



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

Revision history

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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. These are the Botley Flour Mills and the Mill House.
- 2.2 Botley Flour Mills has a List Entry Number 1322641 and was first listed on 5th December 1955; it is a Grade II Listing. The Listing states:

1 5230 BOTLEY FAREHAM ROAD (Mill Hill) (north side)

*Botley (Flour) Mills SU 5113 SE 9/20 SU 5113 SW 9/20 5.12.55
II GV*

2. Circa 1770 mill, still in use. Front is a near-symmetrical design of 2 storeys with attic; 3+1+3 windows, projecting centre of 3 storeys with brick dentilled pediment gable. The red tile roof has a series of hipped roof dormers at front and rear; a parapet has a decorative brick band below the coping. Walling is red brick (Flemish bond) with blue headers, red-rubbed cambered arches to windows. First floor band, stone cills; a wide arch at east is the carriage entrance; another under the centre unit gives on to the entrance door. Casements. At the rear, the water reaches first floor level, where there are 3 windows on either side of a central door. Within, the structure is a heavy timber frame, with much old equipment still in use. To the north side there is a rearward extension of similar date. To the south a tall modern structure of 1922 is attached.

- 2.3 The Mill House has a List Entry number of 1281683 and was Listed on 5th December 1955; it is a Grade II Listing. The Listing states:

1. 5230 BOTLEY FAREHAM ROAD (Mill Hill) (north side)

*The Mill House SU 5113 SE 9/19 SU 5113 SW 9/19 5.12.55
II GV*

2. Circa 1770. Two storeys, 4 windows. Red tile hipped roof with red brick dentil eaves on projecting band. Front wall in blue header band, with rubbed red flat arches, return in Flemish bond with a plinth. Sash windows in exposed frames. Central doorway is wide, of coarse detail; a pediment on coupled pilasters with an oval arch containing a fanlight and a 6-panelled door (4 being glazed). At rear an early C19 extension has a low-pitched slate roof and a porch with oval arches to doorway and coupled windows.

- 2.4 The main mill buildings comprise red brick walls, plain tile roofs and timber arch-headed windows and impart much character to the appearance of the site.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 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.

- 2.7 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. Proposals

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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. Assessment of the impact of the proposals

The existing canopy is not historically significant, having been built relatively recently (circa 1960's) compared to the main mill buildings, but had a functional mill use and therefore forms part of the 'story' of the site. However this element currently detracts somewhat from the main Mill building which surrounds it, particularly as the roof downstand blocks the view of the Mill building.

The existing single-storey shop units also appear 'incomplete' as they sit under the canopy – with a blank concrete retaining wall behind.

The replacement canopy therefore addresses these issues through the omission of the downstand and the inclusion of glazing to the front gable. The new office space at first floor 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) – and 'completes' the existing ground floor shop units.

In terms of the site overall, the proposals will create an attractive courtyard space free of vehicles, which will be a considerable improvement to the existing arrangement (both in terms of the existing courtyard, and the wider site which is otherwise characterised by car parking.)