

Background

Hermitage Mill is a Grade II Listed Building, located to the west of Hermitage Lane, Mansfield and dates from 1803-04. The Mill has served both the textile and hosiery industries, and since the 1950s, the building industry.

The current occupiers of the mill, a builders merchant, are due to relocate their business in the near future which gives an opportunity to consider the future of a relatively complete mill building that helps interpret Mansfield's textile and hosiery history. The Mill is in good condition considering its age, although it is partially obscured by later additions which detract from its appearance. The sensitive removal of these buildings would enhance the Mill and is to be encouraged.

As a potential vacant employment site, located in a predominantly employment area, it is necessary to look at what type of development would be acceptable on the site.

Site Description

The Hermitage Mill site is 1.89 hectares in size and slopes approximately 3 metres from north to south, giving it a relatively steep gradient across the front of the site.

The Robin Hood Railway Line runs along the northern boundary of the site, beyond which is a residential area. The east of the site faces Hermitage Lane, and has two access points. Across Hermitage Lane are a range of industrial units including Biffa Waste and RMC Ltd.

The southern part of the site is currently used for open storage of building materials and has natural tree cover on the boundary, beyond which is a woodland trail, a small undeveloped area of land and then further industrial units leading to the Oakham Business Park. The west of the site backs onto a fishing lake, and provides a pleasant environment.

Nature Conservation

The plan overleaf shows how the Hermitage Mill area links with natural and cultural assets along the River Maun.

The Hermitage Pond site was declared a Local Nature Reserve in 2004 and is important in forming part of the wildlife corridor of the River Maun which enables wildlife to move between habitats through the heart of Mansfield. The Hermitage forms a link in the chain of Local Nature Reserves from Kings Mill Reservoir to the centre of the town. The redevelopment of Hermitage Mill presents an opportunity to enhance this wildlife corridor.

Any new development on the Hermitage Mill site should protect the integrity, and enhance and promote the heritage features of the site, including the Local Nature Reserve, the Scheduled Ancient Monument (Kings Mill Viaduct) and the Maun Valley Trail.

Relevant Planning Policy

Planning policies that are relevant to this site are as follows:

- **E4** – protects existing employment sites from alternative development;
- **BE1** – ensures all developments achieve a high standard of design;
- **BE2** – protects Listed Buildings from harmful demolition;
- **BE3** – protects Listed Buildings from harmful alterations, additions and changes of use;
- **BE4** – protects the setting of Listed Buildings from inappropriate development;
- **BE5** – protects Listed Buildings from re-use that would harm the special character of the building;
- **BE12** – relates to the treatment of known and possible archaeological sites.
- **BE16** – seeks the improvement of prominent vacant sites;
- **NE8 (a)** – protects the River Maun Mature Landscape Area from inappropriate development;
- **NE13 & NE14** – both protect Local Nature Reserves;
- **NE16** – deals with protected species issues;
- **M7** – protects the Robin Hood line from development that may prejudice its effective operation;
- **M12 (a)** – protects the strategic route for walkers, horse riders and cyclists at the River Maun Valley from loss;
- **M16** – relates to movement in all new developments;
- **DWM1** – relates to land that may be contaminated from historic uses;
- **U6** – relates to development within flood plains;
- **PPS9** – relates to biodiversity and geological conservation;
- **PPG15** – relates to the historic environment; and,
- **PPG16** – relates to archaeology;
- **PPG25 and emerging PPS25** – relates to development and flood risk.

The full local policies can be found in the Adopted Mansfield Local Plan 1998, or on the Council's website at the following address:

www.mansfield.gov.uk/localplanning_localplan.htm

Full national policies can be found online at the following website: www.communities.gov.uk

Acceptable Development

The site has existing permitted use as a builder's merchants, which can be continued. However, if a different use were to be proposed it would need to conform with the policies highlighted. Therefore it is likely that any new use would be of an employment nature (under Policy E4). This would include office development. The areas hatched on the plan have potential for additional development of employment uses.

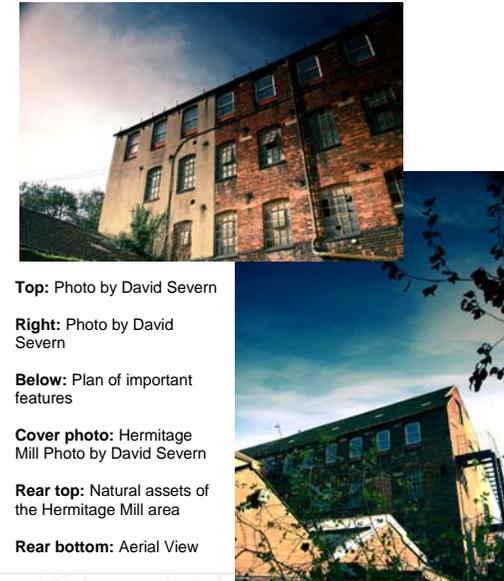
There is a requirement to protect the Listed Building and its setting (in accordance with Policies BE2 to BE5). It is considered important that the front area, to the east of the site, is kept free from substantial development, other than landscaping or car parking. The Council will support schemes that enhance the appearance of the mill which includes the removal of additions that are of poor architectural or historic interest. These are indicated on the plan.

In order to support improvements to the mill building, there is the possibility of allowing facilitating development in the hatched areas. The Council recognises that there are aspirations for community and conservation uses for the mill building which may necessitate greater levels of profitable development. However this would be subject to discussion and negotiation.

The site is not considered suitable for residential and retail development due to the employment nature of the area. However small, ancillary retail units that relate to leisure and employment uses may be acceptable. Any proposals for hotel use will be considered against any justification given. Proposals for the alteration of the mill must be fully justified, in line with PPG15.

Any new development within the Potential Development Areas (highlighted on the plan below) will be expected to replace existing structures with development that is in keeping with the Listed Building and respects its setting. The scale of any new developments should be subservient to the Mill to ensure it remains the most prominent building.

The site is partially at flood risk as it lays in Flood Zone 2 and 3 of maps published by the Environment Agency. Developers will need to carry out further investigation through a Flood Risk Assessment.



Top: Photo by David Severn

Right: Photo by David Severn

Below: Plan of important features

Cover photo: Hermitage Mill Photo by David Severn

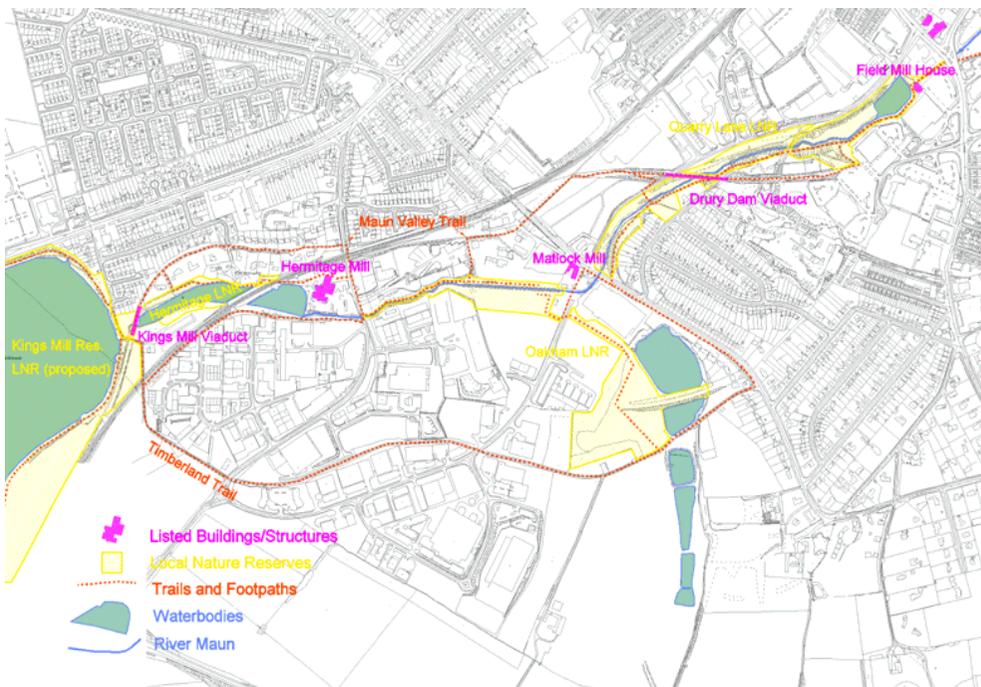
Rear top: Natural assets of the Hermitage Mill area

Rear bottom: Aerial View



Interim Planning Guidance Note 5

Hermitage Mill Development Brief



Development Considerations

Development of the Hermitage Mill site needs to consider a variety of factors.

- Any building works that affect the character of the Hermitage Mill will need to have Listed Building Consent.
- The site is located within an employment area, which mitigates against residential or retail uses.
- The site has a steep topography that slopes approximately 3 metres from the north down to the south across the frontage.
- In order not to obscure the view of the mill building, it is necessary to limit development on the eastern part of the site (along the roadside frontage).
- Access points will probably be limited to existing locations as both the bridge (to the north) and the bend in the road (to the south) obscure the view of oncoming traffic.
- Consideration will need to be given to nature conservation and archaeological issues.
- The two rights of access need to be protected and maintained (one runs through the eastern part of the site giving access to the western part, and one passes through the northern part of the site).
- The health and safety of users of the footpaths needs to be considered in relation to the potential development areas.
- It must be ensured that any development within the potential development area to the south of the site is not subject to flood risk or worsen the risk to the existing property. Mitigation measures should be used if flooding would occur.



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