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SITE – Land to the rear of
7 to 15 Lodge Street
Middleton
Rochdale
M24 6AA

15 May 2025

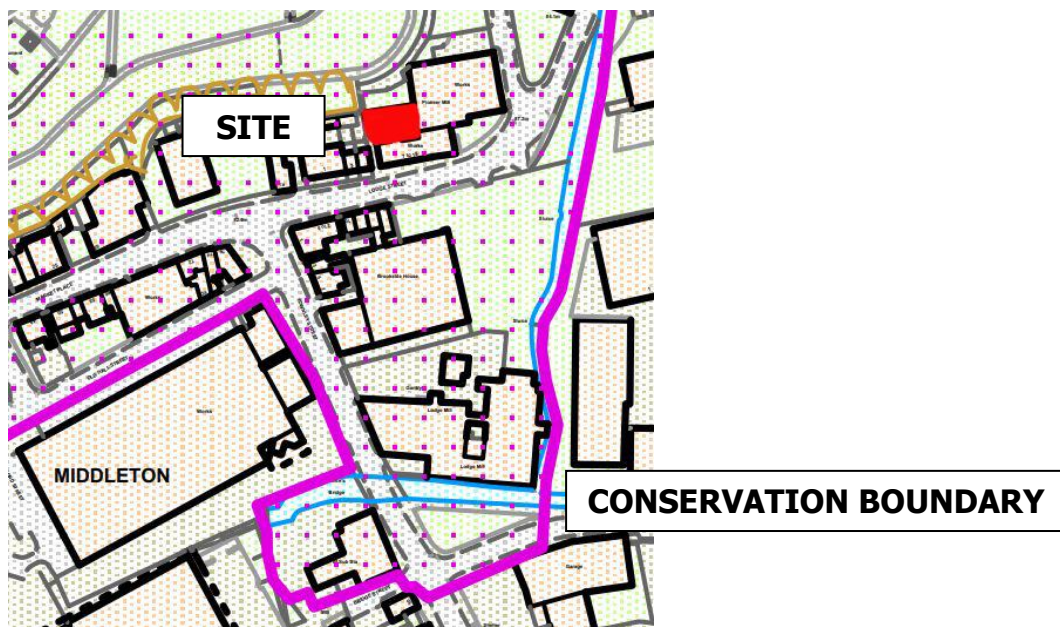
PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT

The site is to the rear of numbers 7 to 15 on Lodge Street, Middleton. The site is accessed from a path to the West. The site is in a poor state of repair where the buildings are in a condition to dangerous to enter, this is due to vandalism over a number of years and parts of the roof being removed. There is also a public right of way to the West of the building which slopes steeply from the South to North

The site (as shown in red) is part of the group of buildings known as Pioneer Mill, mainly owned by the applicant (as shown in blue), the rest of the site is in good state of repair.



The site is approx 500m from the square in Middleton centre to the North East and is near the East boundary of the extended Middleton Conservation Area introduced 1978 and extended 2009, it was out of the area before the amendment.



Rochdale MBC – Middleton Conservation area

This application is to demolish a steadily degrading building that is in a poor state of repair and needs to be dismantled on safety grounds.

FUNCTION OF THE BUILDINGS



The original 'site' building and the row of buildings on Lodge Street are shown on the Middleton Tithe map dated 1839, 'Pioneer Mill' building is shown on Ordnance map dated 1891 with the overall buildings showing on 1932 OS mapping.

The row to the South of the site are retail units, with a cycle repair shop and large arts and craft shop that also provides community groups around arts and crafts. The large building to the West and the yard to the North are used by an arts and theatre charity that provide a great space for the community. The grey roof building further East is not in the applicants control but operates for commercial use.

The group of buildings are not do not have Listed status, there is a Listed Structure approx 75m to the East of the site, the former Providence United Reform Church, but this can not be seen from the site so this does not have a bearing on this application. The Listed building also had a major collapse in 2013 and was seriously damaged.

The area is shown as unallocated on the Rochdale UDP 2006, but is on the edge of the Protected & Enhancement area of the Conservation Area as part of the burial ground.

The application site is listed as a Non Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA) list dated 2023, but it is fact that the building has been in a poor state for over 20 years and this has not been raised to our knowledge. In the listing it states the building as a 'Mill' but the we understand this is not the case.

The buildings are brick facings, with welsh blue state roofs or sheet cladding.



Current condition of building

Pioneer Mill: although currently known as Pioneer Mill, there is no historical evidence to suggest that any of the original mills in Middleton operated under this name.

The extensive lists of cotton mills in Greater Manchester compiled by Williams and Farnie(1992) do not mention Pioneer Mill and the trade directories for cotton spinners and manufacturers (Worrall 1884–1930; Worrall 1930–70) for the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries make no reference of this mill. The extensive mill archives held by the Middleton Local Studies Library also contained no reference to Pioneer Mill.

The first reference to the Pioneer name in association with a mill in Middleton appears to have been in 1970, when Pioneer Manufacturing Co Ltd occupied Brookside Mill, on Townley Street (Worrall 1930–70). This company manufactured polishing cloths, dusters, scourers, and sponge cloths and it is possible that they might have owned the building currently under study, as it was situated opposite Brookside Mill, separated by Lodge Street. It is, therefore, possible that the Pioneer name might have become associated with this building as late as the 1970s.

In addition to the Pioneer name apparently being applied to the building in the late twentieth century, there is no evidence to suggest that the building had ever functioned as a mill. Although it might have been associated with Brookside Mill in the late twentieth century, the Middleton tithe map clearly showed that the Pioneer Mill building had been constructed prior to 1839, whereas Brookside Mill was not built until after the survey for the Ordnance Survey map of 1848.

The building was not, therefore, an ancillary structure associated with Brookside Mill. Numerous mills were labelled on the Ordnance Survey maps of Middleton published between 1844 and 1938, however, the function, or name, of the building currently under study was not specified on any of these maps and the adjacent terraced buildings, named as 'The Lodge' were not named as mill buildings.

The original purpose of the building may have been as a storage area or subsidiary working area associated with home-based silk or cotton weaving at the adjacent terraced cottages named 'The Lodge', now the retail space.

The building had a report carried out in 2007 where part internal access was carried out, it is clear on the images taken then that the main brick structure had been altered internally, walls removed and steel beams installed.

PLANNING STATEMENT

The application site and the surrounding buildings have been in the applicants family ownership for a long time. The buildings surrounding the application site serve as a great addition to the environment and community just off the centre of Middleton.

We understand there has been a few proposals over the years to assist this part of the town but that is yet to come to fruition. The applicant is happy to discuss the site with the Local Authority as to a future for the site.

It is clear that the building is of low significance as an asset to the area of Middleton, owing to the deterioration of the building and now presents a safety risk to the buildings surrounding it and the public footway.

The expected existing use planning status of the building is Class E - 'any other services which it is appropriate to provide in a commercial, business or service locality'. The proposal is to maintain this Class E for future development opportunities to be explored, but the priority must be safety and for the building to be demolished.