



Bob Melling
Rochdale Borough Council
Economy Directorate
Planning and Development
Number One Riverside
Smith Street
Rochdale
OL16 1XU

Your Ref: PL/2026/0148
Date: 16th June 2026

Archaeological Consultation PL/2026/0148 - 8no. bungalows with associated access, parking and landscaping – Land south of Stubley Mill Road and north of Calliard Mill, Smithy Bridge, Littleborough, OL15 8HP

Dear Bob,

Thank you consulting GMAAS on this application.

The application is supported by a Heritage Statement (HS) produced by Paul Butler Associates in April 2026, which provides a summative account of the history and development of the site, describing the surviving two-story element of the former Calliard Mill site to the immediate south of the application area, and describing the fragmented remains of the demolished portions of the mill complex within the redline boundary. Whilst archaeological potential of the site is only included as a small section (paragraphs 4.15-4.16), specific features are mentioned that are of archaeological interest and would be at risk of disturbance and/or removal as part of the proposed developments. Some of the features correlate with those described in the Historic Environment Record entry for the site (HER 5244.1.0), including: ill-defined remains of walls, water intake channels on the alignment of the head and tail race above the surviving weir, associated with the potential location of a former water-wheel pit, and various other earthworks.

Calliard Mill probably dates to the early – mid nineteenth century. The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1848 shows the mill as a complex of buildings lying between the River Roch and a lane which subsequently (1892) is shown as Calliards Street (now Stubley Mill Road). On the 1848 map it is named 'Lower Mill (woollen)' with tenter grounds marked in the fields to the north-east and, in 1892, to the north-west. Records indicate that it became a dyeworks and bleachworks operating at least into the 1940s. By 1892 the site also contained one and possibly two terraces of mill housing – one of which was named 'Calliards Terrace'.

The proposed site plan for the development (GA Studio, DWG L(-1)013, Jun 25) indicates a linear development of housing plots with gardens and an access road, predominantly through the centre of the site on a north-east to south-west alignment. Dashed lines also represent sewer runs and easement zones, showing that below-ground disturbance will extend beyond that main development corridor both to the north-west towards the road and to the south-east towards the River Roch. The groundworks necessary to facilitate the development will impact on the surviving archaeological remains of the industrial complex of buildings, but also formerly associated domestic buildings within the site. Such remains have the potential to be of local, and at best, regional, significance, and an opportunity should be afforded for the extents and relative significance of remains to be understood and recorded prior to

removal. Of particular interest will be areas that contain evidence for power production across the site, including evidence for water and steam powered elements of the industrial complex.

The above can be achieved via a scheme of archaeological evaluation (targeted strip-map-sample and/or evaluation trenches), and if necessary, more detailed excavation prior to commencement of development. Results of these works should be used to inform where further monitoring and recording might be required under watching brief conditions during construction (i.e. during installation of drainage and service runs). Results of all fieldwork would need to be presented in a report or reports for inclusion on the HER, supported by relevant documentary research to contextualise the findings. Dissemination of results and archiving of the project records would also need to be taken care of. Appropriate methodologies for all fieldwork and post-excavation tasks would need to be presented in a Project Design (PD), to be submitted and approved in advance of commencement. Research to inform the PD should include a search of local archives to locate detailed plans of the mill; this will assist in the creation of a targeted approach to the archaeological works.

GMAAS recommends that this programme of archaeological works is secured through a planning condition worded as follows:

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

- 1. Informed by the North West Regional Research Framework, a phased programme and methodology of investigation and recording to include:***
 - a) targeted evaluation via strip-map-record and trenching across areas of archaeological sensitivity that will be subject to development groundworks***
 - b) informed by the above, more detailed excavation in areas of significance***
 - c) if required, further archaeological monitoring and recording during ground-works that could further reveal or impact on below-ground features of the former mill complex***
- 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 archaeological and historical interest represented.***
- 3. Deposition of the final report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record.***
- 4. Dissemination of the results commensurate with their significance.***
- 5. Provision for archive deposition of the report and records of the site investigation.***
- 6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the approved PD.***

Reason: In accordance with NPPF Section 16, Paragraph 218 - 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 evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

The work should be undertaken by a suitably experienced and qualified archaeological contractor, funded by the applicant, and in accordance with guidance provided by GMAAS who would also monitor the implementation of the works on behalf of Rochdale MBC.

Yours sincerely,



Ben Dyson BA MLitt

Senior Planning Archaeologist

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS)

Tel: 0161 295 6917 / 07934903149