



Paul Butler Associates
Planning, Development & Heritage Consultants

Cassel and Fletcher

No.1 Drake Street

Building Recording: Level 2

21 November 2025

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Professional Planning, Development & Heritage Advisors since 1992.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Paul Butler Associates on behalf of Cassel & Fletcher. The report has been provided in reference to Condition 9 of approved applications 25/00314/FUL and 25/00315/LBC for a residential development at 1 Drake Street, Rochdale, OL16 1RE. This condition is as follows with this document intended to cover the point related to the Level 2 record –

No works shall take place until a full schedule of repairs and finishes not covered by other conditions of this consent has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The schedule shall include:

- *A photographic and written record of the existing condition of each individual space, prepared to an approved Level 2 recording standard;*
- *A description and methodology for all proposed repair works and finishes, including scaled drawings (not less than 1:50) where necessary;*
- *Details of all new fittings (e.g. walls, doors, joinery, secondary glazing);*
- *Provisions for the retention in situ of all surviving historic fabric (e.g. coving, skirting boards, timber floors, lath and plaster ceilings and walls), with any elements too damaged to be incorporated retained in situ unless otherwise agreed in writing. The approved works shall be carried out prior to first occupation or in accordance with a phasing plan agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.*

Approach and Methodology

- 1.2 This document is partly informed by the existing Heritage Statement submitted as part of the application in terms of Historic Background with additional material added to meet the requirements of the condition.
- 1.3 Research has been primarily desk-based, consulting historic mapping and written secondary sources. A visual and photographic survey of the site, its surroundings and nearby heritage assets was undertaken on 25th September 2025.

1.4 A level 2 building recording is defined as –

This is a descriptive record, made in similar circumstances to Level 1 but when more information is needed. It may be made of a building which is judged not to require a more detailed record, or it may serve to gather data for a wider project. Both the exterior and interior of the building will be seen, described and photographed. The examination of the building will produce an analysis of its development and use and the record will include the conclusions reached, but it will not discuss in detail the evidence on which this analysis is based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made but the drawn record will normally not be comprehensive and may be tailored to the scope of a wider project.

A Level 2 record will typically consist of: drawn record– sometimes item 1 or 2, sometimes one or more of items 3-7 (see numbered list in 4.3.3) photography – items 1, 2 and 4 (see numbered list in 4.4.8) written record – items 1-3 and 6 (see numbered list in 4.5.1)¹

1.5 As works are largely internal and that the condition seeks clarity on the finishes to interior the building's exterior is not discussed in detail.

¹ Historic England (2016): Understanding Historic Buildings A Guide to Good Recording Practice

2. The Application Site and its Surroundings

Site location

- 2.1 The application site sits to the south east of the junction of Smith Street and Drake Street in Rochdale Town Centre.



Figure 2.1: Application site boundary identified in red.

Designations

- 2.2 1 Drake Street was Grade II listed on 12th February 1985 (list entry 1367054). The listing has the following description:

ROCHDALE, DRAKE STREET (north-east side), No 1 Wellington Hotel

(Formerly listed as No 1, DRAKE STREET, previously listed as Dukes Restaurant and Nightclub, DRAKE STREET)

II SUMMARY: former town house, now (2019) hotel and pub. Built between 1764 and 1795 as a town house for Thomas Smith

HISTORY: it was built between about 1764, when the vicar gained powers to grant building leases, and 1795, as a town house for Thomas Smith (1743-1806), a wealthy woollen merchant who built fulling mills behind it. It was later a school, then from 1818 the Wellington Hotel. Between 1825 and 1839 the police commissioners met here. In 1844, the building was still owned by the Smith family and the hotel was run by Elizabeth Richardson.

DETAILS: brick, appearing to be of various dates, the front appearing to have been re-faced, stone dressings and slate roof. Five bays, double-pile with three storeys and an additional wider bay to the right with a former bar entrance. Stone plinth, continuous ground and first-floor cornices and a modillion eaves cornice; steeply pitched roof. Pedimented Ionic doorcase as well as the entrance in bay six which has four Ionic pilasters and entablature. Window openings with moulded architraves, the ground floor having pulvinated friezes the first and second having sill blocks. Ground and first floors have Victorian sashes, otherwise glazing is C20. The original glazing pattern and some original brickwork is seen in the gable.

- 2.3 It is within the Rochdale Town Centre Conservation Area, in the Regency Drake Street character area.

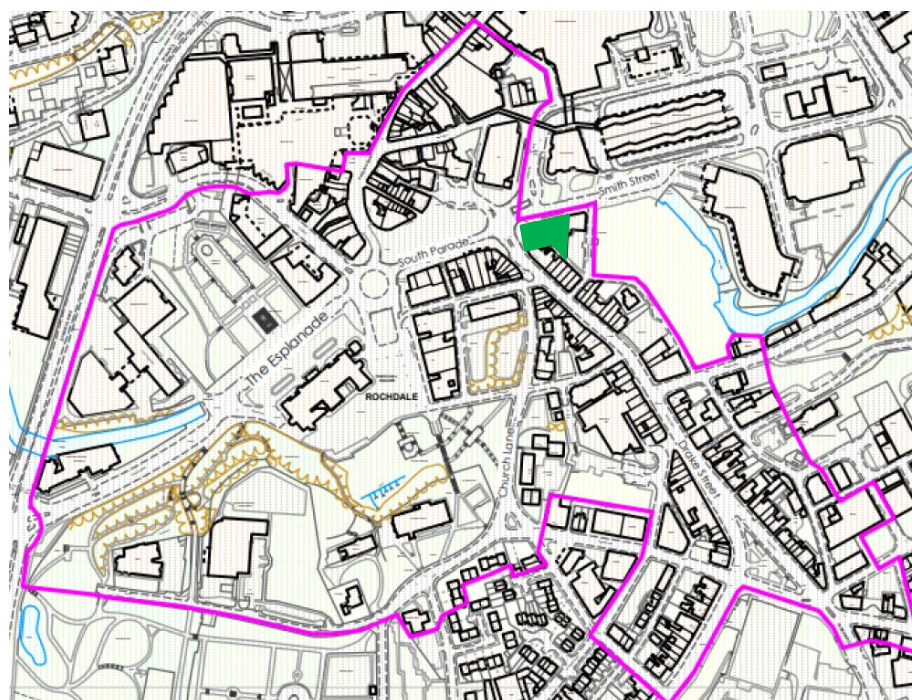


Figure 2.2: Map of conservation area boundary (pink), application site (green).

2.4 The Historic Environment Record was viewed online via the Heritage Gateway. Beyond the listed building which occupies the site, the following entries within 100m of the site are of note:

HER Number: 16713.1.0

Name: Butts Factory, The Butts (site of)

Grid Reference: SD 8976 1345

Protected Status: Conservation Area: Rochdale Town Centre

Full description:

Henry Kelsall is listed as a woollen manufacturer in Pigot's directory of 1822. The area is shown as partially developed on Murphy's 1831 map, and a small building with a chimney is depicted on the OS map of 1851. 'Butts Factory (Woollen)', is shown on the OS map of 1892, and two water mains and two tanks are marked within the site. The building is labelled 'Butts Mills (Woollen)' on the OS maps of 1910 and 1930 and 'Mills' on the OS maps of 1931 and 1938. On the 1959 OS map the westernmost of the mill buildings had been replaced by the Regal Cinema [HER 16741.1.0]. The remainder of the mill was demolished to make way for council offices, as shown on the OS map of 1978.

The site lies within the study area and any future development could have an impact on buried archaeological remains, which may require mitigation prior to development. Whilst much of the site is likely to have been destroyed during the construction of the cinema and the office block that occupy the site presently, some fragmentary elements of the mill may survive as buried remains beneath modern surfacing.

HER Number: 15499.1.0

Name: Bottom O'th Lane Mills (site of)

Grid Reference: SD 8983 1340

Protected Status: None recorded

Full description: Former site of Bottom O'th Lane Mills, an early 19th-century corn and seed mill. First shown on the Plan of Rochdale 1824. A waterway named the Goit was utilised as the power source. The mill had been demolished by 1930, when Electric House was built [see HER 15497.1.0]. The corn mill was constructed on an alignment different from that of Electric House: the northern elevation of the mill reflected the line of the southern bank of the river Roch, whilst the northern façade of Electric House followed the line of Smith Street.

HER Number: 15497.1.0

Name: Electric House, Smith Street (site of)

Grid Reference: SD 8983 1340

Protected Status: None recorded

Full description

Purpose-built electricity showroom and offices constructed in 1930, part of a multi-phase building complex dating back to the early C19 [see also HER 15498.1.0 & 15499.1.0]. Constructed of steel framing, with brick and stone infilling; part of the steel frame was exposed during an asbestos survey of the building. The plan of the building shows an unorthodox alignment with other buildings located along Smith Street. The building that stood prior to Electric House, a corn mill, was constructed on a different alignment. The northern elevation of the corn mill reflected the line of the southern bank of the river Roch, whilst the northern façade of Electric House followed the line of Smith Street. This northern façade, constructed of dressed sandstone blocks with symmetrically laid offset window openings and doorways, is arguably a fine example of a 1930s utility building. To the rear of the building the southern elevations are constructed of white-glazed engineering brick. In the interior of Electric House an important trace of the 1930s decor has survived, including the tiled walls in the male and female toilets of the first floor, and wood and glass panels. An entrance hall located within the NW corner of the Smith Street frontage led to a staircase and lift and to a series of display halls. During the latter part of the 20th century, the Rochdale Corporation was integrated into a larger company, Norweb, and became a district office. However, by 1972 the company had vacated Electric House. Rochdale Council purchased the building from Norweb in 1974 but the ground-floor showrooms were leased back to Norweb. (1)

Desk-based assessment and building recording were undertaken in advance of proposed demolition, and the site had been cleared by 2006. (1)(2)

3. Historic Development

Rochdale Town

- 3.1 Situated at the foot of the Pennines and north of Manchester, Rochdale is a former industrial town. It made its wealth through the wool trade, and later cotton weaving. It is also known for the 'Rochdale Pioneers' that established the first co-operative, an establishment that now stretches across the globe.
- 3.2 Located on the River Roch, from which the town takes its name, Rochdale is mentioned in the Domesday book (1086) as Recedham Manor (parts of which can be traced back to the 9th century). A market charter, issued in 1251, allowed for a weekly market on a Wednesday and an annual fair on the 28th of October.
- 3.3 The main period of growth was during the 16th century, when Rochdale became known for its wool and established itself as one of the principal towns in Lancashire. This growth continued throughout the 18th and early 19th century, until the introduction and subsequent success, of the mechanised loom which brought the town's prosperity to an end.
- 3.4 In the early 19th century, there was growing unrest within Rochdale, not just because of the economic downturn and spiralling wages of the working class, but also from the middle-class merchants and entrepreneurs who had no power or political franchise. Riots were common and by the 1810s, the town had a barracks to ensure all uprisings were quickly dealt with. However, there was still an atmosphere of political resilience and many of the residents were involved in the Peterloo Massacre of 1819, having gone with Samuel Bamford (a radical reformist of the working class) to hear Henry 'Orator' Hunt, a fellow reformist, speak. The resulting Reform Act of 1832 which gave Rochdale representation in parliament, gave the vote to more men. Despite this, less than 1000 of the town's 28,000 strong population fitted the criteria of being able to vote. The inadequacies of the 1832 Reform Bill sparked the beginnings of the Chartist movement which would become a national protest organisation in favour of giving more power to the middle and working classes, from the late 1830s to the late 1850s.

- 3.5 John Bright, a famous parliamentary orator of the mid-19th century, has been described as 'Rochdale's most famous son'. Bright began the campaign to repeal the Corn Laws in 1841, establishing the anti-Corn league. This proved successful as they were abolished in 1846. He was also a keen opposer of the Crimean War. Bright had been born in Rochdale in 1811 and ran a successful campaign within the borough to end the payment of compulsory taxes to the Anglican church.
- 3.6 Out of the economic and political struggle, the Rochdale Pioneers created a co-operative in 1844. This enabled people to purchase basic goods at lower prices whilst also allowing members to gain ownership of the business and make profits. The first co-op shop was established on Toad Lane, where the museum now resides. By 1900, there were over 2 million members across the country.
- 3.7 In 1856 Rochdale was made a municipal borough, following which the town hall was commissioned in celebration. This coincided with improvements being made in the surrounding area and the appointment of Messrs Stansfield and Sons to create a public park. Broadfield Park (now grade II listed), as it became known, was opened in successive phases between 1870 and 1874 with later additions, such as St Chad's, being added well into the 20th century.
- 3.8 In 1903 plans emerged to cover the River Roch which ran through the centre of the town, because of lack of even ground and thus allowing the town to expand. This wasn't completed until 1923, when six bridges were joined together. In 2016 a section of the river was opened to not only alleviate the flood risk that it posed, but to also create links to the town's past.
- 3.9 Development in Rochdale continued with the construction of the inner ring road in the mid 20th century, which significantly altered Rochdale's historic layout. The 1950s and 60s was a period of economic decline for Rochdale due to the collapse of the textile industry in the Northwest of England more generally, in favour of cheaper textile products from abroad. Even today, many companies within the region still have some connection to the textile industry.

Drake Street

- 3.10 Regency Drake Street is a character area within the Rochdale Town centre Conservation Area. Drake street was constructed during the late Georgian period, when the town needed to improve its transport links and was named after a reverend of the time, Reverend Drake. The street connected the centre of town to the Rochdale canal, which opened in 1788 to Stalybridge and 1804 to Manchester, and later the railway station (1838). The street's creation allowed for development opportunities south of the river and in the Victorian and Edwardian period, as well as much of the 20th century, it was a primary shopping area. Today, the Metrolink tram is a key feature of the street as the main shopping area moved away, towards Yorkshire Street in the 1990s.

1 Drake Street

- 3.11 As noted in the listing description, 1 Drake Street was built at some point between 1764 and 1795 for the wealthy wool merchant Thomas Smith and his family; they then went on to build mills behind it. This was the family's town residence, spending the other half of their time at Summer Castle, which was further down Drake Street but has now been demolished.
- 3.12 It was later converted to a school and by 1818, it operated as the 'Wellington Hotel' into the 20th century. More recent uses have included a nightclub / bar, and restaurant use. Historic photographs (see figures 3.1-3.3) show a balcony on the first floor of the sixth bay above the bar entrance, and lamp above the central entrance; the balcony no longer exists but a modern lamp has been installed in the same location. Although it is possible (if not likely) the main façade was re-faced it has always been shown from early 20th century photos in its current form so this presumably took place during the 19th century. It was known as the main coaching house within the town and the area outside known as 'Speaker's Corner'. There is a blue plaque which commemorates the 8,000 people who gathered outside of the building following the 1832 reform act which kick started the chartist movement. Hence, it became a backdrop for Rochdale's political significance.
- 3.13 OS mapping published in 1851 (see Appendix A) shows the building identified as the Wellington Hotel at this time. Built form to the south, east and north of the site forms a central courtyard. This is likely the pitch roof development on site today, where the courtyard has

been infilled with a flat roof element. The built form to the north may be retained in places where the later extension of the building fronts Smith Street, however the slight angle to the building line suggests this has more likely been demolished and the building extended on Smith Street, there was also a separation between the buildings shown on 19th century maps. Land to the south on the eastern side of Drake Street is sporadically developed at this stage. The river runs to the north of the site with industrial uses located to the west. The application building, a bridge over the River Roch and a foundry are all named 'Wellington'. The blue plaque on the building suggests this was after the Duke of Wellington, the peerage title which was created for Arthur Wellesley following his victory over Napoleon in 1815.

- 3.14 Mapping published in 1910 shows that the river has been culverted and tramlines are in place along South Parade and Drake Street, with a tramway shelter adjacent to the site. Land to the south on the eastern side of Drake Street is now densely developed, as is land to the east of the site on Farrier Street and Samuel Street. Mapping published in 1960 continues to show an open courtyard to the rear of the building, confirming the flat roof infill was undertaken after this date.



Figure 3.1: The Site as The Wellington Hotel, c1900.



Figure 3.2: The Site as The Wellington Hotel – c1910.



Figure 3.3: Wellington Hotel, with Butts Mill visible on the left. C1950s.

4. Building Record

Exterior

- 4.1 1 Drake Street comprises an L-shaped three storey building fronting onto both Drake Street and Smith Street, with one and two storey elements infilling the L-shape at the rear. It is understood that the whole building is listed, however the Historic England listing describes only the western portion of the building fronting Drake Street. The application floorspace relates to the upper floors of the element of the building fronting Drake Street, and the first floor of the infill development to its rear and this is the area of study for the scope of this report.
- 4.2 This element of the building fronting Drake Street retains a good degree of architectural integrity; it is constructed of red / orange brick with a slate roof, and features including a classical stone surround with a pediment to the main entrance, moulded stone window surrounds, projecting stone string courses, and a modillion eaves cornice. Windows are one over one sliding sash, frames are timber with horns and possibly a reproduction of a Victorian style window frame. The listing notes that the brick frontages may have been refaced, this is corroborated by the stretcher bond to the front elevation, while the return of the gable to Smith Street is in Flemish bond. The gable elevation also indicates previous alterations where there are variances in brickwork, inserted windows and visible gauged brick arches with keystones where former openings have been bricked up.
- 4.3 The roof is steeply pitched with a slate covering and bargeboards to either side of a central chimney stack that projects from the gable. The roof undulates and raises significantly along the southern element of the building, and the slates do not meet flush in this area. This could be due to later structural movement, the nature of hand-cut timbers or that that this represents an extension. There are no obvious signs of joints within the brickwork, however, as the building has likely been re-faced in the 19th century this would make analysis difficult. The chimney stack has eight glazed bishop chimney pots. Historic photos also show a stack has been removed in the location of the raised roofline.

- 4.4 This portion of the building fronting Drake Street is currently vacant, it was most recently in use as 'Bombay Brew' restaurant on the ground floor. The upper floors were most recently in use as 'The Nile' nightclub, but have been vacant.
- 4.5 The element of the building fronting Smith Street (not described within the listing) is a later phase of construction, and likely dates from the around the mid-20th Century. This is evident from the more contemporary appearance of the brickwork. Nonetheless, a traditional design approach has been adopted with the use of buff stone dressings and traditional glazing pattern to the uPVC windows. This element of the building is occupied by Rochdale Housing Solutions on the ground floor, and residential apartments on the upper floors.
- 4.6 Development infilling the 'L' shape comprises pitched roof buildings which form a perimeter block and square off the 'L' shape, which has been infilled at a later point with a flat roof element. A former glazed lantern appears to have been removed from the most southern building and infilled with a flat roof, indicated by small the projecting gables to either side of the flat element.
- 4.7 The side elevation (Smith Street) gives the best evidence for the likely form of the building before the re-facing. Sections are in an older handmade red brick, currently there are plain stone window surrounds but slightly off-set from these are bricked up openings with gauged brick heads and stone keystones (now cemented over).



Figure 4.1: Site exterior as viewed from Drake Street



Figure 4.2: Site exterior from Smith Street

Setting

- 4.8 The site occupies a central position in the town centre, and its context is distinctively urban. Looking northwards up Drake Street, buildings are predominantly late 18th to 19th century buildings that are three storeys in height with varying materials including red brick, render and stone. There is a good degree of enclosure to Drake Street created by the flanking buildings, the topography gently rises and the gently curving nature of Drake Street lends to a key vista into this part of the Conservation Area.
- 4.9 In contrast, looking northwards the site fronts onto open space comprising the public realm where the River Roch has been culverted at South Parade, the Conservation Area Appraisal notes that that this sweeping terrace marks the junction of Drake Street with the former limit to development on the southern bank of the river. These buildings are modest 3 storey shops which have undergone recent refurbishment works as part of the Heritage Action Zone scheme. Buildings fronting onto this central space vary in age, scale, style and materiality; for example neo-classical, art deco and contemporary 21st century development adjoin each other. Surrounding development is typically three to four storeys in height, with varying roof lines. Rochdale Town Hall is an exception to this and its tower is an imposing feature to the open nature of this part of the town centre.

Interior

- 4.10 Internally, the upper floors of the application floorspace are in a significant state of disrepair. Wall and ceiling finishes are considerably damaged or missing. The following gives a room-by-room account of features of interest and surviving finishes. Room numbers referred to are those shown on the associated plan in Appendix B which also shows relevant annotation. A photographic record of spaces is also included in Appendix C.

GF lobby

- 4.11 This space was partly inaccessible but was viewed from above. There is a timber stair between ground and first floor that no longer meets the first-floor level with the floor covered over.

Room FF1

Floorboards are visible in some locations but are covered by modern boarding. There are modern plasterboard finishes throughout with some areas of exposed brickwork. Windows are modern replacement sashes with modern surrounds.



Figure 4.3: Room FF1

Room FF2

- 4.12 Floorboards are visible in some locations but are covered by modern boarding. Modern plasterboard finishes throughout with some areas of exposed brickwork. Modern replacement sash with modern surround.



Figure 4.4: Room FF2

Room FF3

- 4.13 Floorboards are visible in some locations but are covered by modern boarding. Modern plasterboard finishes throughout with some areas of exposed breeze block walls and painted brickwork. Some skirting in place but on plasterboard walls and sitting on the modern floor finishes so assumed to be modern.
- 4.14 Some historic floor joists above are visible that are partly boxed in. Several have been reinforced with later steel beams.
- 4.15 Modern replacement sashes with modern surrounds.



Figure 4.5: Room FF3

Room FF4

- 4.16 Floorboards are visible in some locations but are covered by modern boarding. Modern plasterboard finishes some with picture rails but again assumed to be modern.
- 4.17 The room has two timber columns of varnished panelling fixed to an internal timber. One has 'lounge' painted onto the panel.
- 4.18 Some isolated areas of ceiling plaster, however, it is applied to metal mesh sheets so likely 20th century in date.
- 4.19 Modern replacement sash with modern surrounds.
- 4.20 Opening in the wall between FF4 and FF5 crudely formed so likely to be a fairly recent alteration.



Figure 4.1: Room FF4

Room FF5

- 4.21 Lath and plaster applied above the rafters with evidence that there was also a ceiling below the rafters that has been removed.
- 4.22 Timber mansard roof structure with steel collars and ties where end wall has been removed following the later extension of room FF6. Principal timbers have chamfered edges suggesting they were likely exposed.
- 4.23 Central section of the roof appears later in date and is assumed to have been a roof lantern.
- 4.24 Walls a mixture of bare brick, breeze block and plasterboard.



Figure 4.5: Room FF5

Room FF6

- 4.25 Modern extension with no heritage features of note.

Room SF7

- 4.26 Ceiling remains in part with the remainder lost / removed and open to the attic space. There are areas of plaster applied directly to brick. Timber floorboards visible throughout with some areas of timber skirting. Former attic space is exposed brick in lime mortar.
- 4.27 There is a timber lintel above the window to the front elevation set back from the main façade, a stone lintel is separate and forms the current façade so the timber presumably relates to the original phase of the building before being re-faced. The window itself is a modern replacement sash to the front elevation with missing surround / exposed brick.

- 4.28 There is a sash window with timber surround to the rear where the glazing survives but this is bricked up with breeze blocks externally.
- 4.29 Historic timber dog-leg stair leading to attic level with wide timber panels on walls.



Figure 4.6: Window reveal in Room SF7.



Figure 4.7: Dogleg stair in Room SF7

Room SF8

- 4.30 Evidence of a hearth in the floor adjacent to chimney breast although no fireplace or surround remains.
- 4.31 Timber cupboard door to the back of the stairs with evidence of strap hinges. The door now appears to be un-openable and forms a fix panel with no handle or hinges.
- 4.32 Timber floorboards visible throughout with timber skirting.
- 4.33 Timber lintel above window to the front elevation set slightly back from the main façade with modern replacement sashes to the front elevation with missing surround / exposed brick.

- 4.34 Ceiling missing / removed although joists for the attic space above still survive in part.



Figure 4.8: Room SF8

Room SF9

- 4.35 Ceiling has been removed and the room is currently open to the attic level. Underside of the roof is visible which shows modern felt, the roof timbers appear machine cut and are likely later replacements suggesting a re-roofing has taken place. 20th century steel supports with water tanks within the attic level are also visible.
- 4.36 Hearth and bricked up fireplace in dividing wall, the chimney stack externally has since been removed.
- 4.37 Timber floorboards throughout with isolated areas of skirting.

- 4.38 Cast iron radiator beneath a large opening in the rear wall that has been bricked up with modern brickwork. The size and horizontal shape of the opening suggest this was likely not a historic opening or was widened before infilling.
- 4.39 Areas of plaster applied to brick. Exposed brick in lime mortar to the attic space above.
- 4.40 Three timber steps into adjacent room SF10, again possible suggesting this formed a later extension or was connected to the main building at a later point due to the level change.
- 4.41 Modern replacement sashes to the front elevation with missing surround / exposed brick.



Figure 4.9: Room SF9

SF10

- 4.42 Room comprises various dividing timbers for partitions, some are clearly modern but others with evidence of studs and laths likely older. These demark various level changes across the floor in this room. Small subdivided former WC with white tiling.

- 4.43 Ceiling has been removed and room is currently open to the attic level, although evidence of a ceiling structure still remains.
- 4.44 Sash window in rear wall partly boarded over, 20th century casement side window. Modern replacement sash to the front elevation with timber surround and cill.
- 4.45 Timber floorboards slightly wider than those elsewhere possibly suggesting they are likely older. Timber skirting survives in places.
- 4.46 Cast iron radiator.



Figure 4.10: Room SF10

Bibliography

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<https://manchesterhistory.net/rochdale/history.html>

Appendix A: Map Regression



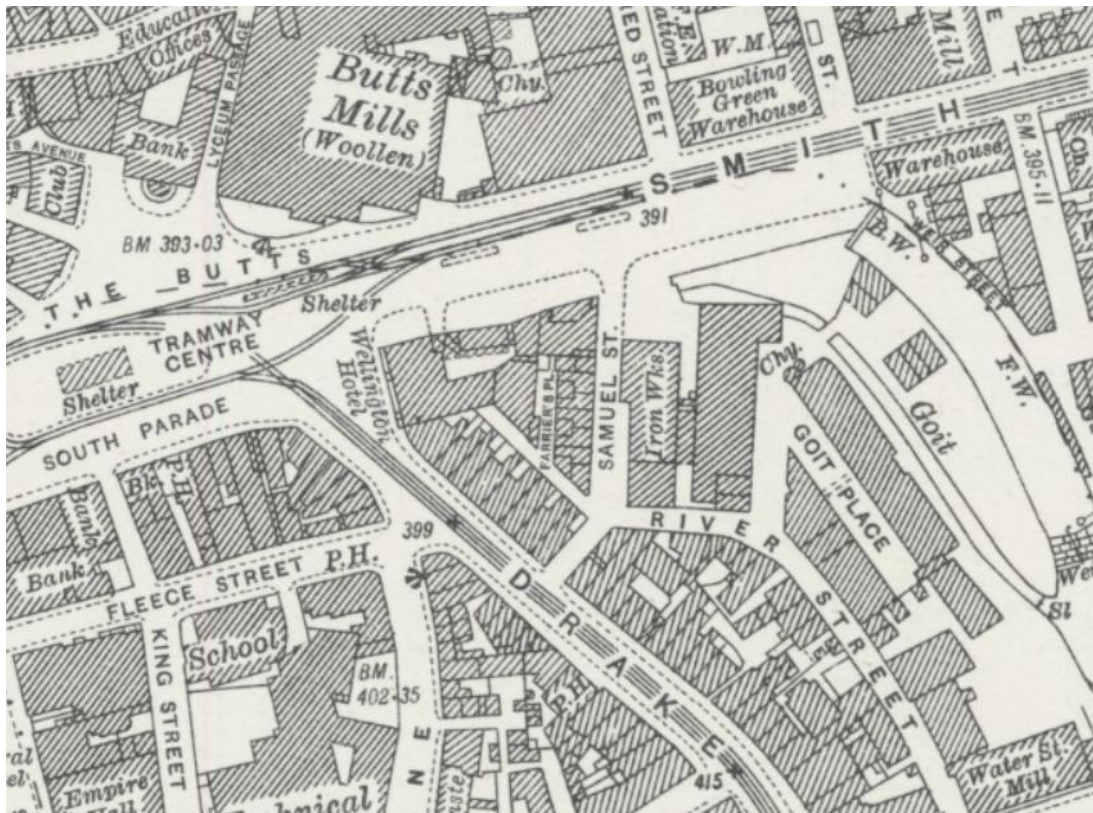
Rochdale Sheet 8 Surveyed: 1848, Published: 1851.



Rochdale - Lancashire LXXXIX.1.11 Surveyed: 1890, Published: 1892.



Lancashire LXXXIX.1 Revised: 1908, Published: 1910



Lancashire LXXXIX.1 Revised: 1928, Published: 1930

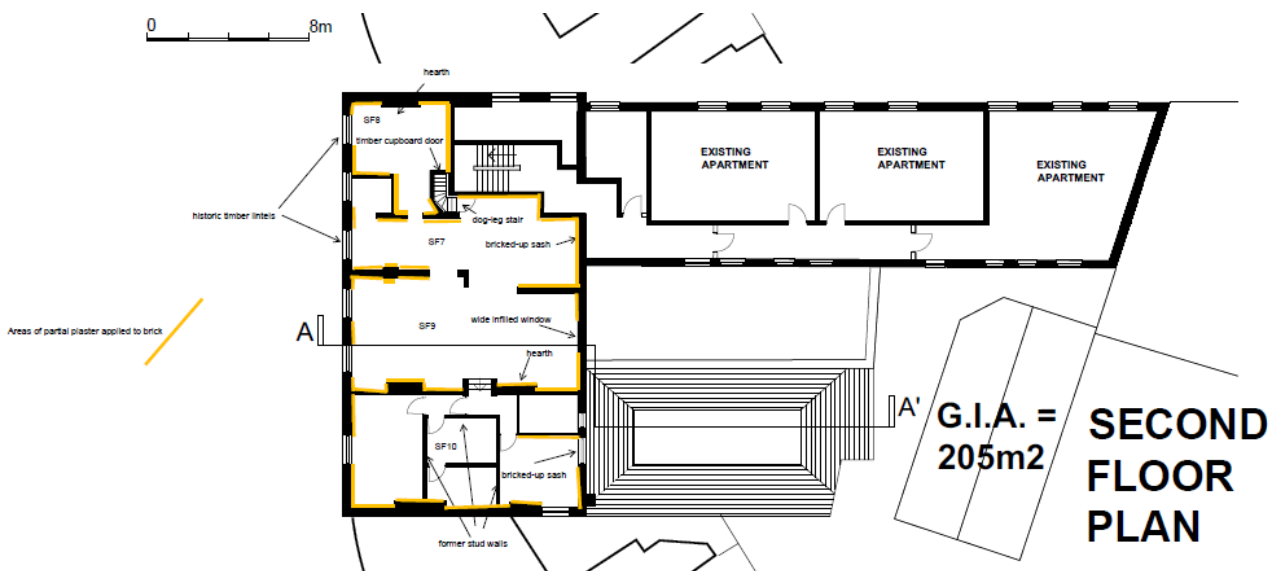
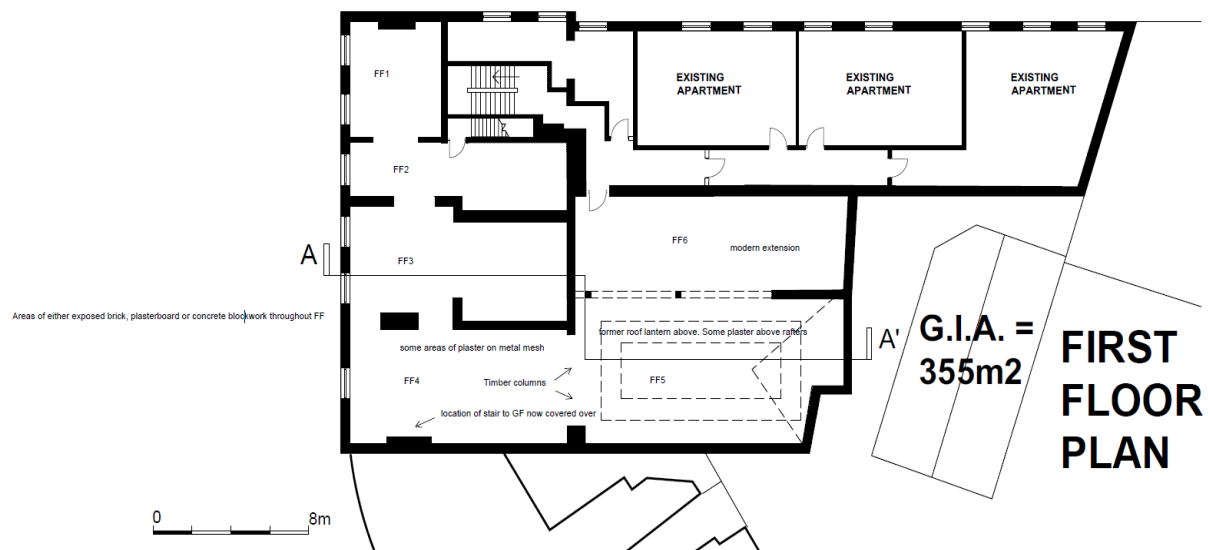


Lancashire Sheet LXXXIX.NW Revised: 1938, Published: 1947



SD8813-SD8913 – AA Revised: 1959, Published: 1960

Appendix B: Annotated Floor Plans



Appendix C: Site Photography

Exterior





GF Lobby



Room FF1





Room FF2







Room FF3



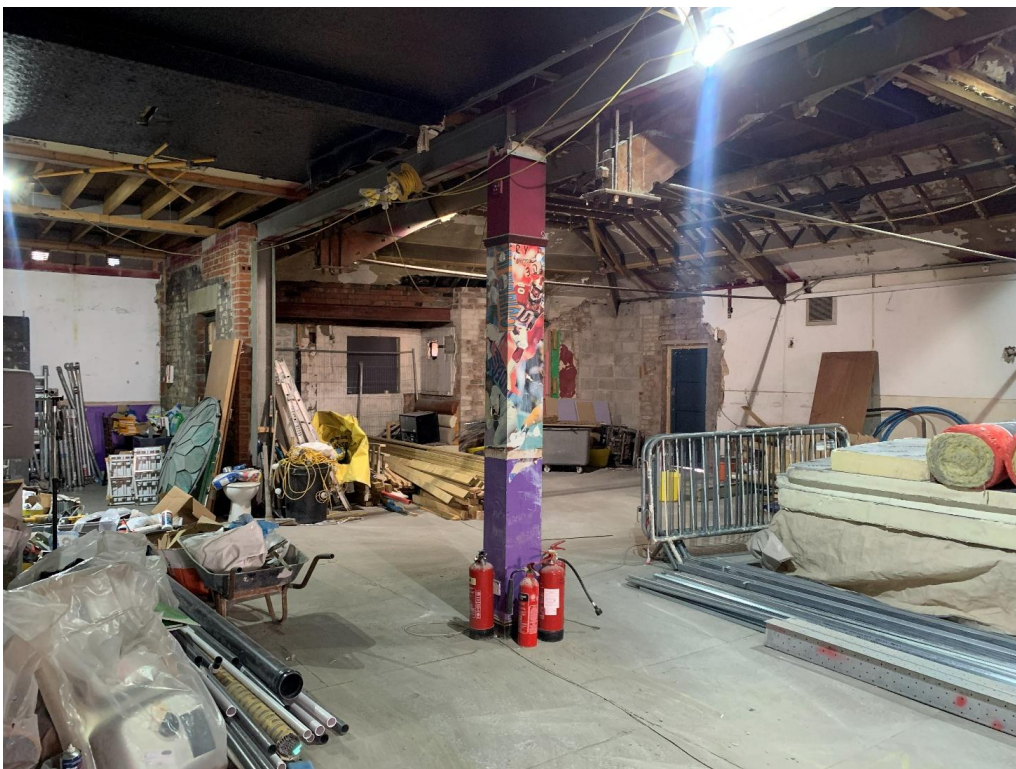
Room FF4

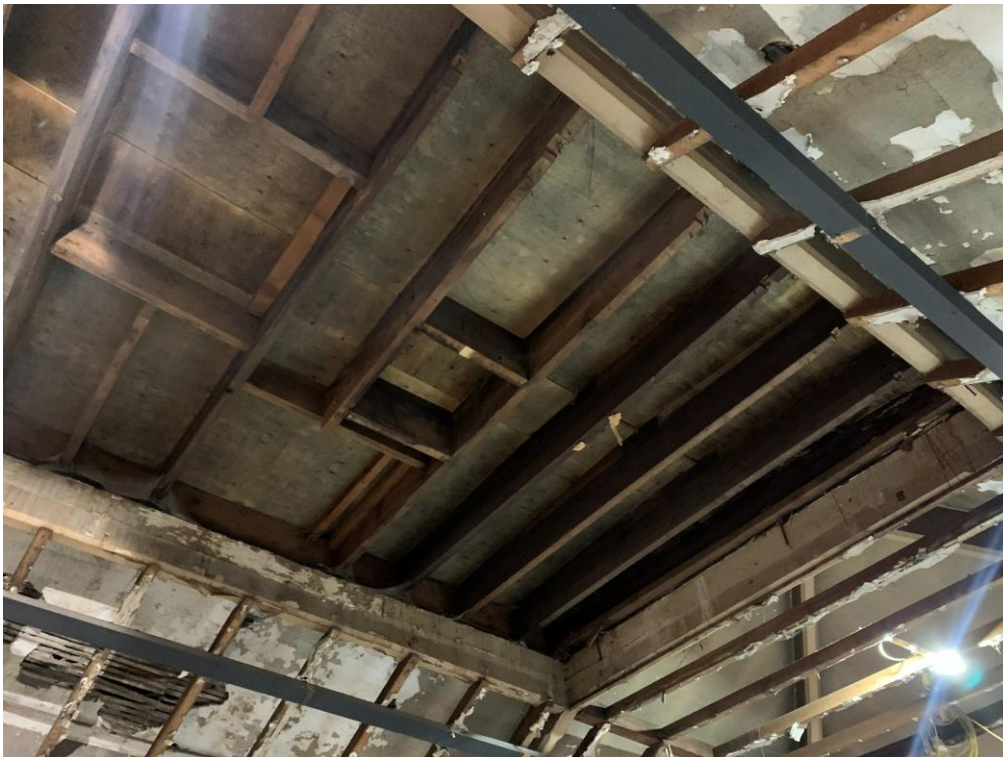






Room FF5







Room FF6



Room SF7







Room SF8



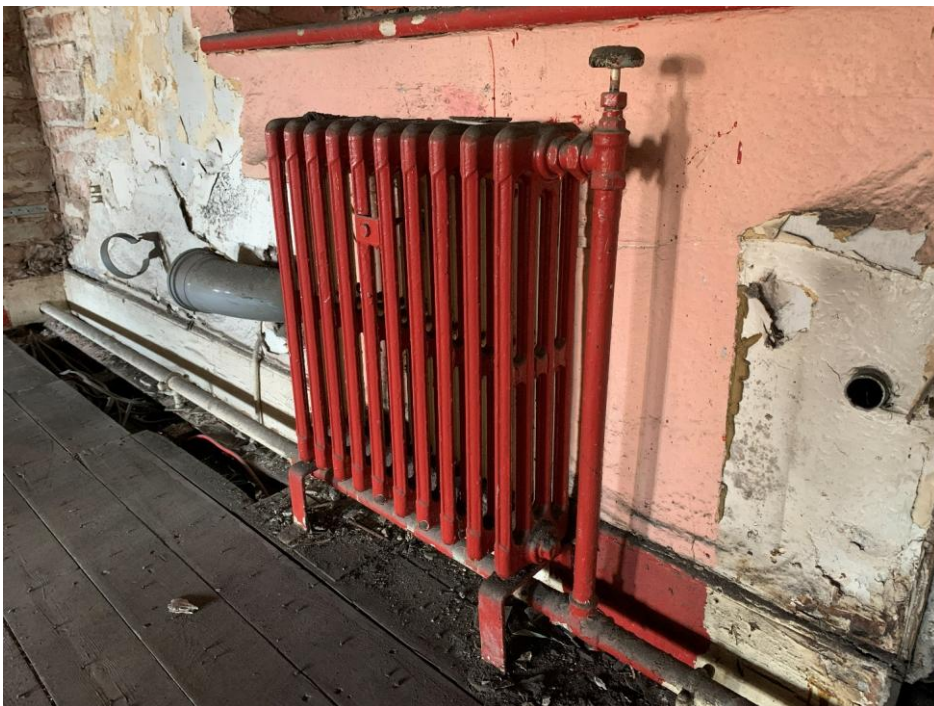




Room SF9









Room SF10



