



GMAAS
Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service
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Salford M5 4WX

Mr H. Rigg
Planning Officer
Rochdale Borough Council
Number One Riverside
Smith Street
Rochdale OL16 1XU

Date: 16th May 2025

Dear Hamish

Application 25/00195/FUL - Residential development consisting of 9no' 4 bedroom dwellings with associated parking and landscaping - Land at Schofield Street, Heywood OL10 1DH

Thank you for consulting GMAAS regarding the above planning application.

The application area does not contain any designated heritage assets and does not lie within a conservation area, although it is potentially of some archaeological interest. In particular, the site was occupied during the later 19th century by a rope walk which, until its demolition in the early 20th century, represented a very rare survival of this type of structure in Greater Manchester.

The application is supported by a document that purports to be a 'Heritage Assessment', although most of the text has been copied verbatim from an archaeological assessment of the site that was prepared in 2011 for a slightly larger area that incorporates the current application area. There is little indication that that copied text has been updated or reworked to suit the current proposals and, contra Policy 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record has not been consulted.

The original assessment report concluded that the standing remains of the rope walk should be subject to an archaeological survey prior to demolition, although GMAAS has no record of this having been carried out. However, there is potential for elements of the former rope walk to survive as below-ground remains, which would be of archaeological interest. In particular, 19th-century Ordnance Survey mapping depicts several detached buildings in the southern part of the application area that may have been associated with the rope works, although confirmation of their function, character and significance awaits further investigation.

The proposed development seemingly necessitates some reduction of the existing ground level, with potential to damage or remove any below-ground remains of the 19th-century rope walk. Policy 218 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should require developers 'to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this impact publicly accessible.' This advice can be addressed through a programme of archaeological investigation that should be secured through a condition attached to planning consent. The condition should be worded as follows:



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'No development works shall take place until the applicant or their agents or their successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a Project Design which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Project Design shall cover the following:

1. A phased programme and methodology to include:

- a) an archaeological evaluation through 'strip, map and record';***
- b) pending results of the above, targeted open-area excavation and recording.***

2. A programme for post-investigation assessment to include:

- a) analysis of the site investigation records and finds;***
- b) production of a final report on the significance of the heritage interest recorded.***

3. Deposition of the final report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record.

4. Dissemination of the results of the site investigations commensurate with their significance.

5. Provision for archive deposition of the report, finds and records of the site investigation.

6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the approved Project Design.

Reason: In accordance with NPPF Policy 218: To record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.'

GMAAS will monitor the implementation and progress of the archaeological works on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council.

Yours sincerely



Ian Miller BA FSA

Heritage Management Director

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