

Planning Statement – Worsbrough Mill, Old Mill accessibility

Currently there are three issues within the Old Mill at Worsbrough that relate to an access ramp installed during the building's restoration programme in the early 1970s.

The first is that the ramp does not allow access for wheelchairs as it has a small step at either end, is too narrow (with a minimum width of 650mm) and its gradient is too steep to comply with current building regulations.

Secondly, at its south end (the end nearest to the mill's entrance) there is a maximum clearance of 1430mm which creates a hazard for the majority of the mill's visitors. In addition this minimum clearance is positioned just after the small step up at that end.

Finally the fixed ramp overhangs one set of millstones which makes access to those stones for dressing and other maintenance tasks difficult.

The proposed solution has been discussed with BMBC's Senior Conservation Officer and their recommendations that architects be consulted along with a structural engineer have been followed in producing the design.

It is proposed that the current ramp be removed and that the void below its southern end (650mm x 2110mm) be covered with floorboards to improve space for maintenance. The ramp will then be replaced starting at floor level at both ends to give wheelchair access. The new timber ramp will be longer by approximately 1000mm at the northern end and will incorporate a removable section (in two parts) starting at the southern end to allow the stones to be raised without hinderance and for maintenance to be carried out more easily. In addition the current stone furniture and chain housing will be repositioned slightly to enable the ramp to be widened to give a minimum width of 800mm.

The existing railing will be replaced with a removable rail with additional safety railing introduced when the removable ramp sections have been lifted.

The new ramp and railings are to be stained to match existing railings to differentiate new intervention from historic timber.

Although Worsbrough Mill is a Grade II* listed building this replacement will have limited impact on the building.