

# **Former Mondi Mill Paper Works Heritage Impact Assessment**

Eccleston Homes

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**LICHFIELDS**

# LICHFIELDS

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## 1.0 Introduction

### Background

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment [HIA] has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Eccleston Homes Ltd [Eccleston Homes]. It assesses the effect of the proposal at the site of the former Mondi Paper Mill upon the existing mill buildings themselves and surrounding aboveground heritage assets; namely the Ramsbottom Conservation Area.
- 1.2 The application site sits to the east (and is partially located within) the Ramsbottom Conservation Area. Ramsbottom is located approximately 5 miles north of Bury in Greater Manchester, on the edge of the West Pennine Moors. It is a good example of a Pennine textile town which developed from the manufacturing and processing of cotton in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Within the application site itself and remaining buildings and structures in association with the former Mondi Paper Mill. These buildings feature on Bury Council's Local List and comprise non-designated heritage assets in their own right.
- 1.3 In accordance with Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework [‘the Framework’], this HIA establishes the significance of heritage assets to be affected, including an understanding of their setting and how it contributes to significance. It then considers the effects of the proposal on setting and significance.

### Methodology

- 1.4 This section sets out the approach to assessing the significance of heritage assets as well as the approach to assessing the proposal's effect on their significance, including consideration of how changes to setting will affect the significance of the identified heritage assets.
- 1.5 The Framework defines significance as the ‘value’ of an asset based on its ‘heritage interest’, and it defines that interest as archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic. This broadly aligns with the heritage values outlined in Historic England's Conservation Principles, 2008, which are evidential value, aesthetic value, historical value and communal value.
- 1.6 The overview of the significance of the heritage assets has been undertaken using a combination of desk-based study and fieldwork undertaken on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020. Desk-based references consulted include the National Heritage List for England, Borough Council's Local List, Ramsbottom Conservation Area Character Appraisal as well as relevant historic mapping and photography.
- 1.7 The approach to considering the effect of changes to setting upon significance has been carried out in accordance with Historic England's The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition), 2017.

### Scope

- 1.8 The following heritage assets were considered to be potentially affected by the proposal:
- 1 Ramsbottom Conservation Area; and,
  - 2 The existing buildings within the site associated with the former Mondi Paper Mill.
- 1.9 Ramsbottom Conservation Area contains a large number of designated and non-designated heritage assets, many of which are located within relative proximity to the application site. Fieldwork has established that the visual relationship between these assets and the application site is extremely limited due to the sites location on the edge of the Conservation Area, intervening development, separation distances and existing vegetation present on the

application site. In most cases the only feature within the application site that can be seen as the existing chimney stack, which would be retained under the proposed development.

- 1.10 Ramsbottom Railway Station, which is locally listed, sits to the immediate west of the application site. Historic links between the application site and the Railway Station have been lost. The visual relationship between the application site and the Railway Station is broken up by vegetation, and due to the current degraded state of the application site, it plays a negative role in the setting of the Railway Station. It is therefore considered that the redevelopment of the site will not lead to any negative impact upon the setting of the Railway Station, and it is excluded from further assessment.

## **2.0 Heritage Statute and Policy**

### **Statute and Policy Context**

2.1 The relevant statutory development plan for the application site comprises the adopted Bury Unitary Development Plan [the UDP]. The statutory test for the proposal is S.72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 [the 1990 Act].

2.2 Material considerations include:

- 1 National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) [the Framework];
- 2 Planning Practice Guidance [PPG]: Historic Environment (July 2019);
- 3 National Design Guidance (September 2019);
- 4 Emerging Bury Local Plan, which is at early consultation stages and can be afforded limited weight only;
- 5 Relevant Historic England guidance; and,
- 6 Ramsbottom Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan [the Conservation Area Appraisal].

### **Application of Statute and Policy**

2.3 The following are the key heritage policies and statutory tests the proposal will be assessed against:

- 1 Does the proposal preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area (S.72 (1) of the 1990 act, Policy 4 of the Conservation Area Appraisal and UDP Policy EN2/1)?
- 2 Does the proposal directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets? In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of heritage assets (§197 of the Framework).
- 3 Will the proposal preserve important views and vistas (Conservation Area Appraisal Policy 10)?

## 3.0 Baseline Conditions

### Site and Surroundings

- 3.1 The application site is situated on the eastern edge of Ramsbottom. Ramsbottom is located approximately 5 miles north of Bury in Greater Manchester, on the edge of the West Pennine Moors. It is a good example of a Pennine textile town which developed as a result of the manufacturing and processing of cotton during the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Photographs showing the site and surrounding area are included within Appendix 2 of this report.
- 3.2 The application site comprises an area of largely derelict brownfield land to the immediate south of Bridge Street and to the immediate west of the River Irwell. The northern boundary of the site features an existing stone wall, which has been partially demolished and in places rebuilt. The site is bound to the south by Ramsbottom Cricket Club and to the west by Ramsbottom Railway Station.
- 3.3 The site is served by an existing unnamed access road [Road 1] on the western boundary of the site, which connects to Bridge Street. The north-west corner of the site is included within the Ramsbottom Conservation Area, which includes a much larger portion of the town as well as the valley sides (on the western side).
- 3.4 Within the north-west portion of the site are three existing buildings, as well as a chimney stack, which comprised part of the former Mondi Mill. From north to south, these buildings are referred to respectively as Buildings A, B and C. Buildings A and B (and the chimney stack) are located within the Conservation Area, whilst Building C is located just outside of it. These buildings feature on Bury Council's local list and are therefore considered to be non-designated heritage assets. They are not considered to be likely candidates for national listing.
- 3.5 Building A is the northernmost building within the site and is understood to have been used as an office. It is a two-storey stone-built structure with a pitched roof and a single rising chimney stack. The building has been extended to the west with the addition of a late 20<sup>th</sup>-century single-story lean-to structure. It is the most decorative of the remaining buildings on site including chamfered stonework, moulded drip courses and a relatively ornate gate pier. Various windows and entrances have been blocked up (including all those on the west elevation of the building). Despite this, it is clear from the remaining window openings that the interior of the building is in a very poor state. Much of the building at present is concealed by unplanned vegetation.
- 3.6 Building B is located to the south of Building A and comprises a two-storey rubble stone-built structure with hipped roof. The 1983 plan of the site shows this building to be in use as a joiner's shop and engineer's store. The corners of the building are delineated by quoins and the top edge of each elevation has stone coping. This building appears to have been extensively modified. The northern elevation has unequal fenestration with differing openings and designs. Most windows are obscured or blocked by boarding and encroaching vegetation. Access is provided to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor level by way of an external metal staircase to the north elevation of the building. The eastern elevation of the building has a brick lean-to structure with stone quoins, partially obscuring the original ground floor elevation. At upper floor level, two modified window openings are present, with each appearing to have been expanded or reduced in size. The southern gable end has two window openings with quoins around. The western elevation fronts the water course and is largely obscured by extensive encroaching vegetation. Glimpsed views reveal various modifications to this elevation. It is not possible to enter the building due to its unsafe state, although it is possible to see through the window that part of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor ceiling has collapsed and the building is in a very poor state.

- 3.7 Building C is the southernmost building within the application site, sitting adjacent to the existing chimney structure. The 1983 plan of the site labels this building as the mess room, papermakers office, laboratory and stores. The building is two storeys in height and is stone-built with coping stones lining the edge of the pitched roof. A brick-built extension exists to the south, though only a small section of this remains. The building has unequal fenestration and has been subject to various modifications. There is an unintentional hole on the western elevation due to a localised collapse. The western elevation of this building adjoins the chimney stack, providing it with a small degree of context.
- 3.8 The chimney stack itself stands at approximately 15 metres, having been shortened twice. The structure is red brick and, as set out above, partially adjoins Building C. An unintentional opening/cavity is present at ground floor, where the chimney previously adjoined part of the larger building/structure in which it was originally set.
- 3.9 The remainder of the site is covered in concrete hardstanding which is in poor condition, as well as vegetation and detritus.

## **Historic Development**

- 3.10 An historic map extract showing the site and surrounding area included in Appendix 1 of this report. Although the town of Ramsbottom was largely developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area has a long history of human habitation and Bronze-Age burial sites have been found on the surrounding moors.
- 3.11 The early settlement was located well above the valley floor. The presence of the Manor Court and Tudor Chapel in Holcombe indicates the village's importance of the mediaeval population centre of the Ramsbottom Area. Evidence of mediaeval route-ways can be found in the Town's modern street pattern.
- 3.12 Before the late 18<sup>th</sup> century there was no settlement on the modern site of Ramsbottom other than a single farm. The Ramsbottom area remained rural until late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Ramsbottom's rapid growth began in 1783 when the Bury firm of Peel and Yates, headed by Robert Peel, took a lease on the Old Ground, in the area of the present Smithy Street, Square Street, Bolton Street and Bridge Street. The firm built new factories and offices for their expanding bleaching and dyeing business; they already had factories in Bury and at The Burrs. Ramsbottom was ideally situated with its plentiful supply of pure water fed by streams from springs below Holcombe Moor.
- 3.13 These works were later acquired by the Grant Brothers in 1806. The Grant Brothers would go on to acquire a number of other mills within the area and become notable citizens within Ramsbottom. In 1821, the Grant Brothers built a large calico printing works on the west bank of the River Irwell known as the Square Works, shown in the to the map of 1842 to the south-west of the application site. Ramsbottom Mill (not to be confused with Ramsbottom Paper Mill), to the north of Athol Street, was originally built in 1802 by Samuel and Thomas Ashton and was the first large spinning and weaving mill in the town. It expanded rapidly and by 1833 was the largest mill in the Irwell Valley.
- 3.14 By 1850, when the first 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey map was published, the application site was shown to accommodate a series of reservoirs associated with the Square Works. By this stage a number of additional mills and reservoirs had been constructed including Springwood Mill, Car Mill, Top Wood Mill. In addition, the railway had recently arrived in Ramsbottom, and the Church of St Paul, Bridge Street, had just been built on Ashton owned land. The extent of the town at this stage was similar to that shown in the 1842 map, with little development away from the main streets.

- 3.15 By the early 1890s a dense pattern of terraced housing on Street to the north and south of Bridge Street, to the west and above Bolton Street and along Peel Brow had been developed.
- 3.16 The 1894 Ordnance Survey map (surveyed 1891) shows the application site as being partially infilled to accommodate a Paper Mill. Parts of the site still accommodated reservoirs albeit the size of these had been reduced. By this time there was a marked increase in the number of cotton mills and industrial sites in the town. To the north of Bridge Street, in addition to Ramsbottom Mills, there were now three additional complexes, Garden Mill, Waterside Mill, and Irwell Bridge Mill. South of Bridge Street, additional new cotton mills were present including Rose Mill, Railway Mill and Meadow Mill.
- 3.17 The cotton industry suffered a decline in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and many of the surrounding industrial buildings were repurposed and eventually lost. The railway also closed in 1972 (though it would reopen in 1987 as a heritage railway). By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century most of the surrounding industrial buildings had been lost. Most recently the area to the west of the application site (south of Bridge Street) has been developed by modern supermarkets. The historic connections between the application site and the adjacent railway have been lost. Cognisant with the above, the application site has largely lost its historic context.
- 3.18 The Paper Mill present on the application site continually expanded through the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, with the demolition and construction of a number of buildings within the site. The Mill has changed hands several times throughout its lifespan, being known as Ramsbottom Paper Mill, Holcombe Mill, Trinity Paper Mill and finally Mondi Mill. For consistency, the mill is hereafter referred to as Mondi Mill in this assessment. The site operations at Mondi Mill ceased in 2008 as a result of rising fuel costs and declining demand. The majority of the buildings within the site were demolished between 2012 and 2015, with only three buildings and the chimney stack (which has been shortened twice) remaining within the site. Since this time the buildings and the wider application site have fallen into a state of degradation and disrepair

## 4.0 **Significance of Heritage Assets**

### **Ramsbottom Conservation Area**

- 4.1 Ramsbottom Conservation Area was originally designated in 1977 and extended in 1988 and 2004. At the time of the 2004 extension, the adjacent Tanners and Bury New Road Conservation Areas were also designated. In 2007, the three conservation areas were amalgamated and extended to form the present Ramsbottom Conservation Area. At this time the Ramsbottom Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was published.
- 4.2 Ramsbottom's physical character and historical development has been influenced by its location on the sides of the Irwell Valley, the rivers, springs and streams of the surrounding West Pennine moors provided the water needed for textile processes (particularly for dyeing materials). The underlying geology of the area is predominantly sandstone, a durable building stone that does not suffer adversely from erosion.
- 4.3 The urban form of the Conservation Area is focused on the dense, compact central area around the marketplace, with more suburban development to the south and east. The sloping site of the town has influenced the distinctive pattern of terraced streets built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century both along and across the contours. The town also has many steps, alleys and footpaths that run between streets and link to courtyards. These serve to add to the interest and intimacy of the town.
- 4.4 Typically, the domestic buildings found within the town are small in scale and predominantly of two storeys. They display the clear character of workers housing, being of a relatively high density with little amenity space. The buildings are constructed from local sandstone and are unified in their materiality and architectural style. Good quality masonry is a common feature within Ramsbottom. These historic residential buildings and streets within the Conservation Area therefore have illustrative value owing to their legible historic role as workers dwellings, as well as architectural value owing to their uniformity and their display of well-preserved local vernacular.
- 4.5 The predominance of two-storey dwellings in the more domestic parts of the Conservation Area also allows larger notable buildings, such as churches and chimneys (including the Mondi Mill chimney) to be visible in various parts of the Town. This helps to provide an understanding of the town's industrial past.
- 4.6 Turning to the former industrial buildings and structures which once prevailed within the town, these have largely been lost. As set out in section 3 of this report, the sheer number of mills in the town once would have created a dramatic industrial townscape. Whilst some have survived and been repurposed, most have been substantially altered or lost. In particular, in the eastern part of the Conservation Area (west of Railway Street, the railway station and beyond this the application site) the industrial buildings that were once present have been demolished and redeveloped as supermarkets.
- 4.7 The loss of many of the town's industrial buildings does serve to increase the importance of remaining industrial buildings and structures that remain. The chimney stack of Mondi Mill is an important feature within the Conservation Area and can be seen throughout the town. The remaining structures of Mondi Mill (which are assessed in further detail in the next section of this report) cannot be seen from the vast majority of the Conservation Area due to separation distances, intervening development and existing overgrown vegetation. At present, the only place to appreciate these assets is from the Irwell Bridge, where the assets can be seen as a group (though partially obscured by vegetation). Views of the buildings (other than the

chimney) are restricted from anywhere else. Whilst the chimney is identified in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal as an important feature within the townscape, the application site does not form part of a recognised key views. Previously, buildings of a much greater scale were present on the application site and therefore there are no historically important views through the site. Therefore, whilst existing buildings A B and C make an important contribution to the historic interest of the Conservation Area, their visual and functional relationship with the wider Conservation Area is limited.

- 4.8 As for the remaining part of the application site which sits within the Conservation Area, this is in a poor and deteriorated state and detracts from the aesthetic value of the Conservation Area. The same can be said for the remainder of the application site which falls outside of the Conservation Area. This area features incongruous concrete hardstanding which is in a fragmented state, unruly and unplanned vegetation, as well as detritus and evidence of arson/trespassing. On the northern boundary of the site is a stone wall, which has been knocked through in places to create vehicular access points. It also appears that parts of the wall have been demolished and rebuilt. Notwithstanding the degree of alteration, the wall makes a positive contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 4.9 Looking more broadly at the wider setting of the Conservation Area, the West Pennine Moors provide a dramatic backdrop/contrast to the densely developed town centre and this context enhances the significance of the Conservation Area.
- 4.10 In summary, Ramsbottom is a good example of a West Pennine town which prospered during the Industrial Revolution largely as a result of the rapidly expanding cotton and textile industry in Greater Manchester. Through the decline of the industry Ramsbottom lost many of its industrial buildings and structures but the stone built domestic and civic structures have been relatively well preserved.
- 4.11 The former Mondi Mill structures present within the application site make a limited positive contribution to the historic and architectural interest of the town, though the chimney stack is the only structure which can be widely appreciated throughout the Conservation Area. A stone wall on the northern boundary of the site, and the existing goit both make a small positive contribution to the Conservation Area. The remainder of the application site consists of deteriorated brownfield land and is of no illustrative or aesthetic value and currently forms a negative element both within the Conservation Area and within its setting.

## **The Former Mondi Mill**

- 4.12 A full description of the buildings and structures present on the site is set out in section 3 of this report. Building A is the northernmost building within the site, making it the most prominent building as it can be viewed from Bridge Street. The building features relatively ornate architectural detailing including chamfered stonework, mouldings, stone sills and lintels as well as an ashlar string course. The eastern elevation of the building also features an ornately carved stone gate pier. This architectural design and detailing suggest this building was a high status structure within the mill complex; the building is understood to have been in use as the site office. This is quite common within such industrial developments from this time; architectural detailing will often be focused on the public facing elements of the building. The building has been subject to a degree of alterations, with a lean-to structure on the western elevation and the blocking up of many windows. In addition, the general state of the building has deteriorated over time. Notwithstanding the derelict state of the building it is considered to be of some local architectural and illustrative historic interest given its design detailing, historic status as an office and prominent position within the site.

- 4.13 Buildings B and C are both of a simpler architectural style when compared to Building A, reflecting the less prominent role they played within the site historically. It also appears likely that these buildings were later additions. As set out in Section 3, these buildings have both undergone extensive modifications in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and their condition is considerably deteriorated. This is particularly the case for Building C, whose roof has almost entirely collapsed, and with extensive plant growth and damage to the stonework evident on each elevation. In this context it is considered that the architectural interest of the two buildings in their own right is very limited. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the buildings do have some illustrative historic value in helping to give a limited understanding of the previous industrial use of the site. This illustrative historic value of each of these buildings on an individual basis however is very limited, particularly Building C, which has deteriorated virtually beyond recognition.
- 4.14 The chimney stack, while it has been reduced in height, remains a prominent structure throughout the town. Despite its altered and deteriorated state, it serves as a clear reminder of the former industrial role of the application site. It is considered to be of local architectural and historic interest for these reasons.
- 4.15 As set out above, the existing structures and buildings on the site have (to varying degrees) historic and architectural interest in their own right. The relationship between the structures however, and the goit running through the western part of the site, represent a legible and tangible remnant of the former Mill complex. For this reason, the buildings share group value and enhance the setting of one another. Building A and the remaining chimney represent the most important features within the group.
- 4.16 The northern boundary of the site is partially delineated with a stone wall. Two openings are present within the wall and sections have been demolished and rebuilt. Despite this, the wall makes a small positive contribution to the setting of the assets.
- 4.17 The remainder of the application site plays a negative role in the setting of these assets. The site contains deteriorated concrete hardstanding, overgrown vegetation and detritus. In terms of the wider historical context of the site, which once would have been a striking industrial landscape, this has been lost. In any case, boundary planting and separation distances limit any visual relationship with surrounding developments.
- 4.18 In summary, the former Mondi Mill buildings are of some limited architectural and illustrative historic interest and serve as a reminder of the former industrial role of both the application site and the wider town. Building A and the chimney stack play the most important role, with Building B and, in particular, Building C having very limited architectural interest due to the level of modification and deterioration.
- 4.19 The structures share group value and enhance one another's setting. The wall on the northern boundary makes a modest positive contribution to the setting. The remainder of the application site plays a negative role in the setting of the assets and they are very limited tangible links with the surrounding area.

5.0

## Assessment of Effects of the Proposed Development on Significance

### Proposed Development

5.1

The accompanying planning application proposes to redevelop the site for residential use. The application seeks full planning permission for the erection of 72 dwellings comprising 5 one-bed apartments, 14 two-bed apartments, 2 two-bed dwelling, 22 three-bed dwellings, and 29 four-bed dwellings. There are several different house types proposed. They share similarities in terms of materials and design detailing, providing a mix of apartments, semi-detached and detached dwellings. This provides variation and provokes interest providing enhanced legibility within the site. All dwellings will be constructed from Marshalls Cromwell Stone which has been selected to respond positively to the Ramsbottom Conservation Area. The houses will be a mixture of two-storey and 2.5 storey dwellings, whilst the new build apartment blocks will be 3.5 stories.

5.2

The development will be accessed off Bridge Street to the north of the site. The development would make use of the existing Road 1 which runs on a north to south orientation on the western boundary of the site. A secondary road [Road 2] is proposed in an east to west orientation in the centre of the site, which comprises a cul-de-sac road leading to shared driveways. Emergency access will be provided via the shared accessway which runs perpendicular to Bridge Street. Dwellings have been set back from the existing buildings and structures present within the site. Dwellings are also set back from the road with a front garden and driveway area. Dwellings are proposed to address street corners and enhance natural surveillance throughout the development. The dwellings have also been orientated to ensure that there is no unacceptable means of overlooking in relation to privacy to both proposed and existing dwellings. Each dwelling is proposed with a front and rear garden and 2 car parking spaces either to the front or side of the respective unit. All properties are provided with designated areas for storage of waste and recycling bins. The proposals also include two apartment blocks located at the south of the site comprising 16 one and two-bed apartments.

5.3

The scheme has been designed to include an area of Public Open Space [POS] (approximately 0.6 ha, as well as incorporating an attractive soft landscaping scheme. The main body of open space will be located on the eastern boundary of the site, adjacent the River Irwell. An additional area of POS will be located in the north-west corner of the site, fronting Bridge Street. The roads have been designed to maintain vehicular access to the cricket club. The existing road will be widened to 5.5m with 2m footpath.

5.4

Existing buildings A and B will be retained and refurbished for use as residential dwellings. Building A will be subdivided into two one-bedroom apartments at ground floor, and one two-bedroom apartment at first floor. In general, external alterations have been kept to a minimum and are mostly restricted to what will be required to bring the property back into a usable condition. The massing of the building will not be altered. Windows which were previously blocked up will be reinstated. Any repairs/replacements will use sympathetic casings/materials. On the original, main part of the building (i.e. not the ground floor extension), no new window openings are proposed on the rear elevation or side elevations of the building. Two new window openings are proposed on the front elevation, which will tie in closely with the typology and rhythm of the existing fenestration. On the ground floor extension, the existing fenestration (which is a irregular and inconsistent) will be replaced by three evenly spaced, consistently sized windows on the rear elevation and an identical window on the gable end.

5.5

Building B will comprise 2 semi-detached two-bedroom dwellings. Due to the deteriorated state of Building B, more interventions and external alterations are proposed when compared to

Building A. The ground floor extension present on the front elevation of the building will be removed and any scarring will be made good with sympathetic materials. The metal staircase present on the north elevation of the building will also be removed. Existing fenestration on the side elevations will be blocked up and made good with sympathetic materials. New fenestration will be introduced at ground floor and first floor on the front and rear elevations taking the form of four evenly sized bays on each elevation. The proposed windows have been designed so as to respond to the character of the Conservation Area.

- 5.6 The proposals also include the retention of the existing brick chimney. Building C, which is the most damaged and substantially altered remaining structure on the site, will be demolished. The existing goit which runs to the west of Buildings B and C, will remain undeveloped but will be repaired as appropriate.

## **Assessment of Effects**

### **Ramsbottom Conservation Area**

- 5.7 The north-west corner of the application site falls within Ramsbottom Conservation Area, therefore the proposed development has the potential to impact directly on the Conservation Area as well as having the potential to affect its setting. The key contribution the site makes to the value of the Conservation Area is the former Mondi Mill, by virtue of its illustrative and architectural value. The impact upon these structures as non-designated heritage assets is assessed in further detail below, but it is considered that their sympathetic refurbishment will preserve and enhance the significance of Ramsbottom Conservation Area.
- 5.8 The chimney makes the most important contribution to the wider Conservation Area, being noted in the Character Appraisal as a key feature within the town. It assists with legibility and serves as a strong reminder of Ramsbottom's industrial past. Views of the chimney will not be interrupted by the proposed development therefore its positive role in the Conservation Area would be preserved.
- 5.9 As previously established, the remainder of the structures cannot be seen within the wider Conservation Area due to intervening development, vegetation and the scale of these buildings. At present, the only place from which the structures can be appreciated is Bridge Street. These views will be preserved. The application site does not form part of any key views noted within the Character Appraisal, therefore the proposal will not impact upon key views. The previous larger and relatively contemporary industrial structures which were present at the site until 2015 would have formed a negative element within both the Conservation Area and its setting.
- 5.10 On the whole the application site currently detracts from the Conservation Area and its setting, given its deteriorated state. The proposed development comprises an attractive small/ medium scale residential scheme, which incorporates sympathetic building materials, large areas of open landscaping and buildings of a domestic scale. The proposed buildings will reference the stone-built buildings within Ramsbottom Conservation Area, without seeking to imitate. The proposed development has been updated so that Plots 8 – 12 have moved further north to create a more active frontage to Bridge Street. The stone wall on the northern boundary of the site will be retained and restored (using sympathetic materials) where the large openings are currently present. A much smaller opening will be created to facilitate a 3.5 m wide emergency access route from Shared Accessway 1 to Bridge Street.
- 5.11 Whilst it is recognised that there is a predominance of two-storey workers cottage style dwellings within the heart of Ramsbottom Conservation Area, it is considered that the application site is capable of accommodating a modest increase in height due to the lack of visual relationship with the wider Conservation Area, as well as the more contemporary

development (predominantly supermarkets) present to the immediate west of the application site on Railway Street.

- 5.12 Taking into account the baseline position, (i.e. that the wider application site detracts from the setting and significance of the Conservation Area) it is considered that the proposed development will preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with S.72 (1) of the 1990 act, Policy 4 of the Conservation Area Appraisal and UDP Policy EN2/1.

### **Former Mondi Mill**

- 5.13 As set out above, Building A is to be refurbished for residential use. Internally, this will result in subdivision which will reduce the understanding of how the building was previously laid out or used. However, the internal spaces within the building are in such a state of disrepair that there is very little illustrative value or legibility within the building's interior at present. In addition, the very poor state of the interior detracts from the aesthetic value of the building. It is therefore considered that subdivision and renovation of the building's interior will offer an improvement to its aesthetic value and have a neutral effect on its illustrative value. Turning to the building's exterior, the building will be restored, with blocked up windows reinstated, and any damage/scarring made good with sympathetic materials. It has been assumed for the purpose of this assessment that window casings/materials will be sympathetic with those that are existing. External alterations are minimal and have been limited to introduction of two new windows on the principal elevation of the building, as well as the introduction of more uniform windows on the ground floor extension. The new windows to be introduced will be in fitting with the rhythm and detail of the existing fenestration. Overall, it is considered that the alterations will improve the aesthetic value of the building and will preserve its historic significance.
- 5.14 A greater degree of intervention/alteration is proposed for Building B. This reflects the fact that it is been more substantially modified and holds less historic and architectural significance. As set out in the previous section of this report, the later ground floor extension an external metal staircase will be removed. Sympathetic and uniform fenestration will be introduced to the principal and rear elevations of the building. The proposed fenestration reflects the character of the Conservation Area and is appropriate for the past industrial use of the site. Given the building's low illustrative value and low sensitivity, it is considered that the proposed alterations will improve the aesthetic value of the building and will have a neutral effect on its historic significance. Again, whilst subdivision of the building will not assist in understanding its previous use, the building has very little illustrative value at present due to its state of disrepair. Overall, it is considered that the alterations will improve the aesthetic value of Building B and its significance will be preserved.
- 5.15 As set out in the previous section of this report, Building C is of the least historic and architectural value, out of the group of structures that survive at the site. This is predominantly due to its very poor state of disrepair and signs of extensive modification. Whilst the demolition of this structure will clearly lead to the loss of any value it has at present, the sensitivity is so low that the effect is negligible. Any negligible harm arising from loss of Building C is outweighed by the heritage benefits of sympathetically refurbishing buildings A and buildings B.
- 5.16 The existing chimney, whilst having been shortened, still serves as a very visible reminder of the site's industrial past which can be appreciated from various parts in and around Ramsbottom. The chimney will be left in situ, and the existing cavity within its base will be made good with sympathetic red brick. Whilst the loss of Building C may take away, to a small degree, some of the context of the chimney, this contribution was very limited to begin with given the poor state of Building C. The retention and refurbishment of Buildings A and B will enhance the setting of the existing chimney. The historic significance and aesthetic value of the chimney will be

preserved. The group value of the remaining structures as a whole will be preserved and enhanced. The retention of the existing goit will help to preserve and enhance their setting, by providing an understanding of their functional role and importance of Ramsbottom's water springs in serving these industrial complexes. The open space to the west of Building A, and the slight setback of plots 8 – 12 from Bridge Street, will help to ensure that this building remains the most prominent structure within the application site, serving as a gateway feature on arrival at the application site. This will assist in the understanding of the building's former role as site office, and will allow the building to be appreciated from views that are not possible at present.

- 5.17 The wider setting of the existing buildings currently plays a negative role, detracting from the significance of these structures. The site is in an unkempt, overgrown state. There are signs of trespassing, vandalism and arson throughout the site. The regeneration of the site to create an attractive housing scheme which makes use of sympathetic stone and incorporates areas of open space will improve the aesthetic value of the site overall and therefore will make a small but positive contribution to the setting of the former Mill.
- 5.18 In summary, it is considered that the proposed development will improve the aesthetic and historic value of the former Mondi Mill buildings and preserve and enhance their significance. The proposals are therefore in accordance with paragraph 197 of the Framework.

6.0

## Summary and Conclusion

6.1

This assessment has established the significance of the relevant heritage assets and has assessed the potential effects of the proposal on their significance.

6.2

It has been identified that the proposal would meet the heritage policy tests and legislative requirements outlined in Section 2. These can be some right as follows:

- 1 Does the proposal preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area? (S.72 (1) of the 1990 act, Policy 4 of the Conservation Area Appraisal and UDP Policy EN2/1.)

*Yes, the proposed development will preserve and enhance the character of Ramsbottom Conservation Area, representing an improvement to both this part of the Conservation Area as well as its setting.*

- 2 Does the proposal directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets? In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of heritage assets. (Paragraph 197 of the Framework)

*Yes, the proposed refurbishment of buildings and structures associated with the former Mondi Mill will improve their aesthetic value and have a neutral effect on their illustrative value. Their significance will be preserved and enhanced.*

- 3 Will the proposal preserve important views and vistas? (Conservation Area Appraisal Policy 10)

*Yes, important views of the surviving chimney will be preserved. The application site does not form part of any other key views.*

## **Appendix 1 Historic Map Extracts**

## Appendix 1 – Historic Map Extracts

### 1840s Ordnance Survey One-Inch Plan Extract



### 1842 Tottigham Lower End Tithe Map Extract



A hand-drawn floor plan of a building complex, likely a school or institutional building, with numerous rooms and corridors. The plan is oriented with a north arrow pointing towards the top right. Rooms are numbered in circles, ranging from 1 to 40. Key areas include a large central hall (18), a kitchen (19), a dining area (20), a classroom (21), a library (22), a gymnasium (23), a playground (24), a swimming pool (25), a parking lot (26), and a bus stop (27). Other labeled areas include 'Office', 'Storage', 'Bicycle', 'Motorcycle', 'Car', 'Truck', 'Bus', 'Van', 'Motorcycle', 'Bicycle', 'Car', 'Truck', 'Bus', 'Van', 'Motorcycle', 'Bicycle', 'Car', 'Truck', 'Bus', 'Van'. The plan also shows a 'Main Entrance' and a 'Back Entrance'. A red line is drawn across the top of the plan, and a blue line is drawn along the bottom edge. The drawing is on a piece of paper with a grid pattern.

1844 to 1847 Lancashire LXXIX Six-Inch Series Map Extract



1891 Lancashire LXXIX Six-Inch Series Map Extract



## **Appendix 2 Site Photographs**



Image 1 – South facing view of site from bridge Street



Image 2 – Existing Building A, East Elevation



Image 3 – Existing Building A, South Elevation



Image 4 – Existing Building A, Interior



Image 5 – Existing Building A, West Elevation



Image 6 – Existing Building A, North and East Elevations



Image 7 – Existing Building B – North Elevation



Image 8 – Existing Building B, North and East Elevations



Image 9 – Building A (Foreground) Buildings B and C (Background)



Image 10 – Existing Building B (Foreground) South and East Elevations



Image 11 – Elevated 1st Floor View from Existing Building B Towards Bridge Street (Facing North-East)



Image 12 – Existing Building C North Elevation (And Chimney)



Image 13 – Existing Building B, East Elevation



Image 14 – Existing Building C (West Elevation) Plus Chimney



Image 15 – Existing Building C Interior



Image 16 – View along the Eastern Boundary of Site



Image 17 – View across River from Eastern Boundary of Site



Image 18 – Northern Boundary Of The Site Including Existing Wall



Image 19 – Gate on Northern Boundary Wall at Curve of Bridge Street



Image 20 – West Facing View from within Site



Image 21 – South East Facing View within Site



Image 22 – South West Facing View of Application Site from Bridge



Image 23 – West Facing View along Bridge Street,North of the Application Boundary



Image 24 – North-West Facing Views from Bridge



Image 25 – South Facing View along Road One  
(Application Site Boundary)



Image 26 – North-East Facing View Of Site From Road I



Image 27 – North-West Facing View Of Train Station From Road I



Image 28 – North East facing view Towards site from Railway Station Platform



Image 29 – North-East Facing Views Towards the Site from Railway Street



Image 30 – Modern Buildings Present on Western Side of Railway Street



Image 31 – North facing view along railway Street



Image 32 – South Facing View along Bridge Street Adjacent St Paul's Church



Image 33 – West Facing View along Bridge Street from Railway Street Junction



Image 34 – East Facing View Towards Site from Union Street



Image 35 – North-East Facing View of Application Site from Western Boundary (Road)



Image 36 – South Facing View of Application Site from Bridge Street



