



Design, Access & Heritage Statement

15 Bolton Road West, Ramsbottom, Bury, BL0 9NA

Author

SKY Design & Consulting Limited

Date

July 2024

Revision

A | Non-relative Planning Policy references omitted | March 2025

Executive Summary

SKY Design & Consulting Limited have been appointed as project agents by Formulated Polymer Products Ltd (FPP) to undertake all architectural design works and application management for the intended works at their property at 8 Garden Street, West, Ramsbottom, BL0 9BQ

The proposed construction works comprise:

- Factory extension to rear to create powder plant room
- Detached storage building to replace cabins to south-east corner of site
- Additional storage silo to replace existing tanks along rear elevation

This document is to supplement the planning application and provide support and context to the proposed development located in The Ramsbottom Conservation area.

Contents

[1.0](#) Location, Site & Surroundings

[2.0](#) The Property

[3.0](#) Historical Development of Ramsbottom

[4.0](#) Planning Policies

[5.0](#) The Proposed Works

[7.0](#) Development Justification Summary

I.0 Location, Site & Surroundings

I.1 The site address is 8 Garden Street, Ramsbottom, BL0 9BQ.

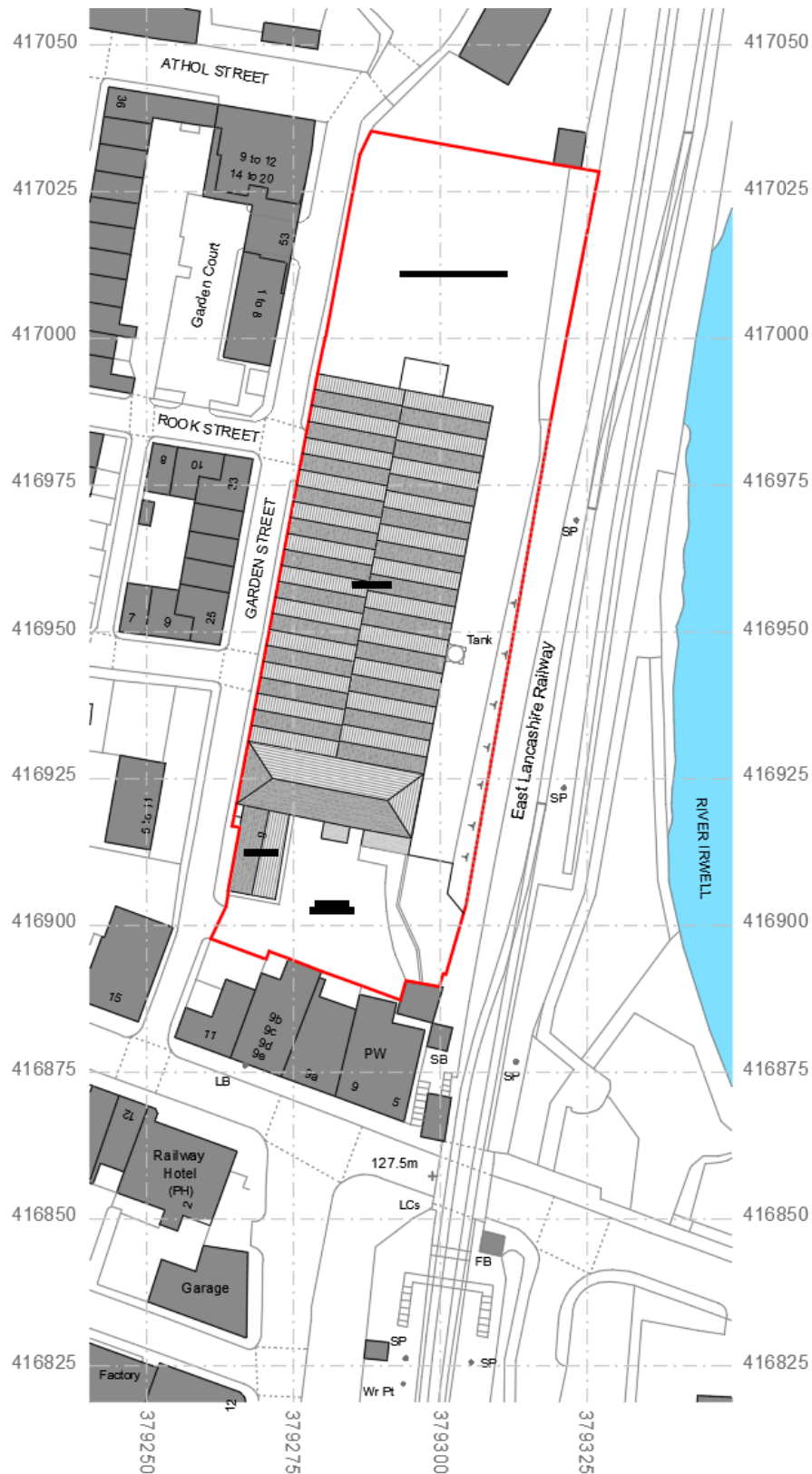


Figure I | Location Plan – site edged red | not to scale

- I.2 The site is located just within the fringes of the Ramsbottom Conservation Area boundary, but densely surrounded by a mix of commercial properties to the south and surrounding areas, with residential properties located directly to the west.



Figure 2 | Ramsbottom Conservation Area edged red | not to scale

- I.3 The East Lancashire Railway line runs parallel to the application site to the east with the Ramsbottom train station found to the south-east of the application site on the junction of Bridge Street and Railway Street.
- I.4 The River Irwell runs directly adjacent to the railway line to the east and flows in a southern direction.
- I.5 Ramsbottom centre is densely populated with a mix of industrial, commercial, sports & recreation facilities, residential and ecclesiastical buildings.
- I.6 There is a mixed-use industrial site on the opposite side of the River Irwell, accommodating mechanics and automotive works; skip hire companies and waste & recycling operations.

- I.7 Cormar Carpets works from a large site to the south of the application site and Essity paper mill operate from a substantial site in Stubbins, just north of FPP. Both are visible within the image provided below, 'Figure 3'
- I.8 Marshalls PLC operate from the vast quarry in Shuttleworth, around 1km to the east of the application site. This is also visible within 'Figure 3' below.



Figure 3 | Image providing context of developed surroundings | Google Images | not to scale | not orientated north

2.0 The Property

- 2.1 The property comprises of 2 No distinct parts: the office building and the factory.
- 2.2 The former is the newest addition to the site, albeit constructed some 20 years ago as a replacement structure to a previous construction. The facade comprises of reconstituted coursed stone façade and concrete roof tiles. It is a 2-storey structure and reflective of more modern form and proportion.



Figure 4 | Image of office building | Google Images | not to scale

2.3 The latter is characterised by 2 main elements:

- A natural randomly coursed stone structure with metal corrugated roof. This building is 2-storey high, but with larger proportions compared with the office building. This is reflective of the time period that it was built to suit its operational needs.



Figure 5 | Image of natural stone factory building |
Google Images | not to scale



Figure 6 | Image extract of typical factory building façade | Google Images | not to scale

- The main factory element attached to the natural stone building runs along the western boundary parallel with Garden Street. This façade is visible to the public and has a natural stone lower-level façade, with corrugated sheeted finish to the upper level and continual apex glazing following the profile of the multi-gable roof arrangement. The façade to the east is much the same, but consists of a brick plinth but is only visible from the ELR.

- 2.4 There is HGV access to the factory via Garden Street at the north-west corner of the site.
- 2.5 The exact age of the factory is unknown, however it will be dated between 1850 and 1894 based on ordnance survey records. 'Figure 7' below provides indication that the site was vacant in 1850, later showing an ample building accommodating the site known as 'Garden Mill' shown in 'Figure 8' dated 1894. This was originally constructed to be a cotton mill.



Figure 7 | Ordnance Survey map – published 1850 | site annotated by red dot | not to scale



Figure 8 | Ordnance Survey map – published 1894 | site annotated by red dot | not to scale

- 2.6 A later OS map published in 1910 then provides clarification to the site usage, referencing the building as 'Garden Engineering Works' – see 'Figure 9'.



Figure 9 | Ordnance Survey map – published 1910 | site annotated by red dot | not to scale

2.6 The industrial and manufacturing usage of the site has remained the same since.

3.0 Historical Development of Ramsbottom

- 3.1 Ramsbottom developed during the 19th century as a manufacturing and mill town on the road from Bury to Haslingden by the River Irwell, its suburbs stretched south to Hazelhurst and north to Stubbins. Mills were built for spinning, weaving and printing.
- 3.2 However, evidence of prehistoric human activity has been discovered in the hills surrounding the town before Ramsbottom became established. Early records show that in Norman times Ramsbottom was part of the Forest of Rossendale. There are a number of Bronze Age burial sites around the town, the most notable of which is Whitelow Cairn
- 3.3 The early Anglo-Saxons who gave Ramsbottom its name progressively felled the woodland during the Middle Ages. Ramsbottom became an area of scattered woods, farmsteads, moorland and swamp with a small community of families until the late 18th century.
- 3.4 The Ramsbottom area remained rural until the late 18th century. In the area now occupied by the town centre there were several farmsteads, including Crow Trees Farm in the area of St Paul's Church, a corn mill near the present Market Place and a tannery. Ramsbottom's rapid growth began in 1783 when the Bury firm of Peel and Yates, headed by Robert Peel, the father of the future Prime Minister, 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 calico bleaching and dyeing business; they already had factories in Bury and at The Burrs, and Ramsbottom offered a plentiful supply of pure water fed by streams from springs below Holcombe Moor, essential for bleaching and dyeing. Around 1789, Peel and Yates built, at their own expense, Peel Bridge over the Irwell, to connect their works with the new Bury.
- 3.5 The Grant Arms Hotel in Market Place was the home of William and Daniel Grant, 19th century industrialists closely associated with the rise of the town. The building itself dates back to the 1780s and was originally named Top o'th' Brow. Its name was changed to Grant Lodge when it was purchased by the Grant family after their arrival in Ramsbottom in 1807. In 1828, it was turned into a pub, The Grant Arms, and the building's present frontage was added.
- 3.6 The Grants came to the Manchester area from Scotland in 1783 and were apprentices to a Bury calico printer. By 1812 the Grants had acquired the Alsop mill at Nuttall, added other mills and turned Nuttall Hall into a farm of some international renown. They also built a new Nuttall Hall, in what is now Nuttall Park, across the river, as a home for John Grant, brother of the Cheerybles.

- 3.7 The earliest housing around Ramsbottom was built high up on the western slopes of the valley. Whilst Holcombe village was the medieval centre of population in the area, Tanners, Carr Fold and Foot o' th' Rake appeared as small and loosely grouped settlements during the 18th century, and possibly earlier. They were absorbed into larger groups of cottages and terraces from approximately 1850 onwards. In the 1795 Survey of the Township of Tottington Lower End's rateable value, both Foot o' th' Rake and Tanners Lower Tenement are each recorded as a handful of cottages and farm buildings sitting within tenanted paddocks, closes and fields.
- 3.8 Since the development of the earlier ordnance survey map in 1850 (see 'Figure 7'), many of the fields on the northern and eastern side of Rawson's Rake, Tanners Street and Carr Street were developed for residential cottages and terraces. Some rebuilding involved the removal of earlier houses and cottages, whilst the local authority clearance orders of the mid-1930s, though dealing primarily with town centre streets, saw the removal of Carr Fold and possibly Gutter Lane. It appears, however, that it was not until the mid 20th century that the mills were removed together with the farm buildings.
- 3.9 By the early 1890s a dense pattern of terraced housing on streets to the north and south of Bridge Street, to the west and above Bolton Street and along Peel Brow had taken shape. Bolton Street had been substantially developed to the junction of Dundee Lane and Nuttall Lane, with a low-density suburb towards its south end. It is assumed that it is around this date that the application property was constructed.
- 3.10 There was a significant increase in the number of cotton mills and industrial sites in the town between 1850 and 1895. To the north of Bridge Street, in addition to Ramsbottom Mills, there are now three additional complexes, Garden Mill (application site), Waterside Mill, and Irwell Bridge Mill. South of Bridge Street are further new cotton mills including Rose Mill, Railway Mill and Meadow Mill, and to the east of the railway line is a large paper mill. The town registered its maximum number of spindles, a measure of the size of the industry, in 1889. To serve the mills, new workers' housing was built on the slopes to the west of the town centre; the terraces on Callender Street, Albert Street and Victoria Street were all developed during the 1880s.
- 3.11 However, the cotton industry suffered a decline during the 20th century, although Ramsbottom mills continued to produce cotton from waste into the 1980s, and some mills were adapted for other industries; Garden Mill became an engineering works. The railway closed in 1972.
- 3.12 During the last decades of the 20th century, many mill buildings were demolished, or in a minority of cases, converted to new uses; Cobden Mill is now partly housing.

Ramsbottom had been fortunate in retaining industrial activity in other mills until recent past, such as Mondi paper mill at Holcombe Mill. However, the textile industry has now disappeared.

- 3.13 A large number of other historic buildings have been retained and are still in their original use; houses and shops are the most obvious examples. Some historic buildings have been found new uses; two redundant chapels and a school have been converted to flats.
- 3.14 The revival of the town as a tourist and shopping destination was marked by the re-opening of the East Lancashire Railway in 1987, which runs heritage trains from Heywood to Bury, Ramsbottom and Rawtenstall. Visitors and residents can enjoy a town with a remarkably intact layout, form and scale, with many original features, and essentially as it was built in the second half of the 19th century.

4.0 Planning Policies

This application will be assessed against the following planning policies:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as revised on 20th July 2021 has been considered within this application. The relevant sections of the NPPF are considered below.

The NPPF includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is recognised as having three mutually dependent dimensions: economic, social and environmental. The NPPF advises that these should be sought simultaneously through the planning system in conjunction with high quality design. The NPPF also advises that the presumption in favour of sustainable development means in practice that development which accords with the Development plan should be approved without delay and that where a Development Plan is out of date or silent, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts from the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or specific policies in the NPPF indicate that the development should be restricted.

Core Principles

The NPPF sets out 12 Core Planning Principles. These are that Planning should:

- Not simply be about scrutiny but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live;
- Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs;
- Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
- Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
- Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk, and coastal change, and to encourage the reuse of existing resources including conversion of existing buildings;
- Reduce pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies within the Framework;
- Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) provided that it is not of high environmental value;
- Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas; and
- Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

5.0 The Proposed Works

- 5.1 The overall proposed development comprises of 3No separate elements, however all are inclusive of the same objectives – the need to separate the powder used in the manufacturing process outside of the existing factory confines to improve the health and safety of staff and visitors to the factory.
- 5.2 The 3No elements within the scheme are:
- a) Factory extension to rear to create powder processing plant room
 - b) Detached storage building to replace cabins to south-east corner of site
 - c) Additional storage silo to replace existing tanks along rear elevation

a) The Factory Extension

The proposed factory extension consists of a steel portal framed structure, attached to the existing factory at the south-eastern corner of the factory. There will be a low-level masonry plinth wall internally to absorb any potential impact from forklift trucks, however this will not be visible externally. The external façade will comprise of profiled metal cladding in a colour to be agreed with the LA. The roof will be finished in matching profiled cladding and include Perspex rooflights to provide natural light to the facility. The extension will not be heated but will include artificial lighting.

Whilst the extension will be attached to the existing factory structure, there will be no direct personnel link between the two elements. The only connection between the two will be the ducting/plant that will pass through the existing wall to connect to the necessary machinery within the main factory.

Personnel access is maintained between the extension and existing concrete retaining wall running parallel with the eastern boundary to all for general access to the intended storage facility. Should vehicular access be required to the storage facility, the 2No roller shutters incorporated within the extension design will allow this.

The proposed height of the extension has been dictated by the tanks/equipment intended to be installed and subsequently, the way that the powder is loaded in to these. The tanks receive the powder from the top and this is carried out with the use of forklift trucks. The minimum permissible height required for this operation is

6m and the envelope of the extension has been developed to accommodate this.

Considering that the internal clear height was determined by the operations that will be carried out within the space, a shallow roof pitch has been designed in to the scheme to minimise massing along the eastern elevation. The proposed extension sits comfortably subserviently to the existing factory structure.

b) The Storage Building

The proposed storage building is intended to replace an old, dilapidated metal porta cabin – see ‘Figure 10’ below:



Figure 10 | Existing storage porta cabin

The proposed structure will be steel portal frame detached building with external finishes to match the proposed extension.

The facility would house the powder used in the manufacturing process that is delivered to site on pallets. These pallets would then be transferred to the storage building by forklift trucks.

The existing on-site storage options are limited, unsecure and prone to wastage via water damage. It is common for water ingress to compromise the batches of powder, therefore rendering them unusable. FPP wish to incorporate a purpose-build structure that is weathertight and secure.

The ideal location for the building is the south-east corner of the site that is currently unutilised and surplus to requirements. All powder operations will be within close proximity of each other and independent from the main factory floor, therefore improving operational efficiency and minimising risk to health and safety of the employees.

Access to the storage building would be permanently available by foot, however only accessible by vehicle through the roller shutter doors within the proposed factory extension, resulting in an extremely secure storage facility that will eliminate product wastage and reduce operational costs.

c) The Silo

The proposed silo will be used to store and then distribute the powder to the internal operations of the factory.

It is proposed to be located adjacent to an existing silo in place of existing water tanks and bund that are now surplus to requirements and decommissioned.

The silo size has been determined by what is readily available on the market. Due to the niche nature of the product, there are very few available within the UK at a scale that would suit the requirement of the applicant. Rather than commissioning a new silo to be manufactured, the applicant would prefer to reuse and repurpose an existing unit.

Following international expansion of the business and increased demand for their products, the need to increase production has determined the need for the silo.

The silo would sit above the factory roof directly adjacent to it along the eastern elevation, however it would not exceed the height of the existing higher level roof construction in the background – refer to drawings reference no: '24015 - 102 Proposed Rear and Side Elevations' for context.

6.0 Development Justification Summary

- 6.1 It is proposed that the intended development can be justified despite the application site being located within the Ramsbottom conservation area for the following reasons:
- 6.1.1 There will no visual impact upon the public or surrounding properties as a result of the proposed development.
 - 6.1.2 The eastern elevation to which all intended works are located is subservient and does not front public domain. It does not currently offer any architectural merit and the proposed developments would therefore not detract away from the existing building, nor contribute to an impact upon the surrounding area.
 - 6.1.3 The only view of the eastern elevation comes via the ELR and would only be available to the passengers on the train for a 10 second window. Further, the proposed developments would not offer anything different to what they would currently see: an industrial factory building.
 - 6.1.4 The external facades to each element are in keeping with the existing factory and usage.
 - 6.1.5 The heights and massing of all aspects of the development are amply subservient to the existing factory building and therefore are not disproportionate to the site or surroundings.
 - 6.1.6 The addition of each part of the proposed development will improve the health and safety of the site employees/visitors the storage and usage of the powder through the manufacturing process will be isolated and self-contained.
 - 6.1.7 The manufacturing process will be much more efficient, resulting in reduced energy costs and improved product output.