



Thurlaston Parish Council
Thurlaston
Rugby

Email: planning@thurlaston-pc.gov.uk

2nd September 2022

Michelle Hill (Post by email to michelle.hill@rugby.gov.uk)
Development Team
Rugby Borough Council
Evreux Way
Town Hall
Rugby
CV21 2RR

Dear Michelle,

Reference: R22/0634 (and R22/0752)

The Old Mill – Installation of Air Source Heat Pump and replacement windows

Thank you for your invitation, dated 16th August, to review the above planning application. We note that there is a secondary submission R22/0752 – described on your planning portal as *Listed building consent for installation of air source heat pump and replacement windows*. Thurlaston Parish Council (TPC) is submitting a single representation in which we focus on the external façade (external elements) of the property and associated ancillary buildings and equipment. The property is Grade II listed and located within the Thurlaston Conservation Area.

We are pleased that the applicant is seeking opportunities to improve the U-Value of the property and a refit of the interior with new services (such as electricity, plumbing and heating), new fittings and wall insulation.

The decommissioning of an oil fired central heating system is applauded as is the installation of an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP). Our caveat with the ASHP is that the installation must be undertaken to ensure it operates so that any noise (from fans and compressors) does not cause a nuisance to neighbours, most notably the occupants of Mill Cottage & Pembridge. It may be necessary to relocate the equipment and/or provide acoustic screening.

We question the accuracy of the applicant's information contained within their D&A Statement and make the following observations:

Section 5.2

The walls are common bricks made over 200 years ago secured with lime mortar. The mortar can vary from soft crumbly which can be easily scraped out, to mortar that is stronger than the

bricks. The existing wall is porous and is a significant restoration consideration.

The walls taper from the top of the Mill to ground level, which results in rain water flowing down the full height of the building. Because of the taper of the external walls, the courses of brickwork slope inwards. It is important therefore that the inside of the walls is allowed to breathe. TPC questions whether recent sand blasting of the inside surface of the brickwork walls will increase the amount of moisture reaching the inside surface of the walls and whether the proposed 'Steico' type wall lining will allow bricks to breathe naturally and adequately.

After a rainy period it is important that the outside of the bricks can breathe, so any treatment of the outer surfaces of the walls must encourage evaporation from the brickwork.

In general, 'rainwater harvesting' is not practical with a conical roof shedding onto sloping brickwork walls, surrounded predominantly by permeable gardens. There are no surface water drains from The Mill, or its paved drive or gardens. Currently, at the lowest levels, there is an impervious roof, external to the tower walls, which sheds via gutters into water butts which harvest water for garden use.

Section 6.1

The applicant states that wherever possible reusable materials will be recycled on site, potentially minimising waste as much as possible. TPC challenges this declaration because water pipework and radiators have already been stripped from The Mill and sent off site.

Section 9

Swallows and bats are regularly seen in the garden of The Mill, and in Thurlaston in general.

Section 10.4

TPC's understanding is that RBC issued Listed Building Consent on 23 July 1987, permitting the reshaping and resizing of a number of the windows in The Mill.

Section 11.6

TPC questions the accuracy of this clause as it states that all the windows are 'single glazed and in poor condition', whereas all the extant windows are double glazed. The panes incorporated into the front and back external doors to the property are single glazed.

TPC is aware that over several decades the building has been subject to maintenance, inter alia, replacement of windows and external doors, and external wall treatments. The extant window frames are of relatively modern appearance and would have been quite different from any in the original structure. It is thought The Mill ceased being used as working windmill circa 1910. Against this backdrop the proposed replacement double glazed windows, if required, is considered acceptable.

Summary & Recommendations

TPC supports the planning proposals with the condition that the ASHP is installed so that it is not a nuisance to neighbours.

TPC questions the accuracy of the applicant's D&A Statement; an example is provided in our submission.

TPC is concerned there are significant 'technical' risks regarding the Mill restoration which have not been addressed. Tacit with this is that Harbur Design, the applicant's architects, has not offered any evidence of their expertise in the restoration of Grade II listed buildings. For the sake of any doubt TPC strongly advises RBC that it should ensure all risks are understood and mitigated prior to full planning consent is granted. Detailed project and construction details are required. Such considerations and their resolution are vital to ensure the sustainability of the building.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Keith Boardman

Chairman Planning Subcommittee

Thurlaston Parish Council