



Warwick Mill – Response to Conservation Officer’s comments (dated 21 September 2023)

DATE:	14 March 2024	CONFIDENTIALITY:	Public
PROJECT:	Warwick Mill	AUTHOR:	LM

INTRODUCTION

This note addresses the Conservation Officer’s comments dated 21 September 2023. It collates comments received from the consultant team including GMA Architects (the architects) and Michael Hadi Associates (the structural engineers).

Each set of comments is addressed in turn below. The Tall Building Assessment which incorporates the Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) accompanies this response and should be read alongside this note.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Viability report required

- A Viability Report has been prepared by Savills and as Rochdale Borough Council (RBC) is aware, discussions regarding the report, between the Applicant’s viability consultant and the Council’s viability consultant will commence shortly. The Conservation Officer will be kept informed of the discussions given the importance of the viability in the overall heritage case.

Detailed schedule of works

- A detailed schedule of works has already been submitted through the combination of:
 - The Structural Engineers’ Report “Structural Appraisal Report Rev. A”;
 - GMAA’s detailed annotated “Demolition Drawings Series” Plans (7), Sections (3), and Elevations (4); and
 - Townscape’s “Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment”, including sections on Heritage Impact Assessment and English Heritage Conservation Principles in Terms of Significance, addressing all relevant areas of proposed works.
- For ease we have collated these in a separate file which accompanies this note – please refer to **Enclosure 1**.

Condition survey of existing windows

- A condition survey of the existing windows (prepared by GMA Architecture) is enclosed. Please refer to the ‘Warwick Mill – Window Condition Survey’ (November 2023) at **Enclosure 2** which addresses this point.

Key views showing the development once complete

- It has been agreed with the Council that the Tall Building Assessment will include the TVIA which includes three key CGI views of the development once completed. The views are from the three agreed viewpoints with Conservation Officer and the Applicant Heritage Consultant on their site visit in April 2022.
- For the avoidance of doubt, the CGI key views accurately represent the proposals for Warwick Mill however the design of the Loom Building isn’t entirely representable of the proposed ‘Loom’ scheme due to the recent changes made to the elevations. With that said, the CGIs represent a worst-case scenario as the massing of the Loom is greater than is now proposed and overall, the massing and scale can be assessed from a TVIA perspective. For ease and for a helpful comparison, **Enclosure 3**

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contains an annotated version of the CGIs outlining the changes and discrepancies with the now proposed scheme.

Planning and Tall Building Statement, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment with visualisations and 3D views (as per HE advice note)

- A Tall Building Assessment accompanies this advice note and is provided at **Enclosure 4**. This has been prepared in accordance with the Tall Buildings: Historic England Advice Note 4 (2022), the Rochdale Core Strategy (2016) and Middleton Town Centre Masterplan (2023).

STRUCTURAL QUERIES

Proposed use of concrete for topping and infill of columns

- The provision of a structural concrete topping is a previously used successful strategy to strengthen existing mill constructions, and to comply with the current Building Regulations to reduce the sensitivity of the building to progressive collapse in the event of an accident. The method is included in the publication: “Structural Appraisal of Iron Framed Textile Mills” published by the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) and in an Institution of Structural Engineers technical paper from 1998 for a cast-iron mill.
- Based on the historical record information and making conservative assumptions on the mechanical properties of cast-iron, we do not anticipate that we will require to infill any of the columns. The infill of the columns was included on MHA’s drawing 200 as a possible remedial strategy to improve the capacity of the cast-iron columns in the unlikely event that the tested properties of the metal are lower than anticipated. Our initial assessment follows the guidance presented in “Historic Steel Handbook” by the British Constructional Steelwork Association (BCSA) as well as in the ICE publication.

Proposed proprietary protection around the cast-iron columns (drawing ref: 21008-120 P3)

- Any certified system to protect columns from vehicle impact will be acceptable from a structural point of view. The specific product is to be coordinated across the design team in the next phases of the project. A robust barrier will be required, along with a suitable gap behind the barrier (so that it does not come into contact with the cast-iron column in the event of a vehicle impact).

Visible columns and arches within the flats

- The existing cast-iron columns will be exposed around the central atrium and the jack arches are to be exposed in the perimeter bays.

Clarify highlighted yellow sections on structural plans

- The yellow lines denote the position of movement joints in the proposed reinforced concrete topping.

Clarify areas of green on the demolition plan (drawing ref: WM DM-106 4F)

- The areas of green on the roof demolition plan (provided at **Enclosure 5**) indicates the removal of the exiting telecommunications installation.

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EXTENT OF DEMOLITION

Clarification regarding elements of the existing building which are proposed to be demolished and why only 3-4 meters of the internal floors would be retained around the perimeter.

- GMA Architecture has provided justification regarding the need for the removal of elements of the internal floors and this is provided at **Enclosure 6**. Please refer to the “Warwick Mill – Building Fabric Alterations” statement which sets out in detail why this is required.

Justification regarding: the loss of elements of the listed building and assessment of alternative schemes

- GMA Architecture has provided a statement which outlines the research undertaken and options considered (including alternative schemes) to determine the proposed, viable use of the Warwick Mill development, include the design progression. Please refer to **Enclosure 7** which includes the “Warwick Mill – Scheme Design Development” statement.
- GMA Architecture has provided a separate statement which provides justification and reasoning behind the loss of the external fire escape staircase. Please refer to **Enclosure 8** which includes the “Warwick Mill – Removal of External Fire Escape” statement.