

Heritage Statement

Proposal for new front door and archway at Town House Mill, Town House Road, Littleborough OL15 9JX

Background and History

Town House Warehouse was built in the mid-18th century in front of the now demolished mill (which originally sat to the rear of the property) and started as an unheated two storey warehouse with a tacking-in door on the top floor (now a smaller window). In the early 19th century, a larger three storey warehouse (now known as **Town House Mill**) was built on the right-hand end and later the original two storey structure was increased to three storeys (these properties, now divided into two dwellings, are now known as **Lower Town House Mill Cottage** and **Town House Mill Cottage**). Later still, stables were added on the east end (now an annexe to Town House Mill) and a cottage built on the western end.

On 23 April 1986 Town House Mill (incorporating Town House Mill, Town House Mill Cottage and Lower Town House Mill Cottage) was designated a Grade II listed building by Historic England. The entry is as follows:

“Wool warehouse, used for storage (when surveyed). “L S N 1752” (Lawrence and Sarah Newall) on carved stone with Newall Coat of Arms. Hammer-dressed watershot stone with graduated stone slate roof. Total of six bays and three storeys. Quoins. Each bay has a 3 or 4-light chamfered mullion window on each floor. Chamfered door with segmental head in bay three and blocked taking-in door to first floor. Bays five and six are of a slightly later date and have double loading doors on each floor below a segmental keystone arch. Ridge and gable chimney stacks in brick. Similar fenestration to rear. The single-span floors are supported on later cylindrical cast-iron columns. Fishwick, History of Rochdale, 1889.”

Of note some read the date stone as 1732 (picture below)



Around 1990 Townhouse Warehouse was reviewed as a Building at Risk during which it was found to be *“in poor condition, not sufficiently weatherproofed and deteriorating significantly in places, windows not sealed and doors at all levels in poor condition. Cottage chimney stack and stack on Mill (i.e. Warehouse) look dangerous”*. The review also found side buildings in a poor condition, but the rear of the building was in better condition.

In 1992 the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England produced a report on Town House Mill which noted that it was built in varying stages during the 18th and 19th Centuries. A further Building at Risk review in March 1994 found that the buildings had suffered further deterioration with scaffolding in place for support. It also noted that work was in hand to restore the property by its owner. The picture below shows the property prior to renovation:



Around 1997 (date stone on Town House Mill garage) the property was subsequently converted into three individual dwellings as described previously.

Current Position

Town House Mill Cottage and Lower Town House Mill Cottage both have large solid bespoke wooden front doors which can be seen below.



Conversely, Town House Mill has an “off the shelf” front door with large glass upper panel, built centrally into an arched hardwood frame, with glass to the upper elements of the side panels and wood below. A small transom window is above the door.

Both the door and arch are in poor condition, with wood filler in many of the panels, gaps in and around the door, and a failed seal on the right-hand glazing unit (looking at the door from the front).

The door currently has a centrally located letter box which does correspond to the neighbouring properties, both of which have post boxes to the side of the door (both different styles).

The wooden arched windows in the first and second floor bays are in good condition however the left middle glazing unit seal (looking at the property from the front) has failed in both windows. Upon inspection by the proposed joinery company, it appears that the remaining five units in each window have been replaced previously except for the sixth one.

Current external picture of the property is below:



Internal view of the front door:



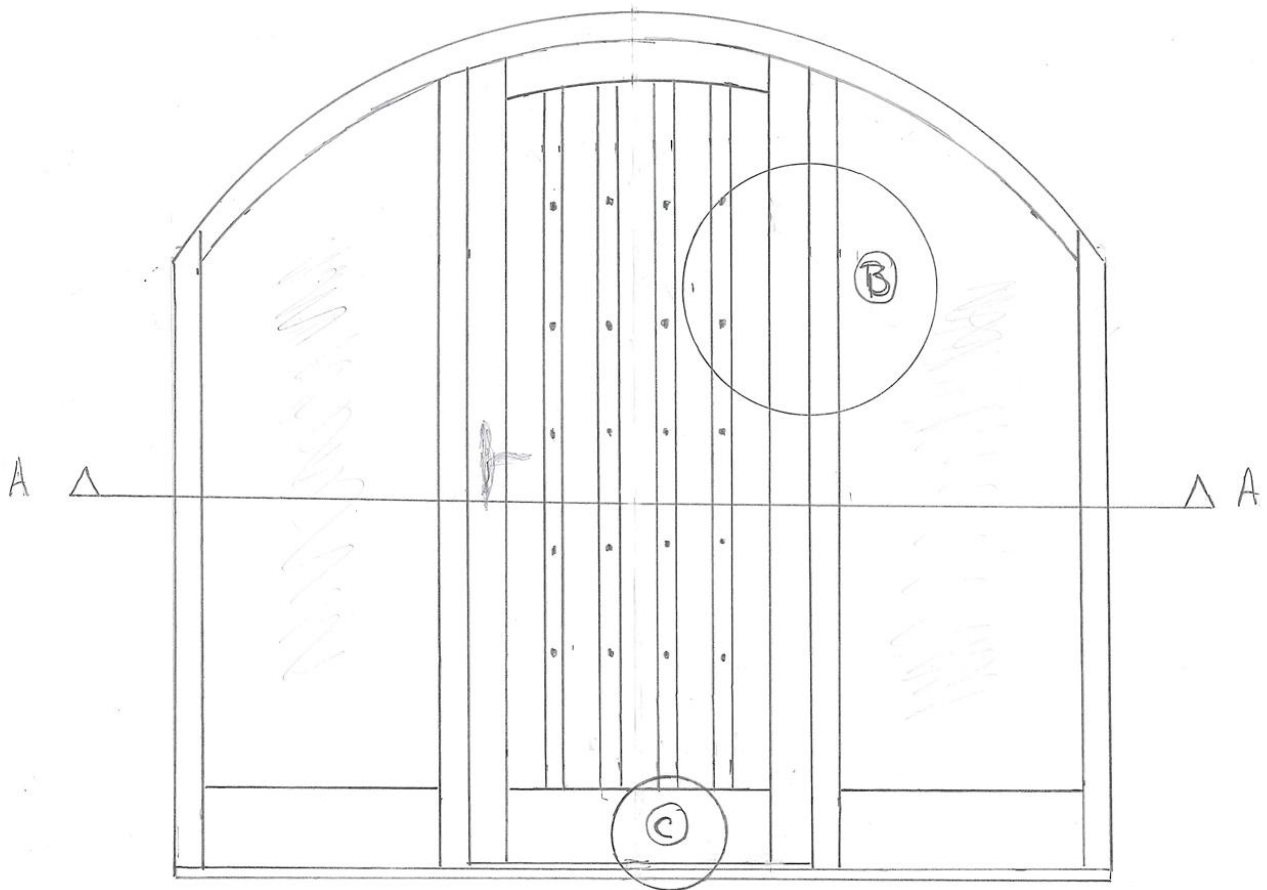
Proposal

Following several quotes and discussions, J and J Ormerod PLC (JJ&O) have been selected as the company of choice to carry out the work. Formed in 1868, and based locally in Bacup, Lancashire, the company have a long tradition and experience of working with older historic properties.

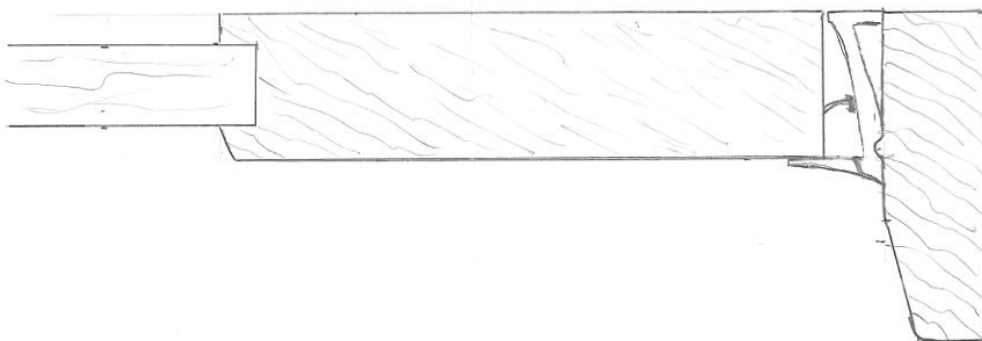
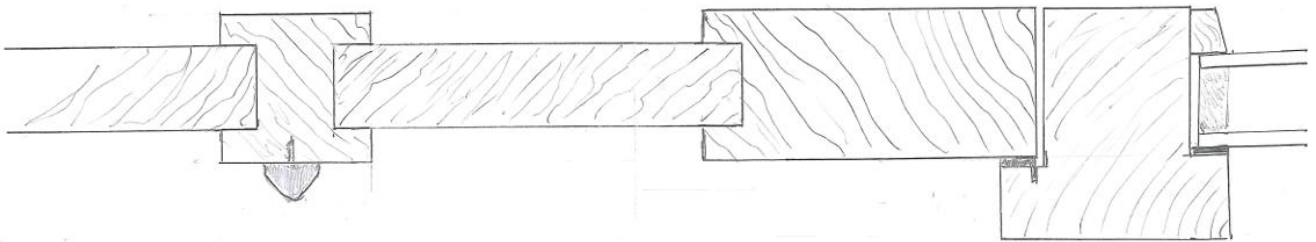
1. Front Door and Arch

Inner dimensions of the arch (measured to the edge of the current frame) are 2410mm wide and 2210mm high. The current front door is 810mm x 1930mm.

To bring the property more in line with its residential status, it is proposed to have a solid hardwood (Sapele mahogany) front door, slightly wider than the original (900mm) to match the next-door property and allow easier access. The top of the door will be arched to enhance the original stone arch feature of the property. The glass side panels are proposed to be full-length clear toughened double-glazed units (low E Argon filled, warm edge cavity) to continue to let light into the entrance hall and continue with the vertical theme, avoiding horizontal bars which are not visible anywhere else on the property or its neighbours. A drawing supplied by JJ&O can be seen below:

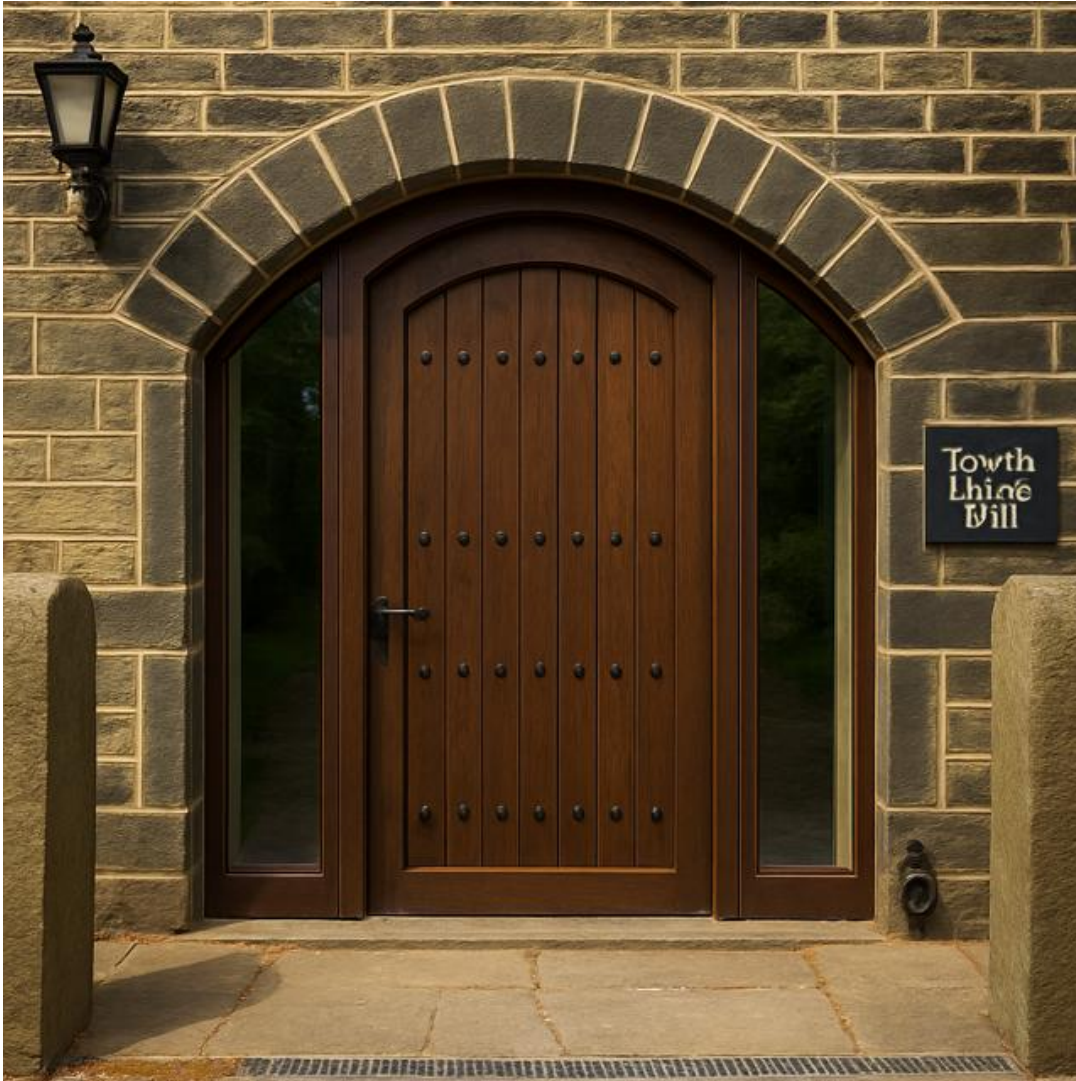


① B SCALE 1:1 @ A3



① C SCALE 1:1 @ A3

The below is a further AI rendition (please note this for guidance only, noting the limitations of the medium):



For a further idea of the design of the front door, below is a similar proposed design although the final product will have an arched top:



The door will be finished in dark wood stain to match the neighbouring properties. Ironmongery will include studs as in the above picture and a black period door handle, with an iron door knocker located centrally to the upper section of the door.

2. Post Box

To ensure continuity with the neighbouring properties it is proposed to have a post box to the left of the arch (looking from the front). The box will be mounted into the mortar rather than the stonework of the property. The proposed post box is below, and is constructed from black iron and steel:



Measurements of the post box are:

Height 315mm, width 355mm, depth 170mm, weight 4kg. The aperture is 275mm x 25mm, and the door opening 280mm x 120mm.

3. *Replacement double glazing units in arched windows on the first and second floors*

It is proposed that these units are replaced like-for-like with no change to the current appearance.