
From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
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Categories:

Application Reference No. : SMD/2025/0015 Site Address: Well Street Mill Well Street Leek Staffordshire ST13 6JU
Leek Comments by: Amber Patrick Association for Industrial Archaeology
From:

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Submission: Neither

Comments: The Association for Industrial Archaeology notes that it is proposed to convert two buildings inside the Cross Street Mill complex, situated within the Leek Conservation Area, to apartment use. The larger building, a warehouse/twisting shade of c.1865, is one of the earliest buildings to survive within the Cross Street Mill complex and although not mentioned in the listing description is curtilage listed as part of the complex, affording it the same level of protection. The smaller block, fronting onto Well Street, is Grade II listed and is believed to date from the 1890s. Both are believed to have been vacant since 2015 or earlier, after the stalling of a proposed scheme of conversion and demolition that was granted approval in 2007.

The AIA welcomes the proposal to return both buildings to active use after long-term vacancy. As the buildings have been vacant for 10 years or more there seems only a low likelihood that a return to full use could be found in industrial activities, or without conversion. It is also desirable to avoid any repeat of the stalling of works that resulted in incomplete interventions to the building without bringing occupancy and a sustainable viable use. The retention of the smaller, street-facing, frontage block as part of the proposals is also welcomed and it is noted that this building appears to have been in residential use previously.

In particular, the complex as a whole has a strong streetscape presence (primarily in a more dominant and ornate street-facing block, although the site's frontage block also provides enclosure) and forms one of a condensed cluster of mills that together comprise this detached addition to the conservation area.

The proposals appear to offer the opportunity to bring the two buildings back into sustainable in a manner that could minimise harmful alteration to their external appearance and character, and this would retain their positive contribution to the special interest and character of the conservation area and the significance of the Cross Street Mills as a Grade II listed group. It is noted that the Crittal windows are to be retained and care will be needed in regard to the repair and retention. With regard to the interior, it is essential that any features of note are retained, protected and, if possible, exposed. This also applies to surviving original or historic joinery, plasterwork and lathe.

The Association recommends that further information as to the existing interiors and the impact of the proposed works should be requested in order to understand their likely impact on the significance of the Grade II listed Cross Street Mill. Further details of the external changes to the building, including its windows, should be requested as a means of understanding their likely impact on the significance of the listed buildings and the character and special

interest of the Leek Conservation Area. A programme of building recording could be considered as a condition of approval.

Alison Montgomery,

Assistant Planning Casework Officer,

Association for Industrial Archaeology

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