



Galgate Silk Mills, Galgate, Lancashire

Heritage Assessment



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SUMMARY

In April 2014, Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was commissioned by UK Mills Ltd to undertake a heritage assessment of Galgate Silk Mills, which lie on the north-eastern fringe of Galgate in the Lancashire borough of Lancaster (centred on NGR 348520 455740). The heritage assessment was required to inform and support current proposals for the repair and conservation of the historic five-storey mill, which lies at the heart of the Galgate Silk Mills complex, and is afforded statutory designation as a Grade II listed building.

The development proposals allow for the creation of student apartments on the upper floors of the mill, together with a small museum dedicated to the area's historic silk industry, a café and student facilities. Government policy set out in *the National Planning Policy Framework* requires that proposed changes to the historic environment are based on a clear understanding of significance of any heritage assets and their setting that are affected.

This report provides an assessment of the existing building within its historic context, and an understanding of the surrounding area based on historical research and a rapid archaeological survey of the mill. This has enabled the principal features of interest to be identified, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) would like to thank Ayub Hussain of UK Mills Ltd for commissioning and supporting the project, and to Ashfaq Patel for supplying the measured survey drawings of the building. Thanks are also expressed to Anthony Pilling for his support, and for sharing his in-depth knowledge of the local textile industry.

The archaeological assessment of the building was carried out by Chris Wild, and the report was compiled by Ian Miller, who was also responsible for project management.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PROJECT

- 1.1.1 In April 2014, Oxford Archaeology North (OA North) was commissioned by UK Mills Ltd to undertake a heritage assessment of Galgate Silk Mill, a Grade II listed building that lies on the north-eastern fringe of Galgate, Lancashire. The heritage appraisal was required to support a planning application for the repair and conversion of the building for residential use, coupled with the inclusion of a small museum on the ground floor.
- 1.1.2 This report provides an assessment of the existing building within its historic context, and an understanding of the surrounding area based on historical research and a rapid archaeological survey of the mill. This has enabled the principal features of interest to be identified, together with an assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development.

1.2 LOCATION

- 1.2.1 The Galgate Silk Mills complex (centred on NGR 348520 455740) lies on the north-eastern edge of Galgate, a village situated some 6.5km to the south of Lancaster. It comprises a former corn mill that converted to silk spinning in 1792, and extended in 1832, on the west of Chapel Lane, and a large mill dating to 1851-2 on the east of Chapel Lane, with a modern housing estate on Crofters Fold to the south. The River Conder takes a course a short distance to the west of the mill, as it flows through Galgate to its confluence with the River Lune near Glasson Dock, and provided a source of water for the mills.



Plate 1: Recent aerial view looking south across Galgate Silk Mills

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1.1 The main objective of the heritage appraisal was to allow an informed decision to be taken with regard to the current proposals for the repair and conversion of the building for residential purposes. This was achieved by carrying out a rapid visual inspection survey of the building, which was carried out in May 2014.
- 2.1.2 The visual inspection survey was intended to provide the minimum of information needed to identify the building's age, type, broad chronological development, and, crucially, relative significance; it was not intended to provide a detailed archaeological survey of the building. It is anticipated that any development work carried out will be accompanied by an appropriate programme of further archaeological investigation.

2.2 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 2.2.1 **National Policy Framework:** national planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment are set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was published by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in March 2012. Sites of archaeological or cultural heritage significance that are valued components of the historic environment and merit consideration in planning decisions are grouped as 'heritage assets'; 'heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource', the conservation of which can bring 'wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits...' (DCLG 2012, *Section 12.126*). The policy framework states that the 'significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting' should be understood in order to assess the potential impact (DCLG 2012, *Section 12.128*).
- 2.2.2 In accordance with paragraph 128 of the NPPF, Lancaster City Council planning authority requires planning applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by planning proposals and evaluate the impact on them, identifying appropriate design and other mitigation measures to ensure that they are not adversely affected. This heritage appraisal is intended to fulfil this requirement.
- 2.2.3 In addition to NPPF, heritage assets and their settings are protected under the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act. The impact of development on the setting of a listed building is a material consideration that local planning authorities have a duty to consider. Section 66(1) states: 'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.

2.2.4 English Heritage guidance defines setting as ‘the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve’ (English Heritage 2011, 4). Setting can make a varying contribution to an asset’s significance; it may be positive or negative, or neutral. The NPPF also states that ‘proposals that preserve those elements of setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably’ (paragraph 137). A key principle within the NPPF is that any harm to heritage assets should be weighed against the public benefits (paragraphs 133 and 134).

2.3 DESIGNATED SITES

2.3.1 Galgate Silk Mill does not lie within a Conservation Area or a Registered Park and Garden, although it was afforded statutory designation as a Grade II listed building (English Heritage ID 182167) in 1968. The listing text describes the heritage asset as:

‘Silk mill, erected for John Armstrong in 1852, now converted into warehouse units. Brick with ridge-and-furrow slate roof. 5 storeys, 9 bays, with corners treated as pilasters with stone capitals. Windows have stone lintels and small panes, the upper lights pivoting horizontally. Central bay has loading doors, now partly blocked to form windows, on ground, 1st, and 3rd floors. Main entrance in 1st bay, which is topped by a sprinkler tank. Linked to the main building at the north is a 2-storey range of similar appearance. Towards the rear, between the two parts of the building, is the boiler house with a tapering brick chimney of square plan. Interior said to have wooden floors on iron columns.’

2.3.2 There are five other buildings of special architectural interest within close proximity of the study area (Table 1). These are all afforded statutory designation as Grade II listed buildings.

EH ID No	Description	Grade	NGR
182168	Galgate Mill. The first silk mill established in Galgate, situated on the west side of Chapel Lane. Comprises three-storey range of 1792, and two-storey block of 1830 on the east side.	II	348496, 455789
182166	Chapel Cottage, 1 Chapel Lane. Two-storey house probably dating to c 1600, and restored in c 1970.	II	348446, 455673
182169	Ellel House, 4 Chapel Lane. A two-storey house dating to the first half of the nineteenth century.	II	348554, 455811
182165	31, Chapel Street. Two-storey house built in 1701	II	348442, 455474
182170	Church of St John. Built in 1906-07 to a design by Austin & Paley.	II	348601, 455842

Table 1: Summary of Listed Buildings within close proximity of the study area

2.4 ASSESSING THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS

- 2.4.1 The definition of setting used here is taken from the NPPF (2012): ‘setting is surroundings in which an asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surrounding evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral’. Furthermore, the English Heritage document *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008) states that setting also relates to the asset’s local context, embracing present and past relationships to the adjacent landscape. More recently, English Heritage (2011) considers that the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence and historic fabric, but also from its setting – the surrounding within which it is experienced.
- 2.4.2 English Heritage in their guidance document, *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011), has provided a stepped approach to the assessment of significance of setting to heritage assets. Following the initial identification of the heritage asset(s) and associated setting the following steps comprise:
- assessing whether, how and to what degree the settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage assets;
 - assessing the effect of the proposed development on the setting, and the resulting implications for the significance of the heritage asset(s);
 - maximising enhancement and minimising harm (mitigation).
- 2.4.3 In assessing whether, how and to what degree the settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage assets, several potential attributes of a setting may help in determining its significance (Table 2). Having assessed the contribution of the setting to the significance of the heritage asset, the effect of any proposed development on the setting can be determined by consideration of the potential attributes of the development affecting setting. This will enable a decision to be formulated as to whether any harm to the setting of a heritage asset is outweighed by the benefits afforded by development.
- 2.4.4 If the significance of a place is to be retained and its historic value sympathetically managed, further change will inevitably be needed. Development need not devalue the significance of the place, both its tangible values, such as historic fabric, or its associational values, such as its place within the landscape, provided the work is done with understanding.
- 2.4.5 English Heritage’s *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008) also states that new work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:
- there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;
 - the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;
 - the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future.

Physical Surroundings of the Heritage Asset
<p>Topography;</p> <p>Other heritage assets (archaeological remains, buildings, structures, landscapes, areas or archaeological remains);</p> <p>Definition, scale and 'grain' of surrounding streetscape, landscape and spaces;</p> <p>Historic materials and surfaces;</p> <p>Land use;</p> <p>Openness, enclosure and boundaries; functional relationships and communications;</p> <p>Green spaces, trees and vegetation;</p> <p>History and degree of change over time;</p> <p>Integrity;</p> <p>Issues, such as soil chemistry and hydrology</p>
Experience of the Heritage Asset
<p>Surrounding landscape and town character;</p> <p>Views from, towards, through and across, including the asset;</p> <p>Visual dominance, prominence or role as focal point;</p> <p>Intentional intervisibility with other historic and natural features;</p> <p>Noise, vibration and other pollutants and nuisances;</p> <p>Tranquillity, remoteness, 'wildness';</p> <p>Sense of enclosure, seclusion, intimacy or privacy;</p> <p>Dynamism and activity;</p> <p>Accessibility, permeability and patterns of movement;</p> <p>Degree of interpretation or promotion to the public;</p> <p>The rarity of comparable survivals of setting</p>
Associative Attributes
<p>Associative relationships between heritage assets;</p> <p>Cultural associations;</p> <p>Celebrated artistic representations;</p> <p>Traditions</p>

Table 2: Potential Attributes of the Setting

2.5 DEFINING SIGNIFICANCE

2.5.1 When applied to an historic building, the term ‘significance’ can be taken to have several definitions. The first is importance, suggesting that there is something about the site that is valuable, has status and should not be ignored. A site may be important because it is a rare survival, perhaps the only one in the world, or the earliest known example of its type. It may represent a benchmark in terms of the application of technological development, or be a typical example of such sites. The level to which a site has remained intact is also an important factor in determining its value. The next is the idea of conveying meaning, implying that the site is a source of knowledge. Finally, there is the concept of a sign, that the building is symbolic, and acts as a pointer to something beyond itself. The significance of any site is to a large extent embodied in its surviving fabric, which can incorporate evidence for how the site was built, how it worked, and how it was adapted to new technology over time.

2.5.2 It is necessary to define what it is that gives significance to a building and therefore warrants protection. Galgate Silk Mill encompasses layers of archaeological and historical development, which include several different functional components. These may be valued for different reasons by different people, all of which should be taken into account in determining the overall significance of a place. In their *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance*, English Heritage have identified four areas of heritage values, which will be considered in determining the overall significance of the component sites within the study area (English Heritage 2008):

- **Evidential:** this derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. This includes physical remains as the primary source of evidence and the people and cultures that made them. Significantly, where there is a lack of written records the importance of the material record increases;
- **Historical:** this originates from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. This may include illustrative value, such as its connection to an important development, such as technology, or associative value, such as the connection to an important event or person;
- **Aesthetic:** this is derived from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place or building. These may be related to the design of a place for example through defensive reasons, or the informal development over time, such as the relationship of structures to their setting;
- **Communal:** this derives from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, this includes commemorative, symbolic, social and spiritual value. For example, some places may be important for reminding us of uncomfortable events in national history.

2.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIVIDUAL FEATURES

2.6.1 Galgate Silk Mill is of considerable historical and archaeological significance, which is reflected in its statutory designation as a Grade II Listed Buildings. Notwithstanding the accepted importance of the building and its setting, however, some components are of especial significance and are fundamental to their interest. Conversely, there are a few components of the building that actually detract from its heritage value, and these features may be considered to have a negative value.

2.6.2 Whilst no detailed guidelines for the retention of historic fabric have been produced by either English Heritage or the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), standard English Heritage site attributes are appropriate for the present study. In particular, the criteria listed in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991, 28) may be of relevance. These include:

- Survival/condition;
- Period;
- Rarity;
- Fragility/vulnerability;
- Documentation;
- Group value;
- Potential.

2.6.3 Whilst these were intended for use to identify archaeological sites of importance, the criteria may also be usefully applied within an individual site. Their usage in this document is italicised for clarity and, in order to avoid confusion, a numerical system has been adopted, with Priority 1 being of the highest value, and Priority 5 the lowest, although this is not intended as a crude marking system; just because a feature is not in the highest category does not mean that it is dispensable. Some buildings may have two values, as individual items and as components of a group. The categories may be defined as follows:

- ***Outstanding (Priority 1)***: buildings or other surviving fabric of national or international importance. The earliest and most intact elements of the site, including rare or unique features. It is envisaged that removal or compromise of such features would have a substantial negative effect on the historical character of the area, and would reduce the site's potential as a future archaeological resource. The removal of such features should not be considered as an option in any future development scheme;
- ***Great significance (Priority 2)***: intact buildings or fabric of regional or national significance. Early but damaged parts of the site, which would usually have a high *Group* value and probably *Rarity* and *Period* value. The removal of such features should not be considered as an option in any future development scheme;

- ***Some significance (Priority 3):*** intact buildings or fabric of county or borough significance. May include fabric that now forms an integral part of an early building, or early but severely damaged parts of the site. These features may be significant to the development of an individual site or the local area, but are not of high *Rarity* value. Adequate archaeological recording of such features is likely to be required prior to any removal, and further recording may be necessary during or after removal;
- ***Lesser significance (Priority 4):*** buildings or fabric of local interest. Badly damaged remains of features that would have been of greater significance had they survived. Later features of little intrinsic value, but which form part of a more important building. Adequate archaeological recording is likely to be required prior to any removal;
- ***Negative elements (Priority 5):*** features of little or no intrinsic interest that damage or obscure buildings or features of significance. Adequate archaeological recording is likely to be required prior to any removal.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 DEVELOPMENT OF GALGATE'S SILK MILLS

- 3.1.1 The rural setting of Galgate belies the village's long and rich historical association with the factory-based silk industry. The first silk mill in the village was established in 1792 on the west side of Chapel Lane, opposite the site that was to be developed subsequently for the five-storey Galgate Silk Mill. The 1792 mill was converted from a water-powered corn mill by the partnership of Armstrong, Noble & Thompson, who spun waste silk using throstles (Ashmore 1969, 266-7). Referred to as Bridgend Watermill, it was reportedly the first mechanical silk-spinning mill in the country (Price 2000, 143).
- 3.1.2 The mill was advertised for sale in 1801, the sale notice describing it as a substantial water mill, together with a stable and other buildings. The main factory block was three-storeys high, constructed of stone, and measured about 60ft by 80ft 6inches (Plate 2), and the sale was to include machinery required for manufacturing silk (*Lancaster Gazette*, 7 November 1801). It seems that the mill was not actually sold at that date, as in 1807 James Noble sold his shares to John Armstrong (*Lancaster Gazette*, 29 April 1807). In December 1829, the partnership between William Thompson the elder, John Armstrong the elder (deceased), William Thompson the younger, and John Armstrong the younger, trading under the name of William Thompson & Company, was dissolved. The business was carried on thereafter by William Thompson the younger, John Armstrong the younger, and Thomas Thompson, continuing to trade as William Thompson & Company (*London Gazette*, 29 December 1829). Trade directories of this period indicate that the company carried on the business of silk spinning at premises in Galgate, Caton and on Friar Street in Lancaster (Pigot 1822; Pigot 1834, 273).

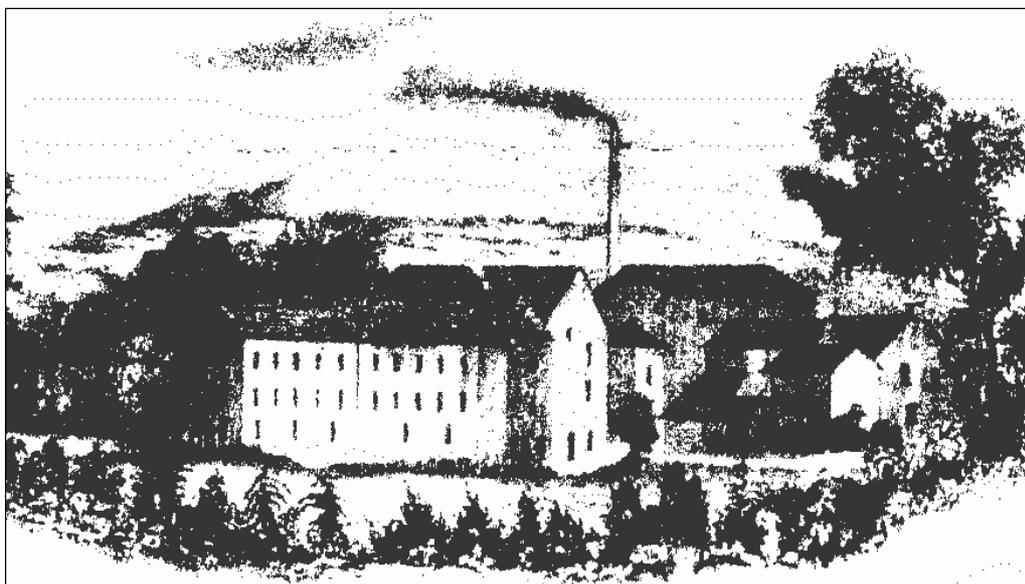


Plate 2: Nineteenth-century engraving of the first silk mill, showing the chimney to the rear

- 3.1.3 In 1832, the mill was extended eastwards with the addition of a three-storey block of non-fireproof construction (Price 2000, 143). It is thought that this was designed to house self-acting mules, powered by two 10hp beam engines installed in a new boiler and engine house with a square chimney built on the opposite side of the Chapel Lane (Plate 2). Self-acting, or automatic, mules were patented by Richard Roberts in 1825, although were not adopted widely in the cotton industry until the 1830s. William Thompson & Company's application of these new machines to his silk-spinning business can thus be seen as a pioneering.
- 3.1.4 In 1840, the partnership between John Armstrong and Thomas Thompson, trading under the name of William Thompson & Company, was dissolved. The business was carried on thereafter by John Armstrong, who continued to occupy all three of the company's premises (*London Gazette*, 28 January 1840).
- 3.1.5 The second silk mill in the village was Galgate Low Mill, which had been established by 1801. This occupied a site on Salford Road in the centre of the village, on the west bank of the River Conder (Plate 3, purple arrow). Whilst this mill was used variously as a flax and cotton factory, it was referred to as a silk mill in a newspaper article in 1836 (*Manchester Times*, 5 November 1836).

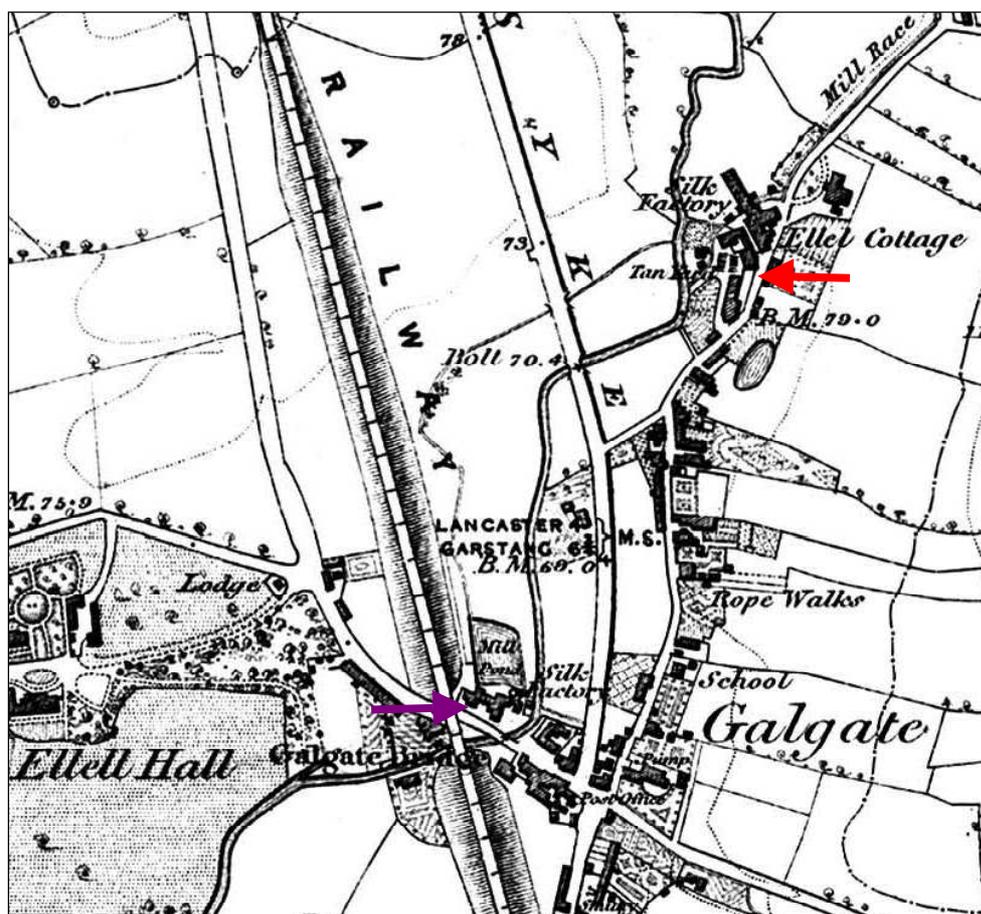


Plate 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 6": 1 mile map of 1848 (surveyed 1844-5)

- 3.1.6 Galgate Low Mill is annotated as a silk factory on the Ordnance Survey first edition 1:10,560 map of 1848 (Plate 3). By the mid-nineteenth century, this mill complex comprised the Old Mill of three storeys (plus attic) and the New End of four storeys (*Lancaster Guardian*, 27 August 1859). By that date, the mill appears to have been owned by John Armstrong, although it was advertised for sale following his death (*Lancaster Gazette*, 14 January 1860). It appears to have been converted for use for cotton spinning by the Galgate Cotton Manufactory Company in 1860, although this firm went into liquidation in 1867 (*London Gazette*, 22 October 1867). The mill was partially demolished in 1895 (Price 1983, 92), although the buildings next to the Condor remain, and the route of the mill leat with its tunnel beneath the A6 can still be traced.
- 3.1.7 In June 1851, the foundation stone for the latest Galgate Silk Mill was laid in 1851 by the contracted builders, Messrs Cooper & Tullis of Preston. The mill was designed by J Stephenson for John Armstrong (*Lancaster Gazette*, 31 May 1851), and was presumably required to enable an expansion of Armstrong's successful silk business, which was still trading under the name of William Thompson & Co. The mill was completed in 1852 at a cost in excess of £25,000 (*Lancaster Gazette*, 29 April 1876). At that date, production utilised the short-spinning process, which was the application of cotton spinning methods to waste silk. This was largely superseded in the silk industry generally by the improved long-spinning system, which was introduced in c 1864.
- 3.1.8 Following the death of John Armstrong in c 1859, the mill was run by Richard Baynes Armstrong Esq (*Lancaster Gazette*, 4 January 1862), who remained the proprietor until his own death in February 1867 (*Lancaster Gazette*, 23 February 1867). The silk mill was kept in operation for the following two years by Armstrong's executors and, in February 1869, William Thompson & Company Limited was established (*Lancaster Gazette*, 29 April 1876). The extent of the mill during this period is captured on the Ordnance Survey map of 1891 (Plate 4).
- 3.1.9 William Thompson & Company Limited developed a reputation for producing fine quality goods, and was awarded a silver medal for their threads of waste silk at the Paris Exhibition in 1878 (*Leeds Mercury*, 22 October 1878). Whilst the company kept abreast with technological advancement, a visitor to the mill in the 1930s noted with interest that there remained a department devoted to the old process of short spinning.

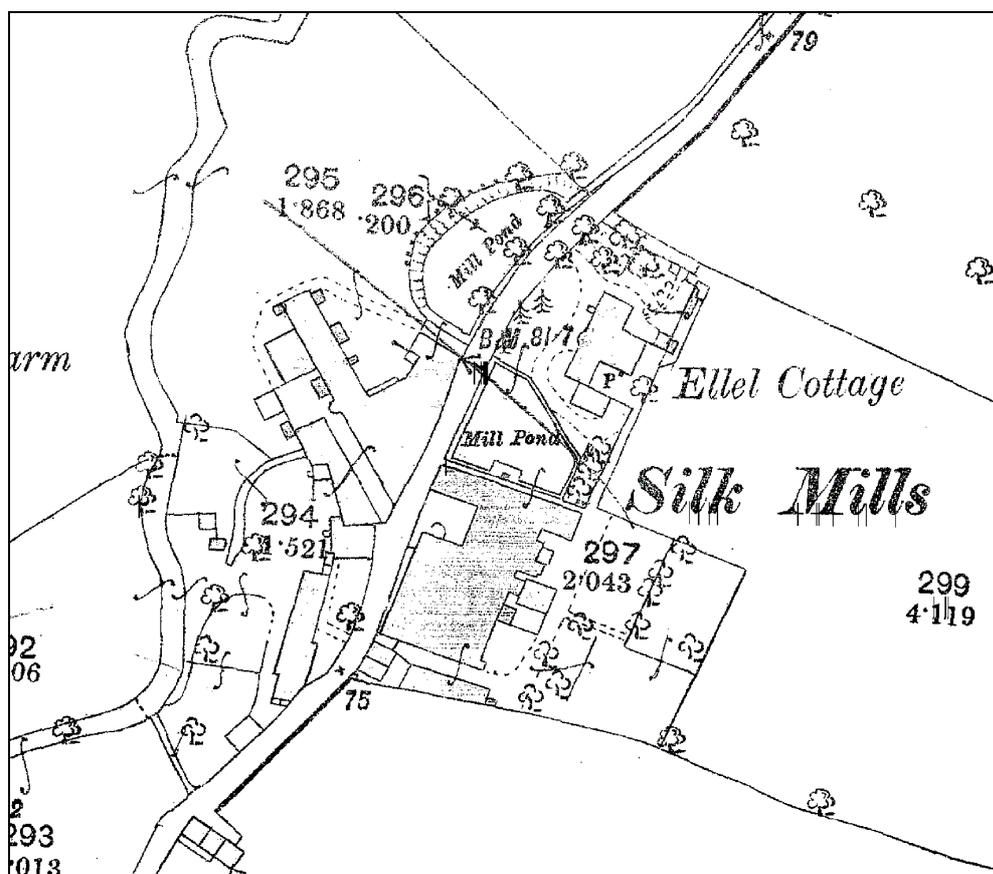


Plate 4: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25":1 mile map of 1891 (surveyed 1890)

- 3.1.10 In 1925, a new power house for generating electric was added to the mill complex. This heralded the introduction of electric drive motors for the production machinery. In 1937, it was noted that the Galgate mills formed the means of livelihood for most of the village, and provided employment for more than 200 operatives.
- 3.1.11 The mill was taken over by the firm of Paton & Baldwin in 1957, but continued to trade as Thompson & Co Ltd (*Lancaster Guardian*, 8 January 1971). The firm is at Galgate Silk Mill are listed in Worrall's directory for 1961 as manufacturers of all classes of spun silk weaving yarns, sewing, hosiery, lace, fancy yarns, etc. Silk spinning, together with nylon, continued at the mill until 1971, when final closure was announced due to increasingly competitive trading conditions (Price 2000, 144). At that date, the mill was the last in England to spin silk, and provided jobs for 85 employees (*Lancaster Guardian*, 8 January 1971).

4. SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

- 4.1.1 The following section provides a brief description of the 1851-2 mill based on a rapid inspection of the surviving fabric. This information is intended solely to provide a basis to assess the relative significance of the various component elements.
- 4.1.2 The Galgate Silk Mills complex comprises two distinct components, both having been afforded separate Grade II listed building status. That to the west of Chapel Lane is the earlier, having been founded in 1792, upon the conversion of a corn mill (English Heritage Building ID 182168), whilst the western complex was erected for John Armstrong in 1851-2 as a purpose-built silk mill. This assessment is solely concerned with the eastern complex (English Heritage Building ID 182167), as this building forms the focus of the development proposals.

4.2 DESCRIPTION

- 4.2.1 The complex incorporates several distinct elements including a multi-storey silk-spinning block, with internal beam engine house, attached boiler house, two-storey office and warehouse block, several ancillary workshops/stores, and a chimney. The site is bounded by Chapel Lane on its western side, and is currently divided into units under separate ownership. The complex has several phases of construction, with the earliest surviving fabric comprising the five-storey spinning block, the chimney, and possibly the two-storey warehouse to the north.
- 4.2.2 The five-storey, nine by six bay, brick-built spinning block (Plate 5) was built in hand-made, mould-thrown brick, in five-stretcher English Garden Wall bond, with pilasters to the return of each elevation, capped with decorative sandstone capitals (Plate 6). The principal western façade has windows to each bay, either side of a central loading loophole (Plate 7), with a projecting hoist beam at fourth-floor level and remodelled loading doors at first- and third-floor level; these features were almost certainly late insertions, as they are not visible on a photograph of the building taken in 1959. The original vertical windows have flush sandstone lintels and projecting sandstone sills and house 56-light timber frames; the top two rows open as a swivel tilt (Plate 8).
- 4.2.3 The semi-basement ground floor was set into the river terrace to the east. It has similar windows to the floors above, with sills at ground level, but also with a recessed 'areas' having been excavated to the east and west to afford maximum natural lighting to the interior, and presumably also to protect the windows. That on the west has a sandstone kerb and ornate wrought-iron railings (Plate 9), and was of uncertain depth, presently being filled to the level of the adjacent road and pavement (Plate 9). The area to the east was later over roofed for storage.



Plate 5: General view of Galgate Silk Mill (1851-2 block), looking south-west



Plate 6: Oblique view of the front elevation of the mill



Plate 7: Central loading loophole in front elevation



Plate 8: Interior view of the 56-light windows with top rows on opening swivel tilt



Plate 9: Wrought-iron railings along Chapel Street

4.2.4 The main entrance doorway is at street level between semi-basement (ground) and first-floor level was positioned at the northern end of the western façade. This has a monolithic sandstone surround with curved jambs below a closed plain pediment (Plate 10). This afforded access to a stair and hoist tower, of fireproof construction, topped with a cast-iron water tank (Plate 11), providing a head of water for the engine and fire-fighting equipment. The remainder of the roof comprises a triple-span pitched roof, behind a low parapet wall (Plate 12). The gable elevations have windows similar to those of the principal façade, but not included in the outer bays. In the southern gable, the eastern of the central windows to each floor was remodelled to form a doorway into a modern lift shaft, now externally clad with metal sheeting (Plate 13), whilst the northern gable had only the western two windows below second-floor level. The east elevation has a projecting small privy tower at its southern end (Plate 14), with the windows of the adjacent bay having been remodelled into doorways upon the later addition of a cast-iron fire escape (Plate 14), installed by Fred^k Fox, Bradford. Originally, the northern bay did not have windows below second-floor level, although a horizontal window was latterly installed at first-floor level.



Plate 10: Doorway at northern end of the western façade



Plate 11: Cast-iron water tank



Plate 12: Triple-span pitched roof and parapet



Plate 13: The southern gable of the mill, with late hoist tower clad in metal sheeting



Plate 14: The privy tower and fire-escape stair

- 4.2.5 Internally, the mill is of non-fireproof construction, with large-scantling timber ceiling beams carrying timber floors undersealed with lath and plaster. The beams are carried on five rows of hollow cylindrical cast-iron columns (Plate 15). These are of 6½" diameter, with a simple plinth at foot and a cruciform head plate bolted into the soffit of timber ceiling beams, which are jointed with bolting plates above the second and fourth rows of columns (Plate 16).
- 4.2.6 Below the top floor each column is capped with a cast-iron crush box (Plate 17), attached to the head plate of the column, and housing the foot of the column above, and transferring the weight around the timber beam, vertically through the column row. These floors also have columns within the central row that incorporate line shaft hanging brackets on their eastern faces, comprising a flat horizontal plate with T-section rib to the column shaft (Plate 18). At basement level, all the columns are of this type with several of the rows having the line shaft hanger on the western face (Plate 19).
- 4.2.7 On the top floor, the ceiling beams form the tie beams of king post trusses, which span two bays, and have a single butt-ended purlin to each pitch, below a clasped ridge board. The roof space is concealed above an inserted plaster board ceiling to all but third bay from north end, which has timber panelling to a six-light timber glazing band on the west pitch. This may represent original fenestration for part of the upper floor, although whitewash undersealing of the slate roof in the southern bay also appears relatively early (Plate 20). Valley gutters between the roof pitches are internally shuttered with timber.



Plate 15: View looking south-east across the third floor, showing the column arrangement



Plate 16: Column capital and bolting arrangement on a fourth-floor column



Plate 17: Example of a crush box attached to the head plate of a column



Plate 18: Example of a line shaft hanging bracket



Plate 19: Columns on the ground floor, showing line shaft hanging brackets



Plate 20: Roof purlins and slate roof undersealed with whitewash

- 4.2.8 On the fourth floor, alternative evidence for line shafting was observed on the outer face of both penultimate column rows, comprising bolt holes in the beam soffits, and blocked end bearing boxes in both gables. Two extant bearing boxes in east wall of stair tower in the north-western bay at this level were presumably for its hoist (Plate 21).

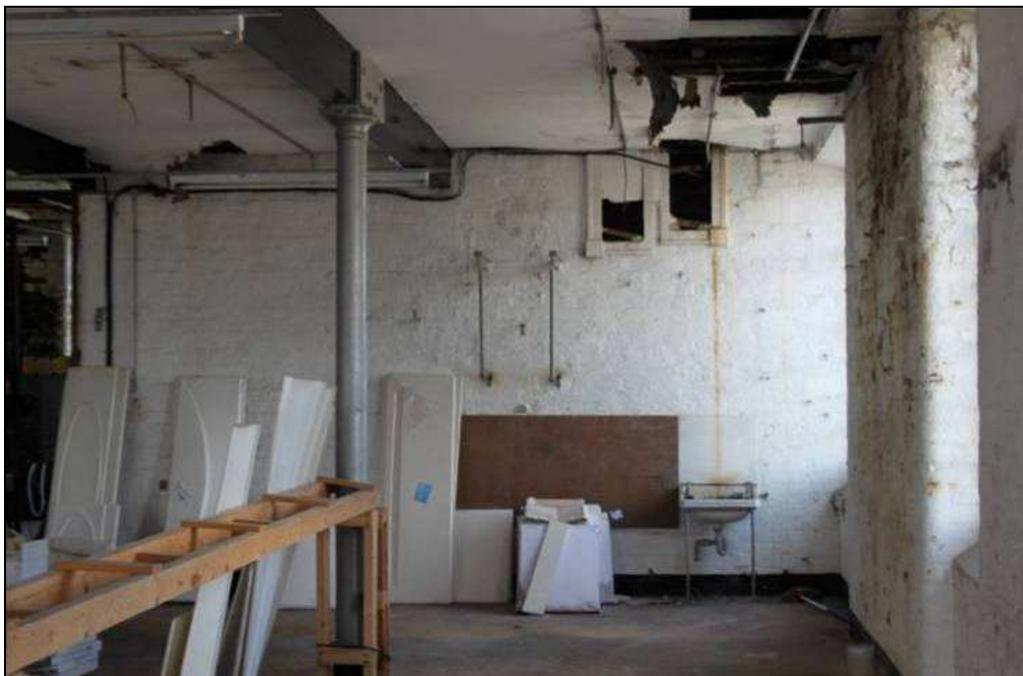


Plate 21: Bearing boxes in the east wall of the stair tower

- 4.2.9 At third-floor level, the original lath and plaster ceiling has recently been removed, revealing the extant original planks of the floor above. These comprise 8" planks, sealed with a later rubberised screed. The ceiling survives intact at second and below, with various cut-outs and drum scars in beams at first-floor level, but without substantive evidence for an alternative full length line shaft position. Each floor also retains an end bearing box in the south wall, aligned with the hanger brackets of the central column row. That on the third floor differs from that of the floor below, being of relatively standard mid/late-nineteenth century type, whilst that on the second floor appears earlier, having a more decorative casting. At the northern end of the original line shaft position, a large cast-iron bearing projects from the wall at third-floor level. This housed the upright drive shaft for power transmission within the mill, and given the lack of a similar feature on the floor above, almost certainly represented a top-end bearing, with a bevel gear at the top of the upright shaft powering the line shaft to the south. A similar bearing at second-floor level is encased within stud partitions, but survives intact, still being covered in bearing grease. A further bearing almost certainly survives at first-floor level, but is obscured behind cladding, which is slightly thickened in this position on the north wall. At ground level, the bearing is flush with the wall, and continues through a 90° angle onto an internal dividing wall within the northern bay, forming the footstep bearing for the upright shaft, with an integral box for the drive shaft from the engine. At this bottom level there are bearing boxes to several line shaft positions in the wall that aligns with the inner engine room wall.

- 4.2.10 This transverse wall across the northern bay was included on the lower three floors, with a further wall spanning the mill from the stair tower to the east wall. This formed two cells within the northern bay, the eastern of which had a thicker southern wall, of three-brick thickness. This eastern chamber formed an internal engine house, and was originally open to second-floor ceiling level, which was formed of five fireproof brick arches, carried on cast-iron beams across the bay, which have holes to receive eyebolts to lift engine castings for installation and maintenance, several cube nuts for which remain embedded in the floor above the iron beams. The engine bed survives at basement level, and comprises two large beds of sandstone blocks, with *in-situ* tie-down bolts, and a large flywheel pit on its southern side. The two beds were for the cylinder to the east, and for the engine beam entablature columns and crank / flywheel main bearing in the western half adjacent to the flywheel pit. A disused modern brick and concrete staircase alteration has been cut into the southern bed to connect boiler room and mill after electrification of the mill drives.
- 4.2.11 Bearing boxes for the central line shaft, matching those of the end bearing in the south wall, and the footstep bearing in the semi-basement were included at second- and first-floor level, with bevel gear bearings projecting through the dividing wall at each bay division in the semi-basement. The western chamber of the north bay is of somewhat unclear function, having windows in the north wall, and columns carrying timber ceiling beams as elsewhere in the mill. It contained engine power transmission drives and clearly does not represent a boiler house for the engine, more probably having formed stores, workshops and offices, adjacent to the stair tower. Later it may have been the location for the steam powered electricity generators, and became the main switch room for the mill when powered from the mains.
- 4.2.12 The stair tower is of fireproof construction, with a hoist within the square newel. It has a rather unusual stair comprising one quarter-turn landing between floor levels with a flat L-shaped landing around the southern and western side of the tower. Some of the sandstone steps have been replaced with concrete, with all of the steps having timber risers. A timber loft above the stair from third to fourth floor affords access to the hoist headgear, whilst the tower projects above the roof line, and is capped with a cast-iron water tank carried on I-section steel beams, possibly replacing earlier cast-iron beams, similar to those carrying the landings of the floors below. The tank feeds a standpipe in north-west corner of the tower, which retains Morris' Patent hose holders, with extant fabric hoses.
- 4.2.13 The slender privy tower at the south end of the east wall is extant internally, housing water closets that replaced original dry chute arrangements. Externally, the tower has blocked small vents in the east wall, and a blocked aperture in its south wall at ground level, representing soil collection access.
- 4.2.14 The majority of the first floor has been partitioned, and is heavily obscured by displays associated with its recent use as a bathroom showroom. However, all the original columns survive, with the original layout appearing intact, and visible at ceiling level (Plate 22). The northern bay is again partitioned, and has been converted into offices, with a suspended ceiling.

- 4.2.15 A wrought-iron spiral stair in the south-west corner of the first floor appears inserted, and forms alternative access to the main machine floor in the semi-basement (Plate 23). The semi-basement was also partitioned as a bathroom showroom, it is sunken approximately 5' below ground level, having ground-level windows in all but the north wall. A personnel tunnel, placed below the second window from the west in the south wall is blocked, but formed access to the basement level of a building to the south of an external access passage and there is a duct round the perimeter beneath flags which may have been for drainage.
- 4.2.16 An extension was added to the eastern side of the mill, with cat-slide roof with glazing band above timber half trusses of queen post style (Plate 24). A narrow transverse chamber at its northern end is taller, and has a pitched roof, and includes a large bearing box in its east wall, which presumably housed a bevel gear to power a line shaft along the west wall of the extension. A later single-storey privy block was placed to the north.
- 4.2.17 The northern side of the mill is abutted by a three bay, two-storey boiler house, with large round-headed arched openings in the western elevation (Plate 25). Whilst it is of similar construction to the main mill, the bricks are darker, and the pointing differs, and its size, erected to house three boilers, would appear exceptional for an engine of this date. It is more probable that it replaced an original smaller boiler house, perhaps undertaken following compounding of the engine by McNaughting - adding a new high pressure cylinder, retaining the existing cylinder for low pressure with a new set of three powerful higher pressure Lancashire boilers. This was common in the latter nineteenth century, increasing the power output at a relatively low cost. To the rear of the boiler house, a square-section tapering chimney is also in brick, with iron bands, and appears to survive to full height (Plate 25).



Plate 22: Top of the columns rising above modern suspended ceiling on the ground floor

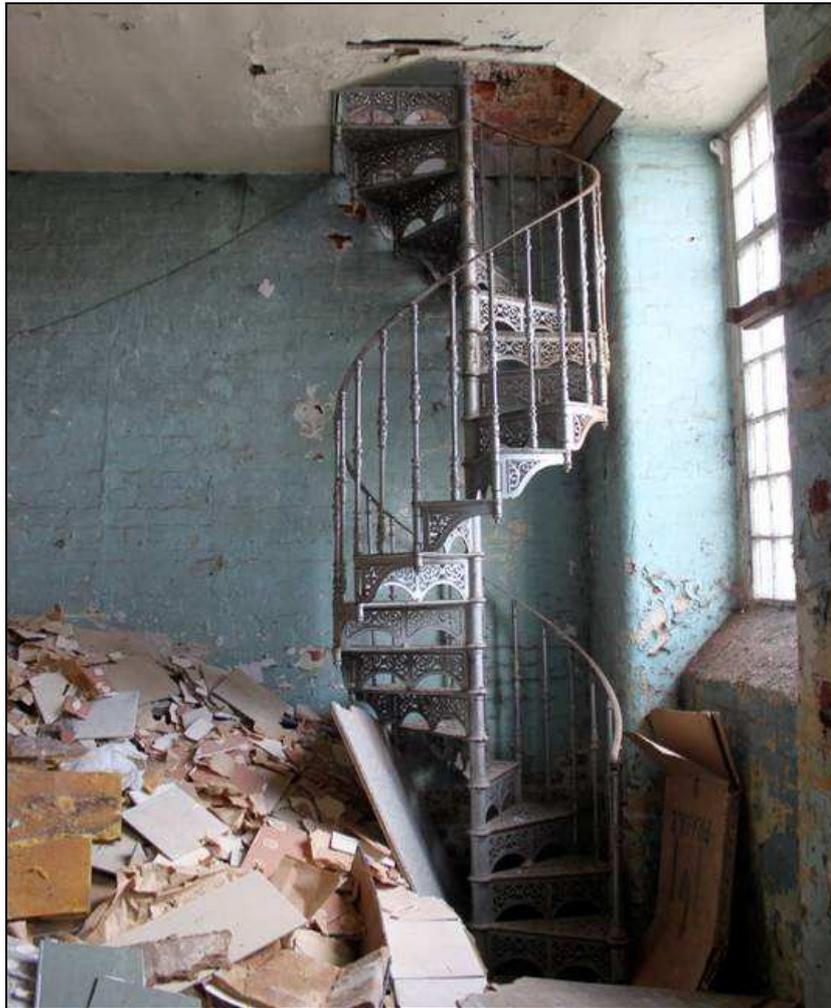


Plate 23: Inserted spiral stair providing alternative access to the ground floor

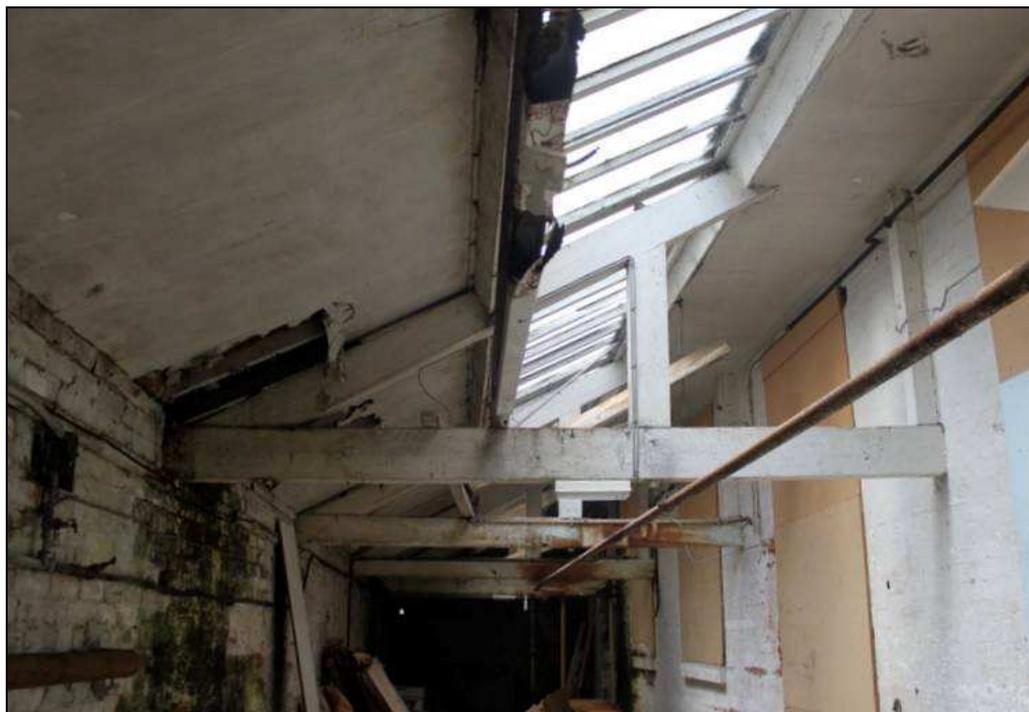


Plate 24: The extension to the eastern side of the mill



Plate 25: The two-storey boiler house abutting the north side of the main mill block, with the full-height chimney visible to the rear. The boiler house lies beyond the boundary of the Application Area

4.2.18 On its northern side, the boiler house abuts the window jamb of an eight bay, two-storey office and warehouse block in brick, which is of a more similar style to the main mill, with many of the upper floor windows incorporating panes of a similar size to those in the brick mill, but within vertical sash frames (Plate 26). The western four bays have doorways in both facades, giving an appearance of a row of cottages but may have been used in connection with putting out weft and warps for weaving. It is likely that later they were used as offices, particularly given the inclusion of a clock within the southern wall face. Only the western bay retains a chimney stack, placed against the internal dividing wall, suggesting that further back-to-back fireplaces may originally have been included. The remaining four bays appear to have formed a warehouse, which was extended subsequently by three bays.



Plate 26: The two-storey office/warehouse, forming the north extent of the 1851-2 mill block

- 4.2.19 The site comprises various further structures on the eastern side of the complex. A two-storey, two-bay stone structure to south of chimney has rock-faced quoins, and possibly predates the mill. A further stone-built seven-bay, two-storey shed to the south of the mill is of similar construction, terraced into the higher ground on its northern side, and with a subterranean passage from the mill basement. Neither structure is shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1848 (Plate 3), but buildings are depicted on the street frontage, suggesting that these probable barns or workshops may have related to these structures or the earlier silk mill on the western side of Chapel Lane.
- 4.2.20 Two workshops to the east of the mill (Plate 27), constructed in machine-made brick, appear contemporary, and of early twentieth-century date, certainly post-dating the Ordnance Survey map of 1891 (Plate 4). The western part is two storey, with the upper floor having brick infill to a steel frame and with a bulls eye window in the south gable (Plate 27). The eastern part has similar rubbed sandstone copings, and is of single-storey height, with large doorways in each gable. These may have been dye houses to produce coloured silk yarns.



Plate 27: Twentieth-century workshops situated to the east of the 1851-2 mill block

5. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1 This assessment of significance is not intended to be a definitive report on the historic building within the study area, and has been based on a rapid inspection, undertaken broadly to English Heritage Level I-type survey standards. Further study the building would undoubtedly furnish a greater understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and its component elements.
- 5.1.2 The Galgate Mills complex as a whole can be defined as being of *Outstanding Significance*, incorporating a wide range of structures, of differing *Rarity* and *Survival*, with an extremely high *Group Value* and archaeological *Potential*. The buildings represent a very rare survival of a silk-spinning complex within Lancashire, and potentially incorporate elements of the earliest surviving silk-spinning factory in the country. However, the individual components of the 1851-2 mill of are varying historic significance, and accordingly various assessments have been made for different elements of the building and adjacent structures.

5.2 PRIORITY 1 ELEMENTS

- 5.2.1 Those elements of the study area considered to be of *Outstanding Significance* are:
- **External elevations of the main mill, boiler house, warehouse range and chimney.** These components provide the important visual representation of the size and layout of the Galgate Silk Mills complex. These elements have a very high *evidential value*, providing important physical evidence for the development of a mid-nineteenth-century textile mill that survives largely intact with considerable elements of original fabric. The mill also has a strong *aesthetic value*, as it provides a powerful reminder that Galgate was once an important centre for the factory-based silk industry. Similarly, the mill has a high *communal value*, as William Thompson & Company was fundamental to the growth and development of Galgate during the nineteenth century, providing employment for a large proportion of the local population, and being responsible for erecting workers' houses and other buildings in the village. Amongst these, however, the 1851-2 mill is easily the dominant edifice, and manifests the technological improvements to the factory-based processes of silk spinning during the second half of the nineteenth century, and thus has an important *historical value*.
- 5.2.2 Of the key components of the mill complex, only the main mill lies within the boundary of the Application Area, although it is important to consider any indirect impacts on the adjacent structures.

5.3 PRIORITY 2 ELEMENTS

5.3.1 Component elements of the main mill considered to be of *Great Significance* are:

- **Internal columns.** Although relatively plain, the columns, capitals and crush boxes are important, complete survivals with their very early horizontal type line shaft brackets, which were becoming an obsolete design by 1852. Few unaltered examples now remain to show how power from beam engine to machines in these early textile mills, and thus retain a high *evidential value* and *aesthetic value*;
- **Upright shaft bearings.** These form an integral part of the construction of the mill, and represent fine examples of how power was transferred from the engine to the machinery between floors. These fixtures therefore also have a high *evidential value*;

5.4 PRIORITY 3 STRUCTURES

5.4.1 Component elements of the main mill considered to be of *Some Significance* are:

- **Engine bed.** Although entirely encased by later blocking and very difficult to access and view, the engine bed survives but with an intrusive modern brick and concrete stair affecting one quarter, it nevertheless represents a relatively rare survival of a mid-nineteenth-century internal beam engine bed within an extant mill, with some *evidential value*;
- **Privy tower.** Although re-furbished with water closets, the privy tower is a good example of such a feature, giving a good visual representation of their typically small size;
- **Fire-fighting apparatus.** The fire fighting provision within the mill generally predates automated sprinkler systems, which were installed from around the turn of the twentieth century. Although the hose reels and external fire escape are later, they form an important part of the fire-fighting arrangements, which appear to survive in a relatively complete state. The group value of the water tank, standpipe, hose holders, and fabric hose pipes is very high, representing a rare completeness, with associated *evidential value*;
- **Window frames.** Although several are damaged, and a few have been replaced, the windows represent a relatively rare survival of mid-nineteenth century small window paned timber frames. Given their fragility, and external glazing, and the standards of draught exclusion required for modern dwellings, it is perhaps unlikely that these can be preserved *in situ*. Nevertheless, their size and form is typical of a mid-nineteenth-century mill, and have an *aesthetic value*;
- **Bearing boxes.** Bearing boxes within the dividing wall of the north bay, and in the south wall, represent strong visual evidence for the power-transmission system and relate to the 1852 engine. When coupled with the larger upright shaft bearings and the engine beds, these fittings have *evidential value*;

5.5 PRIORITY 4 STRUCTURES

5.5.1 Those components of the study are that may be considered to be of *Lesser Significance* are:

- **Ceiling beams.** Timber ceiling beams represent the earliest form of mill floor construction, being replaced eventually by iron or steel beams from the early nineteenth to early twentieth century. Several of the beams retain evidence for additional line shafting, which cannot be seen elsewhere. Channel section strengthening steel rails on the face of many of the timber beams detract from their visual value;
- **Floorboards.** Original floorboards survive in several areas within the mill, representing an increasingly rare survival of such features;
- **Extension.** The small lean-to extension to the eastern side of the mill block is a late addition that is in poor structural condition, which reduces its overall significance;
- **Wrought-iron railings.** The historic railings along Chapel Lane represent an increasingly rare feature of mills or domestic structures, and are a strong visual reminder of the mill having a well-lit semi-basement, rather than having pavement lights to a deeper cellar.
- **Personnel tunnel.** Although blocked at its southern end, as the building it served is now under separate ownership, the passage forms an interesting part of the complex;
- **Spiral stair.** The date of insertion of the spiral staircase is unclear, but it nevertheless represents an important feature linking the mill's two main machinery floors.

5.6 NEGATIVE ELEMENTS

5.6.1 All structural fabric, fixtures and fittings within the building forms an intrinsic part of the history of its development, use and decay, and are thus of value to the researcher. However, a few elements detract from the features that make the site as a whole of such *Outstanding Significance*. Some mask earlier features, hindering their understanding, or obscuring their significance. Some of these paradoxically also lie in the category of *Some Significance*, as they document an important later event. Nevertheless, the Negative Elements may be considered to be of such modest significance that their demolition/removal would not be unreasonable, providing an appropriate archaeological record is compiled in advance. Those components of the 1851-2 mill that may be considered to be *Negative Elements* are:

- **External lift tower.** Although the lift and its headgear represent good examples of early twentieth-century hoist apparatus, and a reminder of the increasing requirement for mechanisation within the textile industry, its external cladding clearly detracts from the visual impact of the complex, to which it represents a relatively late addition;

- **Internal partitions.** The upper floors of the mill are open-plan, and give a much greater impression of the scale of the mill, compared with the heavily partitioned lower floors. The inserted modern partitions and ceilings almost exclusively date to post-textile production, and thus detract from the building.

6. HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1 Paragraph 128 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution to their setting. Paragraph 129 requires that local planning authorities should also take any assessment of significance into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 6.1.2 An analysis of the significance of the 1851-2 Galgate Silk Mill and the surrounding heritage assets is set out in this report. It demonstrates that the mill building is of national importance, which is reflected in its statutory designation as a Grade II listed building. It lies within the setting of five other Grade II listed structures, which are similarly considered to be of national importance. Of these, the water mill, reported to have operated the first ever mechanical silk spinning operation, is especial significance.
- 6.1.3 In considering the impact on heritage assets, and particularly the 1851-2 mill, it is important to note that the growth and development of Galgate is linked very closely to an expansion of the factory-based silk industry locally, which was the most significant industry in the village throughout the nineteenth century. It should also be noted that the 1851-2 mill is the dominant physical reminder of this former important industry, and whilst it is in good structural condition, it is currently under-used, suffering some decay, and in need of a thorough refurbishment.

6.2 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 6.2.1 The development proposals allow for the creation of student apartments on the upper floors of the mill, together with a small museum dedicated to the area's historic silk industry, a café and student facilities. The only new structure to be added to the site is a cycle rack, which is to be placed along the northern boundary of the mill complex, together with some minor highway works within the existing car-parking area. The cycle racks are to be fabricated largely in a clear plastic material, which will not impede views of the historic buildings and will thus have only a negligible visual impact. Similarly, the design proposals will not have any impact on any below-ground remains of archaeological interest, as any earth-moving works required will be very limited.
- 6.2.2 The design proposals do not require any significant alterations to the exterior of the mill block, although character of the historic fabric will be enhanced by the removal of the modern lift tower that abuts the southern elevation, and has been assessed as a negative element (*Section 5.6.1 above*). The small extension that abuts the eastern side of the mill may also be removed as part of the proposed development, although this is not considered to be significant.

- 6.2.3 The design proposals inevitably necessitate some remodelling of the interior of the building, although the main structural elements will be retained. On the lower floors, the proposed remodelling will involve the removal of the modern partitions and ceilings, which have similarly been assessed as negative elements (*Section 5.6.1 above*). The area that is proposed for a museum on the ground floor will be available for the public to appreciate the original layout of the mill, which is currently obscured behind modern finishing materials that are incongruous with the historic fabric.
- 6.2.4 Conversely, it is proposed that on the upper floors new partitions are inserted to create individual apartments, which will detract from the open-plan character of the spinning floors. This can be considered as an adverse impact on the historic character of the building, although needs to be balanced against the benefits afforded by the refurbishment of the mill. Perhaps the most significant intervention that is proposed is the removal of limited sections of all the upper floors to create the atrium. However, this will enable the column and beam structure to be revealed from ground level through to the roof, with views being provided from a new glazed escape stair. It should be stressed that without interventions to permit sustainable uses the mill will decay, and ultimately be lost. Provided the significant historic structures identified are largely retained, interventions that sustain the building may be considered permissible.
- 6.2.5 The existing roof structure will be largely retained and will be subject to a programme of sympathetic repair work, together with the gutters and associated rainwater goods. Proposed alterations to the roofing material are limited to the insertion of a series of skylights, which will provide additional natural lighting. The skylights will be fitted to the central pitches of the multi-span roof, and will thus be largely obscured from view externally.
- 6.2.6 It is anticipated that the most significant historic features within the mill will be retained *in-situ*. These include the huge upright shaft bearing castings and associated line shaft bearing boxes, the cast-iron columns and line shaft brackets (where they survive), the privy tower and the fire-fighting apparatus. The remains of the engine bed will be fully recorded, and then made accessible by being modified to form useable space, while at the same time allowing the location of the flywheel and engine beds to be appreciated from within the room. Appropriate treatment of these fixtures and fittings will enhance their visibility.
- 6.2.7 The proposed development will provide sustainable new use for the 1851-2 mill, and ensure that there is investment available for the maintenance and long-term conservation of the historic building. In addition, the inclusion of a small museum dedicated to the silk industry and its local and regional context will provide a fitting means of celebrating and disseminating the importance of this former industry that was so crucial to the development of Galgate and the North West from the late eighteenth century. The museum will also act as a repository for copies of any photographs, artefacts or memories held locally, enabling important documentation in private collections to be disseminated to a wider audience.

6.3 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS

- 6.3.1 The proposed development will not require any significant alterations to the exterior of the building, other than the sympathetic repair and restoration of deteriorating fixtures and fittings, and will thus not have any adverse impact on the setting of the adjacent heritage assets. Conversely, the repair of the 1851-2 mill, and the removal of the modern hoist tower against the southern elevation, will complement the historic character of the locale by improving the visibility of the historic fabric.
- 6.3.2 Visible from both the M6 and the West Coast main railway line, the townscape and landmark value of the historic fabric will be enhanced by the proposed repair and refurbishment works. The mill complex is approached via Chapel Lane from either the A6 to the south-west, or via Hazelrigg Lane and Lancaster University to the north. The approach from the south-west provides a sense of the historic industrial character of the locale (Plate 28), with Chapel Lane being lined with nineteenth-century workers' houses and associated communal buildings, creating a fairly built-up corridor that widens out by the 1851-2 mill. Negative attributes of the modern environment are perhaps the twentieth-century housing development on Crofters Fold, which detracts from the historic character of the area, and the metal-clad lift tower that abuts the south elevation of the 1851-2 mill (Plate 28).



Plate 28: The approach to Galgate Silk Mills from the south-west, featuring the Grade II listed Chapel Cottage in the foreground

- 6.3.3 The approach to Galgate Silk Mills from the north is characterised by a semi-rural setting with medium-range views, although the visibility of the mill from Kit Brow Lane is obscured to some degree by mature trees and the modern development to the rear of the Grade II listed Ellel House (Plate 29). Beyond Ellel House (Plate 30), the vista becomes more enclosed as the original mill building on the west side of Chapel Lane is reached, and views become dominated by the 1851-2 mill.



Plate 29: View looking south towards Galgate Silk Mills from Kit Brow Lane, the Grade II listed Church of St John in the foreground and modern development to the rear



Plate 30: View looking south towards the 1851-2 mill, with the Grade II listed Ellel House in the foreground

- 6.3.4 In summary, the design proposals do not afford any significant alteration to the visitors' experience of the historic environment from either approach to the Galgate Silk Mills complex.

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