

Correspondence with GMAAS in relation to PP Condition 16.

From: Ian Miller
Sent: 04 October 2021 18:02
To: James Stammers
Subject: RE: Victoria Mill, Miles Platting - Watching Brief

Good afternoon James

Thank you very much for your email last week regarding Victoria Mill, and I'm delighted to hear that you have picked up this important scheme and will see it through to completion.

The principal archaeological interest in the site is undoubtedly the building, which has been subject to an excellent survey by Mark Fletcher, and I'm less concerned about any potential below-ground archaeology that may be impacted upon by the external works. I take Mark's point about there being three below-ground elements of possible interest, but I need to consider what could be learned of these former large buildings by examining any remains uncovered within the tight confines of new drainage trenches. The truthful answer is not very much, especially when they are on the lines of existing drainage channels. The proposed attenuation tank is a slightly different matter, as the size of this intervention is sufficiently large to provide some meaningful archaeological results. However, if this area has already been excavated by Signature Living, it would seem unlikely that any archaeological remains will survive intact.

If it was possible to confirm that the attenuation tank area has definitely been excavated previously, then I would be happy to dispense with any further archaeological investigation (*ie* you don't need to organise a watching brief).

I note under the 'Recommendations' of Mark's report, he mentions the installation of a public information panel, explaining the heritage interests of this immensely important mill. This would be very much welcomed, although such a requirement isn't specified in Condition 16 attached to the planning consent so I can't insist on this being delivered.

I hop that this helps, but please don't hesitate getting back to me should you wish to discuss further.

Kind regards

Ian

From: James Stammers
Sent: 30 September 2021 11:38
To: Ian Miller
Subject: FW: Victoria Mill, Miles Platting - Watching Brief

Ian,

I've been passed your contact details by Mark Fletcher of Matrix Archaeology and I'm contacting you in relation to the redevelopment of Victoria Mill in Miles Platting, Manchester.

The development has been ongoing for some years, having stalled in late 2019 when the original Developer (Signature Living) went into Administration. We are now appointed by the Administrators (FRP Advisory) to oversee the completion of the development. We currently have a Contractor engaged on site to complete refurbishment works to the building, to provide 85 apartments, and will soon be looking to complete external works to improve drainage and flood attenuation in the area as part of our planning permission.

The Mill is Grade II* Listed and as you would expect, one of our planning conditions relates to archaeology. In 2017 Cotswold Archaeology produced a WSI in support of the planning application and in 2019 Matrix Archaeology produced a follow up report specifically in relation to the works within the building. The 2017 Cotswold Report includes the requirement for a Watching Brief in relation to any external works, including the drainage and flood attenuation.

I understand from Mark Fletcher (as per the email below) that we should contact yourself for a final decision over whether a watching brief is required in relation to this work.

I have attached to this email:

- The original Cotswold Archaeology WSI
- The 2019 report by Matrix
- A marked up plan showing the location of the proposed drainage works. These are all within the existing Victoria Mill car park. It is my understanding that some of these areas (notably the location of the attenuation tank) were previously excavated by Signature Living prior to our involvement, the remainder of the excavations will either be on the lines of existing drainage channels or new excavations. Mark has provided some commentary below on the location of these proposed works in relation to below-ground elements.

I would be grateful if you could confirm any requirements relating to a watching brief and if this is required what we need to do to take this forward. If it's easier to discuss this over a call or on site, please let me know.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

James Stammers
Director, Project Management

From: M FLETCHER <mfletcher@matrixarch.co.uk>
Sent: 22 September 2021 12:04
To: James Stammers <J.Stammers@bristowconsulting.co.uk>
Cc: Jas Mann <J.mann@bristowconsulting.co.uk>
Subject: VICTORIA MILL, MILES PLATTING

Hi James,

Further to our telephone conversation yesterday, and your email and attachment, I have now looked at the relevant documentation.

The Cotswold Archaeology WSI of October 2017 does indeed cover an archaeological watching brief on any groundworks related to the development.

At the time when we undertook our building survey work in May/June 2019, there were no groundworks being undertaken, and we were unaware that any such works had either been undertaken (or may have been proposed at that time). Our own work on the standing building, was defined by a WSI which was agreed by GMAAS, who advise the LPA.

Looking at the historic plans in our report, it is clear that the proposed new drainage may impact upon three possible below-ground elements:

1. Any remains of 'D Mill', which was erected in the early 1920s, as possibly the last cotton mill to be erected in Greater Manchester (the basement of this mill seems to be the location of the attenuation pit; and it was connected to the 'A Mill' by a below-ground passageway).
2. The two-storey office block as shown in Figure 13 of our report.
3. Buildings of the chemical works, which stood to the east of the 'A Mill'.

Although we would not consider any of these three to be of high archaeological significance, we would not wish to second-guess whatever GMAAS may recommend regarding any future watching brief on the groundworks.

The officers who were working at GMAAS in 2019 have now retired, and have been replaced, hence the replacements had no first-hand knowledge of what has transpired at the site. I do not know if they have received a copy of our report, although I could forward a copy now.

Any decisions regarding a watching brief on groundworks should be put into their hands, Ian Miller is at I.F.Miller@salford.ac.uk.

I hope this is useful, please let me know if you require any further assistance.

Kind regards,

Mark Fletcher

Matrix Archaeology Ltd