

Warwick Mill, Middleton, Rochdale
Heritage Statement & Impact Assessment
June 2023



Unit 1 Carnforth Station
Carnforth, Lancashire
01524 730382 / 07583152804
info@townscape.org.uk / www.townscape.org.uk

June 2023

All rights in this work are reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means (including without limitation by photocopying or placing on a website) without the prior permission in writing of Townscape except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Applications for permission to reproduce any part of this work should be addressed to Townscape info@townscape.org.uk.

Undertaking any unauthorised act in relation to this work may result in a civil claim for damages and/or criminal prosecution. Any materials used in this work which are subject to third party copyright have been reproduced under license from the copyright owner except in the case of works of unknown authorship as defined by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Any person wishing to assert rights in relation to works which have been reproduced as works of unknown authorship should contact Townscape info@townscape.org.uk

Townscape asserts its moral rights to be identified as the author of this work under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Heritage Statement

1. Introduction
2. Historic description and context
3. Analysis of Warwick Mill
4. Building description – external
5. Building description – internal
6. Statement of Significance & Heritage Planning Context
7. Conclusion

Heritage Impact Assessment

1. Scope and method of assessment
2. Description of proposed development and its impact
3. Assessment of proposed development against planning policy criteria; nationally and locally.
4. Conclusions
5. Appendices

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Townscape has been commissioned by the owners of Warwick Mill to produce this Heritage Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment to support a planning application for change of use and conversion of Warwick Mill, a Grade II listed building, to residential accommodation and mixed use facilities.
- 1.2 Townscape are Chartered Town Planning and Heritage Consultants who serve public, private and community sector clients. We specialise in all aspects of our historic environment, heritage, planning and wider urban design.

2. Historic Description and Context.

- 2.1 Textile manufacturing in the Greater Manchester area was first established in the 17th and early 18th century within domestic buildings where weaving wool was the main trade. The cotton industry developed with the growth of the Canal network connecting the greater Manchester area with the port of Liverpool and available raw materials. With the development of steam power and abundance of coal from the Lancashire coalfields, and a skilled, cheap and plentiful work force, the Textile industry flourished. During the 19th century the design of cotton mills evolved to reflect advances

in engineering, cotton manufacturing and trading conditions. By the late 19th century the multi storey mill became the standard mill of choice providing ever increasing floor areas to accommodate larger spinning machinery to increase production.

- 2.2 Warwick Mill was built as part of the last great mill building boom in the Lancashire textile industry after 1900. Warwick Mill was one of a number of mills built in the Rochdale area that were of similar size and style and were characterised by their enormous floor area, multi-storeys, and width compared with their predecessors. Cotton Mills are one of the region's most distinctive building types and are a visible reminder to the industrial revolution that dominated the region. The Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record, or Heritage Environment Record (HER) lists over 1000 textile mills built in the area with over 2400 mill buildings, many of these buildings are now protected by listing. Many of these surviving mills dated from the late 19th and early 20th century mill building boom. This boom was made possible by the use of steel framing and concrete floors sometimes still supported by a triple brick-arch fireproof system as at Warwick Mill.
- 2.3 The average size of a cotton mill built in the period after 1900 was 90,000 spindles; Warwick Mill had 91,000 mule spindles,

but by 1907 many of Rochdale's new mills were specialising in the more efficient ring spindles spinning machinery. The Warwick Mill Company was part of a larger grouping known as the Combined Egyptian Mill Limited. (Rochdale mills) from 1882 onwards when the first large multi-mill limited spinning company was formed in the town.

2.4 Warwick Mill has several characteristic features common to the last generation of Lancashire spinning mills. The first of these is the use of steel framing and concrete floor supports, but in this case the flooring was also supported by a triple brick-arch fireproof system.

2.5 The second characteristic of this late mill was the use of a large compound horizontal steam engine housed in an engine house at right-angles to the mill and powering a rope race. The rope race at Warwick Mill has survived virtually intact apart from the absence of the ropes themselves and actual engine/power system. Horizontal steam engines were first introduced into the Lancashire textile industry in the early 1860s and by the late 1860s they had become the standard engine for powering weaving sheds; one of the earliest was a single cylinder horizontal engine installed at Navigation Mills, Blackburn, in 1861. However, the McNaughted Beam Engine was still viewed as the best engine for the higher power ratings needed for spinning and it's

allied preparatory processes. It was not until the 1870s that horizontal steam engines began to be used in spinning mills. Initially, horizontal engines were added to complement existing beam engines.

2.6 Warwick Mill can thus be viewed as a classic late-period Lancashire cotton spinning mill design incorporating these innovations in structural and power design. The mill is also notable as being built to a standard form by the noted architect George Stott. George Stott adopted the triple brick arch system of flooring and was responsible for designing several mills during the Edwardian cotton boom in the North West of England.



Fig 1 Warwick Mill, Oldham Road view



Fig 2 OS Map 1909



Fig 3 OS Map 1922

3. Analysis of Warwick Mill

- 3.1 Warwick Mill, a Grade II Listed Building, was built to a design by George Stott of Joseph Stott and Son. Work began on the mill in December 1907 and completed in 1909 on land between Oldham Road and the Wince Brook from which the mill derived its water. This small area of land already contained two cotton mills, Tonge and Park (later Irk) Mills (now demolished) that had been constructed between 1850 and 1890 immediately to the south west of Warwick Mill. See figs 2 and 3.
- 3.2 The area had been in use for textile production for some time, as a little further south west a silk factory existed prior to the 1840s. A grid iron of terraced housing was also in existence close to the mill site probably housing the workers for the local established mills.
- 3.3 Warwick Mill was a brick built, five storey, with cellar, mill complex with a stair and water tower that bore the mills name in white brickwork. In its original plan form the mill was rectangular with an engine house off the south east corner with an attached pump and boiler house. It had a detached chimney (now lost), settling well and water filtration tanks also off the south east corner of the mill. The engine was by

George Saxon supplying 1500hp, the machinery by Platt Brothers and boilers by Tetlow Brothers. The overall appearance of the mill changed little throughout its working life. With only minor alteration or addition to the mill apart from the scrapping of the engine, demolition of the boiler and water filtration system, and the insertion of powered lift systems, all around the 1970s and 1980s. The rope race has survived with flywheels and drive shafts still present on all floor levels. The mill appears to have been built to a standard form by George Stott, with other mills of his design in the Manchester area bearing a close resemblance to Warwick Mill.

4. Building description – exterior, summary

- 4.1 The overall description of the mill is that of a large rectangular five-storey building, built of red engineering brick in English Garden Wall Bond. It consists of forty x fourteen bays with an engine house and pump house. It had a main staircase and water tower with the name of the mill 'WARWICK' incorporated in white glazed brick in the four elevations of the tower. The tower is balanced by brick pilasters with pierced parapet at each of the other three corners of the mill.

- **North Elevation**

At the eastern end of this elevation was the stair tower with a water tower on top. The water tower is square in plan and in the 'Hotel de Ville' style that was raised two stages above the stepped, sandstone coped, brick parapet with three windows in each elevation. Some of which have been blocked up with breeze block. Above the windows on each elevation of the water tower was the name of the mill, 'WARWICK', in white glazed brick. The pyramidal roof of the water tower is covered in slate. On the ground floor running along to the central doorway, is a length of cast iron railing that containing an Art Nouveau design.

- **West Elevation**

The overall appearance and decorative brickwork of this elevation is a repeat of those in the northern elevation. It is fourteen bays wide consisting of three main aisles with the fenestration being identical to those of the north elevation.

- **South Elevation**

The southern elevation was of overall similar appearance to the northern elevation with similar decorative brickwork and fenestration.

- **East Elevation**

Again the east elevation was of overall similar appearance to

the northern elevation with similar decorative brickwork and fenestration.

- **Engine House**

This is a two-storey brick built structure in English Garden Wall Bond in red engineering brick that projects southwards from the mill. It has four stone string courses the lowest being at the floor level of the now removed engine floor. The southern façade contains a large semi-circular arched window with a tripartite keystone.

- **Lodge**

Single storey rectangular building constructed in smooth red engineering brick in the English Garden Wall bond, with sandstone string courses in the neo classical style with quoins. Brick pilasters and architraves to main door way and drip moulds to window mullions.

- **Other structures**

A small brick outbuilding is located at the entrance to the site off Ashton Road; this building has no architectural or historic merit.



Fig 4 Engine House



Fig 5 The Lodge



Fig 7 Warwick Mill, North and East Elevation



Fig 6 Warwick Mill, Southern Elevation

5. Building description – interior

- **Water Tower Stairwell:**

The stairwell of the water tower is accessed via the main entrance door in the eastern elevation of the tower, (fig 8). The steps are of stone. After entering the main door there were a flight of eight steps at the top of which was an open timber framed doorway. This led to the landing at upper ground floor level and to the north of which was the inserted lift. Each landing level gives access to one of the main spinning halls.



Fig 8 Entrance to stair tower

- **Third Floor:**

Overall the floor space that was originally a spinning hall occupied all but the last three eastern bays of the mill with the water tower and access stairs at the north eastern corner. The rope race occupied those last three bays from the eastern wall. The ceiling is vaulted brick arched with beams and along the eastern wall bricks are laid in stretcher bond. The vaulting is orientated north to south whereas the remaining vaults were orientated east to west. There are eight columns running east to west and eleven running north to south, support columns that were replicated on all floors. They were constructed of cast iron and undecorated with simple bell capitals placed directly below the intersection of the steel beams. The third row of columns contains evidence of the line shafting bolting which carried the power transmission directly below the columns. This arrangement was duplicated on the third, second and first floors of the mill.

- **Second Floor:**

The second floor has the same layout and design to that of the third floor and used for the purposes of spinning.

- **First Floor:**

Again the first floor is similar in layout and design to the other floors and, originally a spinning room.



Fig 9 General arrangement of columns

- **Upper Ground Floor:**

This floor was identical in all major aspects to the three floors above and was originally designated as the card room. The windows were of similar dimensions and design to those on the other floors of the mill with one immediately to the south of the northwestern stairwell being of approximately half the width.

- **Lower Ground Floor:**

Much of the western wall extending eastwards for ten bays was taken up with offices constructed of stud walling that had been inserted in the late 20th century. A similar situation occurred along the western half of the northern wall that extended southwards for approximately four bays. The remainder of the floor was used as storage which had been fitted with metal shelving and rails. The floor of the lower ground floor was composed of York stone flags.

- **Engine House:**

The engine house is four bays long and two bays wide with the rope race located centrally. The engine floor has been removed. Below the engine floor level the wall was composed of uncovered brick work, whereas above the engine floor level it was covered with a line of white ceramic glazed tile panels, bordered by dark green ceramic tiles with white stylised flower motifs in the Art Nouveau style. Access to the engine house was restricted.

- **Rope Race:**

Access to the rope race is from the end doorway on the second floor that leads to an iron staircase. The rope race runway was from the lower ground floor level to roof level. The western wall contained the wall drive shaft boxes and transmission which supplied the western end of the main mill floors. At each floor

the flywheels and drive shafts are still present and accessed via an ornate cast iron staircase.

- **Lodge:**

The interior of the lodge was not inspected. However, the interior is believed to be modern and of no overall significance.



Fig 10 (above) & Fig 11 (below) Rope race Iron staircase



Fig 12 above



Fig 12 & Fig 13 above, Existing Rope race machinery

6. Statement of significance and heritage planning policy context

- 6.1 Understanding significance is a key principle for managing change to heritage assets, and is embedded within current government policy in the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework). A key objective in the NPPF is ‘the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets’. The NPPF advises that the more significant the heritage asset the greater weight should be given its conservation. English Heritage issued Conservation Principles in 2008 to explain the importance of understanding what is significant before

making changes to a historic building. English Heritage set out four main aspects of significance: evidential (or archaeological), historical, aesthetic and communal. Measuring significance is not an exact science; it relies on a combination of comparative analysis, an understanding of the building’s development and architectural history and the setting. Assessments depend on using judgment in relation to the quality of the original design and fabric and the level of alteration. Within the four main categories of heritage value, significance can be measured in hierarchical levels:

Exceptional – an asset important at the highest national or international levels, including scheduled ancient monuments, Grade I and II* Listed buildings and World Heritage Sites. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be wholly exceptional.

High – a designated asset important at a national level, including Grade II listed buildings and locally designated conservation areas. The NPPF advises that substantial harm should be exceptional.

Medium – an undesignated asset important at local to regional level, Including buildings on a Local List (non-statutory) or those that make a positive contribution to a conservation area. May

also include less significant parts of listed buildings. Buildings and parts of structures in this category should be retained where possible, although there is usually scope for adaptation.

Low – structure or feature of very limited heritage value and not defined as a heritage asset. Includes buildings that do not contribute positively to a conservation area and also later additions to listed buildings of much less value. The removal or adaptation of structures in this category is usually acceptable where the work will enhance a related heritage asset.

Negative – structure or feature that harms the value of heritage asset. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered, taking account of setting and opportunities for enhancement.

The following table provides a significance level for each of the spaces within the Mill.

Historical Element	Significance Level
Interior	
Main spinning hall to all floors	Very High
Brick vaulting to ceiling	Very High

Iron supporting columns to floors	Very High
Rope race and in situ winding machinery	Very high
Cast iron access staircase to rope race	Very High
Engine House	High
Ancillary accommodation, toilets, rest rooms, storage areas (spaces only although subdivided, not fixtures & fittings)	High
Access, staircases, corridors, lift shaft	Medium
Decorative features, tiles and motifs where original and in good order	High
External	
All main elevations	Very High
Windows – Original timber window frames, however their appearance and condition is unremarkable	Medium
Water Tower/stair tower	Very High
Doorways external (openings)	High
Railings	Very High

Lodge/Office building	High
Brick garage/gatehouse	Low/Negative
External flooring, setts	Medium
Boundary walls	Medium
External fire escape (cast iron)	Medium



Heritage Impact Assessment

1. Scope and method of assessment.

1.1 This impact assessment relies on the understanding of the identified heritage asset that is Warwick Mill, a brief understanding of the heritage asset, its significance and its setting has been discussed in the heritage statement. This impact assessment is a judgment on the proposal to regenerate Warwick Mill to become a residential development with mixed use facilities; to discuss the impact of the new proposal upon the character of the heritage asset, its overall design philosophy, and to provide a professional judgment on its acceptance.

1.2 Whilst no specific or direct guidance is available in assessing the impact of a proposal which entails the impact on a heritage asset. This assessment draws on a number of key guiding documents; such as English Heritage Conservation Principles, 2008 and Historic England Guidance, Historic Environment good practice advice in planning Note 3, The Setting of Heritage Assets, March 2017.

I have also considered the impact of the proposal upon the heritage asset by relating directly to the National Planning

Policy Framework (NPPF) and Rochdale Council Planning policies.

1.3 In determining applications affecting listed buildings, local authorities have to take account of section 66 (1) in the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act): ‘the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest’. This duty relies on understanding the special interest of the building (its significance) and how the proposals will affect this. Policies in the NPPF reinforce the 1990 Planning Act, but use slightly different words and emphasise balancing use, viability and conservation: ‘the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation’; The local authority should ‘identify and assess the particular significance of heritage assets’, and ‘take account of available evidence and necessary expertise’.

1.4 This report provides an appropriate level of significance assessment for this case, when ‘considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal’. The NPPF advises that when considering the impact of a proposal on a listed building, ‘great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the

asset the greater the weight should be. More weight is therefore given to assets of national importance such as listed buildings, than to local heritage, and within listed buildings, more weight should be given to features and elements of high significance than those of lower importance.

- 1.5 Proposals may enhance, have a neutral impact or cause harm to a heritage asset. The level of harm may be slight, 'less than substantial harm' or substantial. The NPPF states that substantial harm to listed buildings (such as demolition or loss) should be exceptional, and it has to be very Justified. Where 'less than substantial' harm is likely to be caused, the harm has to be balanced against the public benefits. This level of harm can include removal or covering over of features within a listed building and minor additions/development in the setting.

2. Description of proposed development and its impact.

- 2.1 This report is to be read in conjunction with plans submitted by the GMA Architects, which proposes a change of use with alterations to Warwick Mill to become a mixed use development comprising mostly of residential with a smaller degree of commercial spaces and lower ground floor parking spaces. In addition, a new build residential block is proposed

to be constructed on the site of London House (The Loom) which is immediately adjacent. The total number of residential units will be 281, split between Warwick Mill (135) and the new Loom development (146).

- 2.2 Through this proposal much of Warwick Mill externally will remain the same, with the exception of the creation of an internal central void and improved access arrangements. However, due to the proposed change of use and the implications in securing residential space, there is a degree of loss of historic internal fabric, in particular the loss to most of the internal floor slab.

- 2.3 The main intervention as identified which results in a less than substantial impact, is the removal of most of the inner structure comprising of; floors, columns and brick arches to the Mill to provide for the internal glazed roof atrium, internal access, staircases and creation of replacement floor construction for residential accommodation. In effect the proposals will retain the Inner core of the structure to only 3 bays deep from the outer face of the Mill.

Roof top apartments are proposed which would be setback behind the existing roof parapet and in effect give the Mill an additional floor.

- **Externally**

The proposed external interventions have been kept to a minimum in order to fully appreciate the sheer mass of the Mill. However, there is recognition that the current access is not suitable and therefore a new main entrance is proposed which mirrors the creation of an internal void.

- a. A new main entrance will involve the removal of 3 bays/windows to the lower ground floor. The entrance will be glazed with metal clad canopy, projecting from the outer face and will add additional light to the mill. The new entrance will front Oldham Road on the north elevation with new storey height doors to the south elevation overlooking the brook. A further new entrance will be created in the west elevation leading directly to the lower ground floor level to provide vehicular access.
- b. Removal of the external fire escape.
- c. New windows will replace the existing in a style to match and of powder coated aluminium material.
- d. Localised repairs/maintenance will take place in a 'like for like' manner. However, a recent condition survey has found

Warwick Mill to be in remarkably good condition, so interventions will be limited.

- e. Some external floodlighting of the Warwick Mill tower to reveal the surface modeling and picking out the building name 'Warwick' will be installed at the roof level of the mill building and on the roof of the Lodge. Recessed overhead lighting within entry portals will highlight pavement thresholds.
- f. Interventions at roof level are focused on the creation of a new roof top apartments set behind the parapet. In addition, the removal of the internal floor slabs rising up through the building, provides for the new atrium. The tower will be refurbished, telecommunication equipment removed and the slate roofing renewed where required.
- g. Public realm proposals are designed to better link the Mill and Engine House with the Lodge structure thus creating an events space and landscaping. Car parking will be provided on the London House site, within the lower ground floor of the Mill and adjacent to the Engine House.

- **Internally**

- a. The existing internal floor space with columns will remain on all levels of the Mill to a depth of some 3-4m from the outer face of the Mill. The large open former spinning halls will be removed together with floor slabs and arches to enable new floor construction to be created. They will be partitioned to form individual tenancies through new stud partitions fixed to the floor offset from the retained and reaffixed columns. The general arrangement of the new spaces will be maintained on all floor levels.
- b. A major internal intervention is the creation of a central void that will facilitate improved access to all the floors via elevators and penetrating light, terminating with a new glazed roof atrium. The creation of the void is deemed necessary for the new use of the mill. The central void will run from the upper ground floor providing access to each residential floor level, and to the proposed roof top glazed atrium and roof top apartments. The atrium will form part of the proposed new residential floors throughout the mill.
- c. The Engine House will be utilised as a restaurant and events space and a part mezzanine floor inserted to accommodate this new function. Existing openings will be reused with new windows and doors inserted.
- d. The rope race will remain as a key feature to the original workings of the mill, and will be cleaned, repaired where required. It will feature an improved viewing area of the historic features.
- e. London House (The Loom) – The proposal seeks consent for adjacent development at London House which will feature as a residential development. The proposal will be 10 storeys in height plus plant and occupy a position clear of the mill building to allow full view of the mill facades, with provision of ground floor podium over car parking spaces. The podium will stretch over the site immediately adjacent to Warwick Mill in particular at the ground and first floors.

The proposed new building will bring a new architectural style to complement Warwick Mill and to be constructed in concrete frame with Corten steel frame and extensive glazing to provide a subordinate foil to the mass of red engineering brick of the Mill itself.

Description of proposed development	Significance level	Reason and justification for development	Level of impact/harm	Mitigation
THIS DOCUMENT IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION TO THE ACCOMPANYING PLANS AND DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT				
Lower ground floor				
Works to the LGF consist mainly of providing access with proposed vehicular access via new access to western elevation, new pedestrian access to north elevation. In addition, retention of the existing floor, columns and arches to facilitate parking spaces together with 6 studio apartments and commercial spaces. New external doors are provided within existing openings to engine house, side entrances and store rooms.	High	Works proposed are required to facilitate the reuse of the Mill. Whilst proposed works are justified on financial viability basis, the removal and reordering of existing space enables the Mill to house the new proposed uses which otherwise couldn't be accommodated.	Moderate harm	A full photographic archaeological recording condition to be placed on any consent awarded.
All floors above LGF – UGF, FF, 2F, 3F & 4F				
Part removal of all interior floors, walls, joists, arches, columns. Retaining outer shell walls, engine house, stair towers. Works involve formation of new floors, subdivided to create residential units and enabling large central void (atrium). Rope race machinery and staircase to be cleaned and stabilised where necessary. Engine House wall feature to be restored and construction of a part mezzanine floor.	High	Works proposed are required to facilitate the reuse of the Mill. Whilst proposed works are justified on a financial viability basis, the removal and reordering of existing space enables the Mill to house the new proposed uses which otherwise couldn't be accommodated. The removal of the proposed internal space does result in a degree of moderate to high harm to be balanced against the need to re-use the mill. The former rope race and engine house provide dramatic viewing points to understand the inner workings of the Mill. The retention	Moderate/High	A full photographic archaeological recording condition to be placed on any consent awarded. Condition to any planning consent, that detailed method statements be submitted in particular to how the rope race machinery will be restored/refurbished and

Warwick Mill –July 2023

		and refurbishment of the Rope Race machinery is welcome and added interpretation to how the mill operated will provide valuable heritage understanding.		details of any interpretation panels.
Roof				
In line with works to the floors below the roof, a glazed atrium will be constructed from the roof. In addition, a number of apartments will be constructed utilising the roof space. The new apartments will be set just above the parapet level and back from the existing parapets, the view of the apartments will be indiscernible from street level.	High	The concept of an atrium has been accepted as evidenced in previous approved schemes for Warwick Mill. The proposed apartments are a well worked solution to utilising roof space of former Mills and creating a greater viability for the re-use of former Mills.	Slight positive.	n/a.
New build, The Loom				
Adjacent to the mill is the former London House site in which a new residential development consisting of a 10 storey block is proposed.	n/a	The proposed new Loom development will provide for a modern development to compliment the existing Mill. The new development is part of the viability package for the wider development and introduces contemporary design which is contextually correct.	Less than substantial	The proposed Loom development will have an impact upon the setting of Warwick Mill. This impact is mitigated by a development which complements rather than dominates Warwick Mill and the Loom will appear to be subservient.
Externally				
New windows throughout the building are proposed and will be a powder coated aluminium or equivalent. All water goods are to be checked/repared and/or replaced with replica units where required.	High	The external cosmetic works are all found to be satisfactory. Replacement windows form the largest intervention to the external appearance to the Mill, the existing windows are in a very poor condition.	Positive	The external works are often controlled by conditions placed on the any consent. Conditions should comprise of;

Warwick Mill –July 2023

All existing stone and brickwork to be cleaned. Existing blocked up windows to engine house to be opened up and enlarged and new windows inserted. Access to proposed new parking entrance to mill. Amenity space to the rear of the Mill overlooking Wince weir New pedestrian access to the front of the mill.		Additional works as annotated on the accompanying plans are to re-open blocked openings, replace doors, improve fire escape routes, new decking, steps and landscaped amenity area to rear of the Mill.		material sample and/or method statements. A photographic record should be undertaken.
Views & Setting				
Warwick Mill itself enjoys an edge of town location positioned directly from a busy road roundabout and therefore is a very prominent building within the street scene and wider Middleton. The setting of the mill is from all points in particular its height and sheer scale which gives it a significant presence. Warwick Mill has had adjacent development on the London House site and whilst development on this site doesn't necessarily impact directly on the setting of the mill, any new development is required to respect and enhance the setting of Warwick Mill.	High	n/a no works proposed.	n/a	n/a

2.4 The setting of Warwick Mill - As noted Warwick Mill stands as a monumental reminder to the past glorious of the cotton industry within Middleton and the greater Manchester Area as a whole. Warwick mill stands alone overlooking Middleton Town centre divided by the busy Oldham Road.

Definition of 'Setting of a heritage asset' within NPPF glossary:

The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it's experienced, its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

- Setting is important to the way in which historic assets are understood, appreciated and experienced and contribute to their significance.
- Setting often extends beyond the property boundary or 'curtilage' of an individual historic asset into a broader landscape context. Intangible as well as physical factors can be important in understanding the setting of a historic asset. These may include function, sensory perceptions and historical, artistic, literary and scenic associations.

- When change or development is proposed, it is important to identify the historic assets that might be affected, define the setting of each historic asset and assess the potential impact of the development on that setting. However, few cases will need extensive analysis and some proposals may not have any impact at all.
- If proposed change or development is likely to have an impact on setting, it is important that the applicant prepares a proportionate and objective written assessment to inform the decision-making process. This should take into account the significance of the asset and its setting and quantify the extent of the impact. The methodology and level of information should be proportionate to the case.
- Development proposals should aim to minimise any harmful impact on the setting of a historic asset.

2.5 The document 'The Setting of Heritage Assets', Historic England, GPA3 2017, sets out guidance on managing change within the setting of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas and landscape. The guidance includes a methodological approach to assessing the effect of proposed development on the setting of assets, which has been followed in this study. The methodology has 4 key stages:

- Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected
- Step 2: Define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the ways in which the historic assets are understood, appreciated and experienced
- Stage 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it
- Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

2.6 The impact assessment includes an assessment of the effect of direct and indirect impact, including physical changes, visual impacts on individual heritage attributes, assets and intangible associations. Professional judgment has been used to evaluate the significance of effect.

2.7 It is generally accepted that conservation is about managing sustainable change and that every reasonable effort should be made to avoid, eliminate or minimise adverse impacts on significant places. In accordance with planning policy, however, it may be necessary to balance the public benefit of any proposed changes against the harm to the place. In this regard, an overall assessment of impact on setting has been made balancing any public benefits and dis-benefits within a

summary and conclusion.

2.8 In conducting this setting assessment of Warwick Mill, key viewpoints have been agreed with Rochdale Conservation Officer in which to assess the proposed development upon the Mills' setting.

- Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected

In relation to this setting assessment, the heritage asset is Warwick Mill to which this report directly relates to and a thorough understanding to the Mills' significance has been noted in the first part of the report.

Warwick Mill in its setting is a striking building which has a strong prominence from all views and vistas. The mass of the mill dominates the Middleton Skyline in particular when viewed from across from Middleton Town centre and forms an impressive backdrop.

2.9 **Contribution of setting to the significance of heritage assets**

Given the size and location of the development site, it is clear that development could impact upon its setting, and must therefore embrace all of its surroundings, in particular the immediate area from which it can be experienced.

2.10 Relationship between setting and significance.

The significance of the heritage asset is set out in other parts of this report. The way in which that significance can be experienced and understood is influenced by setting. Views both of the heritage asset and from them are important, but environmental factors such as noise, weather conditions, spatial associations and our understanding of the historical relationship between places can also play a part.

2.11 Contribution of setting to significance

Key viewpoints have been identified from public places that surround the site. The views have been agreed with the Conservation Officer from Rochdale Council. These can be grouped into 2 categories as follows:

- Short to medium viewpoints taken from roundabouts on Oldham Road.
- Medium distance viewpoints from Middleton Town centre.

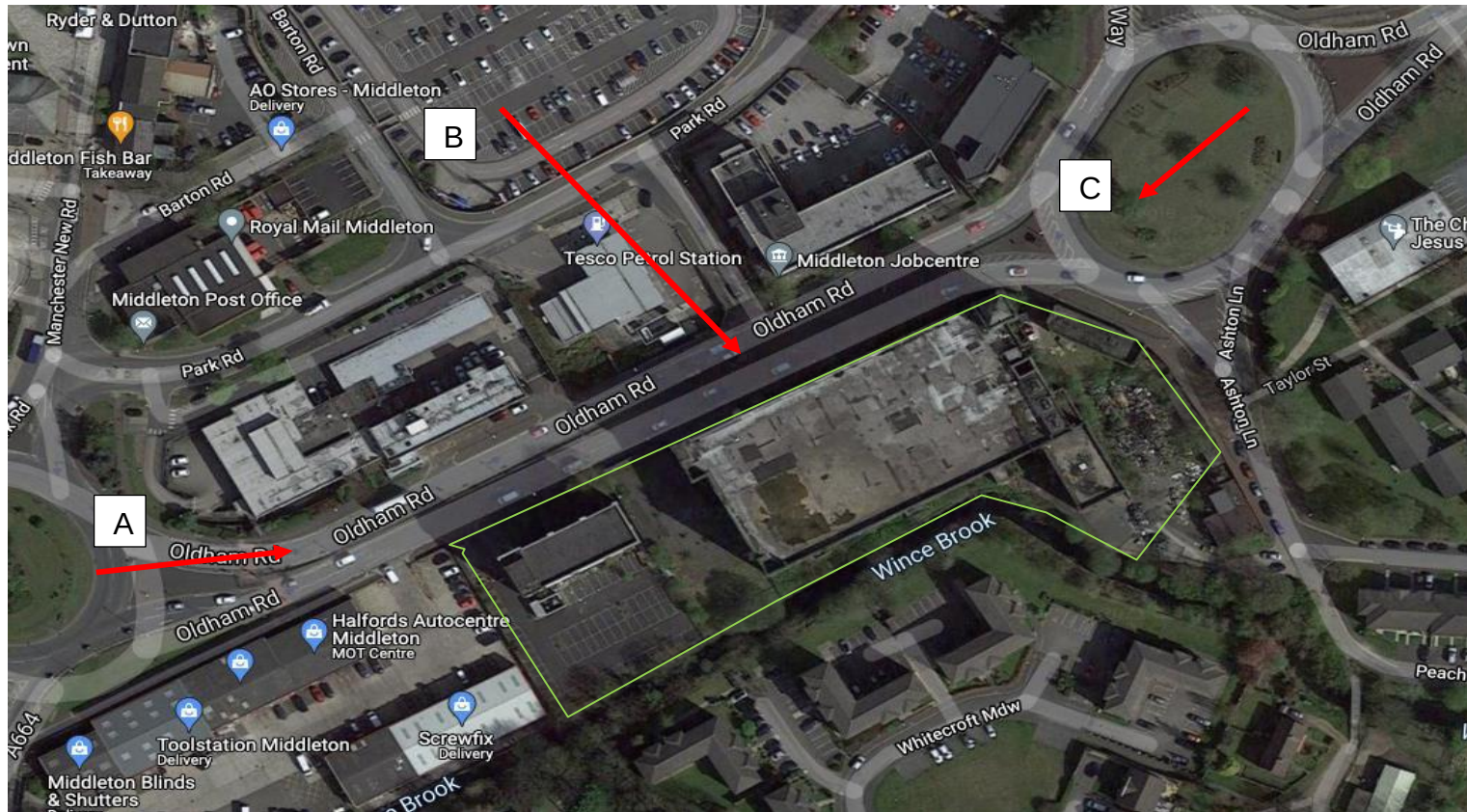
The following map gives the direction of the views and image of the views to be assessed..

2.12 Views from the development site - The development site is Warwick Mill which is a heritage asset and has a strong relationship with Middleton Town centre. Views from the

development site are primarily out towards the town centre and less so to other parts of Middleton. Some views are stronger than others, for instance, views from the rear of the mill are to some extent blocked by a dense tree belt which diminishes its experience as opposed to front and side views which are equally strong. views should be assessed given that natural features may change. Other views from the development site are of modern 20th and 21st century development and roadside kinetic views and provide little in the way of historical or accomplished townscape context.

2.13 Spatial association

The development site has a relationship with the wider town centre but is located to the edge and its position is on a principal road access. The development site is located within a character of predominantly residential uses in particular to the rear where development is predominately between 2 and 3 storeys.



Selected viewpoints



View C



View B



View A

- Step 2: Define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the ways in which the historic assets are understood, appreciated and experienced.

2.14 A number of techniques exist for assessing heritage significance in a view and the impact of development on that view. No perfect technique exists since many views are dynamic and change as the viewer moves along. Views assume different qualities in different light and climatic conditions. A photographic view can be changed dramatically by the width of the subject matter and there is much

subjectivity in the relative importance of views.

2.15 This assessment makes use of the methodology identified within 'The Setting of Historic Assets'. The following stages are followed to ensure consistency and objectivity in the assessment process, which focuses on the attributes of significance of the heritage assets:

- The physical surroundings of the heritage asset and relationship with other heritage assets
- The assets intangible associations with its surrounds and patterns of use.
- The contribution made by noise and smell
- The way the view allows for the significance of the asset to be experienced.

2.16 The views have also been selected on the experience and professional judgement of the author as a historic environment 'expert' and in agreement with Rochdale Council Conservation officer

2.17 As an aid to the assessment process, 'The Setting of Heritage Assets', GPA3 2017, provides a list of attributes for consideration. Those which are relevant to the development proposals and their impact on the setting of the heritage assets are as follows:

- Those where the composition within the view was a fundamental aspect of the design and function of the heritage asset.
- Views where town/village/hamlet reveals views with unplanned or unintended beauty.
- Those view with historical associations including viewpoints
- Those views with cultural associations, including landscapes known historically for their picturesque and landscape beauty, those which became subjects of paintings of landscape tradition and those views which have otherwise become historically cherished and protected.
- Views identified within character area appraisals or in management plans or world heritage sites.
- Important views from and to historic parks and gardens that have been identified as part of the evidence base within development plans.
- Views that have been identified by local planning authorities when assessing development proposals. The visual impact of the proposed change or development relative to the location of the historic asset.

2.18 These issues are considered where relevant in the context of the views analysis and assessed in terms of impact on the setting of the heritage assets as set out below. The overall

impact on significance is a combination of the importance of the view and the magnitude of impact.

2.19 From the selected viewpoints, the full prominence of the Mill is evident and dominates the street scene from all viewpoints. London House is currently a subservient building in relation to Warwick Mill.

- Short to medium viewpoints taken from roundabouts on Oldham Road View C & A. These viewpoints are taken from either end of Oldham Road where Warwick Mill sits centrally, the mill dominates the street scene from both directions, is a local landmark and of unquestionable prominence. Associated buildings such as London House are subservient in both its weak presence, inappropriate material use and construction. Indeed, the weakness of London House perhaps exacerbates the prominence of Warwick Mill. Both views are important and provide for a strong heritage significance.
- Medium distance viewpoints View A from Middleton Town centre. The viewpoint is taken from Middleton Town centre looking towards Warwick Mill across a supermarket car park. The Mill forms a large backdrop to town centre views. This view is strong.

- Stage 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful on the significance or on the ability to appreciate.

2.20 The development proposal - The proposed development involves a change of use from commercial to residential together with a proposed new build immediately adjacent (The Loom) with a height of 10 storeys and fenestration to the elevations and greater built form resulting in development that provides an contemporary foil to the mass of Warwick Mill.

2.21 The scale of the proposed development at the Loom is in keeping with the scale and mass of Warwick Mill. The reordering of the existing site, its appearance with an increase in development mass particularly to Oldham Road, will form a positive impact on the otherwise gap site on the roadside directly adjacent Warwick Mill. The palette of materials to be used are sympathetic, together with high quality contemporary design.

2.22 The appearance of the proposal is to create a contextual architectural design which responds to its constraints and opportunities. The proposed design will also sit comfortably within the surrounding topography and site context yet respects and enhances the views and setting of neighbours,

local residents and Warwick Mill itself without comprising its prominence. Whilst the proposed Loom building will be taller than the existing London House and may in the short term impact local residents. The impact is no more or less than living adjacent to Warwick Mill due to its size and bulk. The design teams' proposal for the Loom has been designed to provide a sympathetic architectural vision to enhance the existing site, while retaining simple construction techniques. Removing a derelict eyesore building and improving the visual quality with appropriate architecture.

- Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

2.23 Mitigation of Visual Impact on heritage setting – Step 4

The assessment of the viewpoints on the significance and impact upon the identified heritage asset has concluded that given the nature and relationship between the identified heritage asset and the Loom development site, there is no one view that will result in an adverse impact upon the heritage asset. Indeed, there are no medium or long distance views, so the further away the public experience is from the development site, the less the impact is perceived. Of the views identified, the views along Oldham Road are perhaps the most important. However, even here the impact is mitigated by the fact that the proposed Loom development

is viewed as infill with a sympathetic design and appearance to that of the Mill and the development is contextually correct.

2.24 Other effects of the development - Change to sky line

There will not be any demonstrable changes to the skyline that will impact on any heritage asset. However, the proposal will be taller than the existing but within the parameters of an acceptable scale, so as to appear subservient to Warwick Mill.

2.25 Lighting effects and light spill

There will be no light spill from the development proposal over and above acceptable living requirements commensurate with roadside living. Light spill will be personal/residential rather than incidental. Those areas deemed to be illuminated will mostly be internal, residential and generally screened in the evening. The new development will only have light where it is absolutely necessary and will be in the form of down lighters to minimise light spill.

2.26 Change to general character

There will be no change to the general character of the heritage asset identified. Indeed, the infill of the site (London House) with the proposed development will strengthen the ribbon/linear development along Oldham Road, form a secure boundary and in doing so reinforce the overall spatial quality of the area.

2.27 Mitigation measures

The applicant is committed to their local environment and to ensuring that the local community and property owners alike continue to enjoy local heritage assets.

3. Assessment of proposed development against Heritage Planning Policy Criteria; Nationally and Locally

3.1 The heritage impact assessment set out above has identified that no substantial harm will result in the proposed works to Warwick Mill.

In accordance with the principles of the NPPF, this might be classified as either ‘substantial’ or ‘less than substantial’ harm. Although no definition is provided as to what constitutes ‘substantial’ in such circumstances, the Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment states that ‘in general terms substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases’. A stronger

justification is required in the case of ‘substantial harm’ than ‘less than substantial harm’ as stated in of the NPPF.

3.2 The NPPF states that ‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum use’.

3.3 The benefits offered by the proposed scheme area as follows:

- The proposal will bring an important area of vacant and redundant land and property back into productive use.
- It will ensure regeneration of the site, re-use and repair of the Mill which is likely to lead to further employment growth, creating jobs and providing office space.
- Without the approval of this proposal for the mill, the site will remain vacant, continuing to blight this part of Middleton.
- The grant of permission will generate further economic benefits via direct employment in construction and development and deliver other indirect employment opportunities.
- The character and appearance of the site will be significantly enhanced through development, and the regeneration of the mill will act as a catalyst for further regeneration of the area,

providing additional confidence as a location for occupation and investment.

- 3.4 These benefits are considered to substantially outweigh the proposed structural changes to Warwick Mill, bearing in mind the limited survival of historic fabric.
- 3.5 Locally, Rochdale emerging Council Core Strategy, January 2013, Chapter 9, Policy SO3, Improving design, image and quality of place. This policy places the emphasis of protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage. The proposal for the re-use of Warwick Mill meets all the aims and objectives of this broad policy in that the proposal will help to ensure the conservation and re-use of a substantial listed building, which will make the structure an active participant to the Townscape character of Middleton and strengthen its identity.
- 3.6 The adopted Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (Local Plan) outlines planning policy considerations for the determination of planning applications. Policies G/BE/9 Highlights the Conservation of the Built Environment; BE/13 Changes of Use to Listed Buildings and Policy BE/14; Alterations and extensions to Listed Buildings. I consider that the proposals for the change of use to Warwick Mill, respects the inherent heritage asset whilst providing an appropriate and viable use.

The proposals therefore meets the policy considerations as laid out in the UDP. The works do result in a level of harm which is less than substantial.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 This report has considered the history and significance of Warwick Mill and its associated structures. The current owners see the site as an opportunity to boost the regeneration potential of the site yet retaining, converting and improving the building and the environment. The proposed scheme will deliver environmental enhancements, enable residential access to the building interior currently not available, improve future connectivity and introduce interpretation to the history of Warwick Mill and the wider cotton industry context.
- 4.2 Government policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework requires that proposed changes to the historic environment are based on a clear understanding of significance of any heritage assets and their setting that are affected, providing information so that the likely impact of proposals can be assessed. The statement of significance provided in this report is carried out in accordance with the historic environment policies in the NPPF and local planning

policy, and is intended to aid the assessment of the planning application.

I have addressed the historical development of the mill, its character and appearance, and whether the buildings contained within the complex make a positive contribution.

The statement of significance demonstrates that the principal features of significance are;

- Association with the growth of the Middleton Textile industry.
- Historic associations with mill owning and working families on the area.
- Distinctive urban form and architectural character based on functional requirements, use of local materials and engineering techniques.
- Well defined space, with key views and landmark buildings.

The specific aspects of significance associated with Warwick Mill are as follows.

- The main brick mill building.
- Its town centre location and relationship forming a key landmark building.
- The view of the mill complex from Middleton Town Centre.

- 4.3 The crucial test contained within the NPPF is whether the harm to heritage assets is outweighed by the benefits of

bringing the site back into use. The proposed development has been a priority for some years but held back due to viability reasons. There are now important economic and social reasons to support such a scheme through development of the site. Should this opportunity be lost, it is probable that the site would remain vacant for many years into the future, putting the heritage at risk.

- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework requires applicants and local planning authorities to assess and understand the particular nature of the significance of heritage assets, which will be affected by proposed development. Such assessment of heritage asset significance is necessary to understand the potential impact of proposed development and devise appropriate mitigation strategies.

- 4.5 This report has considered the nature and significance of Warwick Mill, including a brief analysis of its historical development, its overall layout and identifies those parts of the heritage asset that makes up its significance. My impact assessment has outlined the main proposed interventions both internally and externally, and its relationship to current heritage planning policy.

- 4.6 I believe the proposals strike a balance between the special architectural and historic interest of Warwick Mill and that the proposals as set out will not present any detrimental impact or harm upon the heritage asset.

Jason Alexander Kennedy BSc, Pg Dip TP, MA, MRTPI, IHBC
Director
Townscape: Chartered Town Planning & Heritage Consultant Ltd.

June 2023

5. Appendices;
Listing entry
Archive drawings
Historic England , pre-application advice.

References;

Cotton Mills in Greater Manchester, Williams. M, Farne DA, 1992
Industrial Architecture of Lancashire, O Ashmore, 1969
Oldham Local Studies Library, Stott & Sons Archive
National Planning Policy Framework, 2012
Stott & Sons, Architects of the Lancashire Cotton Mill, Holden, 1998

MIDDLETON OLDHAM ROAD

SD 80 NE

(south side)

2/18 Warwick Mill

including adjoining

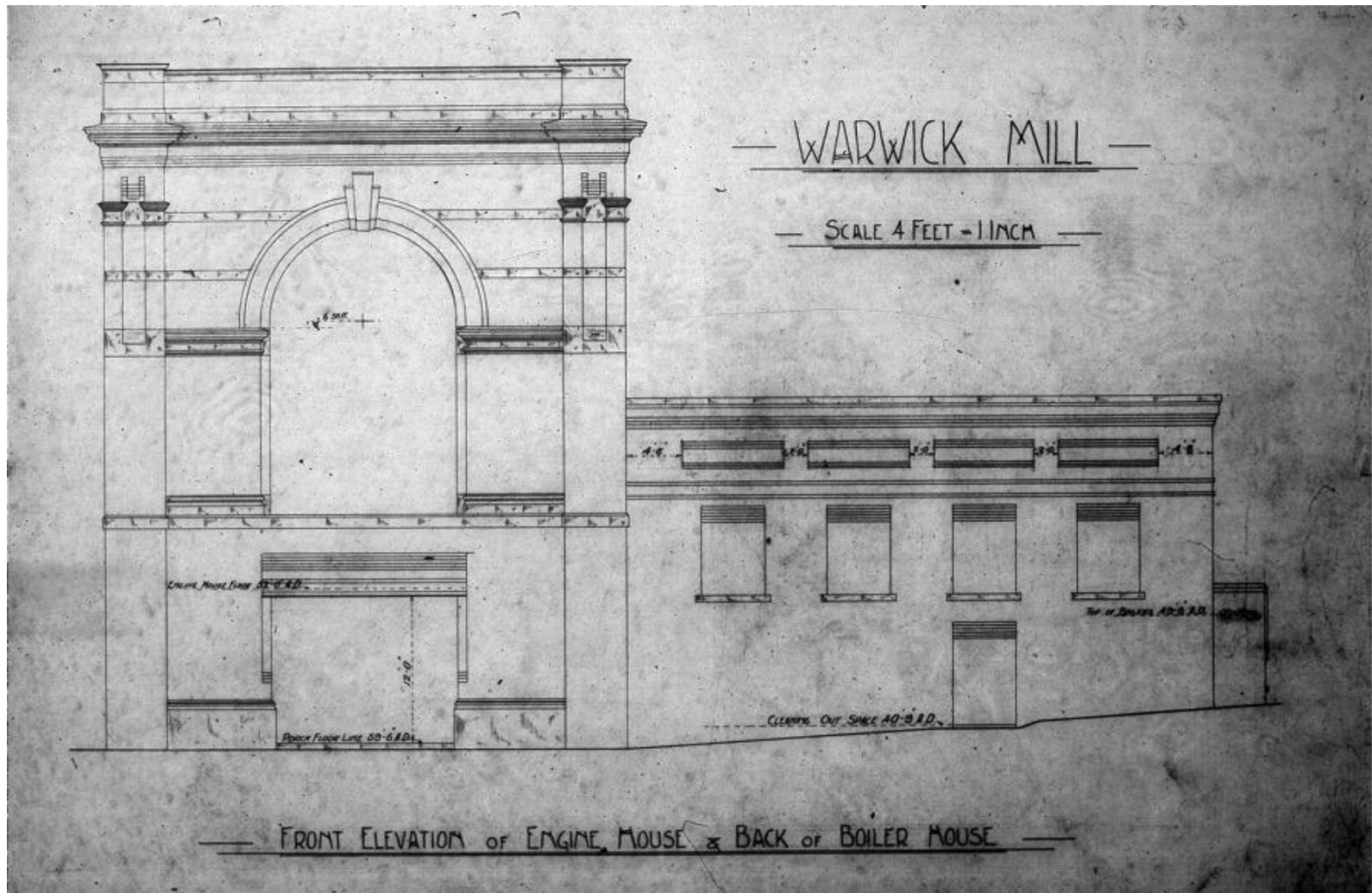
railings (formerly listed

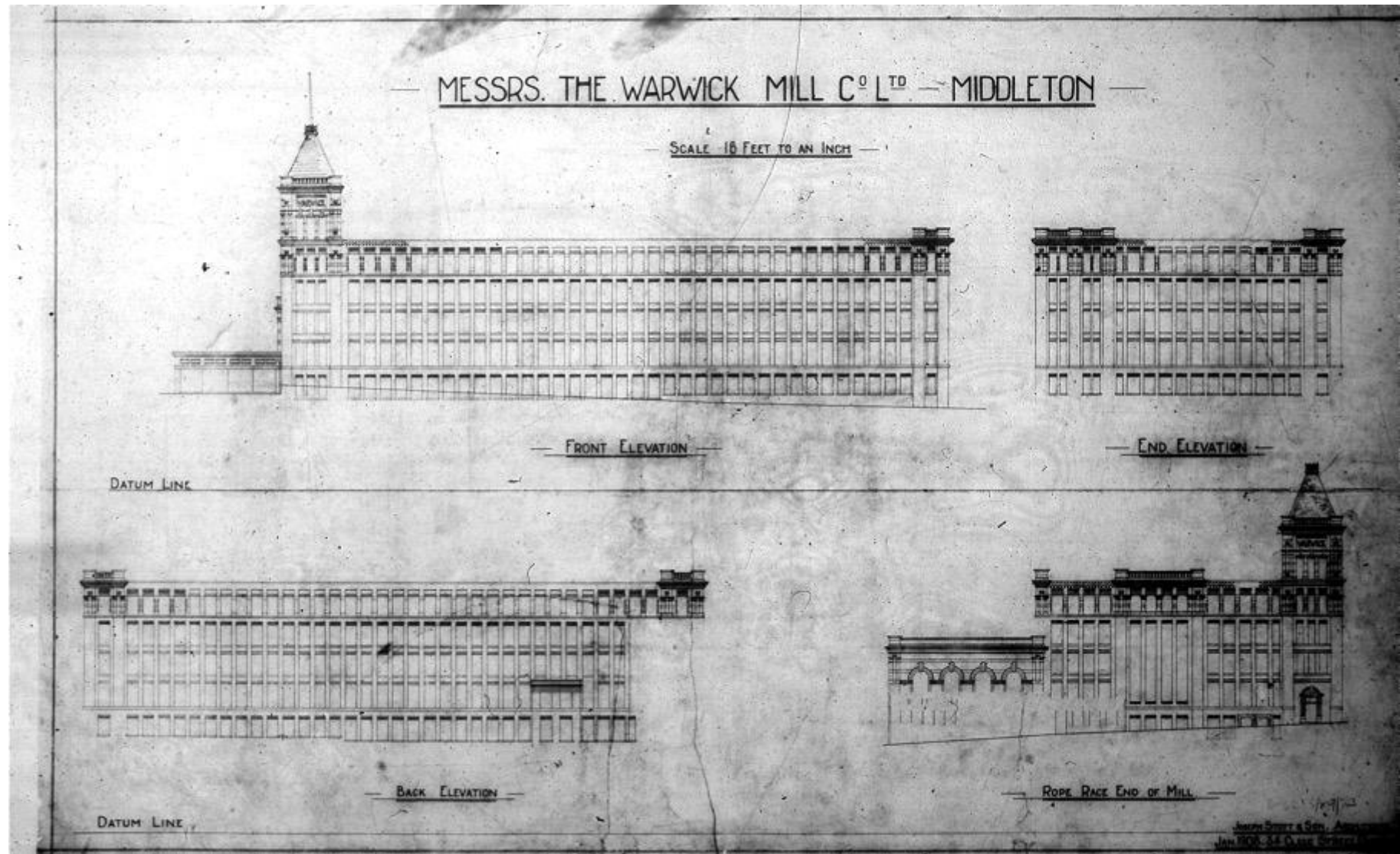
22/8/79 as Warwick Mill)

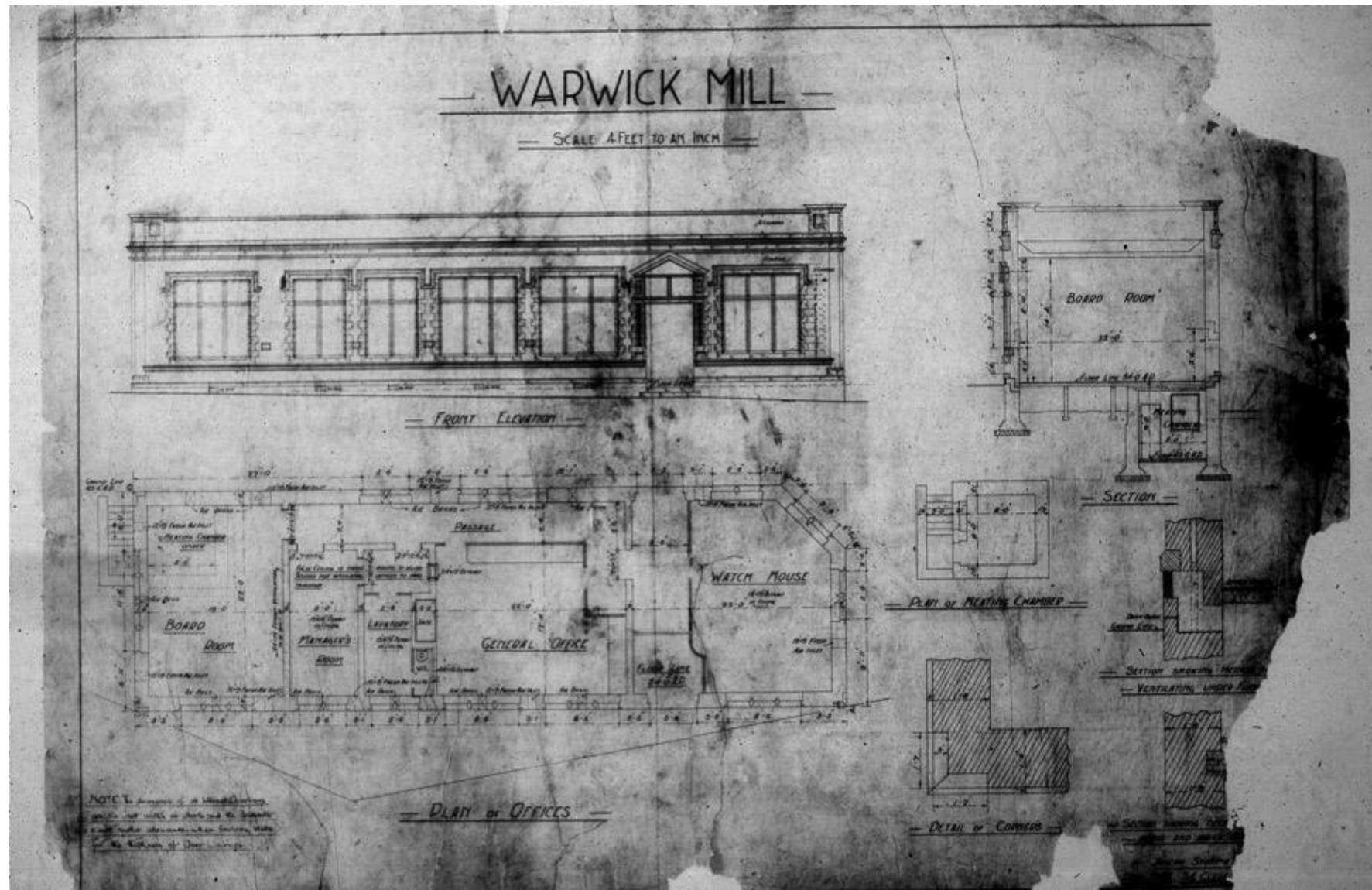
- II

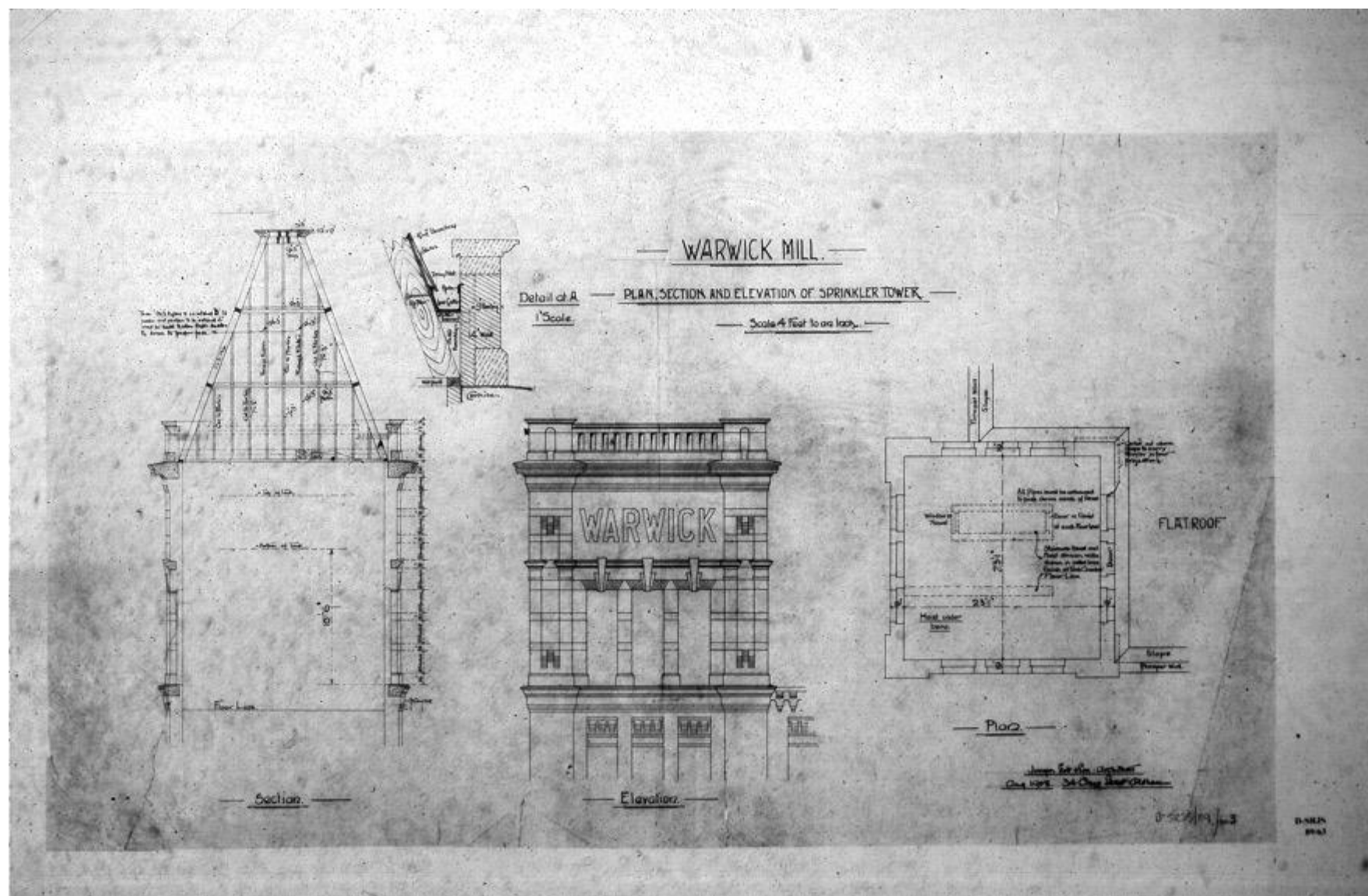
Cotton mill. 1907. By G. Stott of J. Stott and Sons. Red brick with internal cast-iron frame. Total of 40 x 14 bays with 5 storeys (and basement) and an engine-house attached at rear. Continuous sill band to first and fourth floor, machicolated eaves frieze and stepped brick detail above fourth floor windows. Other windows are set between plain brick pilasters; all frames have been replaced. The water-tower rises 2 stages above the stone-coped parapet having 3 windows with tripartite keystones which are keyed into a stone band, the name of the mill in white glazed tiles on the upper stage, an eaves cornice, and a brick parapet in front of a steep pyramidal roof with iron crowning. It is balanced at the other corners by brick pilasters and a pierced parapet rising above a stone cornice. The 4 x 1-bay engine-house has semi-circular-arched stone-dressed openings with archivolt and tripartite keystones as well as stone bands, corner pilasters and a coped parapet above a stone cornice. The engine has been removed but glazed wall tiling remains. The internal structure uses a twin jack-arch system on cylindrical cast-iron columns. The front railings incorporate Art Nouveau motifs.

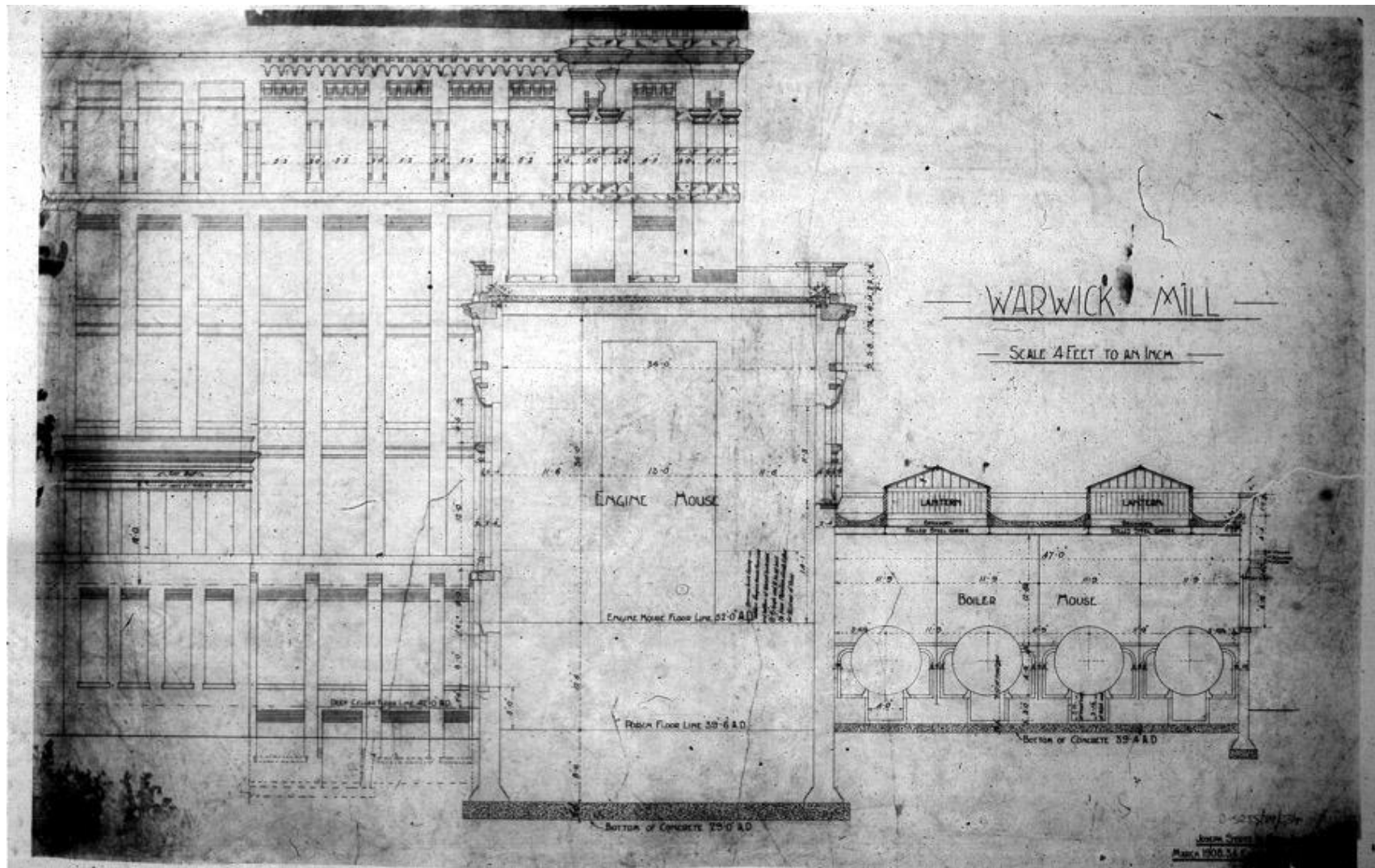
Listing NGR: SD8711205675

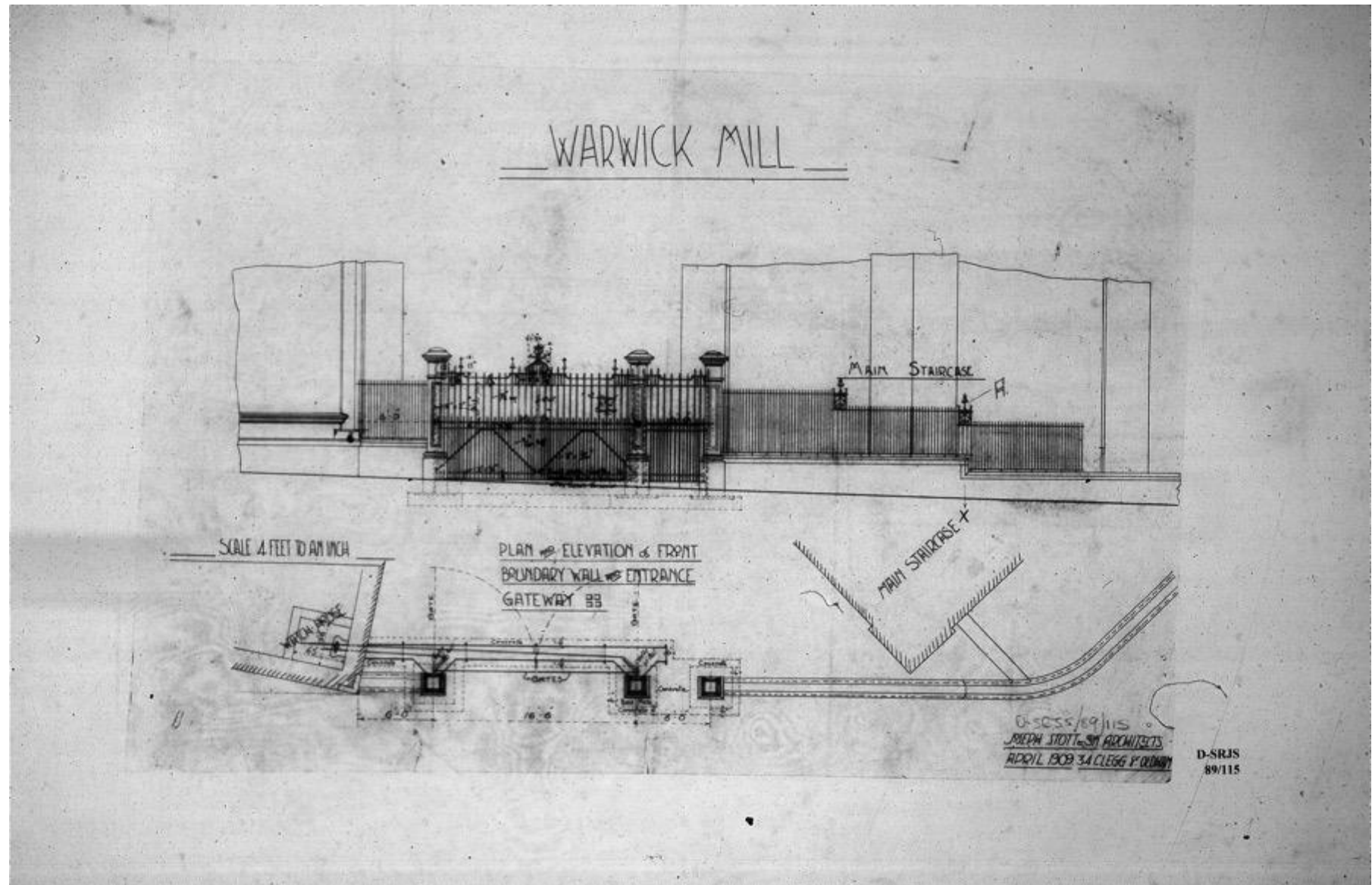


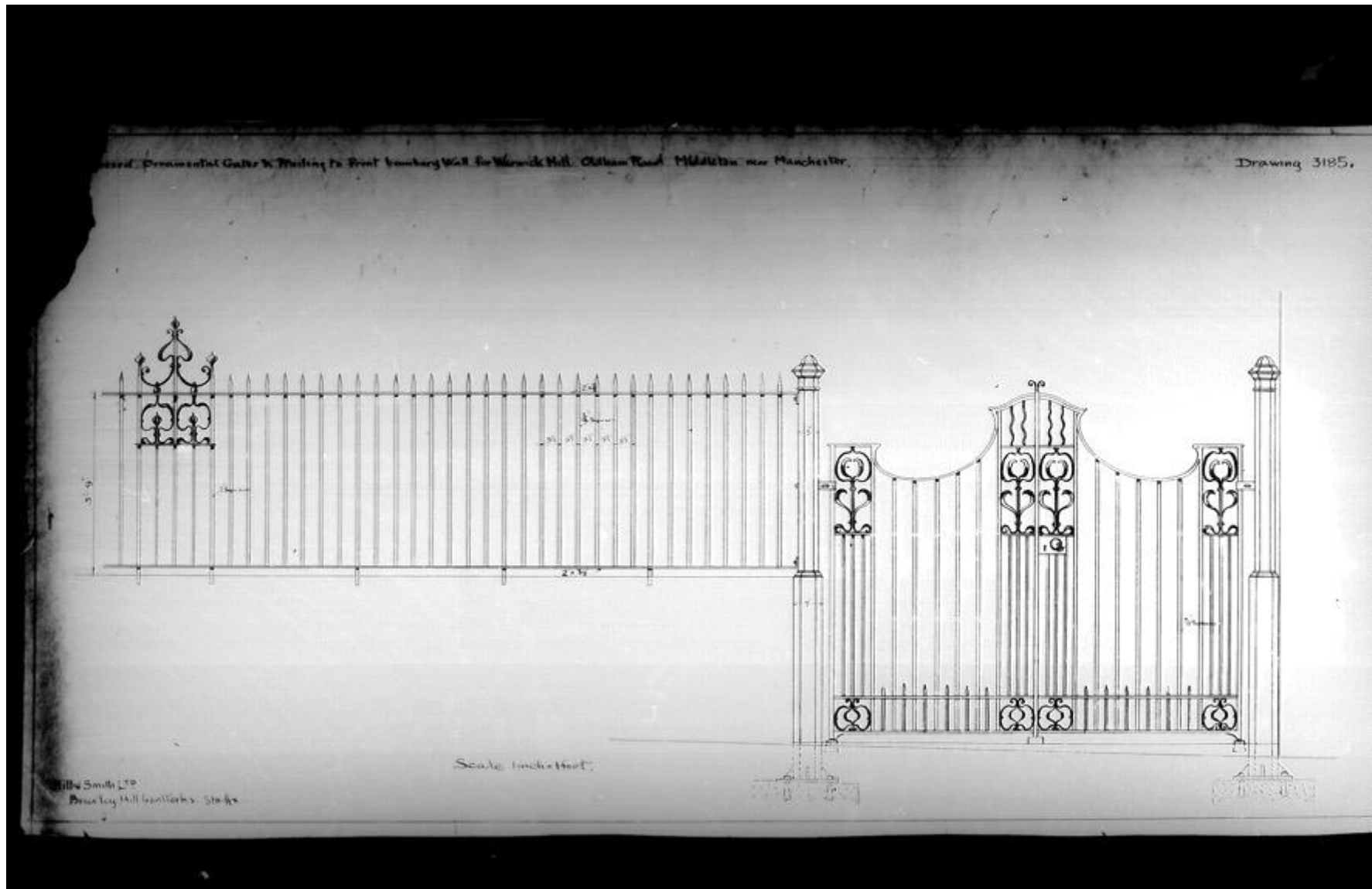














Mr Jason Kennedy
Townscape: Chartered Town Planning &
Heritage Consultant Ltd
Unit 1 Camforth Station
Camforth
Lancashire
LA5 9TR

Direct Dial: 0161 2421442

Our ref: PA01168385

29 November 2021

Dear Mr Kennedy

Pre-application Advice

WARWICK MILL, MIDDLETON, ROCHDALE, M24 1AZ

Having assessed the documents sent in your email of 8th November 2021, please see below Historic England's comments on the proposals. We hope that these will be beneficial to you in developing the proposed scheme.

Summary

Historic England is pleased to see a pre-application being brought forward which seeks to find a long-term use for Warwick Mill, by securing its conversion to residential accommodation. This would not only secure the future of an important historic building, but would also have an environmental benefit, by making best use of the existing building stock to meet the need for new housing.

However, we have concerns over elements of the proposals, including the proposed open atrium, and we therefore recommend that the applicant considers how the conversion of the building could be viably achieved in a more sensitive manner. There is also a considerable degree of additional detail that we would expect to see provided at application stage, in order to be able to fully assess the impact of the works on the listed building. We therefore encourage the applicant to consider further pre-application discussion, once they have this additional information.

Advice

Significance

Warwick Mill is an imposing red brick building, occupying a dominant position on Oldham in Middleton. This prominence derives partly from its sheer scale, as it is five storeys high and forty bays wide, with a deep floorplate. This is emphasised by the water tower, sited at the corner of the building, which rises two storeys above the



SUITES 3.3 AND 3.4 CANADA HOUSE 3 CHEPSTOW STREET MANCHESTER M1 5FW

Telephone 0161 242 1416
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation. We respect your privacy and the use of your information. Please read our full privacy policy for more information <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/terms/privacy-cookies/>



parapet of the mill, and is emblazoned with the word 'Warwick', picked out in glazed white brick.

The mill is also of considerable historic interest, and provides evidence not just of the evolution of Middleton as a settlement, but also of the evolution of mill construction and technology by the early twentieth century. More widely, it is a good example of the later phase of mill construction in Greater Manchester. This wider group of mills are of exceptional significance when considered together, as they have shaped the area's history, character and appearance. More specifically it is also one of a number of mills constructed across Greater Manchester by the company of J. Stott and Sons, and exhibits many of the later advancements in mill construction (including the use of cast iron frames and the triple brick-arch fireproof system) that characterises their mill buildings.

Warwick Mill is therefore of considerable historic and architectural interest. The mill, and its associated Art Nouveau style railings, are accordingly listed at grade II.

Impact

The underlying principle of the proposals seeks to provide the mill with a viable new use, and this is something of which Historic England is highly supportive. This will not only secure its ongoing maintenance, but will also encourage people to interact with the building, and provide opportunities for them to better appreciate its special historic and architectural interest. Furthermore, the conversion and reuse of existing buildings, particularly those of the scale and mass of mills, has other considerable benefits, including from a climate change perspective, as it makes best use of the embodied carbon in the existing building.

However, any new use will need to be compatible with the significance of the listed building, and we would have concerns with any proposals that diminished or removed this significance. We would therefore highlight a number of areas of the proposals that require further consideration or justification.

i) Atrium

The most significant intervention within the proposals will be the creation of a central atrium space within the building, which will create a central open void from the ground floor all the way through the building. In order to achieve this, it will be necessary to remove historic floors, brick arches and elements of the cast iron frame. This causes considerable concerns, as the substantial loss of historic fabric will have a considerably negative impact on the evidence the building provides of later mill construction and technology. It will also considerably alter the internal configuration of the building, and in doing so will diminish the ability to appreciate its characteristic and significant internal form. This will not only detrimentally affect its architectural



SUITES 3.3 AND 3.4 CANADA HOUSE 3 CHEPSTOW STREET MANCHESTER M1 5FW

Telephone 0161 242 1416
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation. We respect your privacy and the use of your information. Please read our full privacy policy for more information <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/terms/privacy-cookies/>



character, but will also reduce the understanding of its historic form and function. This element of the proposals would therefore harm the significance of the listed building.

It is understood why the applicant has sought to carry out these works, as the hugely deep floor plan of the building means that the centre of the floorplate will not get much natural light in any configuration of internal spaces. It also allows for the creation of the vertical circulation needed to create the multiple floors of apartments. However, while some targeted opening up may be justified in order to create a new stair and lift core, it is not clear why the centre needs to be opened up wholesale. We would, as an example, highlight the conversion of the Cotton Works on Blackburn Road in Bolton as a conversion of a similar plan mill, that was converted without the need to create an internal open void. In this instance an internal atrium area was created on each level, allowing for the retention of the floors and associated constructional elements.

If the applicant believes that this is central to their proposed scheme then we would require further information, setting out the benefits it brings, or the need to which an open atrium specifically responds. This should also seek to show why less intrusive solutions do not viably meet these requirements.

ii) Roof top apartments

The atrium is proposed to be lit from above by a glazed section of the roof, and the applicant also seeks to utilise the roof to create additional apartment accommodation. This would be set back, and the applicant is confident that this can be achieved without it being visible in the wider views of the mill. We would not inherently object to this element of the proposals, but we would need considerably more information before we are able to offer a detailed judgement.

In particular we would expect to see structural drawings submitted showing how the rooftop apartments are to be accommodated, supported by a structural report compiled by a relevant qualified professional with experience of historic buildings. We would also want to see detailed drawings showing the form, size, design and finish of the new apartments, as the current drawings provide this at a scale which is too great to be able to offer a detailed assessment. Finally, we would need to see properly accredited visualisations of the proposals, taken from viewpoints within the closer and wider vicinity of the mill, to corroborate the applicant's supposition that the apartments can be created in a non-intrusive manner.

If the apartments are assessed to be required from a viability perspective, this will also need to be clearly demonstrated in a supporting viability report, which should be produced by a professional with experience working with historic buildings.



SUITES 3.3 AND 3.4 CANADA HOUSE 3 CHEPSTOW STREET MANCHESTER M1 5FW

Telephone 0161 242 1410
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation. We respect your privacy and the use of your information. Please read our full privacy policy for more information <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/terms/privacy-cookies/>



iii) New entrance

The proposals also involve the expansion of the existing entrance within the north elevation, to create one which is more prominent. Its creation would require the loss of two bays of brickwork, and therefore result in an isolated loss of historic fabric, and a minor interruption into the regularity of the apertures on this elevation.

However, the harm caused is identified to be minimal, and it is understood why a more legible entrance is required for the proposed new use. Historic England therefore has no objection to the principle of this element. However, given that the entrance will be an intentional visual focal point, it is going to be necessary that it is of a form, design and materiality that complements the architectural character of the listed building. We would therefore want to see the design for this element of the proposals illustrated in detail, in order that we can understand how it will appear in practice.

iv) Replacement windows

The proposals also seek the complete replacement of the existing windows across the building. This is not a course of action of which Historic England is generally supportive, as the fenestration makes a considerable contribution to the architectural character of the building, and their removal would result in the considerable loss of historic fabric. It is however noted that the applicant has indicated that the windows are in a poor condition, and that this is the catalyst to propose their removal.

This is an understandable justification, but we would need to be robustly convinced that less intrusive solutions, such as repair in situ or partial replacement, were not viable. This would need to form part of the evidence base supporting any application, and should be based on a sound understanding of not just the condition of the windows, but also their age and relative significance.

v) Other works

The proposals also seek to carry out a wide range of other associated works, including the removal of the existing telecommunications paraphernalia, general repairs to the building, the removal of an external staircase and the creation of external floodlighting to the tower. These could all have a positive impact on the significance of the listed building. However, it is expected that considerably greater detail would be provided in relation to these elements to support any application, including method statements and detailed sectional drawings as appropriate.

We note with particular positivity the proposals to retain and restore the rope race and to carry out public realm improvements. Both of these have the potential to bring considerable benefits to the scheme, and we welcome their inclusion in the proposals. Again, however, we would expect to see the exact details of how these works are to



SUITES 3.3 AND 3.4 CANADA HOUSE 3 CHEPSTOW STREET MANCHESTER M1 5FW

Telephone 0161 242 1410
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation. We respect your privacy and the use of your information. Please read our full privacy policy for more information <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/terms/privacy-cookies/>



be achieved submitted to support any application.

vi) Proposed new building on the site of London House

More widely, the masterplan also seeks to demolish the adjacent London House, and to erect a new building of eight or nine storeys. The exact details of this proposals have not been provided as part of this pre-application submission. Historic England has no concerns with the principle of demolishing the existing building, which is not of historic or architectural interest, and can see the potential benefits of redeveloping the whole site holistically.

However, the current building does have a subservient relationship with the mill, something which allows the mill's striking prominence to be appreciated and enjoyed. The proposals for an eight or nine storey building therefore raise some concerns, if they lead to the creation of a distracting and competing new building. The applicant will therefore need to demonstrate that they have considered this relationship when designing the new building, and show clearly how the scale and massing they propose can be sensitively integrated on the site.

Next Steps

Historic England is therefore supportive of the principle of converting the building to a new use. However, there are a number of areas of the proposals which raise concerns, most notably the creation of an open atrium. In relation to these elements we would want to see revisions, or further strong justification. We would also expect to see any application supported by considerably greater detail, in order that we can fully assess the impact of elements such as the revised entrance or the proposed rooftop apartments.

We therefore recommend that further pre-application discussions would be beneficial. This would allow us to aid the applicant in creating a scheme which will secure the viable use of the mill, in a sensitive manner. This can be arranged through our Extended Pre-application service, details of which can be found on our website at www.historicengland.org.uk/eas <<http://www.historicengland.org.uk/eas>>. If you would like to discuss this option further, please do contact me.

Yours sincerely

Richard Broadhead
Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
E-mail: Richard.Broadhead@HistoricEngland.org.uk

WARWICK MILL, MIDDLETON, ROCHDALE, M24 1AZ
Pre-application Advice



SUITES 3.3 AND 3.4 CANADA HOUSE 3 CHEPSTOW STREET MANCHESTER M1 5PW
Telephone 0161 242 1416
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.
We respect your privacy and the use of your information. Please read our full privacy policy for more information
<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/terms/privacy-cookies/>