

HERITAGE & CONSERVATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Application Details

Heritage, Conservation & Design team officer

Catherine Fenghour

Date

20 January 2026

Application reference

25/01066/FUL

Address

Moss Mill Industrial Estate, Woodbine Street East, Rochdale, OL16 5LB

Proposal

Demolition of structurally unsafe and damaged upper section of tower

Affected Heritage Assets

Designated heritage assets

- Lock 49 Rochdale Canal (grade II)

Non-designated heritage assets

- Moss Mill

Summary

Further information required

Assessment

Site description and significance

Moss Mill dates from 1888 and was originally built as a cotton mill. It replaced an earlier mill on the site. The building is four storeys in height and constructed in brick. It is a landmark feature in its canal side setting. The building is of historic interest, as a surviving example of a late Victoria cotton mill by a prominent mill designer. While it is a relatively unadorned, industrial building, it is of some architectural interest, noting the brick detailing, including on the tower and at the parapet, scale and window pattern. The building has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset for its architectural and historic interest.

It has some group value with the grade II listed lock 49. The canal at one time would have been lined with mills and ancillary buildings and Moss Mill provides evidence of the area's former industry.

Relevant legislation and planning policy

The impact of a proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset is a material planning consideration. A balanced judgement should be had, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset (NPPF paragraph 216).

Assessment of proposals

The proposals seeks to demolish the upper part of the mill's tower and remove the water tank. The loss of the upper part of the tower and water tank would result in the loss of some historic fabric and would also alter the appearance of the tower tower's historic appearance. These works would result in some harm to the significance of the heritage asset.

The heritage statement advises that these works are required to make the tower safe and to prevent the further deterioration of the tower as a whole. The applicant has provided a structural report with photos of the tower. The structural report suggests either rebuilding the tower following the works to take down the upper courses or leaving the tower at the height of the decorative stone band.

From a heritage perspective, the preference would be for the masonry to be reinstated, as this would largely mitigate any harm. If the applicant is not able to do this, please can they set out why. In either case details are required of making good following the demolition works and the reinstatement of the tower's roof.

Given the distance of separation, it is considered that the proposals would not harm the significance of the listed lock 49.

Conclusions

Further information required.

Re-consultation

Yes