

42013 Botley Mills: new office accommodation **Design Statement**

Preface

Revisions

Rev	Date	Comments	Checked
1	29.09.22	initial issue.	 Digitally signed by Gareth Jenkins_D 0204 Date: 2022.10.03 16:34:29 +01'00'
2	03.10.22	Updated for planning application	

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is in support of an application to revitalise an existing underutilised courtyard, together with a new canopy roof and the creation a new first floor office within the existing complex of buildings at the Botley Mills site.
- 1.2 Botley Mills makes a major contribution to the character and vitality of Botley village. The Mill has been a central feature to the village since at least 11th century although the current buildings date from circa 1770.
- 1.3 The Mill and the associated buildings have been adapted over the years to accommodate the many uses and there are today around 40 different businesses operating from the site. The Mill owners are very conscious that the success of the businesses - and in turn the viability of the Mill complex - are dependent on meeting the needs of the users including creating flexible spaces and an attractive external environment.
- 1.4 The proposals to provide additional accommodate and to remodel the existing courtyard area aim to assist with both of these.

2. Existing Buildings

- 2.1 The curtilage of Botley Flour Mills contains two Listed Buildings (the Botley Flour Mills and the Mill House) and a number of subsequent additions and free-standing buildings around the site.
- 2.2 The main mill buildings, which face the front courtyard and stretch across most of the width of the site, comprise red brick walls, plain tile roofs and timber arch-headed windows. This building imparts much character to the appearance of the site.
- 2.3 The Mill House sits in the south-west corner of the site and is a detached 2-storey building with darker brown brick walls and a tiled roof (with hidden pitches)
- 2.4 The shop building, at the south-eastern corner of the site, was built in the 1970's and recently re-clad with timber cladding walls over a brick plinth, and a profiled metal roof which overhangs at the front to form a canopy over a (now disused) weighbridge. PV panels were added to this roof earlier this year.
- 2.5 A series of small shop/craft units were built in the 1980's underneath a former canopy roof. This is located to the west of the site, and creates a separate and more private courtyard area which is partially covered by the canopy. The canopy is what remains of an earlier grain store but now with only the roof and upper parts of the wall remaining. The units are formed as a single-storey terrace with a flat roof. Steps lead up to a higher-level section of the site to the south.
- 2.6 Ground floor units in the main Mill building form the northern edge of this courtyard, which is informally used for car parking. Another set of (metal) stairs between the canopy and the Mill building form a fire escape route from upper levels and provides maintenance access to the roof of the craft units.
- 2.7 Other sheds, offices and stores are located behind the main building but are largely concealed from view from the front of the site.

3. Site Context

- 3.1 The site sits just to the west of the village of Botley, with pavements facilitating a short walk from the centre and its public car parks and transport links.
- 3.2 The site straddles the River Hamble; the western side of the site accommodates all of the buildings with a bridge link crossing the river to access a parking area on the eastern side.
- 3.3 Surrounding the buildings on the main part of the site are areas used for parking and deliveries. The front parking forecourt was recently designated as visitor-only with parking controls (staff parking is now at the rear of the site and across the bridge to the east) and this has had a dramatic improvement on parking availability generally.
- 3.4 Vehicular access is available at two points to the front of the site from Mill Hill (A334) though generally it is only the eastern access point that is used. Pedestrian access from the main square is via a somewhat narrow pavement; an external gate provide separate access into the south-western corner of the site, though this is not currently used by the general public.
- 3.5 The river runs to the east of the main buildings, with a flood wall built on the western bank. The Mill Race splits off the river to the north of the site and then runs south under the main Mill building; this forms a distinctive feature to the rear of the site.
- 3.6 The site slopes up significantly towards the west, with retaining walls formed against the adjacent properties in Mill Hill and Winchester Street.

4. Planning context

Recent applications for the site generally have comprised the following:

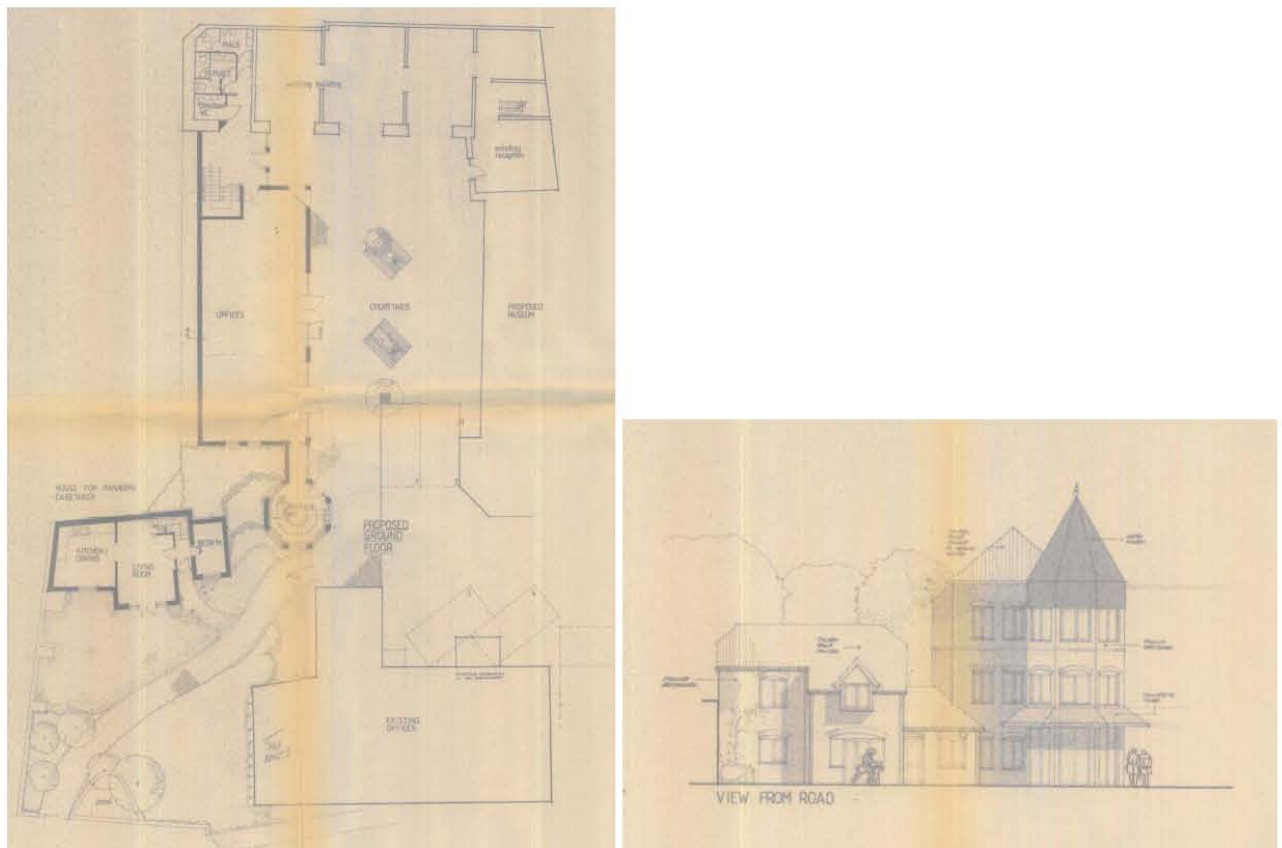
L/16/78084 Approval for the new bridge and car park

L/18/83997 approval for rebuilding of existing boundary/river wall

L/19/86555 Approval for the re-cladding of the shop unit

L/22/92724 Approval for installation of PV panels to the shop unit

In 1989, consent was granted for the construction of a 3-storey office building in the location currently proposed for this application (reference 16401/7). Groundworks were carried out in connection with this, though the scheme was never fully implemented. This included a new landscaped route into the site from the south-western corner.



Policy BO7 in the Eastleigh Local Plan for the Botley Mill site states:

Planning permission will be granted for development at Botley Mill subject to the other policies of this local plan and the following conditions:

- i. it enables the preservation, restoration and future maintenance of the buildings and their setting;*
- ii. it is sympathetic in terms of use, layout and design to the location of the site, the character of the listed buildings and their setting;*

- iii. it provides improved pedestrian links to the centre of Botley;*
- iv. measures are taken to improve the safety of the vehicular access to the site; and*
- v. development would not harm the nature conservation value of the River Hamble.*

These proposals respond to these criteria as follows:

- i. The existing canopy is not historically significant, having been built relatively recently compared to the main mill buildings, but had a functional mill use and therefore part of the 'story' of the site. This element will be upgraded and enhanced as part of this work.
- ii. The new office space is designed to be sympathetic to the existing single-storey element (in terms of size, fenestration design) and other buildings on the site (external materials)
- iii. The proposals do not directly improve pedestrian links with the village centre, but would work well with any future plans to address this possible route (eg through the south-western corner of the site.)
- iv. The proposals do not directly affect vehicular access into the site
- v. The proposals do not harm the nature conservation value of the River Hamble

5. Design proposals

- 5.1 The existing courtyard under the canopy is an under-exploited space but the quality of the space is also limited by the condition of the canopy above – which is in a poor decorative state. Steel portal frames appear sound but the profiled sheet roofing and high-level walls are unattractive. The space above the flat roofs of the craft units is used for general storage and is somewhat untidy.
- 5.2 It is therefore proposed to replace the roof of the canopy with new profiled metal sheeting, to incorporate rooflights to provide better natural light into the space below. The surfacing of the courtyard will be renewed with a resin-bound system to unify the existing finishes without creating level issues for units at the rear (which are low relative to the paving level.) and the space given over as a attractive pedestrian area, rather than for informal parking. New decorative lighting will be provided over the courtyard.
- 5.3 Above the craft units, a new office unit will be created to enclose the void space. This will follow the footprint of the ground floor units, and utilise the raised ground to the south with a further external staircase to provide the main access point. The existing fire escape stairs at the rear will be modified to provide an escape route from the new offices too.
- 5.4 The extension will have fire-retardant timber cladding with a grey stain (similar in appearance to that used recently on the shop unit) extending up to the underside of the canopy roof. Fenestration will follow the rhythm of the ground floor units with timber-framed units facing the courtyard, and an aluminium-framed entrance door where exposed on the southern elevation.
- 5.5 The southern gable of the canopy over the courtyard area will have an area of glazing to create a sense of enclosure to the courtyard space below, form an attractive end elevation (particularly when viewed from the main forecourt area) and provide enhanced weather protection.
- 5.6 The additional office accommodation would in theory generate an additional parking requirement of 3 car spaces (87sqm at 1 space/30sqm). Following the recent changes to parking on site as described above, it is held that there is sufficient capacity with existing provision to accommodate this.
- 5.7 Secure and covered cycle parking is currently provided for 8 bikes under the existing fire escape stairs, which will remain in place.

6. Appendix: Site Photos



View from front of site, with main Mill building to the right, Mill House to the left and the existing canopy in the background



Front of canopy, with craft units under and steps up to higher site level



View of canopy from higher ground level. Retaining wall visible in left of photo



View of void over existing shop units, with the Mill building in the background and retaining wall to the left.



View under the canopy of the main Mill building



The shop/craft units



The existing fire escape staircase