# Application Ref: NP/16/0678/LBA

Case Officer

Rob Scourfield

Applicant Agent

Bluestone National Park Resorts Ltd Mr R Bowen, Asbri Planning Ltd

Proposal

Conversion & restoration of existing mill building &

ancillary buildings to provide heritage tourist facility

Site Location

Blackpool Mill, Blackpool Bridge, Narberth.

Pembrokeshire, SA67 8BL

**Grid Ref** 

SN06711386

**Date Valid** 

22-Dec-2016

Target Date

15-Feb-2017

### **Delegated Status**

Not applicable, as the property is Grade II\* listed. The application is reported to the Development Management Committee because it raises matters of significant public interest. The determining authority for the application is CADW.

### Site Development Description

Blackpool Mill, listed Grade II\* is a rare and complete survival of a Late Georgian former corn mill, a tall and imposing symmetrical winged group, on the upper tidal reaches of the Eastern Cleddau. Two ancillary buildings are located to the south and south-west, the whole group within a fine rural and riverside setting, and set behind a large green bisected by the mill-leat. The site is of archaeological importance, being the site of an iron forge, established in 1760, ceasing production in 1806.

The proposed works to the listed building form part of a wider development to the Mill, ancillary buildings and the surrounding land. Planning applications for the conversion of the mill and ancillary buildings, the erection of an events barn, train station and platform, the creation of a steam train railway, car park and a land train route are also currently being considered by the Local Planning Authority.

A detailed description of the works proposed by this Listed Building application can be found in the Officer's Appraisal section of this report.

### **Consultee Response**

Martletwy Community Council: No response at the time of this report

**The Victorian Society**: No response at the time of this report **The Georgian Group**: No response at the time of this report

PCNPA Ecologist: Objection due to insufficient information to assess the likely significant effect of the proposed development on the relevant European sites

PCNPA Tree and Landscapes Officer: no specific comments concerning the listed building application

PCNPA Park Direction: no response at the time of this report PCNPA Access Manager: no public rights of way affected

Highway Authority: no specific comments concerning the listed building application

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Public Protection: no response at the time of this report

**PCC Drainage**: no specific comments concerning the listed building application **Natural Resources Wales**: Objection, due to significant concerns with regards to the impact on protected species, specifically with regards to survey information and mitigation. However, further information by the applicant was submitted to the Local Planning Authority on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017 to address the objection. Comments received from NRW in relation to the further information will be verbally reported at committee.

**Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings**: Objection, due to removal and relocation of machinery and need to provide record drawings of the existing machinery

Welsh Mills Society: conditional support

Mills Archive: support

Friends of PCNPA: no response at the time of this report Dyfed Archaeological Trust: Suggesting condition

Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water: No specific comments concerning the listed building

application

Cadw: No comments

Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales (Pembrokeshire Branch): no

specific comments concerning the listed building application

Pembrokeshire Tourism: support

Pembrokeshire Historic Buildings Trust: No specific comments concerning the

listed building application

# Public Response

The application has been appropriately advertised, and 33 responses have been received, all in support of the proposal.

#### Policies considered

As this application is for listed building consent, section 16 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

Welsh Office Circular 61/96 (Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas) is a material consideration, with guidance provided by *Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment of Wales* (Cadw, 2011).

# Officer's Appraisal

Blackpool Mill, listed Grade II\* is a rare and complete survival of a Late Georgian former corn mill, a tall and imposing symmetrical winged group, on the upper tidal reaches of the Eastern Cleddau. Two ancillary buildings are located to the south and south-west, the whole group within a fine rural and riverside setting, and set behind a large green bisected by the mill-leat. The site is of archaeological importance, being the site of an iron forge, established in 1760, ceasing production in 1806.

Listed building consent is sought for the conversion and restoration of the existing mill building and ancillary buildings to provide a heritage tourist facility

The proposed scheme is considered to be in keeping with the character of the listed building, and its setting in terms of design and form. As such, the application can be supported subject to conditions

A consideration of accompanying works requiring planning permission is contained within the accompanying planning application (NP/16/0677)

The mill itself, built c. 1813, is a 'set-piece' of five bays and two storeys with wings of two bays and storeys. The walls are faced in roughcast render set on a stone plinth, the sash windows 16-paned. Slate roofs with low coped gables. Central boarded doors with decorative fanlight within a dressed limestone arched surround. The wings have outer boarded doors and the river side has a loading door within a segmentally-headed surround. The machinery within was replaced in 1901 by Armfields of Ringwood, driven by a turbine which powered a vertical iron shaft. The turbine, iron gearing and drive wheels on the lay-shaft remain on the ground floor, together with cast iron hurst frames and four stone nuts. The four pairs of millstones survive on the first floor, with the feed hoppers on the second floor within a large boarded cupboard, a smaller one to the floor above. The attic has four king-post trusses and the pulley-wheels for the sack hoists. Armfields upgraded some of the machinery in 1915, when the mill, run by the Pike family, was successfully grinding wheat.

The mill ceased grinding after it was converted to electricity in 1954. In 1968, repairs were carried out for use as a tourist attraction, involving the guarding of the machinery, the creation of the doorway in the western wing, and the removal of the canopy over the main door. The building has stood empty for some years and whilst the eastern wing has been re-roofed, the building is deteriorating and is on the Authority's Buildings at Risk Register.

The building (store) proposed for conversion to a café is situated immediately southwest of the mill, falling within the historic curtilage of the mill. The six-bay rubble-built building has a profiled- metal sheeted roof on modern timbers. The eaves have been lowered, evidenced by blocked upper openings to the east elevation and south gable. The doors are of modern date, the windows blocked, with no historic joinery surviving. The rough rubble voussoirs and battered north gable suggests that the structure could be earlier than the mill, possibly associated with the forge. The building has been much altered, the interior now comprising a single chamber, subdivided by a modern block wall.

To the south is the building (cottage and forge) proposed for conversion to a railway engine house (to serve a proposed narrow gauge railway to the west). This is rubble-built, a lofted building of exact square plan with a symmetrical east front of three bays. Again, the roof appears to have been altered in form, comprising broad shallow pitches, now entirely renewed in profiled-metal sheeting on early C20 timbers. There are blocked upper windows. The front portion has a three-bay front, the central door and windows (modern softwood casements) with brick heads and a

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date-stone of 1830, presumably when the east portion was added. The interior retains a truncated spine wall of rubble, with central opening.

The group stands within a large curtilage, the front (south-east) enclosure bisected by the mill race, which turns eastwards, spanned by a single-arch bridge over the north-eastern of the two carriageways. The southernmost driveway has modern stone-built piers capped by large carved eagles, relocated here from a nearby lodge. To the north-east of the mill is Blackpool Bridge, spanning the river (separately listed Grade II\*), probably of c. 1813.

# **Relevant Planning History**

NP/16/0677 \_ Conversion & restoration of existing Mill and ancillary buildings to provide heritage tourist facility. Construction of light narrow gauge steam railway with associated station & platform. Construction of 658sq.m all-weather events barn & associated facilities, cycle parking, car parking, site infrastructure including drainage services along with hard & soft landscaping & boundary treatments. Planning application under consideration

NP/16/0679 – Engineering works to facilitate the land train. Planning application under consideration.

# **Current Proposal**

The proposal comprises:-

- 1. Works to exterior of mill:-
  - The whole is to be re-roofed in natural slate, replacing the existing roof-light with one of conservation type of similar dimensions. This work is urgently required, the existing slates largely beyond salvation. The existing roof-light is a modern conventional replacement, but old photos show that one historically existed. A conservation replacement with central glazing-bar is proposed.
  - Insertion of matt-black flue to north roof (east wing). This is discretely sited towards the gable end. The existing modern flue to mill is to be removed.
  - Bat mitigation measures to roof including a single bat access point to each rear roof-slope of the wings and two access points beneath ridge tiles per wing. Internally the roof of each wing is to be appropriately voided. The bat access points are in the form of 'dormer' vents suitable for horseshoe bats, these sited towards abutments, thus reducing their visual impact.
  - Replacement of rainwater goods (existing is a mixture of upvc and iron) in cast iron.
  - Like-for-like replacement of defective windows, copying original mouldings of W49; repair of others. Several windows have been

- replaced over the years, not replicating the finely detailed hornless originals
- Repair of defective timber fanlight to main doorway.
- Fitting of frameless glass balustrade to rear doorway (D04) within existing frame. This is a discrete and reversible proposal.
- Repair and decoration of railings.
- Creation of escape doorway to west return of mill. Door to be of traditional painted timber boarded construction.
- Creation of ramped access to south elevation, to comply with Part M regulations. The existing terrace level is to be slightly increased to provide a ramp to the south-west end, providing access to the new west doorway and main door. The existing weighbridge is to be retained. All existing steps and surfaces are of concrete/concrete slab, replaced in the 1960s.
- Painting external (cementitious) render. Considered acceptable subject to specification and proposed colour.

#### 2. Works to interior of mill

- Insertion of lift rising full-height
- Insertion of full-height staircase. Both stair and lift are located at the
  west end of the main building, away from the machinery zones/fixtures
  and within an area where the floors are in disrepair. This is a legible
  and reversible proposal, necessary for providing public access and
  enabling the three existing historic staircases to be repaired and
  retained without necessary upgrading to conform with access
  regulations. The stair is to be of traditional stick-baluster design, based
  on the existing.
- Ground floor retention of machinery except the loose winnower machine (early C20, made by T.M. Williams of Llandeilo). This is a fitting, not believed to be part of the historic set-up. It is to be relocated elsewhere on site.
- Ground floor conversion of west wing to visitor toilets. Existing space is a single chamber with no historic fixtures.
- First floor insertion of doorway between east wing and main mill, necessary for circulation (balancing existing to west wing).
- First floor retention of machinery except (imported) Bamford corn crusher, Armfield Scalper, Howes' Smutter and later shaft/gearing for electric drive. Historic sack-hoist to be reinstated to original position on fourth floor. Machinery to be removed is all later/imported; to be relocated elsewhere on site.
- First floor partition of west wing for storage/exhibition space. Existing space is a single chamber; no historic fixtures.
- Second floor retention of machinery except smutter feed hopper, this
  to be relocated elsewhere on site.
- Third floor retention of machinery including loose cabinet with stenciled manufacturer's name.

 Basement (no public access) – provision of bat mitigation through the provision of breeze-block walls within existing openings, to create suitable voids. Installation of free-standing 'cold tower'

# 3. Store building - proposed café

- Replacement of roof in slate, eaves and ridge raised 700mm and 1000mm respectively. The existing eaves level is not original, being 'cut-down' in the C20. This partly justifies the alteration, the use of slate being an aesthetic improvement, conducive to preserving the setting of the mill. The proposed large roof-lights are necessary for lighting the first floor and are preferable to a greater number of conventional rooflights. A metal flue is proposed, appropriately black-coated.
- Provision of replacement glazing in traditional timber in the form of small-paned timber sash window, reusing existing openings with two (north) and one (south) new windows proposed for the gable ends. The existing glazing has been lost; the proposed is considered acceptable, matching the type and design of those to the mill.
- Doors. Replacement of doors (existing lost/replaced) with traditional boarded doors, one replacing blocked window to east elevation.
- Ramp. Creation of part M compliant ramp to west elevation. This is effectively the rear elevation, will not be prominently visible, and is necessary for public access.
- Interior. Provision of protected stair to new first floor seating area.
   Existing interior is a single space with no features of architectural/historic interest.

# 4. Cottage and Forge – proposed railway engine house

- Replacement of modern metal sheeted roof in slate
- Replacement of glazing in traditional painted timber, to small-paned casement design.
- Insertion of a pair of large openings to west elevation, fitted with paired planked timber doors with painted finish
- Provision of a matt-black flue pipe to west elevation.
- Provision of open-fronted fuel store to south elevation; timber posts and slate roof. The eastern third is to be clad in corrugated steel/timber to provide bat mitigation.
- Lighting. Down-lighter lamps are proposed to light doorways of mill, café and engine shed with bollard-lights to the terrace fronting the mill.
   This is considered acceptable in terms of design, number and location.

The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of preserving the architectural and historic character of the property, under the provisions of Circular 61/96 (Planning and the Historic Environment: Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas).

In terms of Cadw's Conservation Principles:-

- Evidential value. In terms of the mill, the philosophy is to preserve the 1901 machinery, with all later machines (some imported in the 1960s) to be relocated elsewhere on site. With regards to the ancillary buildings, alterations to roof-lines are to an extent evidenced by drastic later alterations, with the glazing/doors (all historic fabric lost) conjectural, but based on that of the mill.
- Historical Value. Alterations to historic fabric are minimal, largely comprising the creation of two doorways within the mill, and two large doorways to the rear of the proposed engine shed. Much of the alteration involves fabric modernized c. 1968, including the front terrace, mill wings and roofs of the outbuildings.
- 3. Aesthetic value. The proposed repair/replacement of windows, re-roofing, and redecoration are considered an obvious aesthetic improvement, as is the reinstatement of the slate roofs and traditional joinery to the engine house and café.
- 4. Communal value. The building's architectural and historic importance as 'an exceptionally fine industrial building' with 'a full working set of machinery' remains intact

### Biodiversity:-

Both the PCNPA Ecologist and Natural Resources Wales object to the proposed scheme and at the date of this report, their response is awaited to revised/additional information. A verbal update will be provided to Members at Committee, however, if the response requires alterations to the scheme this may result in a delay to the consideration of the application.

#### Machinery:-

With regards to the objection from the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Welsh Mills Society has provided advice during the application process, resulting in amended drawings from the applicant retaining all of the 1901 machinery. The Welsh Mills Society has also produced survey drawings which are included with the application.

#### **Conclusion**

The proposal is considered to be appropriate in terms of size, scale and detail. It is considered to comply with the requirements of Circular 61/96, and Cadw's Conservation Principles. As such, the application can be supported subject to conditions

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### Recommendation

That PCNPA recommends to CADW to approve the above listed building application subject to the following conditions:-

1. The works herby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of the five years from the date of this consent.

Reason: As required by Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)

2. The works hereby permitted shall be carried out, and thereafter retained, strictly in accordance with the deposited plans and documents:
Drawings:-

AL.P.001 Rev A - dated 14/12/16

AL.P.010 Rev A - dated 14/12/16

AL.P.011 Rev D - dated 23/02/17

AL.P.110 Rev D - dated 23/02/17

AL.P.111 Rev D - dated 23/02/17

AL.P.112 Rev C - dated 23/02/17

AL.P.113 Rev A - dated 14/12/16

AL.P.114 Rev B - dated 23/02/17

1667901 - Blackpool Mill Mitigation: Engine Shed - dated 23/02/17

1667901 - Blackpool Mill Mitigation: Annexes - dated 23/02/17

1667901 - Blackpool Mill Mitigation: Basement - dated 23/02/17

Lumenta Lighting Issue 3 – dated 23/02/17

Method Statement - Bats (ref L\E1667901) - dated 23/02/17

Welsh Mills Society machinery drawings – existing elevations 1of2, 2of2, existing, ground and first floor plans, existing second and third floor plans, third arrangement 1of2 and 2of2 – dated 23/02/17

#### Documents:-

Design, Justification and Access Statement – dated 14/12/16
Design, Justification and Access Statement – addendum - dated 23/02/17
Welsh Mills Society Report June 2016

**Reason**: To ensure a proper standard of development and appearance in the interests of conserving the amenities and architectural character of the area

3. A full schedule of window repairs/replacement to the mill to provided and approved in writing by the National Park Authority prior to the commencement of works on site. The works shall thereafter be carried out and retained in accordance with the approved details.

**Reason**: To ensure a proper standard of development and appearance in the interests of conserving the amenities and architectural character of the area.

4. Samples of roofing slates, roof-light, paving slabs and steps to be provided on site for inspection and approval, in writing, by the National Park Authority prior

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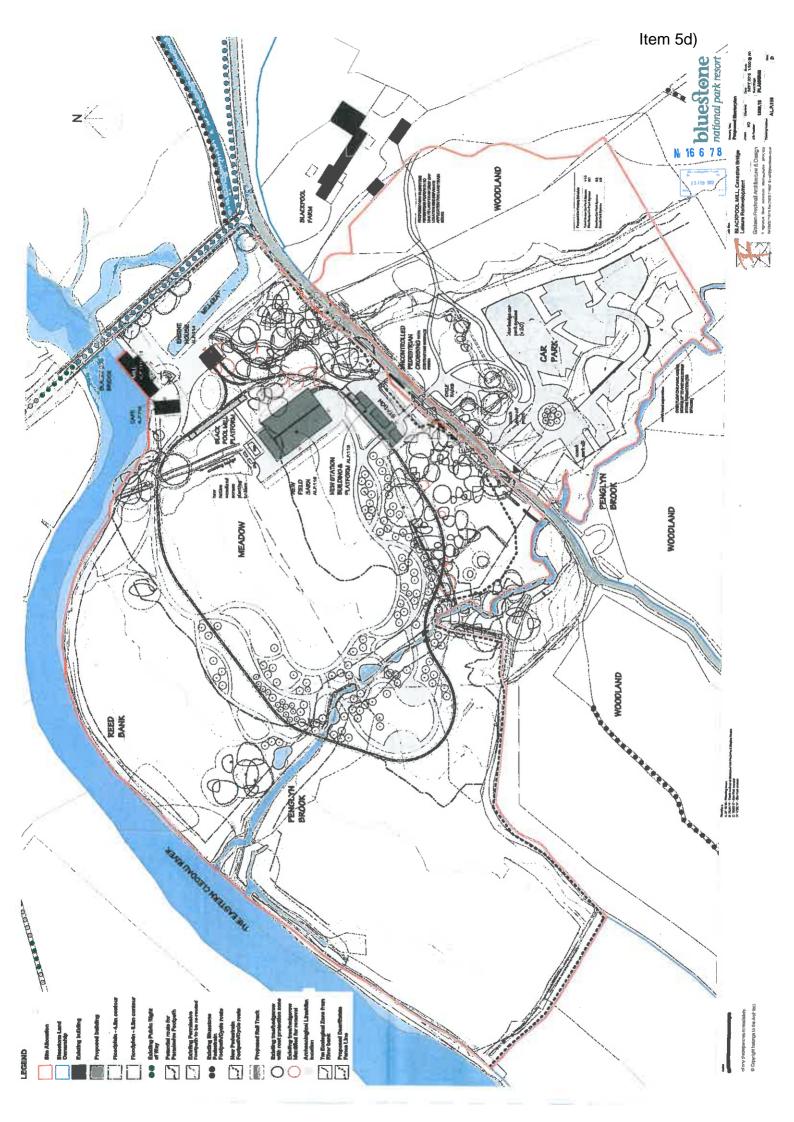
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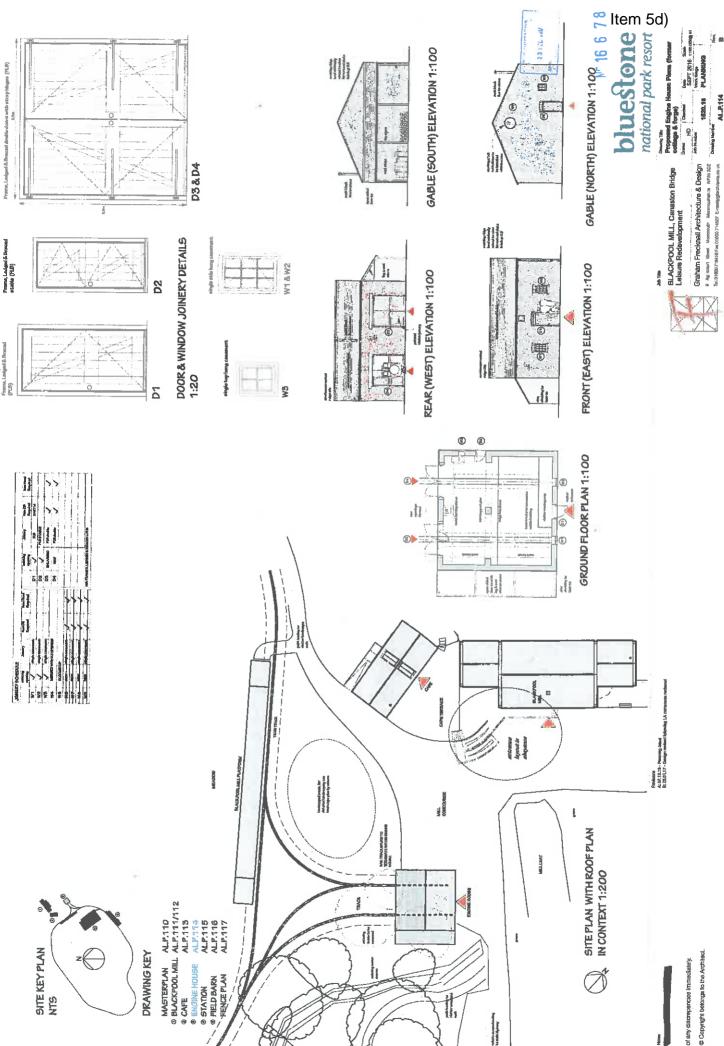
to the commencement of works on site. The works shall thereafter be carried out and retained in accordance with the approved details.

**Reason**: To ensure a proper standard of development and appearance in the interests of conserving the amenities and architectural character of the area.

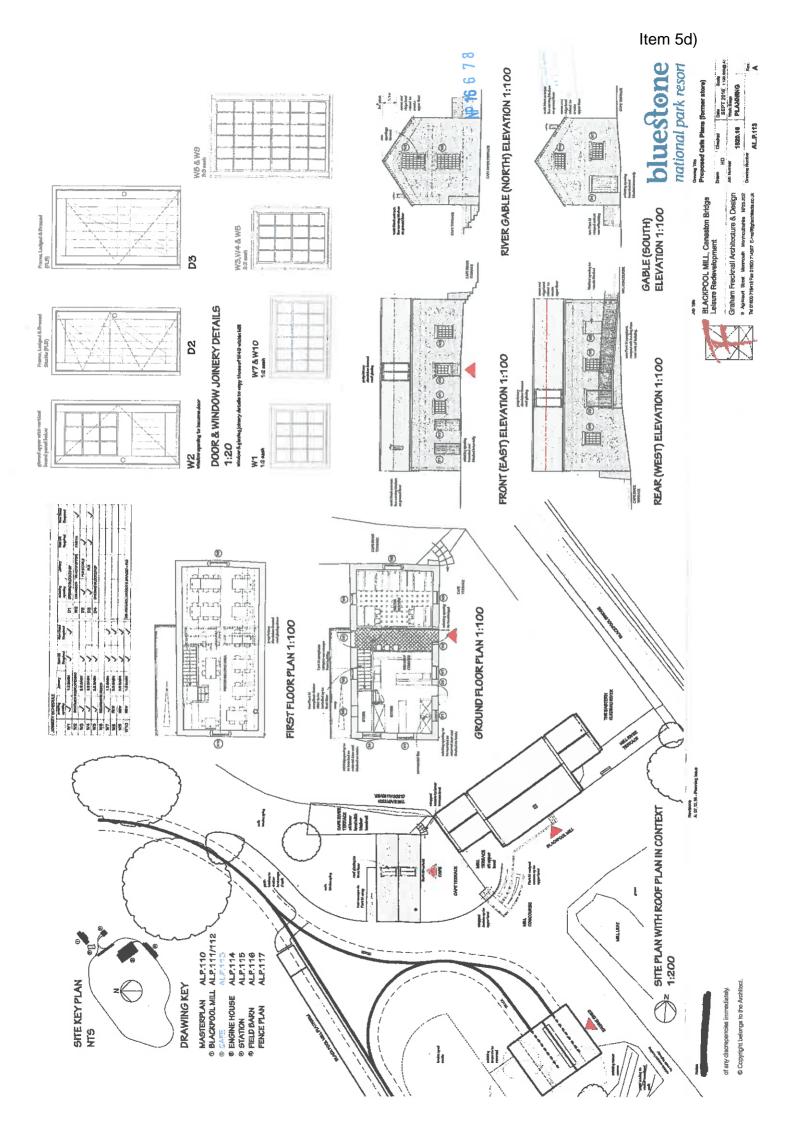
- 5. The external surface of the stove pipes shall be coated and retained as matt black.
  - **Reason**: To ensure a proper standard of development and appearance in the interests of conserving the amenities and architectural character of the area.
- 6. A schedule of external colours to be submitted to the National Park for approval, in writing, prior to the commencement of the work.
  Reason: To ensure a proper standard of development and appearance in the interests of conserving the amenities and architectural character of the area.
- 7. No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority

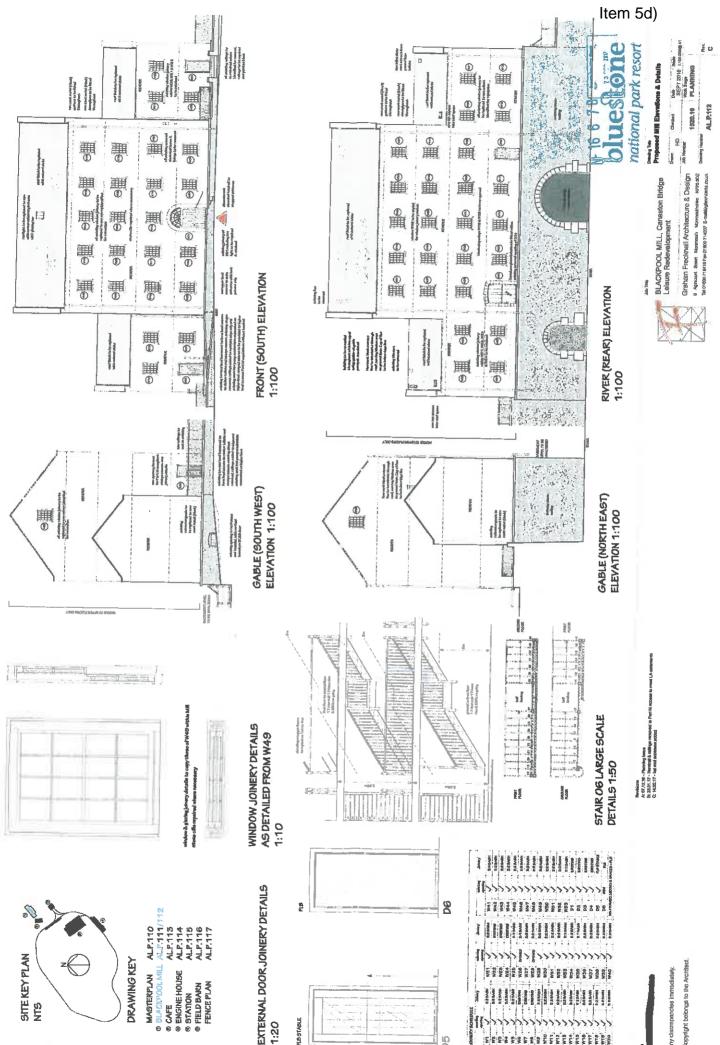
Reason: To assess the archaeological value of the site. Policy: Local Development Plan - Policy 8 (Special Qualities) and Planning Policy Wales (edition 8 - January 2016) - Chapter 6 (Conserving the Historic Environment)





of any distrepancies immediately.





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