THE ARCHAEOLOGY CO.

# Dale Mill, Milnrow

## Written Scheme of Investigation

---

January 2021

## 1: Introduction

Steven Price has been commissioned to produce a WSI for archaeological works at Dale Mill, Milnrow. Condition 11 of planning permission consent 16/01540/FUL states that:

> *No demolition or development shall take place until the applicant or their agents or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works. The works are to be undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The WSI shall cover the following:*
>
> *1. A programme of archaeological survey to include:*
>
> *o historic building survey (English Heritage level 2/3)*
>
> *o a targeted watching brief during stripping out works*
>
> *o an archaeological desk based assessment*
>
> *o -informed by the above, evaluation through trial trenching*
>
> *o informed by the above, more detailed, targeted archaeological excavation and recording.*
>
> *2. A programme for post investigation assessment to include:*
>
> *o detailed analysis of finds*
>
> *o production of a final report on the significance of the archaeological interest.*
>
> *3. Deposition of the final report with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment*
>
> *Record and Rochdale Local Studies Library.*
>
> *4. Dissemination of the results.*
>
> *5. Provision for archive deposition of the report and records of the site investigation.*

*6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the approved WSI.*

*Reason: To record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible and in accordance with the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. Reason for pre-commencement condition: Any works to the site may interfere with the any archaeological evidence present.*

## 2: Site Location

The building is situated on the northeast side of Dale Street, to the southeast side of Middleton centre. The site is bounded to the southwest by Dale Street and the rear of the houses along it; to the north west by Chapel Gate; to the northeast by the rear of the properties to Major Street; and to the southeast by the rear of the properties on Dale Street and Schofield Street. The postal address is Dale Mill, 35 Dale Street, Milnrow, OL16 3NJ and the National Grid Reference is SD 92837 12644.

The site does not lie within a conservation area. The building is not listed but the site does contain Milnrow Mill, an entry on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record (HER No. 5308.1.0). The Grade II listed 45-51 Dale Street lies directly adjacent to the site, at the corner of Dale Street and Chapel Gate.

## 3: Historical Background

Milnrow's post-medieval history is defined by the early domestic woollen trade and the later shift to industrial cotton production in the C19th. From the late 1790's Manchester became the hub of the regional canal system, with the Rochdale

canal a part of this. The early cotton mills occupied a niche, supplying a huge demand for yarn from the cloth manufacturers, which had expanded in the 18th century (Williams and Farnie 1992). Local mill owners saw the potential of the River Beal, and harnessed the water power to drive the machinery in their new mills. This led to a rapid growth in the population of Milnrow (Hignett 1991).

Milnrow retains much evidence of its earlier domestic textile production with numerous weavers' cottages, many altered, characterising the historic core of the settlement and lining the route of Dale Street. Nos 45-51 Dale Street are four such dwellings (O'Flaherty 2016).

The OS map for 1851 shows the site with Church Street Mill to the northwest side. Dale Street is lined with buildings but the rest of the site was undeveloped. By the 1891 OS map the Church Street Mill is shown as "woollen mills", and had been extended to the east, to create an L shaped plan. A further extension to the southwest ran up to the rear of the Dale Street houses. Fronting Dale Street was a large building, possibly a warehouse, between the rows of terrace housing. By 1910, this warehouse building had been reduced in size; the western end having been demolished by approximately half, creating a wide entrance to the site. The mill had also moved cotton, rather than wool. The situation remained the same over the 1930 and 1938 OS mapping, although where the former warehouse had been demolished, it was rebuilt upon with a narrower building. By the 1950's the mill was known as Milnrow Spinning Mills.

Following the C20th decline of textile production, 35 Dale Street (Dale Mill) was converted for retail use in the early 1980s, before being gutted by fire and partly rebuilt in the early 1990s. Most recently the building has lain vacant. Milnrow Spinning Mill was demolished and the land redeveloped for commercial uses in

the later C20th. This newer development was also recently demolished and the site now lies cleared as brownfield land (O'Flaherty 2016).

## 4: Historic Building Survey

### Aims

Buildings are an important part of the historic environment as they provide information on historical technology, social structure and lifestyles. The alteration of buildings may remove evidence of their past uses and occupation and make it more difficult for future historians to understand and interpret them. The aim of the survey is to preserve 'by record' the information that may be lost as a result of demolition or alteration. This will be achieved by recording and analysing the plan form, function, age and development of the building and by the preparation of a written, drawn and photographic archive for future reference.

### Method

This shall comprise a field survey recording of the building performed to Historic England level 2/3 standards (as set out in their 2016 "Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice") and shall record:

- The form and fabric of the building, along with a measured survey, with a view to producing plans at each level of the building and one representative cross section. These shall be produced at 1:50 scale at least;
- Architects plans are to be supplied and, after checking their accuracy using hand tapes and hand held electronic distometers, they shall be used as the base for archaeological details to be added;
- A photographic survey of the building's external appearance and internal rooms, as well as detailed photographs and/or drawings of key

architectural features or features evident of past function. Photographs will be taken using a high resolution digital SLR camera (Olympus E600 [12 Megapixels]) in RAW format, with files saved as lossless TIFF's for archive purposes. All photographs will contain an appropriate photographic scale and the locations and direction will be marked on a photograph location plan.

- An historic map regression will be undertaken along with historical research into the site, with a view to producing a short account of the history of the building and group of buildings it belongs to, as well as putting the building into its surrounding context;
- The building will be formally described internally and externally;
- Areas which may hold key information to the understanding of the building's development, but are currently obscured, will be identified to inform where an archaeological watching brief should be undertaken during stripping out/demolition;

**Reporting**

Following the building survey, the results will be described within a fully illustrated report, which will include the following:

- A summary of the survey's findings;
- The background to the survey, which will include an outline of the planning context, the survey dates and location details;
- An outline of the survey methodology;
- A summary of the sites history, development and importance, including a discussion of the building(s) in its local context;
- A formal and descriptive account of the building, with reference to plans, elevations and photographs;
- A set of measured scaled plans;

- Plan or plans showing the location and direction of the photographs;
- Identification of inaccessible areas, where a watching brief is required

**5: Watching Brief during stripping and demolition**

**Aims**

To record areas of the building that were inaccessible at the time of the survey

**Method**

An archaeologist shall be present to record historic fabric and features during strip out and demolition works. The areas where this watching brief should take place shall be identified during the building recording. The attending archaeologist will be given opportunity to direct and/or to stop the work to allow inspection and/or recording of historic fabric and features.

Recording shall take the form stated above in the Historic Building recording methodology.

**Reporting**

The results of the watching brief shall be added to the historic building survey report to produce a final report of the building.

**6: Desk Based Assessment**

**Aims**

The aims of a Desk-based assessment are to "determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area. Desk-based assessment will be undertaken

using appropriate methods and practices that satisfy the stated aims of the project, and that comply with the Code of conduct and other relevant regulations of CIfA. In a development context, desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so), and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made on whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact" (CIfA 2020).

**Method**

An archaeologist shall visit the site to perform a walkover survey to photograph the area and identify any areas of potential interest visible on the site. The historic map regression from the building survey shall be examined for evidence of past land use. The Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record shall be consulted to obtain HER data for the area as well as access any relevant grey literature. The results shall be compiled into a final report, which shall be used to inform the trial trenching evaluation.

**Reporting**

The results will be presented within a fully illustrated report, which will include the following:

1. A non-technical summary of the survey's findings;
2. Introductory statements;
3. Aims and objectives;
4. Map of the study area;
5. Methodology, including sources consulted;
6. Description of the heritage assets and archaeological potential of the site;
7. An assessment of the interest and significance of each asset and its setting;
8. Conclusions;

9. Supporting illustrations;
10. Supporting photographs;
11. References

The work will be carried out in accordance with the guidelines laid out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists "Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment" (2020).

## 7: Trial Trenching Evaluation

A separate WSI for the trial trenching shall be submitted, informed by the results of the desk-based assessment

## 8: Archive

The physical archive will be placed with Rochdale Touchstones Library within a reasonable time of completion of the project. A digital copy of the building survey report and photographs shall be deposited with ADS through the OASIS database. A copy will also be deposited with the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record and Stockport Local Studies Library. Should the results warrant it, a summary report, or detailed article on the work shall be submitted for publication in a regional or national journal, appropriate to the significance of the results and findings of the project. This shall be done no later than one year after the completion of the work.

## 9: Staff

Steven Price is nominated to carry out the works. All fieldwork will be undertaken by Steven Price BA (Hons.) MA, MPhil, PCIfA as well as other trained staff under his guidance.

## 10: Timetable

It is anticipated that the historic building survey will be undertaken over a period of one week, and a report will be produced within four weeks of commencement.

## 11: General

All project staff will adhere to the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The project will follow the requirements set down in the appropriate Standard and Guidance notes prepared by the Institute for Archaeologists and all staff will wear appropriate PPE. Appropriate COVID-19 precautions shall be undertaken during site visits, including staff maintaining a 2m distance, wearing masks and washing hands before and after eating.

## 12: Bibliography

Hignett, T 1991 "Milnrow and Newhey: A Lancashire Legacy"

O'Flaherty 2016 "Heritage Statement in connection with Proposed Residential Development and Conversion, Dale Mill, Dale Street, Milnrow"

Historic England 2016 "Understanding Historic Buildings"

ClfA 2020 "Standard and guidance for archaeological desk-based assessment"

ClfA 2020 "Standard and guidance for Historic Building Survey"




Figure 1: Location plan (OS Licence Number: 100057911)

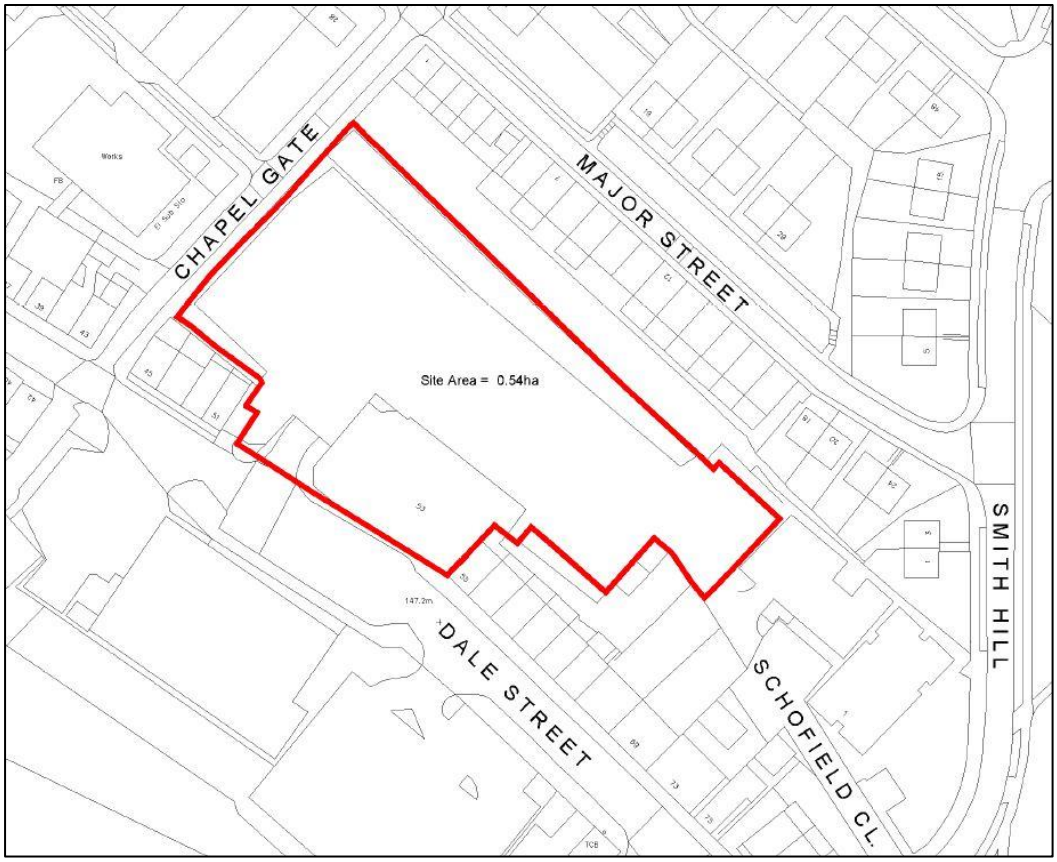


Figure 2: Site Plan (courtesy of client)

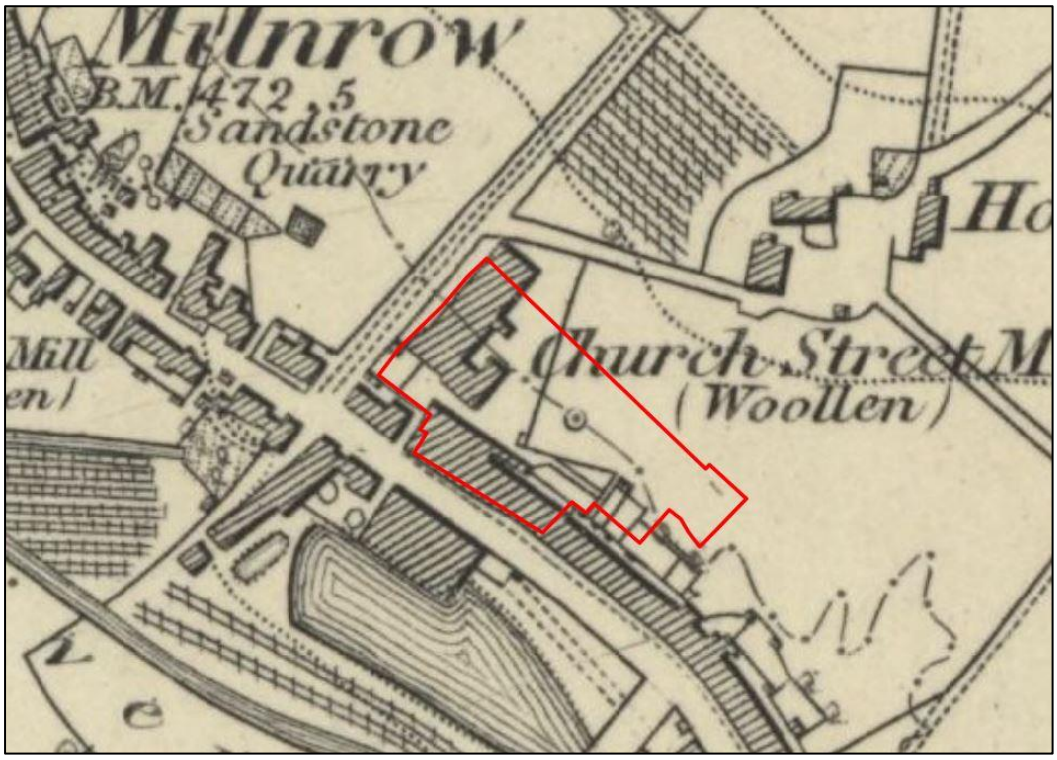


Figure 3: 1851 OS Map Lancashire Sheet LXXXIX

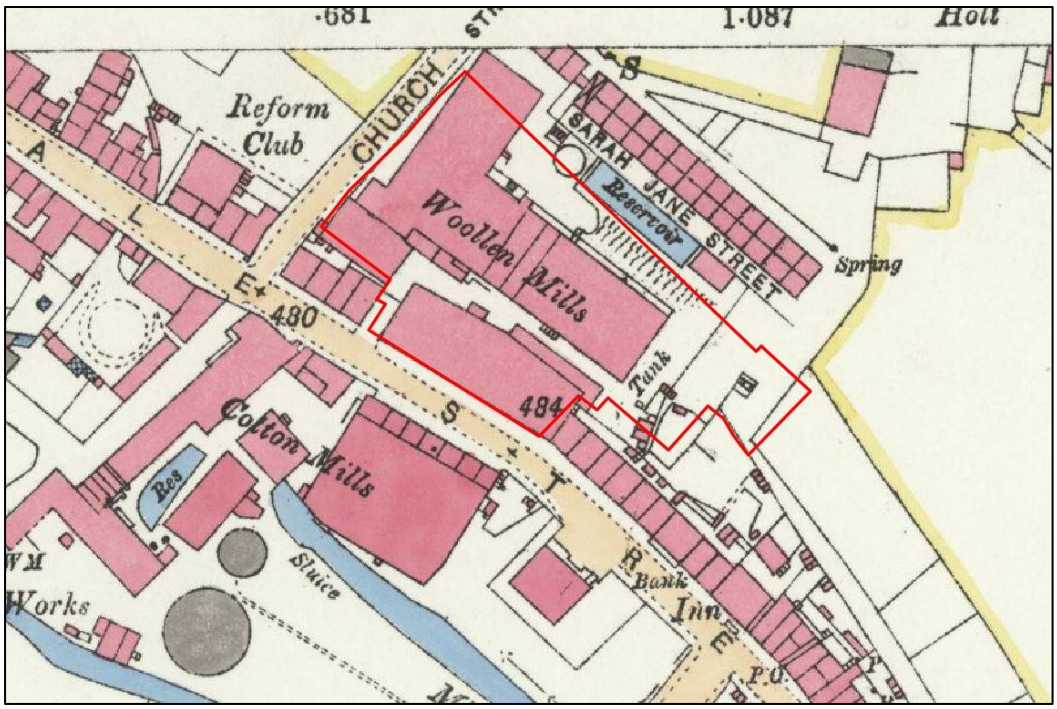


Figure 4: 1893 OS Map Lancashire Sheet LXXXIX.6

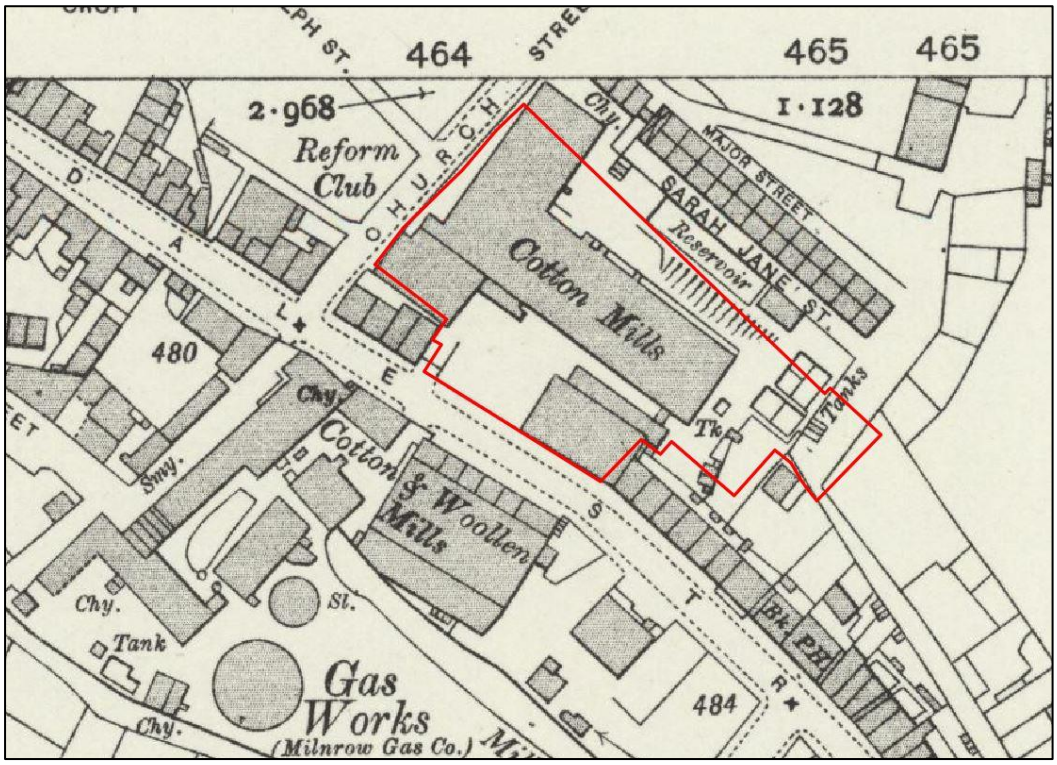


Figure 5: 1910 OS Map Lancashire Sheet LXXXIX.6

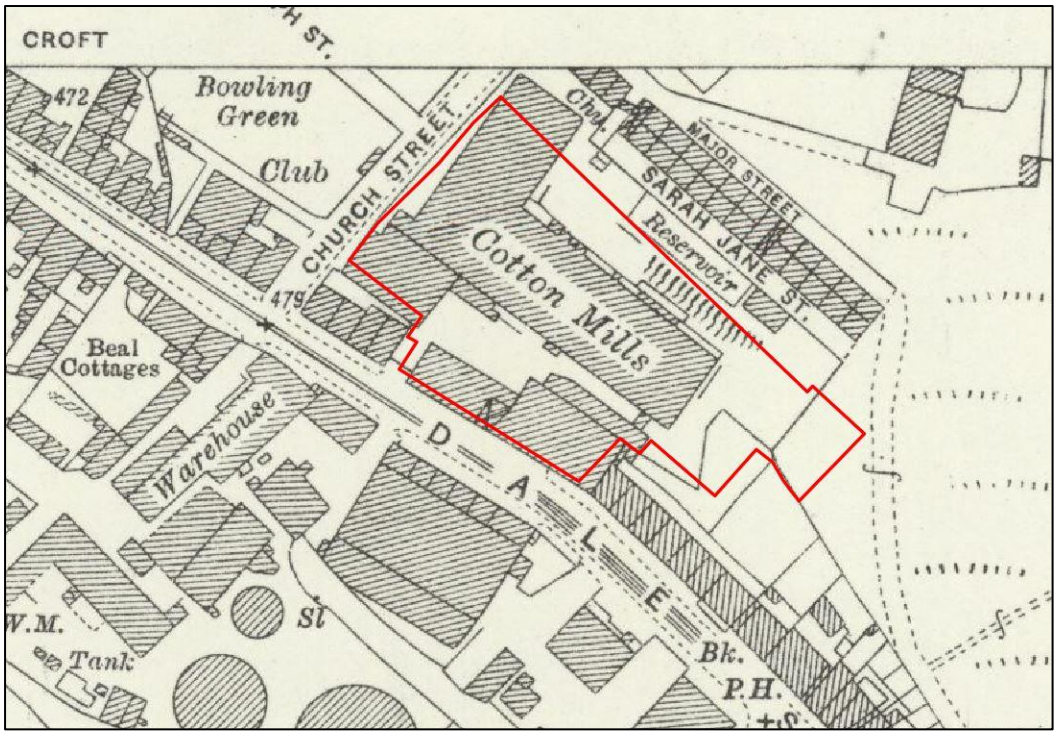


Figure 6: 1930 OS Map Lancashire Sheet LXXXIX.6

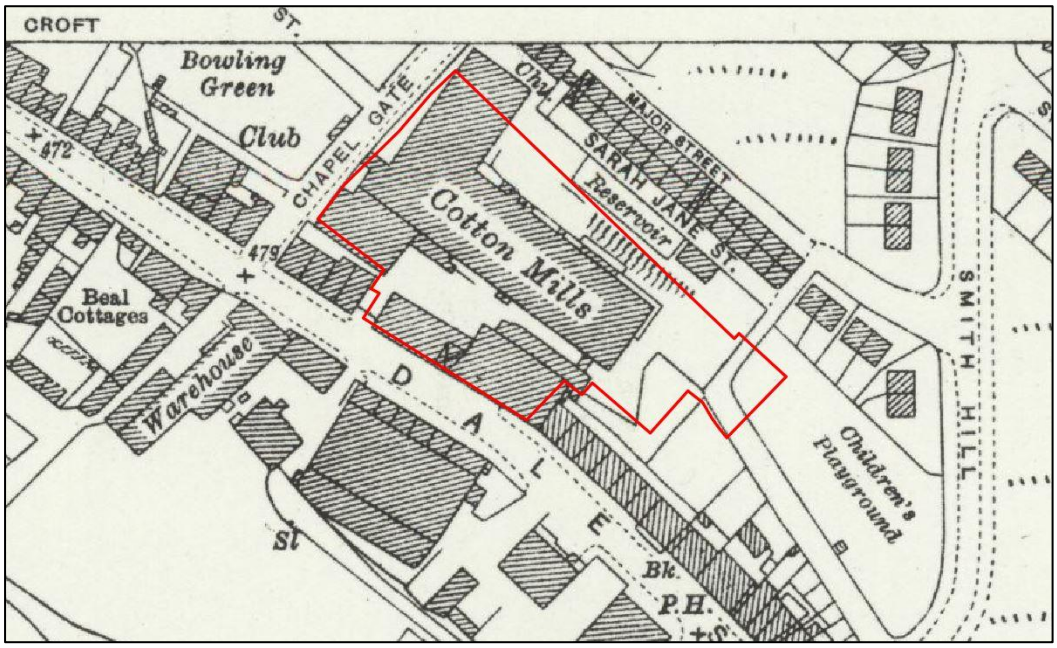


Figure 7: 1938 OS Map Lancashire Sheet LXXXIX.6