location of the proposal has taken account of

- a) The development characteristics and context of the conservation area, in terms of important buildings and important open spaces
- b) Landscapes, walls, trees, and views into or out of the area
- c) The form, scale, size, and massing of nearby buildings, together with materials of construction

Policy SC21: Non-Designated Local Heritage Assets

Development proposals which positively sustain or enhance the significance of any local heritage asset and its setting will be permitted.

Alterations, additions, and changes of use should respect the character, appearance and setting of the local heritage asset in terms of the design, materials, form, scale, size, height and massing of the proposal.

Proposals involving full or partial demolition of a local heritage asset will be resisted unless sufficient justification is provided on the proposed scheme and its public benefits to outweigh the harm caused by the loss of the asset.

National Planning Policy Framework ("the Framework")

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The Framework is therefore a material consideration in the determination of this application and policies in the Framework most relevant to this application include:

- Paragraphs 200 - 214 : Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- **Any harm to significance requires clear and convincing justification and must be weighed against the public benefits of a scheme (NPPF 207 and 208).**

I trust that this provides sufficient information for you to proceed with options for the building but please do not hesitate to contact me if you have require any further information.

Kind regards

Kim

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