

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD**

---

**Date of meeting:** 27<sup>th</sup> June 2009  
**Report of:** Head of Planning and Policy  
**Title:** Dale Street Mill, Dale Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire  
SK10 1HH – Outline Application for 2 No. Blocks of 3 No.  
Terrace Cottages (6 No. Residential Units in Total)

---

### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To consider the planning application 08/2670P.

### **2.0 Decision Required**

- 2.1 To grant or refuse planning permission.

### **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 At the meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2009, the Northern Planning Committee resolved that they were minded to grant planning permission in respect of this application contrary to officer recommendation.
- 3.2 Under the adopted Terms of Reference, applications involving a significant departure from policy, which a Planning Committee is minded to approve, must be referred to the Strategic Planning Board.
- 3.3 The proposal is considered to be a significant departure because it involves the demolition of a building which is on the 'Local List' of historically important buildings. Policy BE20 of the Macclesfield Local Plan states, "Non-Listed buildings and other structures of architectural or historic interest do not enjoy the full protection of statutory listing. However, development which would adversely affect their architectural or historic character will only be allowed if the Borough Council is satisfied that the building or structure is beyond reasonable repair."
- 3.4 The structural engineers report submitted by the applicant concludes that the building is beyond reasonable repair and that it would be unviable to adapt the existing building. Although it is accepted that there are structural defects with the building, it is noted in the main agenda report, that the redevelopment of the building is based on the current market

conditions and there are examples of similar buildings which have been retained elsewhere.

- 3.5 The full circumstances surrounding the case and reasoning behind the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Policy to refuse the application are set out in the attached report.

#### **4.0 Northern Committee Observations**

- 4.1 The Committee's reasons for recommending approval contrary to Policy BE20 and officer recommendation, were: -
- A proposed alternative, which would retain part of the Mill, would not preserve sufficient of the building
  - The development would satisfy housing need
  - The development was appropriate to the local scenery/architecture
- 4.2 In the opinion of the Northern Planning Committee these are material planning considerations which should outweigh the policy presumption against this proposal.

#### **5.0 Officer Response**

##### *Alternatives*

- 5.1 It is considered that if the building were redeveloped, a substantial proportion could be retained. Officers have illustrated to the developer potential options for retaining part of the existing structure. This would include demolition of part of the front of the building to allow an alternative access and the demolition of part of the building to the rear, which is considered to be structurally in very poor condition. This would potentially provide further space for development at the rear of the site (for up to four new dwellings). Whilst the scheme suggested by Officers would involve elements of rebuilding, it would retain the historical identity of the existing mill. However, the applicant is not willing to consider any alternative solutions.

##### *Housing need*

- 5.2 Whilst the proposed scheme would result in the creation of six new dwellings, the alternative scheme could potentially provide for eight dwellings, or more.

##### *Local scenery/architecture*

- 5.3 Whilst the design issues were not put forward as a reason for refusal, it is the principle concern that this proposal would result in the loss of a locally distinct building.
- 5.4 The applicant has undertaken a further structural engineer's report which confirms the detail of the original report and outlines the works which would need to be undertaken to retain the building.

- 5.5 The Council seeks to resist the loss of buildings of local character and interest. Furthermore, it is not considered that local economic factors should be the sole determining factor when considering the redevelopment of a building which is on the Locally Important Buildings List. In this particular instance it is not accepted by Officers that the total loss of the building is the only solution.
- 5.6 If the Strategic Planning Board does not accept that the building is beyond reasonable repair, or that the proposal is the only alternative, then the application should be refused as it would be contrary to policy BE20, otherwise the Board should support the resolution of the Northern Planning Committee.

## **6.0 Options**

- 6.1 To endorse the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Policy to refuse the application for the reasons set out in the report to the Northern Planning Committee.
- 6.2 To endorse the recommendation of the Northern Planning Committee to approve the application for the reasons set out in paragraph 4.1 above.

## **7.0 Recommendation**

- 7.1 The officer recommendation as set out in the planning report still stands.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The applicant may appeal against the refusal and the likely outcome of that is discussed below.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 The applicant may appeal against the refusal and the likely outcome of that is discussed below.

## **10.0 Risk Assessment**

- 10.1 Refusal of the application carries the risk of an Appeal against the decision by the applicant. However, in view of the policy presumption against the development, it is considered that the Appeal is unlikely to be successful.
- 10.2 In this instance approval of the application would be unlikely to generate an undesirable precedent, as the applicants have submitted a Structural Survey, which concludes that the building is beyond reasonable repair.

***For further information:***

*Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jamie Macrae*  
*Officer: Nick Turpin – Principal Planning Officer*  
*Tel No: 01625 504612*

***Background Documents:***

- *North West of England Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021*
- *Adopted Macclesfield Borough Local Plan*
- *Structural survey and addendum report*

*Documents are available for inspection at:*

- *Town Hall, Macclesfield*