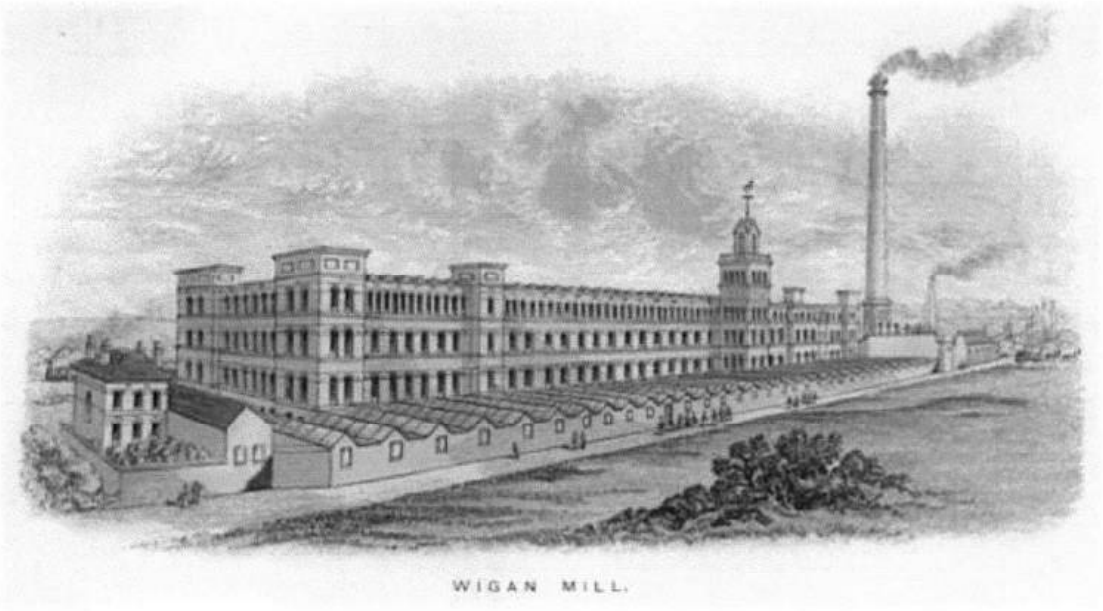
Historic Building Appraisal & Impact Assessment

Pagefield Building, Wigan



AHP Architectural History Practice

July 2008

The Pagefield Building, Wigan

Historic Building Appraisal & Impact Assessment

Prepared for

MCR Property

by

The Architectural History Practice Limited

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HISTORIC BUILDING APPRAISAL & IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The complex known as the Pagefield Building (The Buildings) was built as a cotton mill in 1866-68, for John Rylands, designed by George Woodhouse, a Bolton architect. It was formerly known as Gidlow Mill or Rylands Mill.

The Buildings were constructed as a large integrated mill with weaving sheds, originally powered by an internal steam engine and boilers, supplied with water from the reservoir to the north-west. The principal external frontages were designed in a lavish style, unusual at the time, with polychrome brickwork and turrets to mark the corners and position of the engine house. The brick parapets conceal transverse roofs covered in Welsh slates to the mill and north-light roofs to the weaving sheds.

The three storey spinning mill follows the Greater Manchester form, constructed with cast-iron columns and beams supporting brick vaulted floors, to provide a robust, fire-proof structure. Internally, the mill was designed with open-plan spinning rooms on the ground and third floors, with carding and preparation rooms on the first floor. The boilers and engine house were located internally at the north-west end of the Building, separated from the spinning floors by a full-height brick wall. The detached chimney and stone-lined reservoir (known as a lodge) are to the north. The mill was built with access to rail sidings for coal deliveries and transport for raw cotton and finished cotton goods; a timber railway viaduct runs across the lodge, built off stone piers. Also built over the lodge, supported on brick vaulting on stone piers, was a range of single-storey warehouse buildings.

The spun cotton thread was used to weave cotton fabric such as calico on looms in the single-storey weaving sheds, arranged in a two phase group north and north-east of the mill. An 1873 view of the mill (cover) shows a rectangular block of weaving sheds against the north-east side of the mill, an arrangement that differs from the layout shown on 19th century mapping and on site, due to an element of 'artist's licence'. The first phase of weaving sheds was the large trapezoidal group, separated from the mill by a space which was in-filled by a later phase of weaving sheds, by 1894 (Fig.3).

Later additions to the complex include the 1905 weaving shed engine house (Block H) and an inter-war electricity sub station (Block D); electricity was introduced to power the mill in 1915.

Rylands closed the mill for cotton manufacturing in 1954, and the Buildings were subsequently used by Universal Stores as a warehouse. The portal frame sheds over the reservoir probably date from this period, replacing the original warehouse buildings and built off the original brick vaulted structure. The former

mill manager's house stood at the south east corner of the site and was demolished in the post-war period, also during Universal Stores' occupation; it was replaced with the present 2-storey office block, linked to the first floor of the mill by a steel-framed enclosed bridge. The internal mill engine house, once a full-height volume was horizontally sub-divided at an unknown date, but probably in the early 20th century, after electricity was introduced.

The site was acquired by Wigan College of Technology in 1986 and the mill and weaving sheds were converted for use as a college. Alterations at that time included the addition of the steel-framed, glazed front foyer to the mill, containing new stairs and lifts. Internally, suspended ceilings and new partitions were inserted, but the structure remained little altered. Some windows were replaced with double-glazed windows, but most original timber windows were retained.

Wigan and Leigh College moved out of the Buildings in 2006, re-locating to new purpose-built premises to the north-west of the site. The Building was acquired by MCR Property in 2007; this change of ownership presents an opportunity to refurbish the Building for a new use, to secure its long-term future. Residential conversion with a mix of other compatible uses is considered the most suitable new use given the location.

The Building is listed Grade II and the multi-storey mill is within the Mesnes Park conservation area (the former weaving sheds are outside the boundary). The Building's south frontage presents a fine backdrop to Mesnes Park, opened as a public park in 1878, and now a Grade II registered historic landscape. Listed Building Consent is required for proposals that affect the special interest of the Building; the local authority has a duty to protect listed buildings. In determining proposals for planning permission, the local authority also has a duty to have special regard for the impact on the setting of listed buildings, the character of the conservation area and the setting of the registered park.

The proposed works have been designed by Howard and Seddon Architects and particularly affect the interior and roof; the removal of previous alterations and linings, the exposure wherever possible of historic features and the creation of new dwellings within the former mill and weaving sheds. The fabric of the Buildings will be repaired to specifications prepared by Anthony Grimshaw Associates, accredited conservation architects.

In summary, the proposals include the removal of most of the existing mill roof and its replacement with a new level of third floor accommodation, set behind the parapet. The roof over the engine shed will be retained and repaired with the glazed lantern reinstated. Light wells are proposed to be cut through the mill floors to provide light and ventilation to the new apartments, retaining the cast-iron structural frame. The proposals will create 142 apartments within the former mill and 44 apartments or houses within sections of retained weaving sheds. The phase two weaving sheds will be demolished to create space for car parking, for

access and to enable ground floor windows of the adjacent buildings to be used. The loss of part of the weaving sheds is balanced by the retention and adaptation of a significant part of the first phase of sheds for housing.

It is proposed to refurbish and extend the inter-war sub station (block D), for 15 units. The 1905 engine house (block H) will be refurbished for apartments. New apartments (block E) will be constructed on the site of the portal-frame buildings above the reservoir, and to the east and south of the weaving sheds town houses are proposed (blocks F and G). The post-war office building (Block C) is to be replaced by a new 3-storey building for business use. The entrance to the site from Bridgeman Terrace will be up-graded to enhance the setting of the Building, a new entrance created off Walkden Avenue. The setting will be enhanced by the repair and retention of historic boundary walls and railings and new landscaping for the amenity of residents.

The proposals have been designed to strike a balance between the special interest of the Buildings and the importance of ensuring that the Buildings are economically viable in the long-term, by creating attractive new dwellings that will meet current industry standards and statutory regulations.

1. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

1.1. Introduction

The Architectural History Practice Ltd was commissioned to produce an historic building appraisal and PPG15 statement for the former mill in December 2007 for MCR Property, the owner of the site. The report has been produced to inform the owner of the significance of the Buildings and for use in support of applications for listed building consent or planning permission, submitted for the owner. This report has been prepared by Marion Barter BA MA IHBC, with Samantha Barnes BA MA.

The former cotton mill was built in 1867, to designs by George Woodhouse for John Rylands, one of the region's largest cotton manufacturers. It is a Grade II listed building, incorporating the former spinning mill, former weaving sheds and former engine house and chimney. The former spinning mill is within the Mesnes Park conservation area. The Building was occupied by the Wigan and Leigh College from the mid-1980s to 2006, when the college relocated, leaving the mill empty. In the latest phase in the life of the Buildings, MCR Property proposes to refurbish and convert the Building for residential use; a total of 316 new apartments, houses or duplexes will be provided on the site, divided between the mill and weaving sheds, and in new-build blocks built within the site.

1.2 Location

The Building is situated approximately half a mile to the north-west of Wigan town centre, off Bridgeman Terrace. The post-code is WN1 2JH

1.3 Ownership

The Building is in the ownership of MCR Property. The local planning authority is Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.

1.4 Acknowledgement

AHP is grateful to Norman Redhead the Greater Manchester Archaeologist for his advice and for access to the records of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record, to the Wigan History Shop for access to local records and to the Joule Library at the University of Manchester for help with Evan Leigh's book.

2. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT & BUILDING APPRAISAL

2.1 Context: Greater Manchester cotton mills

Cotton manufacturing in the Greater Manchester area developed from the late 18th century, and had its roots in small-scale 17th and 18th century woollen weaving. The cotton industry developed due to a well-known combination of factors: the development of a canal network connecting Manchester and Lancashire to the port of Liverpool; the Lancashire coalfields; the development of steam power and construction engineering; ambitious entrepreneurs and a skilled, cheap labour force; and lastly the damp local climate. At its peak in 1926, the cotton industry in the Greater Manchester area involved almost 1100 firms and dominated world production.

The cotton industry was diverse, with specialisation occurring in different towns; Bolton specialised in fine spinning, Oldham in coarser yarn spinning, weaving was predominately undertaken in East Lancashire and also in the Wigan area, with trade and warehousing concentrated in Manchester.

During the 19th century, the design of cotton mills evolved to reflect advances in engineering, cotton manufacturing and trading conditions. The earliest water-powered mills were soon improved by the advent of steam-power, which enabled mills to be built away from a source of fast-flowing water. One of the first steam-powered mills in the region was Peel's Cotton Works, Warrington, built in 1787 (demolished), and one of the few early survivals is the 1798 Murrays Mill in Ancoats, Manchester; this has thick timber floors supported on slender cast-iron columns. The form of this eight-storey steam-powered mill was repeated across the region, with only a few variations. The most important construction innovation in the early 19th-century was the development of brick-arched floor construction using cast-iron beams and columns; this improved structural stability and fire protection. Specialist engineering companies such as William Fairbairn in Manchester were essential to this aspect of early mill design, and the companies who manufactured the steam engines and machinery, such as Boulton and Watts of Birmingham were also influential; mills were designed or adapted to accommodate the machinery.

Integrated mills, for both spinning and weaving, were built with single storey, north-light weaving sheds, as well as a multi-storey mill, which required a large site. Mill floor areas grew in response to the development of larger spinning machinery. By the late 19th-century mills were being designed by specialist mill architects, such as A. H. Stott & Sons of Oldham, Bradshaw Gass & Hope and George Woodhouse – the latter both based in Bolton. Architecturally, the Italianate style was particularly popular for large mills from the second half of the 19th century and helped to express the mill owners' success and aspirations. The introduction of steel framing and reinforced concrete construction from c.1900

enabled much larger mills to be built, with wide uninterrupted floors, large windows and flat roofs; these represent the last wave of mill building in the area.

Cotton mills are the region's most distinctive building type and the most visible remains of an industry that collapsed in the mid 20th-century. The Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record lists the 1089 textile mills that were built in the county, with over 2400 individual mill buildings (recorded in 2005). Of these only 800 individual textile mills survive and the most important of these are now protected by listing; totalling around 88 buildings.

Wigan developed from a medieval Royal Borough to become a centre of trade and industry based on coal, iron and textile manufacture in the 19th century. From 1789 Wigan was the main centre of Lancashire coal mining, and in the early 19th century was important for weaving cotton cloth as well as for spinning. In 1878 the *Wigan Examiner* noted that the town had 'cast off its antique habiliments' and that its new buildings were 'imposing and adapted to the requirements of this advanced age'. By 1870 there were 26 spinning and weaving mills in the town, employing more than 11,000 workers. Individual entrepreneurs like John Rylands, the owner of Gidlow Mill, were influential in the development of the town's economy and in providing employment for the expanding population. The town's textile industry endured longer than many others in the region, by using automatic looms in the 1960s; in 1963 Wigan was the fifth largest spinning town in Lancashire. Other prominent mills in the town include Trencherfield Mill (1907), Swan Mill, and Empress Mill, both built *c.* 1901; these enormous mills represent the last phase of steel-framed fireproof mills.

2.2. Historical development of Gidlow Mill

2.2.1 John Rylands, cotton magnate

The development of the mill was the due to role of John Rylands, a leading cotton magnate. He was born in St Helens in 1801, where he initially joined his father, Joseph Rylands, and brothers in the family woollen weaving business. In 1819 Rylands & Sons moved to Wigan where the firm ran a small business, hand-weaving coarse and coloured linen and calico for the Chester trade. They bought a dye and bleach works on a site to the north-west of the town centre that was found to be rich in coal, where they opened a colliery; by 1839 they had become coal masters. The Rylands built their first Wigan mill in 1825, the Wigan Linen Works. In 1842 Joseph Rylands transferred the company to his son John, who expanded the firm's warehouses in Manchester, London, and overseas. In 1873 Rylands & Sons became a limited company, and at the time Gidlow Mill was built they were the leading cotton manufacturers in the world.

John Rylands created a business empire that enabled him to leave a vast fortune to his third wife, Enrequita, when he died in 1888; she used part of this to build the library on Deansgate that takes his name, now part of Manchester University. The firm continued to be successful into the early 20th century, building a large warehouse on the corner of Market Street/Piccadilly Gardens in Manchester, now

Debenhams store. The sharp decline of the Lancashire cotton trade from the 1930s, led to the takeover of Rylands in 1953 by Great Universal Stores Ltd. Gidlow mill was closed for cotton manufacture in 1954. Trading ceased in 1971 and Rylands & Sons was removed from the register of companies in May 1989.

2.2.2 The development of the mill

The triangular site chosen for Gidlow Mill was on land used by John Rylands' colliery. The 1848 OS map shows the site of the mill occupied by open fields and coal pits, bounded to the north by a tram road (Fig.1) Despite a down-turn in the cotton industry due to impact of the American Civil War (1861-5) on the supply of raw cotton from America, Rylands began planning for the new mill in 1865, and building began in 1866-7. The mill was completed at the end of 1867 and was fully equipped in early 1868. An invoice dated 1868 (Fig.7) indicates that the mill buildings and machinery, with managers house, chimney, reservoir and railway bridge cost around £141,000, a vast sum at the time. Over £50,000 was spent on the mill building, and around £26,000 spent on the weaving sheds.

An early photograph shows the mill within a semi-rural setting, (Fig.8) overlooking the land later landscaped to create Mesnes Park. As a forward-looking firm, Rylands recognised the potential of the railways, which had arrived in Wigan in 1832. Gidlow Mill was built alongside the London to Preston railway (opened in 1838), with its own sidings and goods yards, connected to the firm's collieries.

The earliest map to show the mill is the 1876 Hunter map of Wigan (Fig.2); this clearly indicates the mill (named Mesne Factory) with the separate weaving sheds, the lodge, railway sidings and warehouse, as well as Rylands colliery. On the 1894 OS map the mill is named as Gidlow Works (Fig.3). At the north-east corner of the site was a gas works, used to supply the mill's lighting; to the west of this was the reservoir which supplied the engine and boilers. A railway siding from the north-west served the mill, crossing the reservoir on a single-track viaduct, with one siding serving the boiler houses with coal, and other sidings leading into the gap between the weaving sheds and mill, to carry raw cotton and finished cotton goods. By 1894, the renamed Gidlow & Swinley Collieries were still operational to the north and west of the mill, and Mesnes Park had opened to the south-west.

The weaving sheds were erected in two phases; the invoice suggests that the first phase was contemporary to the mill and is shown on Hunter's map of 1876 (Fig.2). The sheds filled a large polygonal area to the north-east of the site, following a former straight field boundary along the north-east. The narrow rectangular space between the mill and the first sheds was filled between 1876 and 1892 with further sheds with similar constructional and decorative details, separated from the first phase by the former external brick wall with blocked windows (Fig.24).

Later buildings on the site reflect developments in manufacturing and power generation; the later L-plan engine house, erected in 1905 adjacent to the east group of weaving sheds was built to replace an earlier engine house that served the weaving sheds (Fig.27). The conversion from steam to electric power is reflected in the red brick electricity sub-station, built on the south-west boundary in c.1915 (Fig.28). The 1907-10 OS survey shows that the collieries had by then closed (Fig.4). The mill manager's house, contemporary to the mill and called Newmill Cottage, was still extant in the 1950s (Fig.6), but was demolished and replaced with a 2-storey office block, probably in the 1960s for Universal Stores. The colliery site was developed for housing in the early 20th century.

2.3 Design & Historic Function

2.3.1 The original design

Gidlow Mill was built as an integrated cotton mill arranged over three storeys; it is 392 feet in length and 108 feet wide and was described by the *Manchester City News* in 1865 as being 'not surpassed and, we believe...not equalled by any other mill in the world'. It was praised by the Earl of Derby as 'a pleasure for the eye to rest upon, so well has the architectural effect been studied in its construction'. The design is Italianate in style, with projecting turrets and a stair tower with cupola to the north-east side; at the time the attention given to the mill's external appearance marked a departure from the generally functional style of mill buildings in the region. Its striking visual impact and presence in the Wigan industrial landscape would have been enhanced by its elevated location on the slope facing south-west over Mesnes Park (Fig.11).

The mill is 36 bays long, articulated by projecting turrets. Polychromatic brick bands link the window heads and sills on all floors, 'further enriched with black crosses at first floor level and geometric patterns to the upper stages of the turrets' (Appendix 1). The ground and 1st floors have segmental-headed 8-pane windows, with pairs of smaller round-headed windows to the 2nd-floor, a motif also used by Woodhouse at Victoria Mill, Manchester. The roof, hidden behind a parapet, is arranged transversely, with multiple hipped ridges covered in Welsh slates (with a bitumen finish); the roofs to the north wing over the former boiler house are arranged at right angles to those on the main mill, and the engine house has a large raised roof light. The parapets and turrets have stone copings. The mill is L-plan, with the boiler houses and mechanics shop contained in the short arm of the L to the north.

The mill structure comprises a grid of brick jack vaults carried on cast-iron beams and columns (Fig.20). The engineering firm J.Musgrave of Bolton provided the ironwork and their name is recorded in raised lettering on some columns. The columns have simple capitals and retain evidence of the brackets that carried the line shafting and belts (Fig.12). The soffit of the brick vaults and all brick walls would have been lime-washed to maximise light levels in the mill. The ceiling of the upper floor is constructed in a vaulted form fixed directly below the slightly

arched tie-beams of the roof structure, with boxed-in timber beams and cast-iron ties on cast-iron columns (Fig.21). The ceiling soffit is finished in lath and plaster.

A goods hoist is located on the north-east elevation, close to the south-east corner, used to move the cotton between processes from floor to floor. The projecting hoist tower has a stone chamfered external door surround on the ground floor; the internal doorways are blocked. The north-east elevation of the north wing has a vertical bay filled with a series of taking-in doors (Fig.19) for the delivery of raw cotton bales into the mill, being close to a tramway and at the end of the building closest to the initial processing areas.

Access between floors for the workers was via two staircases; the largest one at the south-east corner of the mill has an imposing external doorway with a rusticated stone surround, now within the phase two weaving sheds. This was probably the principal entrance into the mill and was closest to the manager's house. A second staircase tower is located on the north east elevation, adjacent to the boiler house; this tower is topped with an Italianate cupola which can be seen from Mesne Park. The workers were provided with privies on each floor, two located in each of the corner turrets. The mill was built with dry-risers for fire fighting in stair towers; where these original services survive, they are of special interest together with the shafts that carried the piping (Fig.25). Lighting would have been gas, supplied by the mill's own gas works, demolished in the early 20th century.

2.3.2 Cotton spinning

The mill produced twills and calico, a cheap cotton known as "Dacca" brand. Cotton was prepared and spun in the mill; although Woodhouse's original plans of the mill have not been located, two 'general plans' were published in Evan Leigh's book *The Science of Modern Cotton Spinning*, 1873. These show what appears to be the ground floor and the middle floor, and provide evidence of the internal layout of the mill's machinery and power transmission (fig.9). The plans and account of the mill by Leigh suggest that the mill was originally designed with carding rooms on the middle floor, with spinning on the upper and ground floors, a departure from the usual arrangement; normally raw cotton was prepared on the ground floor and the finished thread manufactured on the top floor. The machines entirely covered the floors, and the plans show that each throstle frame had 200 spindles and that there were 140 single carding engines on the middle floor. The card room machines and throstles were made by Messrs Howard and Bullough, and the spinning mules by Curtis Parr and Madeley. None of this survives.

2.3.3 The engine house, boiler house and chimney

The machinery in the mill was powered by the three 60 h.p.steam engines in an integral engine house, supplied by boilers located to the north, separated from the rest of the mill by a full-height brick wall. The position of the 4-bay engine

house was expressed on the south-west elevation by a pair of turrets. The engines rested on huge ashlar beds to give stability to the machinery; these are not visible on the ground floor, but ashlar blocks embedded in the engine house walls can be seen, and there would also have been cast-iron transmission boxes in the walls, to take the drive shafts through to the mill floors. The engines were supplied by Messrs J.Musgrave of Bolton, who also supplied the line shafting, which transmitted power around the building. Belts drove the machinery from the overhead shafting, shown in historic photographs (Fig.12) and on historic plans (Leigh 1873)(Fig.9)

The engine house was top-lit by a raised timber roof-light; this still exists although the glazing has been blocked (Figs.23 and 27). The engine house roof is supported on latticed iron beams. The boiler house to the north-west of the engine house, was at basement level and contained eight boilers, each served by a shaped stone doorway (Fig.22) in the north-west wall. These were served by a tramway bringing coal from the Rylands' colliery (Figs.2 and 3). Behind the boiler house to the north-east the raw cotton was brought into the mill on the top floor, on the middle floor initial cleaning and preparation was undertaken and on the ground floor was a mechanics shop. These areas were separated from the main mill floors by a fireproof brick wall, as the initial processes often resulted in fires. The fine free-standing chimney is red brick in three unequal stages, with a square base, octagonal second stage and cylindrical shaft; it has been shortened, probably in the early 20th century. The base and second stage are decorated with recessed panels of coloured brick (Fig.16).

2.3.4 The weaving sheds

In the 1880s a workforce of 1,300 worked at 1,600 looms in the weaving sheds, most of them women and girls, producing 300-400,000 yards of calicoes, twills and cloth per week. The single-storey weaving sheds were erected in two stages: the first phase are located to the north-east and are trapezoidal in plan, with outer brick walls and north-light roofs supported on cast-iron columns, with slate on the south-facing pitches (Fig.14). The internal cast-iron columns have simply decorated heads carrying timber beams that support the roof. In 1852 the *Manchester City News* reported the sheds as measuring 540ft x 196ft, supported on 408 pillars. The second phase, adjacent to the mill and erected some time between 1876 and 1892, is rectangular in plan with similar north-light roofs. These roofs now have corrugated asbestos to the south pitches; originally slate. Both groups are shown on the 1894 OS map (Fig.3). The outer north-east wall of the sheds functions as the site boundary and has the same polychrome brickwork decoration as the rest of the mill buildings.

A second engine house was constructed adjacent to the reservoir and later weaving sheds in 1905, probably replacing an earlier engine house for the weaving sheds (Fig.28). The brick-faced building is L-plan with a gable-end facing west into the yard, with 1905 inscribed on a date-stone. It is much altered and all machinery has been removed; its function and operation is not fully understood. The full-height internal volume behind the front gable contains

some substantial steel beams and other fixings associated with the installation of steam engines. The 1905 building adjoins a 2-storey flat-roofed ancillary building, to the south-east; this has the same polychrome decoration as the original buildings and appears to be part of the first phase of construction although its roof must have been altered (Fig.16). This is contiguous with the north end of the weaving sheds and has goods doorways on both floors, suggesting that it may have been used for the despatch of finished goods via the railway.

2.3.5 Other structures

An invoice for the construction of the Building, dated 18 December 1868 (Fig.7) suggests that the initial construction included a warehouse and offices; a report in the *Manchester City News* (1865) confirms that this was partly constructed over the lodge (reservoir) 'supported by 74 stone pillars' (Fig.13 and 31). The latter are extant but the warehouses were replaced in the post-war years by modern sheds. The invoice also refers to a railway hall (perhaps for unloading under-cover), store rooms, and a gas works (sited to the north-east of the site to supply lighting). The invoice lists the railway bridge built to convey wagons across the stone-lined lodge from the colliery sidings into the mill and to carry cotton; this significant structure still remains although the timber super-structure appears to be in poor condition (Fig.31).

A small two-storey brick building was erected on the south-west boundary of the site between the publication of the 1910 and 1922 OS maps. On the 1955 OS survey it is named as an electricity sub-station (Fig.6); the mill was converted to electric power in 1915, a date consistent with the appearance of the building (Fig.29). It is plain in detail, faced in red brick, with large segmental-headed windows and a flat roof. Internally it is lined with cream and brown glazed tiles and has two cast-iron staircases (Fig.30)

2.3.5 The Architect

George Woodhouse was born in 1829 in Lindley, near Huddersfield, West Yorkshire was articled to James Whittaker, a leading Bolton architect, in the 1850s. Woodhouse practiced from Bolton for most of his life, and kept many of his first commissions close to home, designing several chapels in Lindley and a wide range of buildings in Bolton. His buildings were designed in a range of styles from classical to Italianate; good examples of public buildings by him in Bolton include the former Courts on Mawdsley Street, and in Oldham he designed the Town Hall addition. He was particularly prominent as a mill architect, his obituary stating that 'perhaps he has been connected with the building of more mills than any other man in Lancashire'. Notable designs includes Victoria Mill in north Manchester for William Holland, 1869 (listed grade II*, now offices and apartments), Bliss Tweed Mill in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, 1872 (listed grade II*, now apartments), and the Sunnyside Mills in Farnworth for Tootal, Broadhurst & Lee, 1870s (mostly demolished in the 1980s). After his death in

1883, his obituary suggested that he also designed the first cotton mill to be built in the Midlands, at Nuneaton, in 1861, and that mills in Canada were erected from his designs and specifications.

Although Woodhouse had a successful solo career, he also partnered Edward Potts between 1861 and 1872, with whom he designed extensions to Oldham Town Hall (1879-80, listed grade II), and Rochdale Union Workhouse in Littleborough (1873-7). Bolton Town Hall (listed grade II*) was designed by William Hill of Leeds, but with Woodhouse acting as the project architect, in 1873.

2.4 Alterations in the late 20th century

The Building was last used as a mill by Rylands in 1954. The Building was initially used by Great Universal Stores (a mail order firm). During their occupation, the manager's house, to the south-west corner of the site (Fig.8) was demolished and replaced with a two-storey office building, linked to the main building with a first floor enclosed bridge (Fig.17). Air photographs from the 1980s also show a covered loading bay along the south east elevation, as well as the large hoist enclosure on the north-west elevation. It is also likely that the original entrance gates and gate piers were removed after the mill closed, to allow access for larger goods vehicles.

The site was acquired by Wigan College of Technology, for teaching and offices in 1986. The 2-storey 1960s building was partly used as a crèche by the college, and for administration. The Building was altered for the College in 1987. The most significant addition is the glass and brick stair-tower on the front elevation, which obscured part of the front elevation and intrudes into views along the front of the mill (Figs.15 and 18). Internally much of the structure remains, although some walls were lined and partition walls and suspended ceilings inserted. The ground floor of the engine house was used as a conference hall, with the canteen on an upper (inserted) floor. A full-height staircase was inserted at the south end of the mill, cutting through floors. The weaving sheds and portal frame buildings to the north provided workshop teaching areas, with few changes other than additional lighting. Some mill windows have been replaced with uPVC double-glazing, but many of the original 12-pane timber windows have been retained (Fig.20).

2.5 Setting and Mesnes Park

The Building is located on an elevated site at around 50 metres above sea level, and approximately half a mile to the north west of the centre of Wigan. The west coast main line railway runs north to south along the west edge of the park. The mill overlooks Mesnes Park to the south-west, with early 20th century residential areas to the north and east (Fig.6). The mill site is separated from the park by a low stone wall with weathered copings and iron railings with spear-heads,

probably dating from the 1870s (Fig.32). The north-east boundary wall is a distinctive polychrome brick wall that forms the outer wall of the phase 2 weaving sheds; a back lane runs along the northern part of this wall against its north-east side. To the north of the mill lodge and separating it from the Wigan and Leigh College site is an unattractive open area of former industrial land, with poor quality fencing. During World War II air raids shelters were built below the north west part of the site, cut into the slope above Mesnes Park.

Mesnes Park is an important part of Wigan's 19th-century history and development; the arrival of the railways and rapid industrial and commercial growth resulted in little open space or greenery for the growing population. The site of the park was initially proposed for development, but 16 acres of the site was purchased by the town in 1871, to provide for a public park. The park was formally opened on 6 August 1878, designed by John McLean of Castle Donnington. It is the principal designed open space in Wigan.

Mesnes Park was designated as a conservation area in August 1980, and its boundary was extended in November 1984 to include Bridgeman Terrace and Gidlow Mill. Only the three-storey mill, excluding the weaving sheds to the north east, is included in the conservation area. The Park itself is listed Grade II on the English Register of Historic Parks and Gardens, and contains seven listed buildings; it has recently been restored with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

3. SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Significance

- The Building is significant as a fine example of a large 19th-century integrated mill complex, built for cotton spinning and the manufacturer of cotton fabrics. It is a good example of a mill designed to be served by railway transport, and was directly connected to the owner's collieries.

- It is significant for its association with John Rylands, the cotton magnate whose business empire became the largest in the region and at its peak was the largest cotton firm in the world. The great wealth created by the family's business enabled the building of the John Rylands library on Deansgate, Manchester as a memorial to John Rylands after his death.

- George Woodhouse, the original architect, was a well-regarded Bolton architect and is best known for his numerous mills, notable for their exuberant style and imposing scale; Victoria Mill, Manchester and Bliss Mill, Oxfordshire are among the best. He also designed chapels and civic buildings in the region.

- The Building makes a positive contribution to the setting of Mesnes Park and to the conservation area of the same name, designated in 1980. The south-west frontage of the mill provides an imposing backdrop to the park, currently marred by the 1980s addition.

- The mill's structure of cast-iron columns and brick vaulting is significant, and this survives on all floors.

- Also of special interest is the structure of the engine house and boiler house, and the physical evidence of the original mill function where expressed within the fabric and form of the Building.

- The roof structure is significant as it appears to be the original, and the raised roof light over the engine house is of particular significance.

- Internal historic finishes including the plaster soffits on the upper floor, and the lime-washed/painted finish to walls and brick soffits – this was intended to enhance internal light levels.

- The external elevations with their polychrome brick decoration and stone moulded details, the turrets, stair towers, parapets, hoist, loading bays and windows are all of special interest.

- The weaving sheds are an important integral part of the mill complex; weaving sheds are particularly vulnerable to clearance and many examples have been lost in recent years in the North West. The phase one sheds are most significant as these were built with the mill. The structure of the sheds including the cast-iron columns and roof structure is of special interest, together with external walls and slate roof coverings.

- Significant ancillary structures include the vaulted structure over the reservoir, railway bridge, the chimney, and the boundary walls and railings. The 1905 engine house and inter-war sub station are later additions and of less architectural importance, although they are historically important and reflect the evolution of the power supply for the mill.

- Any surviving services such as dry risers or cast-iron pipework related to the boilers, steam engines and water management within the mill are of special interest. Cast-iron features such as brackets, transmission boxes, engine house features are significant as evidence for the mill's historic function. Internal joinery is rare within the mill, but where historic doors or panelled cupboards (related to dry-risers) exist, these are significant.

- The Building is important for its part in the social history of Wigan; generations of Wigan families worked at the mill in its heyday.

- The Building's national significance is reflected in its listing in Grade II; it was listed in 1996 (Appendix 1). Grade II listed buildings account for around 92% of a total of approximately 400,000 buildings or structures in England. Listed buildings are listed by English Heritage on behalf of the Secretary of State and protected by legislation under the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

4. SCOPE FOR CHANGE

4.1 Areas for retention

Under section 16 of the 1990 (Planning and Listed Buildings) Act local authorities have a duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their features and settings. The Buildings' features of special interest are referred to in the significance section (3.1). The guidance in PPG15 (Planning and the Historic Environment 1985) explains that there is a presumption in favour of preserving listed buildings, and a compelling case has to be made for alteration or demolition (section 3.3 and 3.4). Annex C of PPG15 provides guidance on the treatment of particular features. The Buildings' most significant features including the exterior and interior structure, parts of the roof, the chimney, the phase one weaving sheds, the lodge and vaulted structure over it and ancillary buildings such as later power generation buildings will be retained.

The removal of some significant features will be essential to enable the new use to be practicable or viable. These aspects of the proposals will be justified against criteria on demolition in PPG15 (paragraphs 3.5 and 3.17-3.19).

4.2 Areas with potential for change

Parts of the mill have been altered by changes made in the 20th century. The front entrance lobby with staircase and lift is 1980s addition for the College. Removing this would enhance the mill exterior, particularly in views from Mesne Park and along the frontage from within the site. Full mobility access will be needed for the new use and new lifts will be required; the current proposal is to install these in the proposed internal atria.

The large 20th century hoist enclosure to the north-west of the building intrudes into views of the mill from the north and its removal would enhance this side of the Building.

Most floors have been altered to varying degrees with suspended ceilings, linings and partitions inserted to create enclosed office and teaching areas. These later insertions and finishes have no special interest and their removal provides an opportunity to expose more of the original mill features.

The post-war office block does not complement the appearance of the Building and its setting, and its removal and replacement with a new building could enhance this part of the site.

The post-war sheds above the reservoir have no significance and could be removed and replaced with new buildings, built on the historic vaulted structure, subject to structural considerations and minimising damage. The railway bridge requires a conditions survey and repair although there is scope to remove the

timber structure and replace it with new timber decking or similar, subject to archaeological recording and the stone piers being retained.

The entrance from Bridgeman Terrace has been altered and the historic features and layout removed. This area is unresolved at present and to enhance the setting of the Building, a new entrance to create a sense of arrival would be beneficial. The landscaping of the site is in need of investment, including the boundaries and hard surfaces. The introduction of too much soft landscaping could be inappropriate in this industrial setting; the park already a green 'foil' to the Building.

The reservoir is currently hard to appreciate due to the growth of self-set trees and vegetation around its perimeter; there is scope to open-up views of the water by managing and clearing vegetation, subject to an ecological assessment. The stone lining and walls will need appropriate repair.

There is scope to adjust ground levels at the north end of the Building to improve views of the former boiler house openings, and light levels to new accommodation at basement level.

5 . IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS

5.1 Summary of the proposals

The proposals are for refurbishment and repairs, partial demolition and alterations in connection with the proposed residential use of the Buildings. This report should be read in conjunction with plans submitted by Howard and Seddon, and with the other reports to be submitted by Emery Planning Partnership and other consultants.

The proposed works include the removal of previous alterations and insertions such as partitions, suspended ceilings and linings, with the exposure and restoration wherever possible of historic features such as the internal structure, staircases, vaulted ceiling soffits and cast-iron structural elements.

The intention is to create high quality apartments with a distinctive character within the historic layout, with exposed features such as brick vaulting and columns. A total of 142 units are proposed in the mill (Block B), with 44 in the weaving sheds (Block A) and 15 units in the extended former sub station (Block D). Some demolition is proposed, particularly to the phase two weaving sheds (see 5.1.7), and within the mill where light wells will be cut through the structure and areas of roof replaced with roof-level apartments (5.1.2 to 5.16).

5.2 Mill (Block B)

5.2.1 Summary

142 new apartments will be created in the main mill building, arranged around the perimeter of each floor. The main entrance into the mill will be on the south-west elevation, in the position of the existing 1980s entrance. This will lead into a central circulation area, connected to four internal light wells. Existing historic staircases will be retained, with additional stairs and new lifts installed centrally, between the two light wells in the main body of the mill, and within the structural grid. Plastered soffits to vaulted ceilings, cast iron columns and beams will be retained and exposed as part of the scheme. New floors will be laid over the existing, to take services, sound and fire separation.

5.2.2 Light wells

Two new light wells are proposed to be cut through the main mill floors, one in the former engine house and one in the area above the former boiler house on the north part of the mill, to provide light and ventilation to the inner faces of the apartments. The light well construction will involve the removal of brick vaulted floor structure, but the cast-iron beams and columns will be retained. This will affect the fabric and spatial character of the interior. The justification for this proposal is that the depth of the mill makes it hard to provide attractive, well-lit dwellings; a similar approach was taken at Houldsworth Mill, Reddish a Grade II* listed mill. The light wells will be top-lit by new glazed roofs with louvred ventilation, designed as a ventilated space for Building Regulations purposes. The

light well proposed in the engine house effectively reinstates part of the former full height volume of this area by removing areas of inserted floors; a positive proposal.

5.2.3 Basement – former boiler house

Four single-aspect duplex apartments will be created in the area of the former basement boiler house in the mill (Block B), utilising the large stone openings facing north-west for a new entrance and windows. The subdivision of the interior will affect the spatial character of this area, although this was previously subdivided for the College. The rear (southern) internal area of the basement is not suitable for habitable accommodation due to the low ceiling heights; this may be used for residents' storage.

5.2.4 Ground floor

Each ground floor apartment will occupy two bays within the grid, with an inserted mezzanine floor for bedrooms. The outer edge of the mezzanine floors will be set back from the outside wall of the mill, to provide a full-height volume in front of the windows and to reduce the external impact. This will affect the spatial character of the ground floor, but historic structure will remain visible. Apartment entrances will be from the light wells.

5.2.5 First floor

New apartments will be provided around the perimeter of the mill, each apartment occupying two structural bays of the grid and reached from circulation areas around the light wells. A gym and other resident amenities are proposed on each floor level within the former engine house, towards the mill interior. Existing staircases will serve as escape stairs.

5.2.6 Second floor

New apartments will be provided around the perimeter as on other floors, reached from circulation areas around the light wells. The existing plastered shallow vaulted ceilings at this level are attached to the soffit of the roof structure and the removal of the latter may affect these historic ceilings, although their retention is proposed. The cast iron columns and beams below the roof will be retained as part of the new second floor structure.

5.2.7 Roofs

The roof structure will be retained and repaired over the former engine house and the historic glazed lantern repaired and reinstated, to provide top-lighting to a new light well. This proposal will remove a large section of inserted floor in the formerly full-height space, reinstating an important aspect of the historic fabric and spatial character of this area, lost since the early 20th century. All the roof coverings are in poor condition and require complete renewal, with remedial work to rainwater disposal systems and timber structure, referred to in the report by Anthony Grimshaw Associates.

The remaining roofs to the mill are proposed to be removed and replaced with a single-storey level of apartments – a new third floor, arranged around light wells and reached by lifts or staircases. The new light wells will have low-pitched glazed roofs with louvred ventilation. The removal of the roof structure is a major intervention in the fabric of the mill, entailing the loss of original roof structure and form. However, the roof is not a significant part of the visual appearance or external architecture of the building, as it is concealed behind a parapet and it cannot easily be seen in views of the mill (Fig.11). In contrast to the decorative treatment of the elevations, the roof is purely functional in design. The justification for the replacement of the roof will be referred to in supporting documents.

5.2.8 Exterior of mill

The post-war and 1980s additions and the phase two weaving sheds are proposed for removal; external brickwork and openings will be made good to match existing, and repairs undertaken according to appropriate specifications provided by Anthony Grimshaw Associates. The removal of these elements will enhance views of the mill building, particularly along the main south-west frontage and in views from the park.

New upvc double-glazed windows are proposed, to comply with current thermal standards, and to a pattern compatible with the historic 12-pane windows. This entails the removal of existing single-glazed windows, including historic windows. The overall appearance of the fenestration will be maintained by using the same proportions and number of panes, although the detail will be changed. The mill's scale is robust enough to accommodate this change. New entrance doorways will be created on the north-west and south-west elevations, with a new 1:15 ramp to the latter and new canopies or other features provided to emphasise the entrances in the elevations.

The historic roof structure over the engine house will be retained, repaired and re-slated and the lantern glazing repaired and reinstated, over a new light well (see 5.2.7). The rest of the existing roof structure is proposed for removal and replacement with a new level of apartments. This entails the loss of a large proportion of the historic roof, although this roof is not seen in most views of the mill. The justification for this aspect of the proposals will be provided in other supporting documents. The new flats will each have access to a wide terrace behind the existing parapet, minimising the visual impact of the roof extension in distant views. A contemporary design is proposed, with a horizontal emphasis and low-pitched roofs. An aluminium composite external cladding with glazing is proposed. New light wells will be roofed with a shallow-pitched glazed roof with louvres (see proposed section drawing ref. 43D and 55B). Visual images submitted with the application illustrate the impact of the new roof in views from Mesne Park.

5.3 Weaving sheds (Block A)

The weaving sheds are divided into two phases. It is proposed to retain as much as possible of the phase one sheds (Block A) to the north-east of the site, creating 40 houses and four apartments. The proposals are as follows:

- Sections of the structure and roof covering are proposed for removal to create access and small private garden areas for each of the dwellings.
- New two-storey dwellings are to be arranged in groups, divided by open courtyards.
- The cast-iron frame will be retained within the dwellings, and a similar roof profile provided with slate roof covering.
- The north-east boundary wall will be retained and repaired. The inner, south wall of the phase two sheds facing the mill will be retained in sections for at least 50% of its length, with other sections removed to create permeability between the enclosed amenity areas and the car park and new access road. Brickwork that is currently painted will be cleaned to a suitable specification.
- New first floors will be inserted to provide upper floors in the town houses. New external elevations for the dwellings are to be treated in a contemporary manner with timber, glazing or other cladding materials.
- The phase two sheds, in-filling the space between the mill and the phase one sheds will be removed to enable former eternal walls to be exposed and windows used, and the cleared area to be used for car parking. The external wall of the mill and weaving sheds will be repaired and fabric made good. Cleaning of brickwork will be part of this work, to an agreed specification.

The loss of areas of weaving shed will erode the integrity of the sheds as a whole, but by retaining external walls and creating 44 dwellings within existing structure, their form and scale will still be apparent. Full recording will be arranged in mitigation. The landscape scheme designed for this area will retain some of the cast iron structure as part of the design, to create attractive communal garden areas.

5.4 1905 engine house and adjoining building to the south (Block H)

The slated roof over the engine house is in very poor condition and will be renewed. 22 apartments will be created in the refurbished L-plan building, with two new floors inserted into the full height space. The rhomboidal flat-roofed 2-storey range to the south of the engine house is to be retained and converted to residential use with a total of 22 apartments. Access to the latter block will be from new entrances on the north-west and north-east elevations, the latter from the new car park within the former weaving shed area. A roof extension to provide a second floor of accommodation will be added onto the existing flat roof, set back from the parapet with a roof terrace. This new level will be clad in a composite aluminium cladding system, with a flat roof. The elevations will be repaired, retaining existing openings, with three new windows and a doorway proposed on the gabled frontage of Block H to the ground floor. The principal

external impact will be the roof extension; this does not entail a loss of historic fabric.

5.5 1915 electricity sub station (Block D)

This brick block is proposed to be refurbished and extended to create 22 apartments on three floors. A roof extension will enable a new second floor level, added to the flat roof, and currently asphalted. This new level of apartments will be flat-roofed with upvc double-glazed windows. An extension will be added to the north side, designed in a contrasting contemporary manner, using render and glazing and with a recessed, glazed stair tower between old and new; the form and appearance of the original building will still be legible.

5.6 Reservoir

The 20th century sheds built over the reservoir will be demolished and replaced with new housing (block E). It is proposed to retain the arched brick structure on stone piers over the reservoir, but until the sheds are removed it will not be possible to fully assess the condition of the historic structure. Block E will be built using a light-weight timber-framed structure to minimise loads on the vaulted structure. The structure supporting the historic tramway or railway line will also be retained, with new timber to replace decayed timber structure where necessary, to support a deck for residents. The reservoir lining will be repaired as necessary, new safety railings provided and self-set trees and shrubs removed to open-up views of the reservoir.

5.7 Boundaries and landscape

The north-east boundary is formed by the external wall of the weaving sheds with a zig-zag profile (Block A); this will be repaired and retained, with additional support where necessary. The iron railings along the boundary with Mesnes Park will be retained and repaired to enhance the setting of the Buildings and the park. Access into the park for residents will be provided via an electronically controlled entrance at the top of the steps within the park. Selected trees will be removed to open views up between the mill and park with some new tree planting, as part of the hard and soft landscaping proposals designed by Urban Jungle. A new boundary will be provided to the west, as part of the landscape design of the site. A new gated entrance will be created from Bridgeman Terrace to the south-east of the site, with another gated entrance to the north-east off Walkden Avenue.

6 LISTED BUILDING LEGISLATION & PPG15 CONTEXT

6.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The national legislative framework for listed buildings is provided by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; often referred to as the Listed Buildings Act. This states that there is a duty on local authorities to "*have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest*" (section 16 (2)). The definition of the listed building includes the principal historic building (as identified by the list description), and all objects and structures fixed to it, or within its curtilage (if built before July 1948).

6.2 PPG15 (Planning Policy Guidance) context

Government guidance in *Planning and the Historic Environment, PPG15,* provides advice to local authorities and applicants on the implementation of the 1990 Act. Proposals for alterations to listed buildings are judged against the guidance in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.12-3.15, with additional guidance on demolition proposals in paragraphs 3.17 to 3.19. Proposals for demolition have to be justified against the criteria in para. 3.19, in addition to para.3.5, to take account of the importance of the building, its features and setting, physical condition, the cost of repair, alternative uses and community benefits. Para.3.4 states that applicants must be able to justify their proposals and show why works to listed buildings are desirable or necessary. PPG15 para. 3.9 advises that a new use requires balancing economic viability against the impact of changes on the special interest of the building. The optimum viable use is one that is compatible with the fabric, interior and setting of the building.

The impact of the current proposals is summarised in section 5, with additional information provided in the Design & Access Statement. The proposed residential use is considered to be the optimum viable use for the Buildings, now that the College has vacated the site. The benefits of this new use include securing a long-term use for the Buildings, under continuing ownership and management by MCR Property. The removal of external lift towers, finishes and partitions installed in the 1980s for the College use will enhance the character of the historic building and its impact on the conservation area. The benefits of the scheme also include the retention and maintenance of ancillary structures such as the chimney and lodge, to enable the integrity of the whole complex to be retained.

The principal changes to the mill (Block B) are the removal of most of the roof structure, a new single-storey roof extension for apartments and the insertion of light wells, to provide lifts, natural light and ventilation to the core of the mill. These changes will result in a loss of historic fabric; the reason for this part of the scheme will be referred to in other supporting documents

Other changes to the mill include new double glazed mill windows and new roof coverings and insulation for the north-light sheds, are required to address energy conservation.

Converting weaving sheds to new uses, including residential use, is challenging due to energy conservation, planning policy for new dwellings, the Building Regulations and due to the scale and depth of the sheds. Options to retain them have been explored and the current proposals provide a balance between conservation and other policy issues. Section 5.3 summarises the impact on Block A. The aim has been to identify the optimum viable use and design that is compatible with the historic form and character of the weaving sheds (PPG15 3.9), whilst ensuring that the scheme is economically viable and complies with other legislation.

The loss of the phase two weaving sheds against the north side of the mill is important to provide natural light and ventilation to ground floor apartments, with appropriate repairs to the original external walls, and to create space for parking. Arrangements will be made for an archaeological record (PPG15 3.23).

6.3 Impact on the conservation area

The national legislative framework for development in conservation areas is provided by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This states that there is a duty on local authorities to pay special attention to the "*the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance*" of conservation areas (section 72 (1)). The refurbishment of this building will generally enhance the conservation area, by ensuring the property remains in active, viable use and through the proposed programme of repairs and refurbishment to the exterior.

The new roof level apartments will have a low horizontal character and as they will be set behind the mill parapets their visual impact on views from Mesnes Park will be low. The impact on views from the park will be illustrated in visual information accompanying the application. Linkages between the site and park will be enhanced by providing residents of the mill complex with secure access into the park, and by selected removal of trees along the boundary.

The settings of nearby listed buildings will not be affected by these proposals.

7. Conclusion

The Buildings on this site form an important historic mill complex, reflected in its listed building status at Grade II. Listed buildings are protected by heritage legislation under local and national policy. The current proposals for residential use represent the latest phase in the life of this former industrial site; since the cotton mill closed it has successively been a distribution warehouse and a College.

This report should be read in conjunction with proposal drawings provided by Howard & Seddon Architects and the Access and Design Statement. The proposals inevitably entail alterations to the Buildings, to create dwellings and amenity spaces; the justification for the level of changes is set out in other supporting documents accompanying the planning and listed building consent applications, to enable the scheme to be considered against local policy and the criteria in PPG15.

The Buildings require significant repairs to fabric and there is now a back-log of repairs and maintenance; Anthony Grimshaw Architects will be providing advice on repair specifications to ensure that the Buildings are appropriately repaired. The removal of intrusive 20th century additions, and proposed boundary and landscape works will enhance the setting and appearance of the Buildings.

The proposals are considered to strike a reasonable balance between the special interest of the Buildings and the need to secure a long-term viable use for the whole site, in a manner that addresses other strands of planning legislation, policy and Building Regulations. Where fabric is proposed to be removed, appropriate recording will be arranged.

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RIBA Biographical file on George Woodhouse

Photographs and historic maps in The History Shop, Wigan

Appendix 1

Listed Building Description

WIGAN
SD50NE
BRIDGEMAN TERRACE
(West side (off))

24-1/5/3
04/11/96

Pagefield Building of Wigan College of Technology

GV II

Formerly known as: Gidlow Mill BRIDGEMAN TERRACE.

Integrated cotton mill, comprising spinning mill with integral boiler and engine house, associated chimney and attached weaving sheds; now part of a college. 1865. By George Woodhouse. For Rylands & Sons; altered and internally remodelled. Main range of red brick in English garden wall bond (3+1) with stridently polychrome bands and ornament in black and yellow brick; roof concealed but consists of multiple ridge structure with Welsh slate covering. Shallow L-plan formed by spinning block on east-west axis with integral boiler house and engine room at west end projecting to the rear, with corner turrets. Italianate style.
EXTERIOR: 3 storeys, 1:4:1:4:1:24:1 windows, the single-window portions being projected turrets rising above parapet level (and the 1st 8 windows of the 24-window main range now enclosed by recently-added full-height glazed porch/stair turret); with a chamfered plinth, broad polychrome bands linking the heads of the windows on all floors, further enriched with black crosses at 1st-floor level and geometric patterns to the upper stages of the turrets. The ground and 1st floors have large segmental-headed windows, the 2nd floor has pairs of round-headed windows, and all have polychrome heads; and the turrets have prominent cornices (some openings altered). Tower to rear.
INTERIOR: fire-proof construction based on brick jack arches, supported on cast-iron columns.
Detached chimney at west end, of brown brick with polychrome dressings and stone cornices, 3 unequal stages, with square base, octagonal 2nd stage and wide cylindrical shaft (reduced): rectangular panels to the base with raised geometric patterns, round-headed blind windows and sunk panels to the 2nd stage, moulded cornices to both, and shaft with one moulded band, 16 steel belts and moulded cornice.
Weaving sheds attached to rear, in 2 portions. The inner, rectangular in plan and the outer trapeziform and larger (30 bays): brick partition and side walls with

stone copings, saw-tooth "north-light" roofs, the outer angled, both glazed but the inner roofed with corrugated asbestos sheet and the outer with Welsh slates. Substantial mill reservoir; stone-lined and enclosed by stone boundary wall to north-west corner of site.

HISTORY: designed for throstle spinning, with throstles at ground floor and preparation rooms above. Gidlow Works was for some time the centre of Rylands and Sons extensive textile business. It is one of a number of similar mill designs produced by Woodhouse, but the only one built in Britain. The use of polychromatic brickwork for mill construction at this time was unusual. Forms a very striking feature on an elevated site immediately north of Mesnes Park.

(Jones E: Industrial Architecture in Britain 1750-1939: 1985- pp.144-145; Williams M & Farnie D: Cotton Mills in Greater Manchester: 1992- pp.34-35 and 97-98).

Listing NGR: SD5788506585

Appendix 2

Historic Maps and images

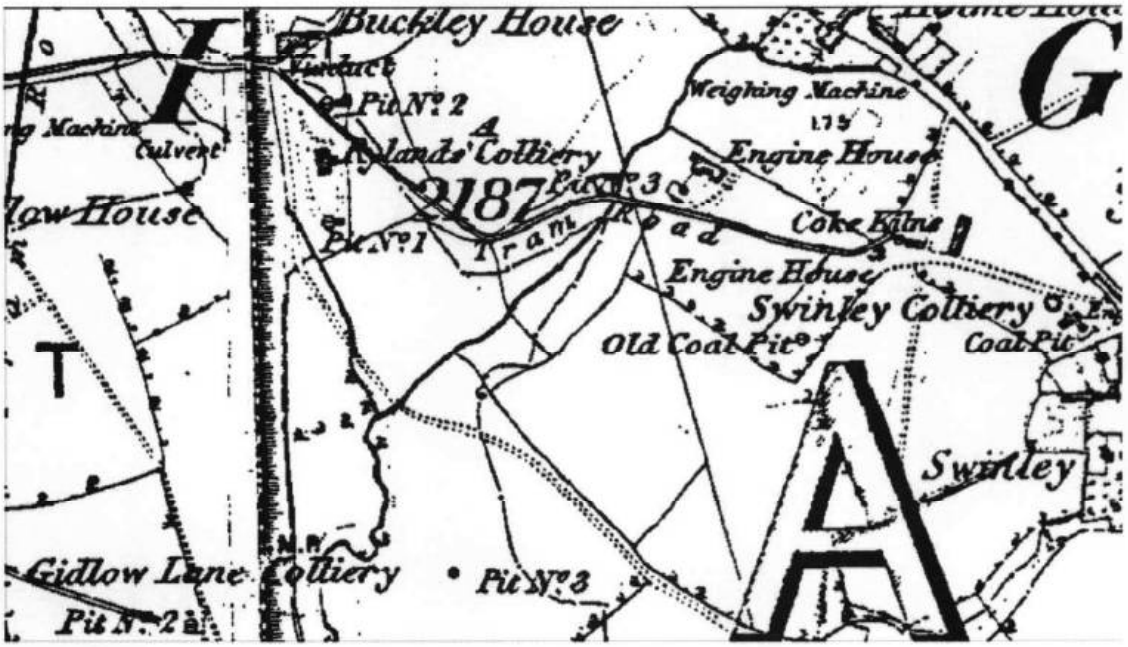


Fig. 1: 1st edition OS map, 1850, showing Rylands colliery and the site of the mill (large triangular area to left of letter A)

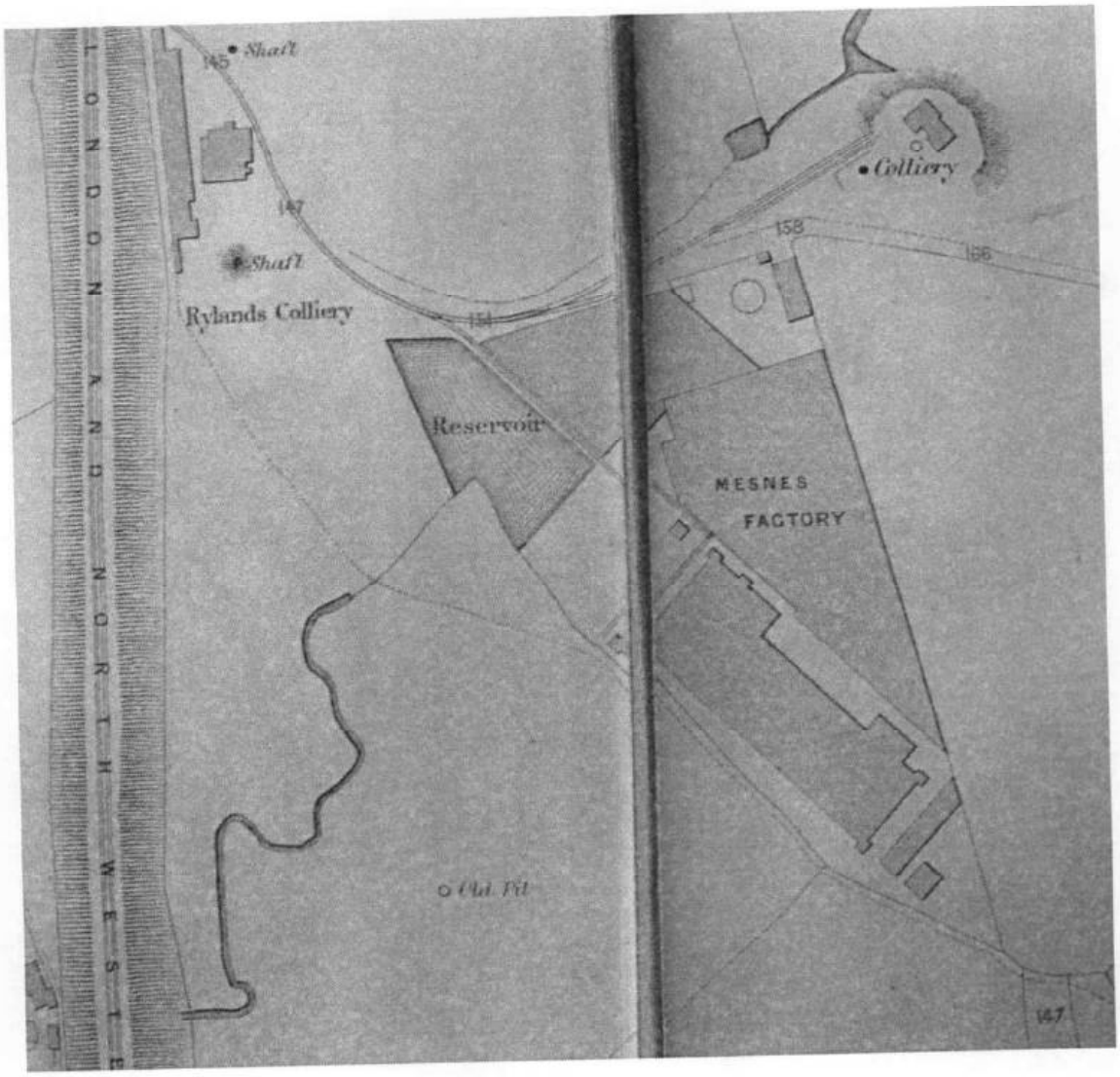


Fig.2: 1876 Hunter map of Wigan showing the Rylands colliery, the mill, buildings over the reservoir and the first group of weaving sheds, separated by a gap (Wigan History Shop)

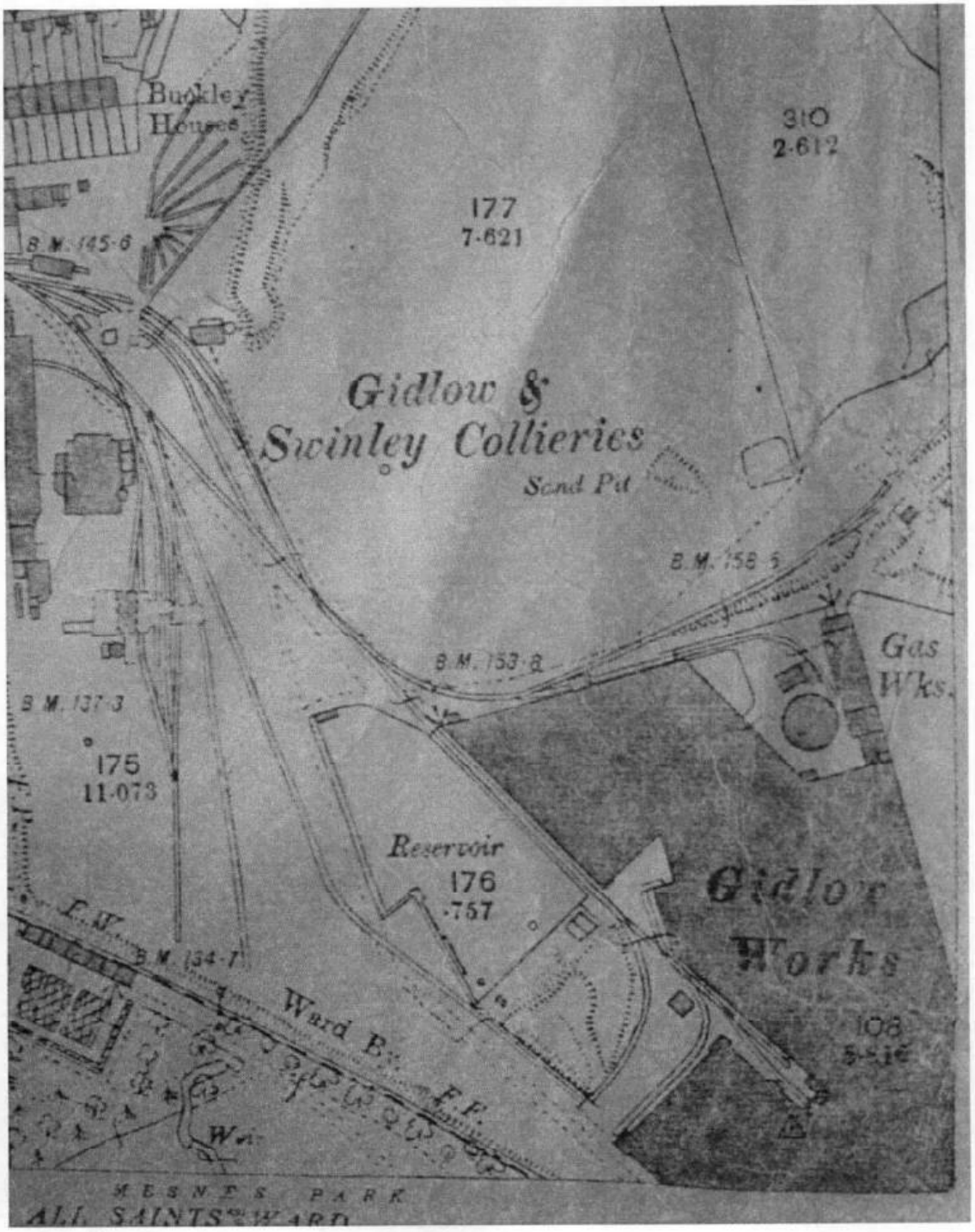


Fig. 3: 1894 OS map, showing part of the mill and the weaving sheds (Wigan History Shop)

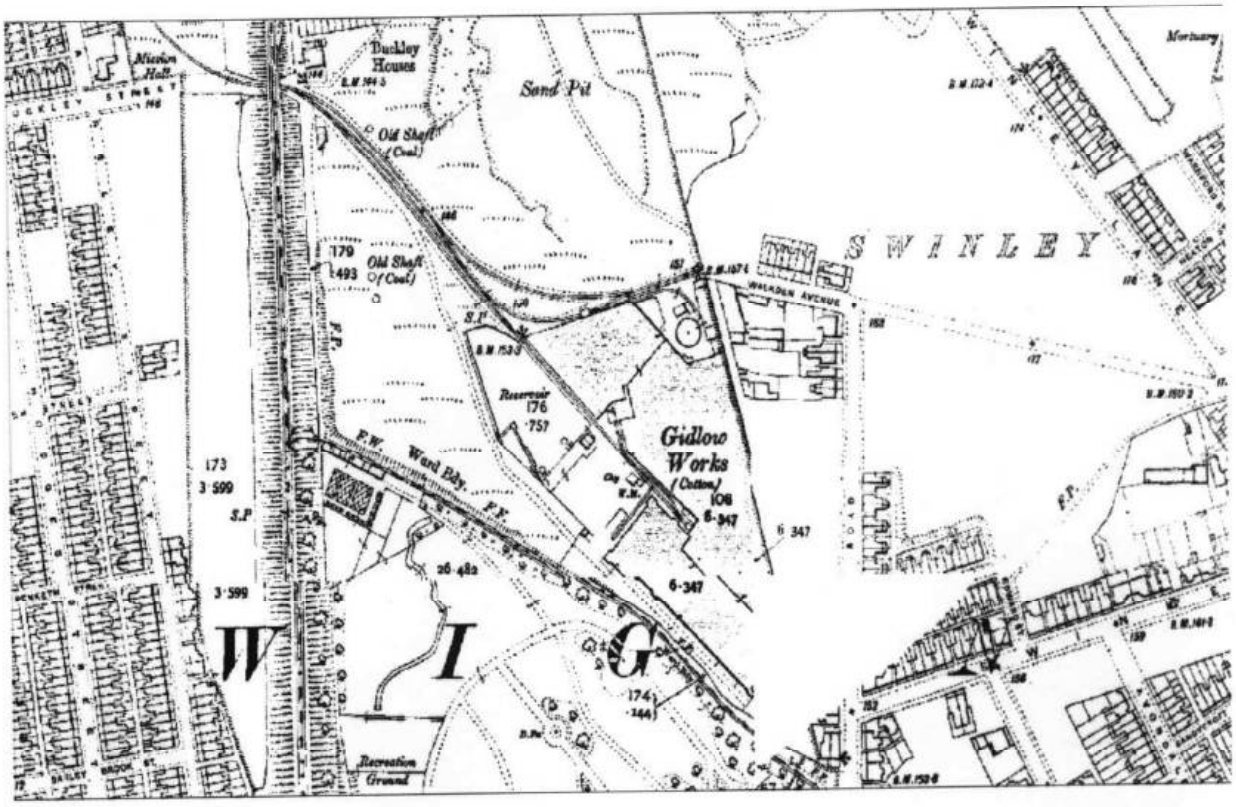


Fig.4: 1907 OS map (Greater Manchester Sites & Monuments Record)

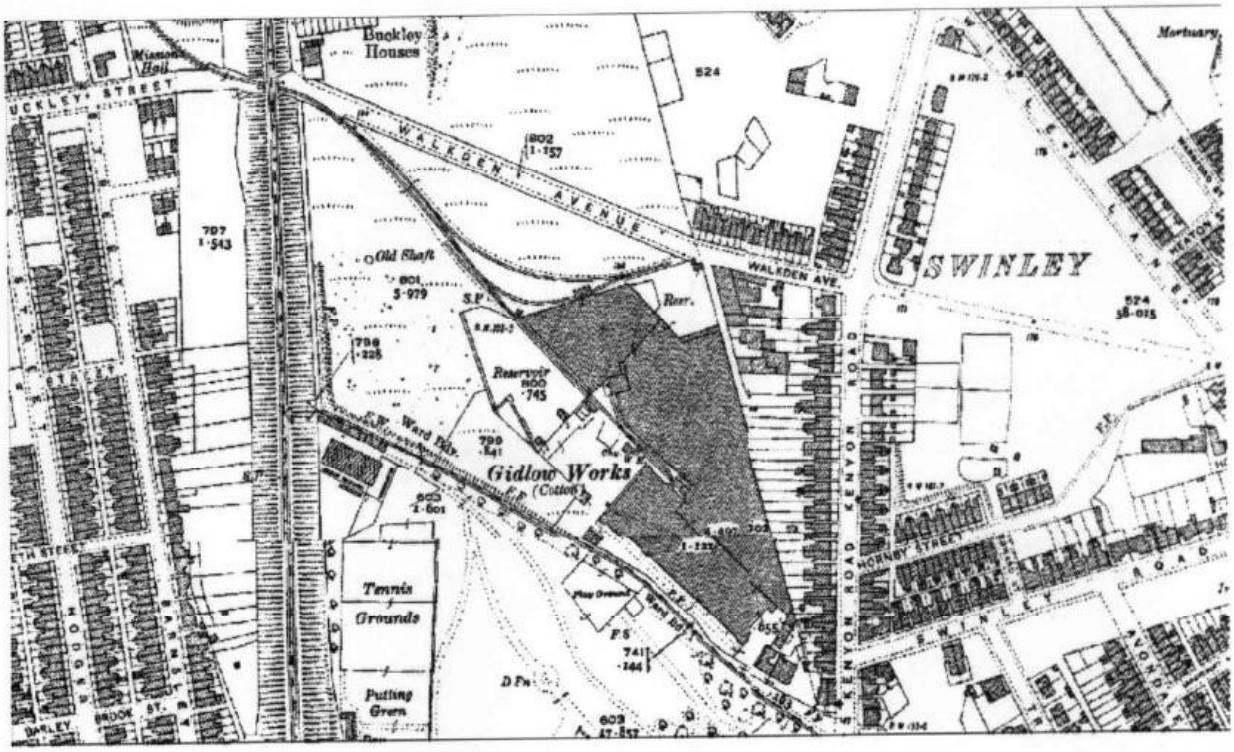


Fig.5: 1922-29 OS map (Greater Manchester Sites & Monuments Record)

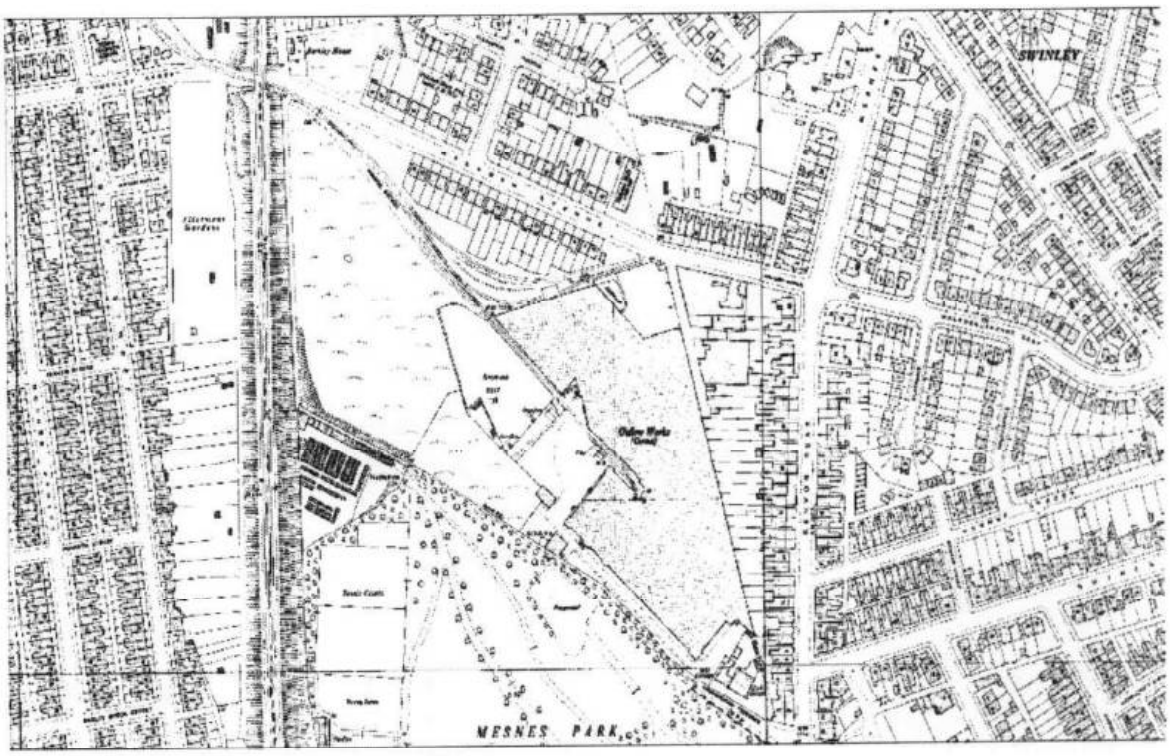
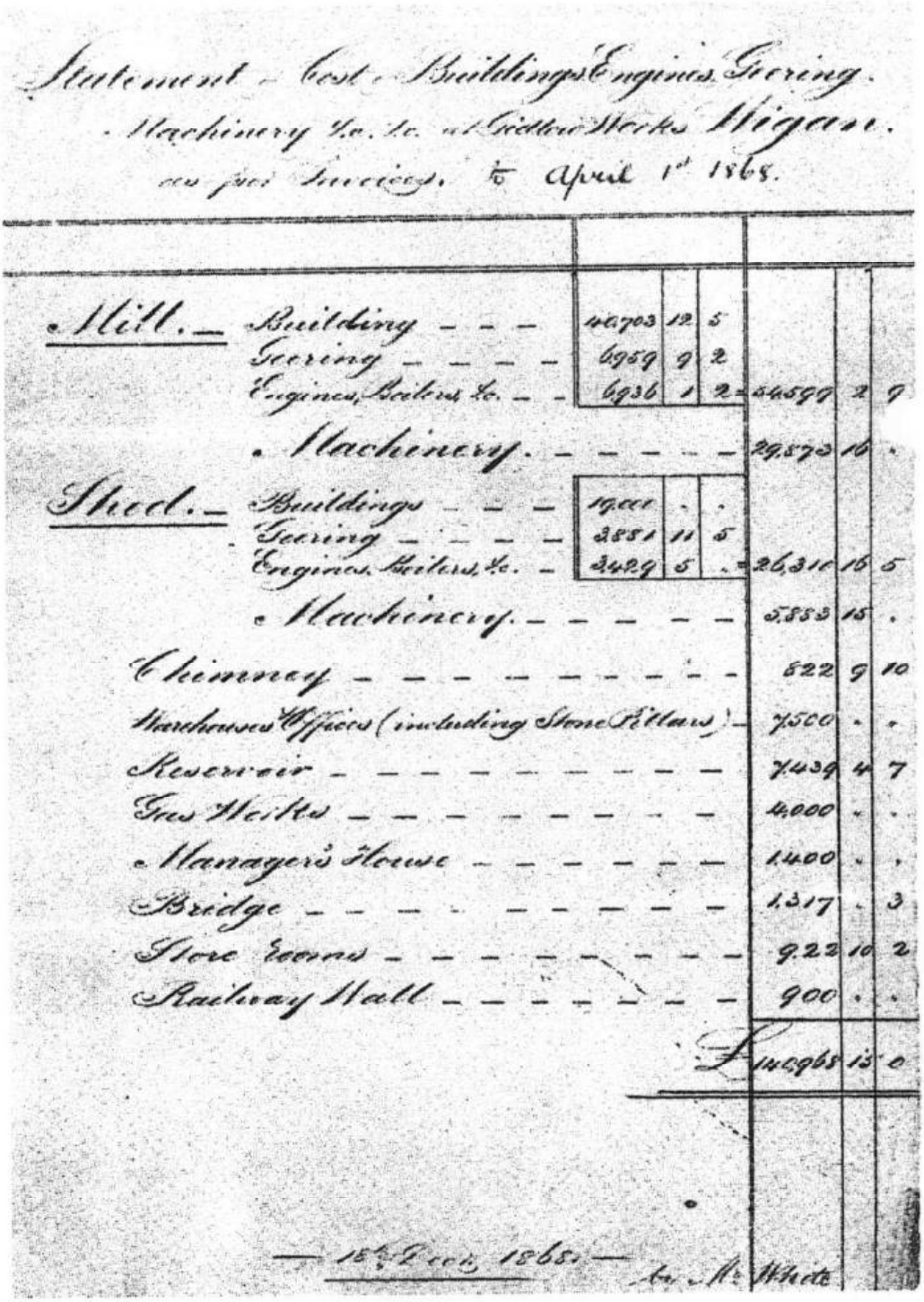


Fig.6: 1955 OS map (Greater Manchester Sites & Monuments Record)



Statement of Cost of Buildings Engines Gearing
Machinery &c. &c. at Griddon Works Wigan.
as per Invoices. to April 1st 1868.

Mill.	Building	14703	12	5			
	Gearing	6959	9	2			
	Engines, Boilers &c.	6936	1	2	44599	2	9
	Machinery				29.573	16	.
Steel.	Buildings	19.00	.	.			
	Gearing	2851	11	5			
	Engines, Boilers &c.	3429	5	.	26,310	16	5
	Machinery				5853	15	.
Chimney					822	9	10
Warehouses Offices (including Stone Pillars)					7500	.	.
Reservoir					7439	4	7
Gas Works					4000	.	.
Managers House					1400	.	.
Bridge					1317	.	3
Store Rooms					922	10	2
Railway Wall					900	.	.
					£ 140968	15	0

— 15th Dec. 1868 — by Mr White

Fig.7: invoice dated 1868 for the mill buildings, machinery, engines etc (E.Jones, 1985)

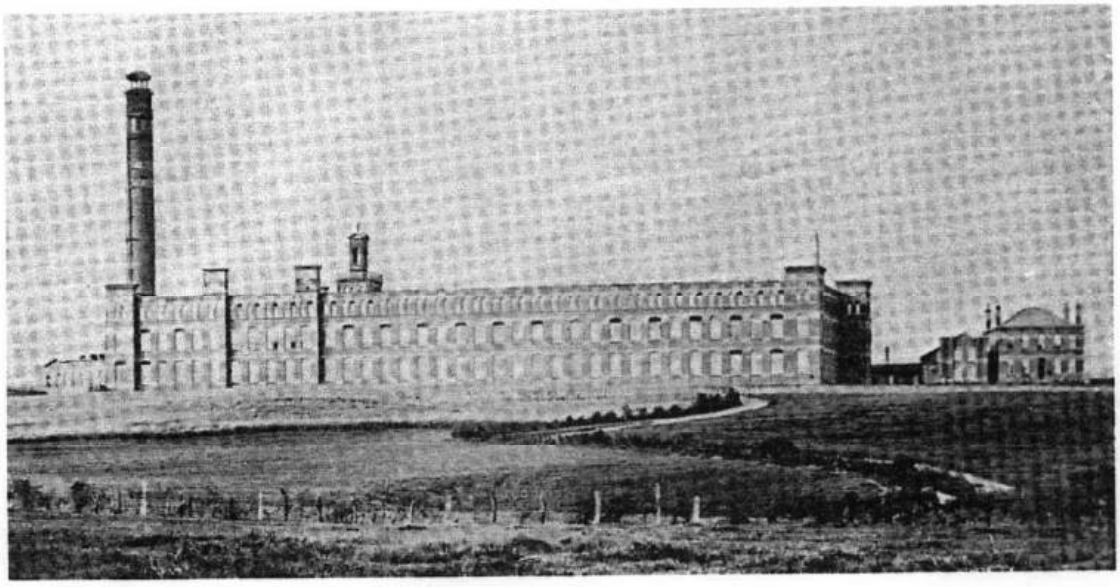


Fig.8: view of Gidlow Mill from the south west, shortly before Mesnes Park was created in 1878, with manager's house to right (from E. Jones, 1985).

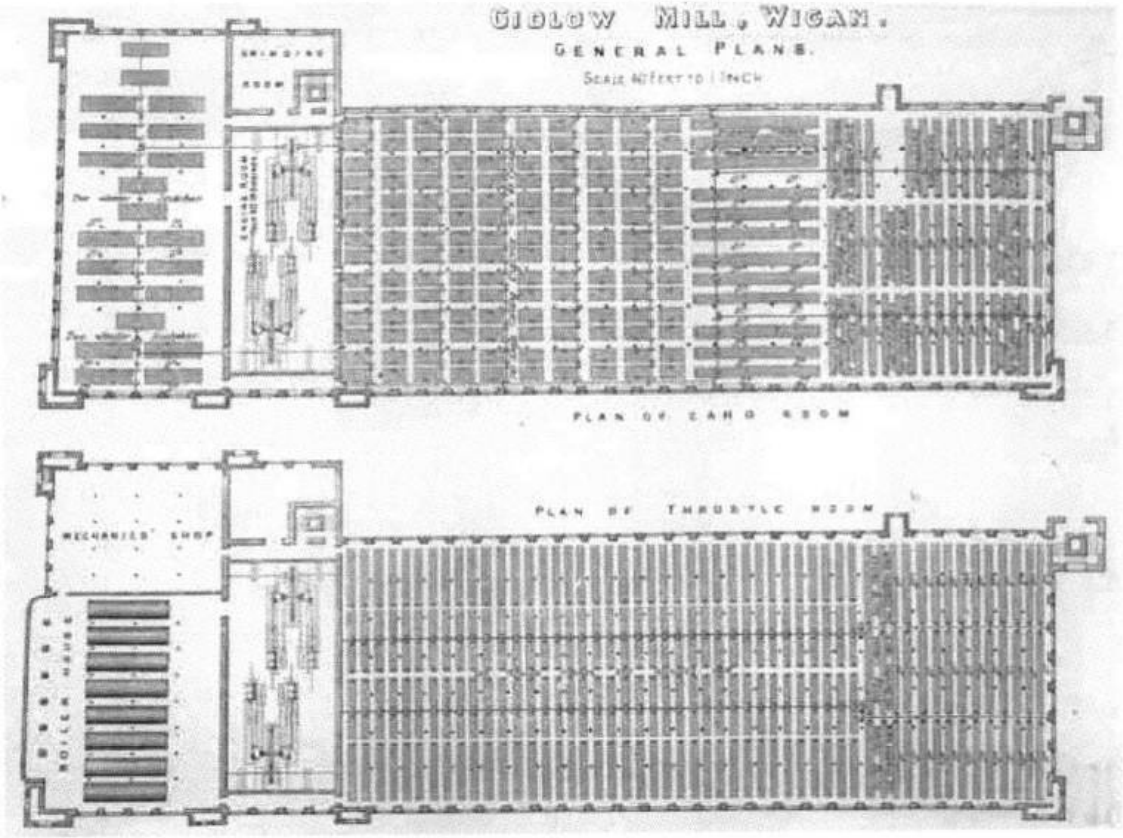


Fig.9: floor plans of the mill showing boilers and engine house to the left, card room on the middle floor (top), and a throstle spinning floor below (E.Leigh, 1873)

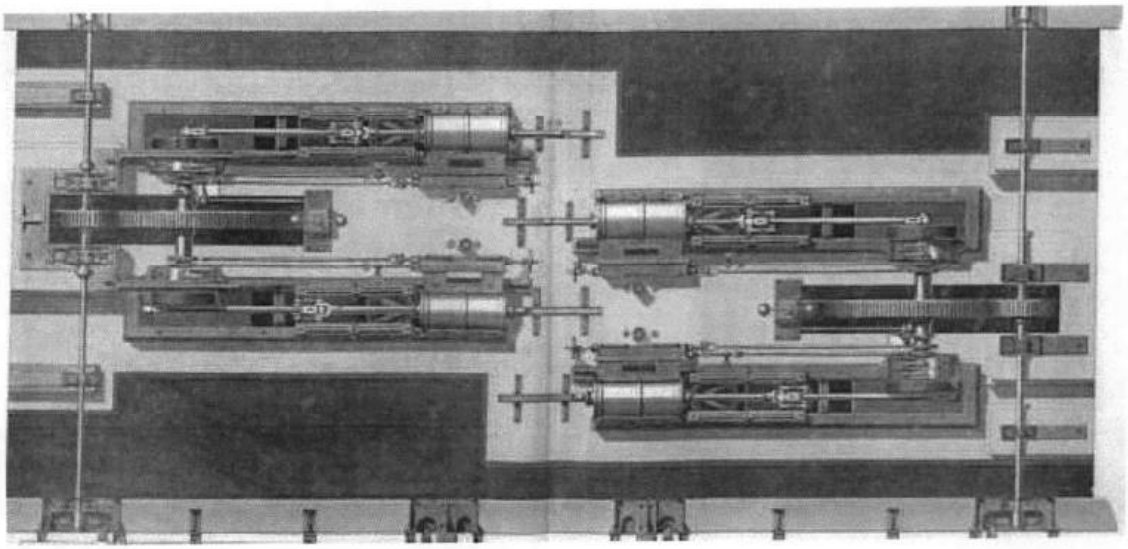


Fig.10: plan of the four steam engines within the mill engine house (E.Leigh, 1873)

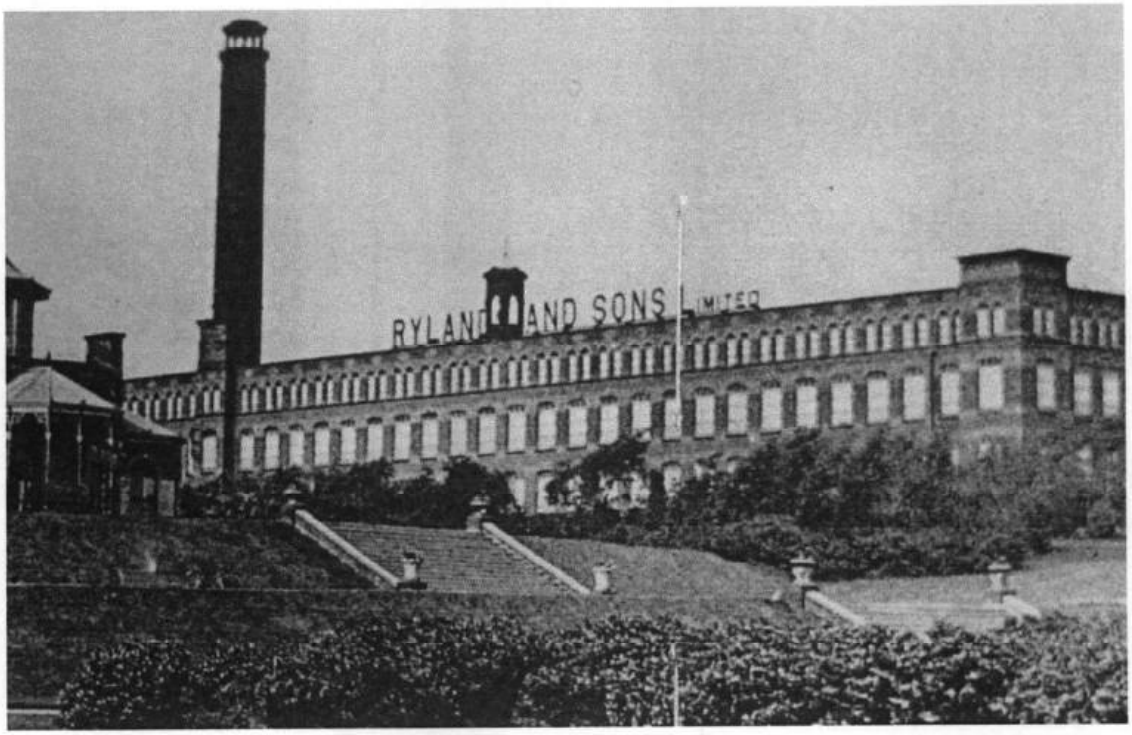


Fig.11: Rylands Mill from Mesne Park c.1900 (Hannavy and Ryan, 1987)

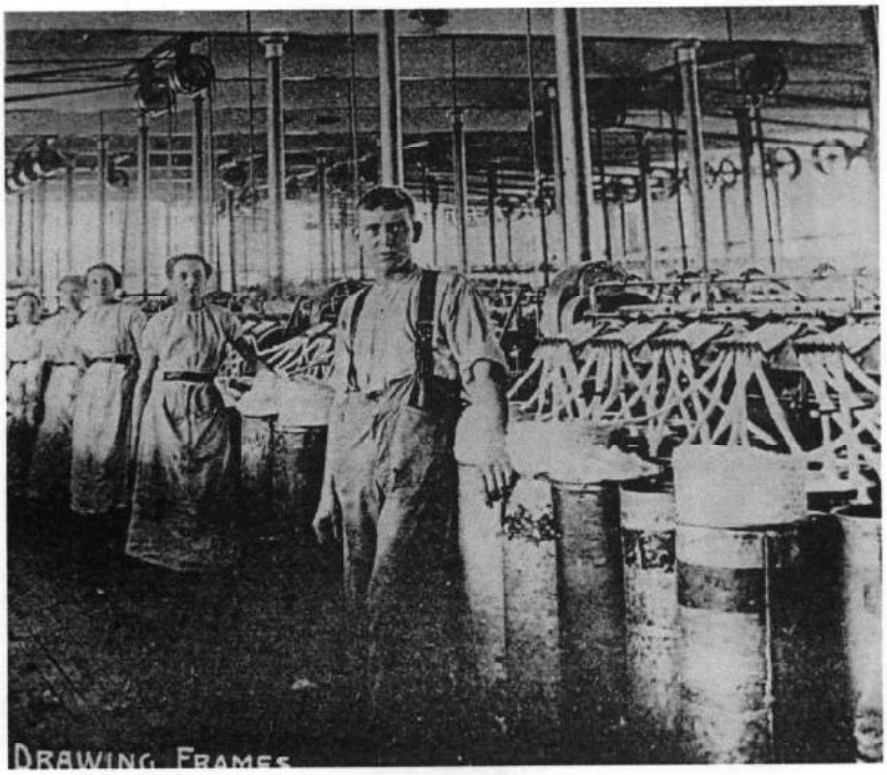


Fig.12: workers inside the mill, c.1890 (Hannavy & Ryan, 1987)

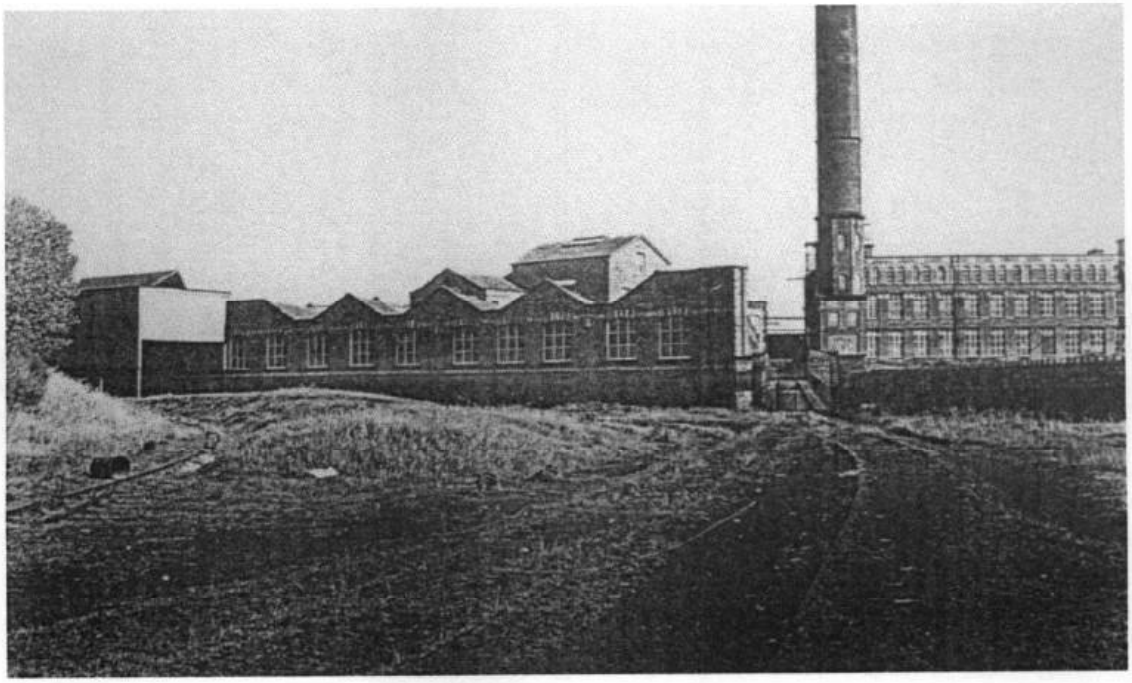


Fig.13: the mill from the north, with railway sidings and the former warehouse over the lodge to the left - probably in mid 20th century (Wigan History Shop)

Appendix 3

Recent photographs

Fig.14: aerial view of the mill in the 1980s, looking south, prior to Wigan College's occupation (Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record ref:SF3169/20)

Fig.15: the mill (block B) from Mesnes Park with late 1980s glazed addition

Fig.16: Part of north-west elevation of mill (block B) and chimney base, with post-war lift to right and weaving sheds (block A) to left

Fig. 17: south-west corner of mill and 1960s bridge

Fig. 18: 1980s addition on south-west elevation (block B)

Fig.19: view of stair tower cupola and water tank, with taking-in door on north-east elevation (block B)

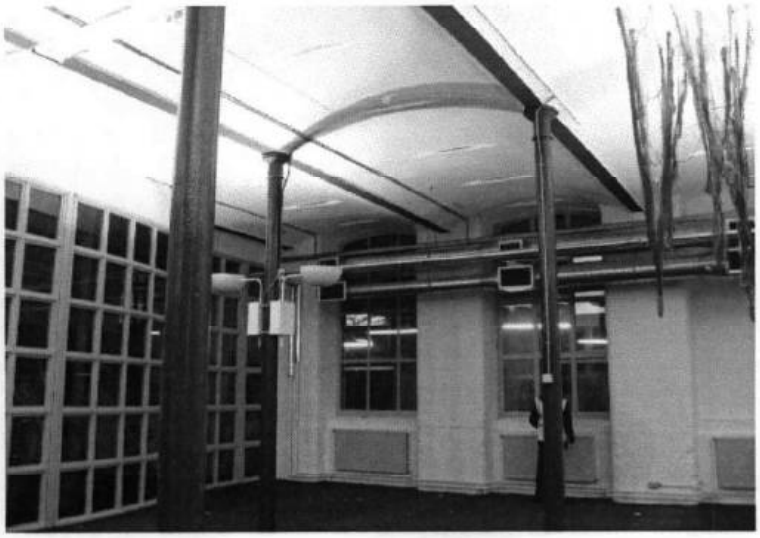


Fig.20: typical ground floor mill interior (block B), with brick vaulting and one new and one original (to left) window

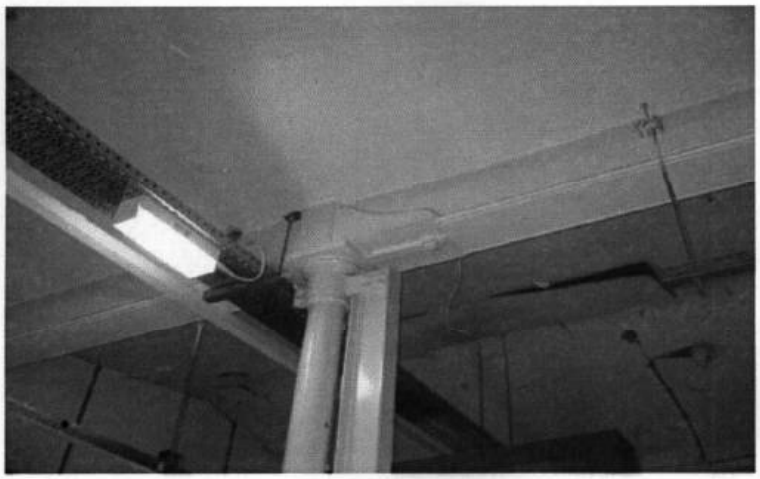


Fig.21: detail of second floor plastered ceiling, column and beam (Block B)

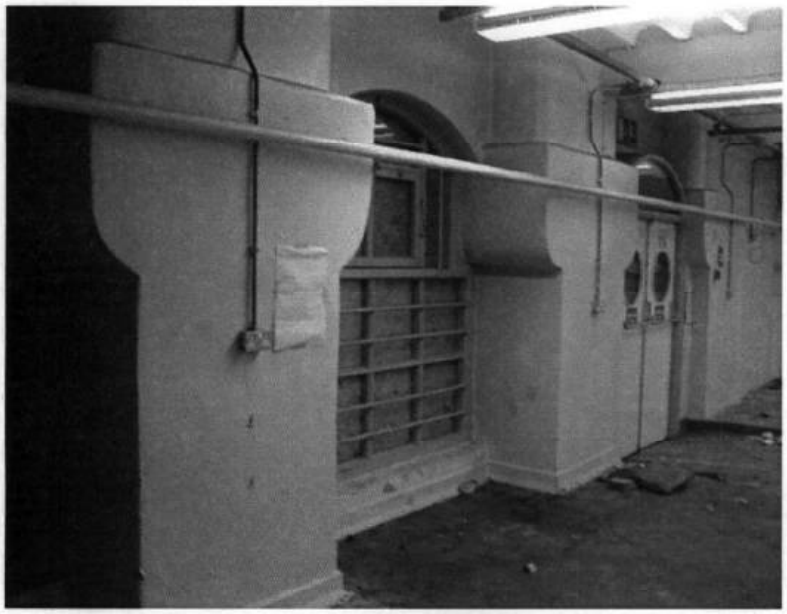


Fig.22: inside former boiler house, stone piers on north-west external wall (block B)

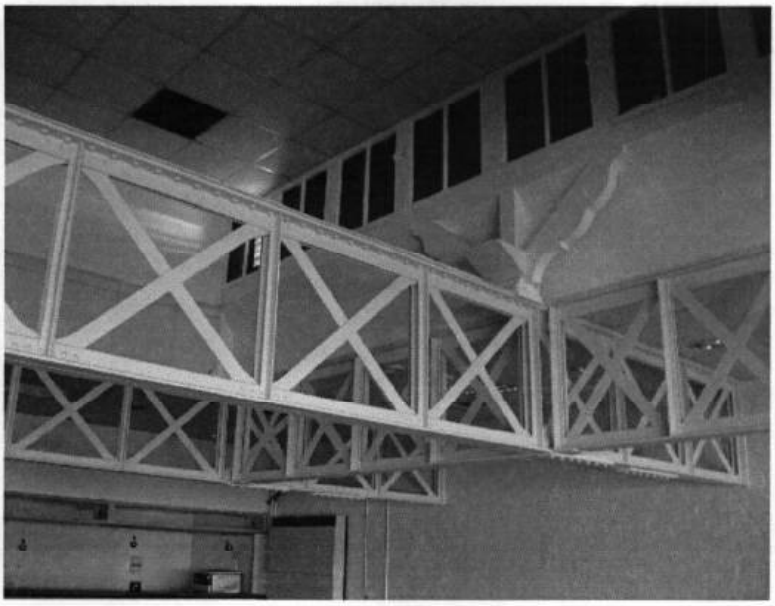


Fig.23: engine house, part of roof lantern structure (block B)

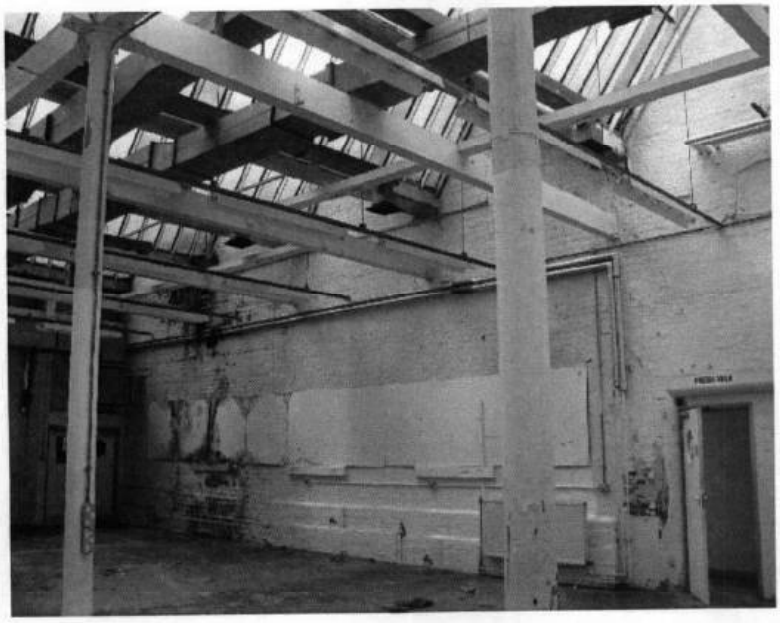


Fig.24: phase 2 weaving shed interior, looking north-east (roof structure proposed for demolition, wall to be retained and cleaned)

Fig.25: historic dry riser in corner of south-east stair tower (block B)

Fig.26: mill roof viewed to south-east (block B)

Fig. 27: glazed roof-lantern over former engine house, viewed to south- west (block B)

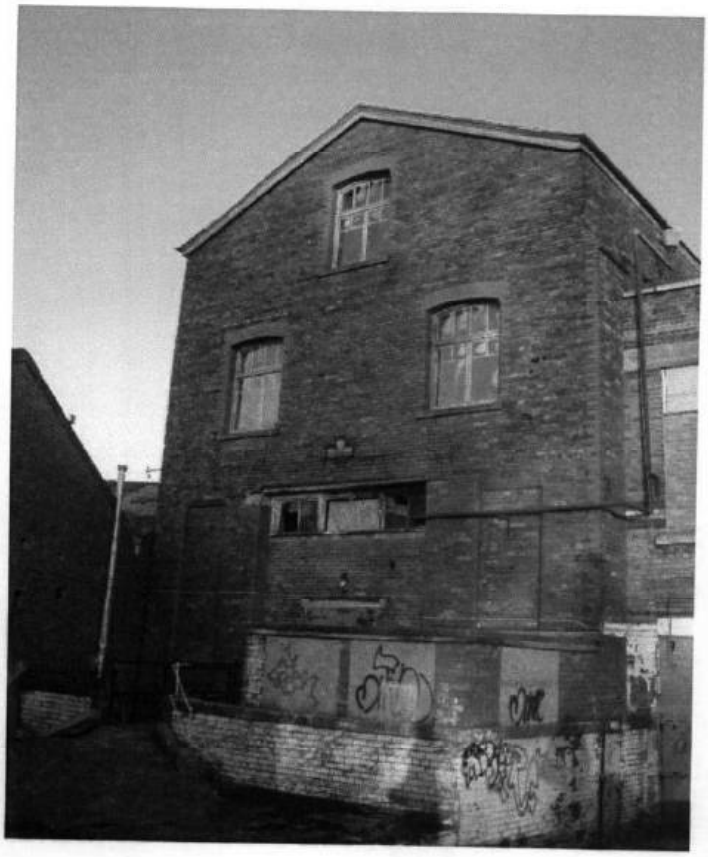


Fig.28: 1905 engine house (block H)

Fig.29: 1915 substation (block D)

Fig.30: interior of sub station (block D)

Fig.31: post-war sheds over reservoir with 1860s railway bridge (site of block E)

Fig.32: wall and railings along south-west boundary between Mesnes Park and mill

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