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MANCHESTER

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service
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Ryan Grant
Principal Planning Officer
Planning and Development
Rochdale Borough Council
Number One Riverside
Smith Street
Rochdale OL16 1XU

Date: 22nd December 2022

Dear Ryan

RE: Archaeological Consultation: 22/01068/FUL - Residential development comprising 52 new dwellings with associated access and infrastructure - Former Oakenrod Primary School, Bury Road, Rochdale OL11 4EE

Thank you for consulting GMAAS on the above planning application.

The application site has been subject in part to some initial archaeological investigation previously, when a scheme of evaluation trenching was implemented in 2006. This work revealed significant remains of the water-power system associated with a post-medieval fulling mill, together with a turbine pit in a 19th-century block that was added to the original building when it was converted to use as a cotton waste mill.

The application is supported by an archaeological desk-based assessment and a separate heritage statement that have been prepared by Brogan Archaeology and have been undertaken in accordance with Section 16 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF.

The heritage statement provides a useful review of the historic development of the application site and its setting, and provides sufficient detail to enable the significance of the historic built environment to be understood, and the harm of development to that significance. The heritage statement concludes that delivery of the scheme will have an overall slight beneficial impact upon the significance of the surrounding heritage assets and that the character of the key views of the heritage assets will not be affected by the proposed development. This conclusion seems reasonable to GMAAS, although the opinion of the Rochdale Conservation Officer should be sought in this respect.

The archaeological assessment similarly describes the historical development of the application site, supported by key historic map extracts. It utilises GM Historic Environment Record data and grey literature reports on relevant pieces of archaeological investigation and key publications. The report is a comprehensive and useful document that allows a clear understanding of the potential archaeological interests and enables an appropriate strategy to mitigate the harm of development on these interests to be formulated.



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The report concludes that it would be appropriate to implement a programme of archaeological excavation in advance of development, which should allow for detailed recording of the two waterwheel pits, water turbine housing and putative steam-power plant that was identified during the initial evaluation trenching in 2006, along with a 'strip, map and record' of the back-to-back houses that lie to the west of the area evaluated in 2006.

GMAAS concurs with the conclusions drawn by the desk-based assessment, and recommends that an archaeological mitigation strategy is warranted in advance of development. As any archaeological remains that do survive are going to be of local significance, rather than national importance, GMAAS would be content to see the programme of archaeological work conditioned on the planning consent. The condition should be worded as follows:

No development 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 Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the approved WSI and provision made for the completion of all elements of that programme. The WSI shall cover the following:

- 1. A phased programme and methodology of site investigation and recording to include:
a) an archaeological evaluation through 'strip, map and record' of former workers' housing in the north-eastern part of the site;
b) detailed excavation of the waterwheel pits, water turbine and steam-power plant.***
- 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, including the installation of a permanent information panel.***
- 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 WSI.***

Reason: In accordance with NPPF policy 16, paragraph 205: 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.

All archaeological work should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced archaeological contractor, funded by the applicant. GMAAS will monitor the implementation of the archaeological works on behalf of Rochdale Borough Council.

Yours sincerely



Ian Miller BA FSA

Heritage Management Director

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service

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