Pollard Street, Ancoats, Manchester

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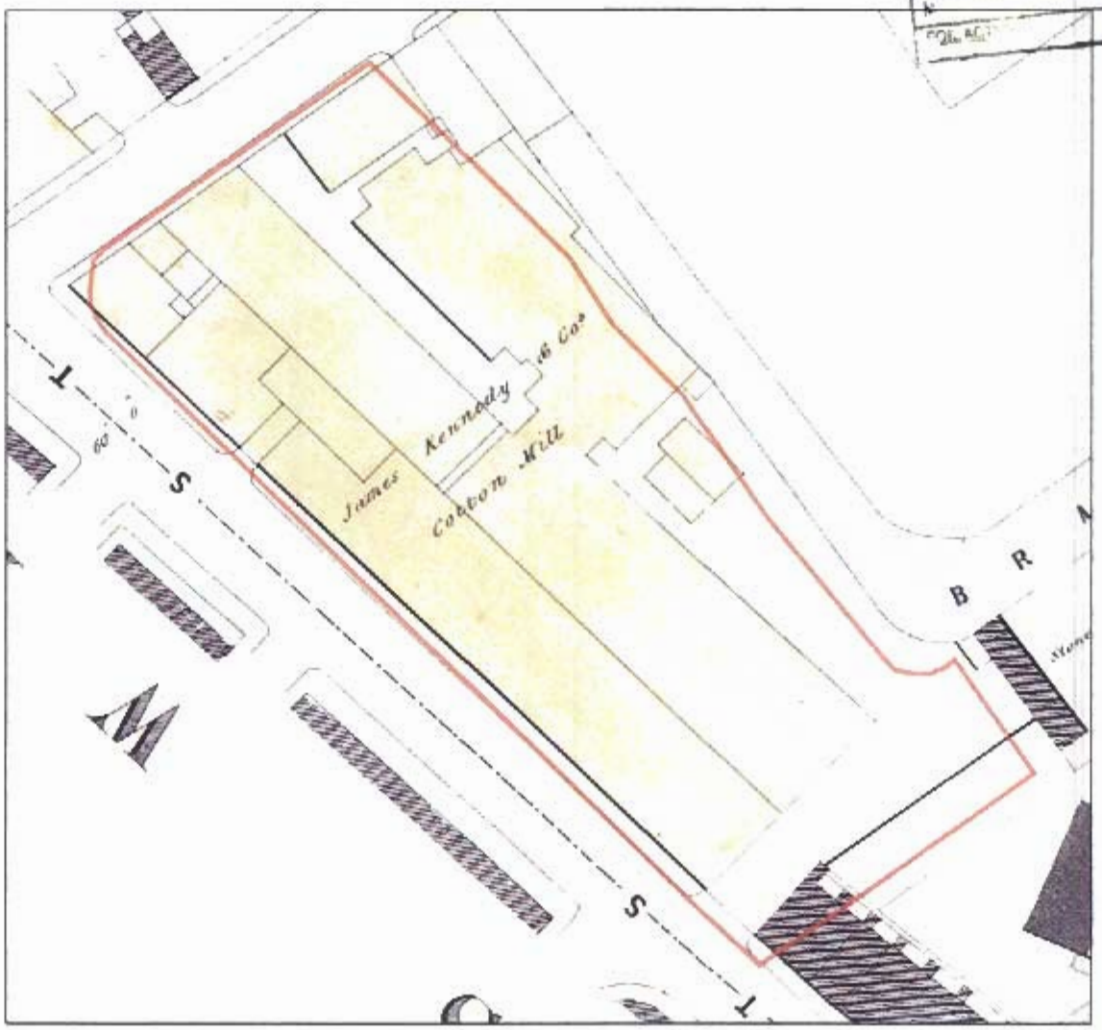
An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment



A report by Dr Richard A Gregory
University of Manchester Archaeological Unit
University of Manchester Field Archaeology Centre
Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL
Tel 0161 275 2314
Fax 0161 275 2315
www.art.man.ac.uk/fieldarchaeologycentre
e-mail: richard.a.gregory@manchester.ac.uk
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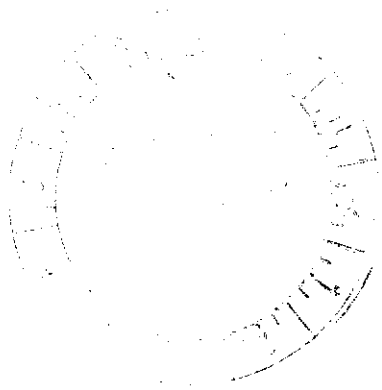

Summary

The University of Manchester Archaeological Unit was commissioned by CRE8 to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of a proposed development at the corner of Pollard Street and Great Ancoats Street, Ancoats, Manchester (centred on NGR: SJ 8539 9807).

The study area contains the site of a mill, built in 1803 or 1804, which was gradually expanded and modified over the course of the nineteenth century. Associated with the mill were buildings, constructed during the nineteenth century, which housed its power systems. In 1876 the mill was converted into a railway owned grain warehouse, which was demolished in the latter part of the twentieth century.

None of these remains are considered to be of national importance. However, the power systems of the nineteenth century mill are considered to be of regional significance.

It is recommended that the sites of these power systems should be targeted by evaluation trenching, prior to redevelopment, with the position and extent of the trenches determined through consultation with the Assistant County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester. Should significant remains be found to survive, which are threatened by redevelopment, recommendations for further, open-area, excavation may follow.

1. Introduction

1.1. The University of Manchester Archaeological Unit was commissioned by CRE8 to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment of a proposed development at the corner of Pollard and Great Ancoats Street, Ancoats, Manchester (centred on NGR: SJ 8538 9806). The aim of the assessment was to identify as far as reasonably possible the nature of the archaeological resource to enable informed recommendations to be made for the future treatment of any remains[1].

[1] The assessment was carried out by Dr Richard Gregory. Thanks to Dr Peter Arrowsmith, UMAU, and Norman Redhaed, Assistant County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester.

2. Methodology Statement

2.1. The assessment consisted of a desk-based study and a site inspection. The desk-based study made use of the following sources:

- The Greater Manchester Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) held by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit at the University of Manchester
- Published and unpublished cartographic, documentary and photographic sources

2.2. The aim of the site inspection was to relate the findings of the desk-top study to the existing topography and land-use and to recover evidence not available from the desk-top sources.

3. The Setting

3.1. Location, Topography and Land-use

3.1.1. The study area lies in the Ancoats district of Manchester and is bounded by Great Ancoats Street to the south-west and Pollard Street to the north west (centred on NGR: SJ 8539 9807) (**Figure** 1).

3.1.2. The topography of the study area is generally level maintaining a fairly constant height of *c.* 48.5m AOD. The site is presently occupied by two late twentieth century commercial units, which are associated with two areas used as car parks.

3.2. Geology

The solid geology within the study area, as mapped by the OS Geological Survey, comprises Sherwood (formerly Bunter) Sandstone, whilst the superficial deposits comprise late glacial Boulder Clay.

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1. Prehistoric and Roman

No prehistoric finds are known to have been discovered within the study area or its close vicinity. In the North-West the evidence for prehistoric activity is often sparse and based on chance finds. However, in this case the absence of such evidence may reflect the unfavourable geological conditions. In the region there is growing evidence for prehistoric settlement and other activity taking place on light well-drained sands, such as sands and gravels, in preference to the boulder clay found within the study area.

The line of the Roman road leading from Manchester to Castleshaw near Oldham and ultimately to York passes through Ancoats, but runs to the north of the study area (SMR 24; Arrowsmith 2002, 7-8). No Roman remains are known from the study area itself or its immediate vicinity.

4.2. Industrial

4.2.1. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, Ancoats was a rural area on the eastern side of the town of Manchester. In last quarter of the eighteenth century the population of Manchester expanded at an unprecedented rate, helped by an upsurge in the textile industry in which the town was involved as both a manufacturing and a commercial centre. Ancoats played a key part in the process of growth as the town's first industrial suburb, with land here being given over to the construction of workers' housing and factories. The industrialization of Ancoats continued unabated into the nineteenth century.

4.2.2. Late Eighteenth Century

Green's map of 1787-94 shows that during the late eighteenth century this area of Ancoats was largely undeveloped and of a rural character, comprising a series of fields, enclosed by hedgerows, positioned on either side of Ancoats Lane (later renamed Great Ancoats Street) (**Figure 2**). Two fields, separated by a hedgerow, were found within the study area and these were owned respectively by 'Messrs Rigby, Tochett, Harrison & Wild' and 'Messrs Rigby & Co'.

Green's map does, however, indicate the course of two intended roads traversing the study area. These are named as Ashton Street, which would later be established as Pollard Street, and Park Street, running to the west of a 'proposed gardens or pleasure grounds'. The later cartographic sources indicate that this latter street was never constructed, nor the proposed pleasure grounds.

To the north-west of the study area Green's map also denotes the intended course of the Ashton canal. This canal was authorized by Act of Parliament in 1792, and was largely intended to carry coal to Manchester from the collieries of the Ashton and Oldham areas. The canal opened between Ashton and Ancoats in 1796 (Hadfield & Biddle 1970, 294-5), and would act as a major stimulus to the industrialization of the study area.

4.2.3. Early to Mid-Nineteenth Century

Johnson's 1818-19 map of Manchester indicates that during the early nineteenth century a large cotton mill had been constructed within the study area (**Figure 3**), fronting Great Ancoats Street. A parliamentary paper dating to 1834 (PP XX 1834, D1 p. 266 no. 177) indicates that this mill was constructed in 1803 or 1804, with additional parts added between 1814 and 1824. This document also indicates that in 1833 the mill produced cotton, yarn and thread, was powered by steam, with a total output of 120 horsepower (nominal figure) and was lit during winter afternoons by gas lighting.

Although it has not been possible to establish the original owner of the mill, through contemporary trade directories, it appears that by 1811 the mill was in the ownership of James Kennedy (**Table 1**). Prior to this date, by 1808, Kennedy was, however, resident at Caledonian Place, a large house found directly to the east of the study area. Moreover, James Kennedy along with his brother John Kennedy, James McConnel, Adam and George Murray, the Houldsworths and William Fairburn formed a group of significant industrialists, who had migrated from Southern Scotland, and played an integral role in the development of Manchester's textile industry (GMAU 1990, 1). Notes taken from Guildhall insurance records, during the Greater Manchester Textile Survey (MS. 7253/32A No. 158639; MS. 7253/32 No. 174854), indicate that James Kennedy was based in Manchester by 1797 and that in 1800 he part owned and/or occupied a cotton mill with Christopher Nuttall in German Street, Ancoats. The early nineteenth century trade directories also indicate that from 1808 James Kennedy owned, and/or occupied, a cotton mill in Pickford Street, Ancoats, until 1822.

Further documentary evidence relating to the Great Ancoats mill is found in the Boulton & Watt archive, held by Birmingham City Archives which provides details of the engines ordered by James Kennedy (**Table 2**). These orders suggest that during the early nineteenth century (1823/29) the mill contained a Boulton & Watt 10 horsepower independent type engine, whilst by the mid-nineteenth century (1836-1844) a Boulton & Watt 80 horsepower marine engine and a Boulton & Watt 25 horsepower independent type were installed within the mill. The majority of the 120 horsepower documented in 1833 appears, therefore, to have been provided by steam plant made by one or more other manufacturers, rather than Boulton & Watt, during this period.

Table 1: Key dates for the early nineteenth century mill derived from trade directories.

Source	Entry
1811Trade Directory	Kennedy James, cotton spinners, Ancoats Street and Pickford Street, house Caledonian Place, Ancoats.
1838 Trade Directory	Kennedy James & Co., cotton spinners & lace thread manufacturers, 299 Great Ancoats Street.
1854-55 Trade Directory	Kennedy James & Co., cotton spinners, doublers crape & yarn manufactures, Great Ancoats Street.
1858 Trade Directory	No listing which suggests the mill was vacant in 1858.

Table 2: Orders made by James Kennedy to Boulton & Watt.

Date	Details
1823/1829	James Kennedy orders 10 horsepower independent type engine.
1836	Messrs James Kennedy & Co order 80 horsepower side lever (boat) type engine for use on land.
1844	James Kennedy & Co. order 25 horsepower independent type engine.

The form of the early nineteenth century mill can be discerned through reference to the relevant cartographic sources, particularly a plan of the site produced around 1822 (**Figure 4**). This plan indicates that by this date a canal arm, linked to the Ashton Canal, had been constructed to the rear of the mill and that the mill complex was composed of a number of discrete elements (**Figures 4 & 17**).

The 1822 plan indicates that the main body of the mill was composed of three separate components, probably relating to two different phases of construction. Two of these components are denoted as 'a' on the 1822 plan and were both five storeyed with a two-third storeyed loft (**Figure 4: a & Figure 17: 1 & 2**); later OS mapping indicates that a covered passage was positioned between these two buildings (**Figure 8**). Based on this cartographic evidence, and the size of these buildings, it is possible that these two components represent the original mill building (**Figure 17: 1**) and its associated power systems (**Figure 17: 2**), constructed in 1803 or 1804. A photograph of this mill building taken in 1960 (MCL m01937) indicates that it was twenty bays long by three bays wide. Based on its date of construction it is also probable that this mill was not fireproofed, utilising timber traverse beams and longitudinal joists to support the internal flooring, as opposed to the cast iron frames and brick jack arches employed in fireproof mills (Williams 1992, 58-9). A Goads insurance plan of 1928 does, however, indicate the presence of cast iron columns within this areas of the mill by this date, but these were probably inserted at a later date in order to strengthen the floors of the mill. It is also possible that the mill boiler house was located close to the canal arm, as a 1928 Goad's insurance plan indicates that this part of the building contained a transverse centrally placed vaulted room. The third component forming the main body of the mill in *c.* 1822 was also a five storeyed building with a two-third storeyed loft, but was of greater width than the adjacent, north-western, twenty bay building (**Figure 4: b & Figure 17: 3**). This wider building abutted the suspected power systems of the mill and is presumed to represent a later extension to the mill, which the available documentary and cartographic evidence suggests was constructed between 1814 and 1818-19.

The other elements of the mill complex plotted on the *c.* 1822 plan were found flanking Ancoats Lane (Great Ancoats Street) and Ashton (Pollard) Street and were constructed prior to 1818-19, possibly at the same time as the extension to the 1803 mill. Fronting Ancoats Lane (Great Ancoats Street) was a one storeyed building, containing a gasometer and smith's shops. The 1849 OS map indicates that a covered passageway led through this range suggesting that by this date this building was at least two storeys in height (**Figure 4: e & Figure 17: 4**). This building joined to a seven storeyed building, also fronting Ancoats Lane, which in *c.* 1822 contained a warehouse, packing rooms, counting house and reeling rooms (**Figure 4: d; Figure 17: 5**). The large-scale 1849 OS map also indicates that this building was provisioned with two covered passageways (**Figure 8**). Linked to the south-eastern side of this building was a further one storeyed building, described in *c.* 1822 as 'Cotton Rooms'

(**Figure 4: c; Figure 17: 6**). The *c.* 1822 plan (**Figure 4**) also plots three properties, each denoted 'dwelling house' (**Figure 17: 7-9**) and a small building adjacent to the canal arm denoted as 'sheds and chimney in the base' (**Figure 4: f**). A 1928 Goad's Insurance plan indicates that the 'dwellings' fronting Ancoats Lane (Great Ancoats Street) (**Figure 17: 8 & 9**) were two storeyed buildings.

By 1824 Swire's map of Manchester (**Figure 5**) indicates that the sheds adjacent to the canal arm (**Figure 4: f**) had been demolished and two additional buildings constructed at the rear of the mill (**Figure 17: 10 & 11**) of which the easterly is denoted on the 1849 OS map as an engine house (**Figure 8 & Figure 17: 10**). The cartographic evidence indicates that the westerly building (**Figure 17: 11**) had been replaced by 1831 by a north-western extension to the building, which possibly housed the early power systems of the mill (**Figure 6 & Figure 17: 12**). The form of this extension suggests that it represents an additional engine and boiler house, and it is feasible that it contained the 10 horsepower Boulton & Watt independent engine ordered in 1829 (**Table 2**).

The large-scale 1849 OS map also indicates that by this date further modifications had been made to the mill (**Figure 8**), which is now denoted as 'Caledon Mill (Cotton)'. These modifications are also depicted on Adshead's 1850 map (**Figure 9**) and included extensions to both range of buildings fronting Great Ancoats Street (**Figure 17: 13 & 14**) and the construction of an engine house and boiler house (**Figure 17: 15**), which appear to have replaced a possible engine/ boiler house (**Figure 17: 12**) plotted on Bancks & Co's earlier map. Presumably, this new engine house contained one of the Boulton & Watt engines ordered by James Kennedy in 1836 and 1844 (**Table 2**).

Following the construction of these additional elements the trade directories indicate that the mill was involved in cotton spinning, crape doubling and yarn manufacturing. In 1858 the site appears, however, to have passed from the ownership of James Kennedy & Co. and may well have been vacant (**Table 1**).

4.2.4. Late Nineteenth Century

In 1861 the mill reopened under the ownership of John Blair and formed the focus for cotton spinning and wadding manufacturing (**Table 3**). By 1865 cotton waste also appears to have been processed at the mill, whilst in 1869 the mill was employed in flax and hemp spinning, and is listed as Caledon Mill, Great Ancoats Flax & Hemp Spinning Co. (Limited) (**Table 3**). An 1876 trade directory indicates that by this date the mill was partly occupied by the Great Ancoats Flax & Hemp Spinning Co. Limited and partly acted as the Midland Railway Co. Grain Office (**Table 2**). In 1881 the mill was in the sole occupancy of the Midland Railway Co. and functioned as a grain store.

The 1888 and 1888-9 OS mapping plots the form of this grain store and indicates that the area between the original body of the mill and the range of buildings fronting Great Ancoats Street had been covered (**Figures 10 & 11**). This area also contained a series of rail tracks, which were linked to a railway exiting the building and running across Great Ancoats Street. The 1888 and 1888-9 OS maps also indicate that a number of the buildings housing the power systems, originally found at the rear of the mill (**Figure 17: 10, 15 & 16**), had been demolished by this date, along with one of the early nineteenth century buildings fronting Pollard Street (**Figure 17: 7**). In their place, a rectangular building was constructed (**Figures 10 & 11**), although this structure had been demolished by 1905 (**Figure 12**).

Table 3: Key dates for the late nineteenth century mill derived from trade directories.

Source	Entry
1861 Trade Directory	259 Great Ancoats Street, Blair John & Co. patent wadding manufacture & cotton spinning.
1865 Trade Directory	Blair John, wadding manufacturer, cotton spinner and cotton waste dealer, 21 High Street; works, Caledon Mill, Great Ancoats Street, house James Terrace, 379, Waterloo Road, Cheetham.
1868-9 Trade Directory	Blair J, Caledon Mill, cotton spinner Great Ancoats Flax & Hemp Spinning Co. (Limited).
1874 Trade Directory	259 Great Ancoats Street, Great Ancoats Flax & Hemp Spinning Co. Limited.
1876 Trade Directory	Midland Railway Co. Grain Office [Co. Limited Great Ancoats Flax & Hemp Spinning]
1881 Trade Directory	Midland Railway Co. Grain Office

4.2.5. **Twentieth Century**

During the twentieth century the mill continued to function as a grain store, which by 1928 was owned by the London, Midland & Scottish Railway. By 1911 a small building had also been constructed close to the north-western corner of the study area (**Figure 13 & 14**). This had been replaced by 1928 by a larger building, which is denoted on a Goad's insurance plan as a garage. This plan also indicates that 'Associated Biscuit Manufactures Ltd' utilised the grain warehouse, whilst other goods stored in the warehouse included meat extraction products, confectionary and silk. The Goad's plan also indicates that the one area of the warehouse which may originally have formed the 1803 mill had been provisioned with cast iron columns and wrought iron girders. Given the early nineteenth century date for this building these, however, were probably not original features, but were perhaps inserted at a later date in order to strength the floors of the converted mill. The warehouse was extant until 1969, but had been demolished prior to the mid-1980s as the mill was not included within the Greater Manchester Textile Mill Survey.

5. Significance of the Remains

5.1. Criteria

5.1.1. Although there are a wide number of methodologies for assessing archaeological significance, that with the greatest legal standing is the Secretary of State's criteria for the scheduling of ancient monuments, outlined in Annex 4 of PPG16 (*Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning* (DoE 1990)). In the following, the remains in the study area have been assessed using these criteria.

5.1.2. ***Period***

The cartographic evidence indicates that during the late eighteenth century the study area was undeveloped and of a rural character. In 1803 or 1804 a cotton mill was constructed, which was gradually expanded and modified over the course of the nineteenth century. In 1876 the mill was used as a railway owned grain warehouse, and it continued to be used as a multipurpose warehouse until its demolition in the latter part of the twentieth century.

5.1.3. ***Rarity***

Any remains relating to the power systems of the nineteenth century mill are considered to be of regional rarity.

5.1.4. ***Documentation***

The general building development of the study area can be traced reasonably well through the cartographic and published documentary sources. Further details of the engines ordered by James Kennedy for this mill are held in the Boulton & Watt Collection held in the Birmingham City Archives.

5.1.5. ***Group Value***

Any remains of the power systems of the nineteenth century mill may provide comparative material with a small but growing number of textile mill sites excavated in Manchester.

5.1.6. ***Survival Condition***

The extent, survival and condition of below ground remains are presently not known.

5.1.7. ***Fragility***

See section 7.

5.1.8. ***Diversity***

The diversity of the below ground remains within the study area is presently unknown.

5.1.9. ***Potential***

It is not anticipated that the study area will contain remains other than those identified or suggested in this report.

5.2. Significance

5.2.1. On the above criteria, there are no known sites within the study area, which are considered to be of national importance.

5.2.2. Any remains of the power systems of the nineteenth century mill are considered to be of regional significance.

The above assessment of significance is largely based on the criteria of period, rarity, documentation and group value.

6. Impact of the Development

6.1. The archaeological impact of development on a site can be assessed as followed.

Direct:
Involving damage to the remains. This can be further refined by assessing what proportion of the remains is likely to be destroyed.

Indirect:
Involving changes to the condition or setting of the remains as a consequence of the development.

6.2. Information supplied by CRE8 indicates that the site will be redeveloped through the construction of a mixed use commercial and residential unit.

At present no details are available to whether this redevelopment will be provisioned with basements. However, any reduction in ground level including the digging of foundation trenches/piling and services for the development may impact on the below ground remains of the nineteenth century mill.

7. Recommendations for Mitigation

7.1. PPG 16 draws a distinction between remains of national importance and other remains. In the case of the former, the presumption should be in favour of preservation in situ; in the case of the latter, where this is warranted by their significance, remains may undergo preservation by record, that is the making of an appropriate record by the use of survey, photography, excavation or other methods.

The following recommendations are made following consultation with Norman Redhead, Assistant County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester.

7.2. None of the known remains within the study area are considered to be of national importance.

7.3. However, the power systems of the nineteenth century mill are considered to be of regional significance.

It is therefore recommended that prior to redevelopment archaeological trial trenching should target the areas where there are potential remains of the power systems of the cotton mill (**Figure 17: 2, 10-12, 15 & 16**).

The number, position and extent of the evaluation trenches should be determined through consultation with Norman Redhead, Assistant County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester.

Should significant remains be found to survive, which are threatened by redevelopment, recommendations for further, open-area, excavation may follow.

Sources

Bibliography

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GMAU 1990 *The Ancoats Mills*, Unpublished Report.

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Williams M with Farnie D A 1992 *Cotton Mills in Greater Manchester*, Preston, Carnegie Publishing.

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Maps & Plans

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Plan of All the Spinning Factories within the Township of Manchester, nd (*c.* 1822). JRULM Special Collections.

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OS 6in to 1 mile Lancashire sheet 104, surveyed 1845, published 1848.

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Dean R & W 1808 *Manchester and Salford directory for 1808 and 1809.*

Pigot J 1811 *Manchester and Salford directory.*

Pigot J 1813 *Manchester and Salford directory.*

Wardle M & Bentham 1814 *The commercial directory.*

Pigot J & Dean R & W 1815 *Manchester and Salford directory.*

Pigot J & Dean R & W 1817 *Manchester and Salford directory.*

Pigot J & Dean R & W 1819-20 *Manchester and Salford directory.*

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Baines E 1824-5 *History, directory and gazetteer of the County Palatine of Lancaster.*

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Pigot J & Son 1838 *General, classified and street directory of Manchester and Salford.*

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Slater I 1876 *Royal national commercial directory of Manchester and Salford, with their vicinities.*

Slater I 1881 *Royal national commercial directory of Manchester and Salford, with their vicinities.*

Parliamentary Papers

PPX 1834 Factories Inquiries Commission, Supplementary Report, Part 1.

Photographs

MCL = Manchester Central Library

MCL m01937 Great Ancoats Street, Pollard Street Corner. Taken by H Milligan in 20/06/1960.

MCL m01939 Great Ancoats Street, Warehouses. Taken by H Milligan in 20/06/1960.

Figures



Figure 1. Location plan with study area outlined. Scale 1:1000. Reproduced from modern OS mapping by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number WL8021.



Figure 2. Detail of Green's map of Manchester and Salford, 1787-94, with study area outlined. Scale approx. 1:1000.

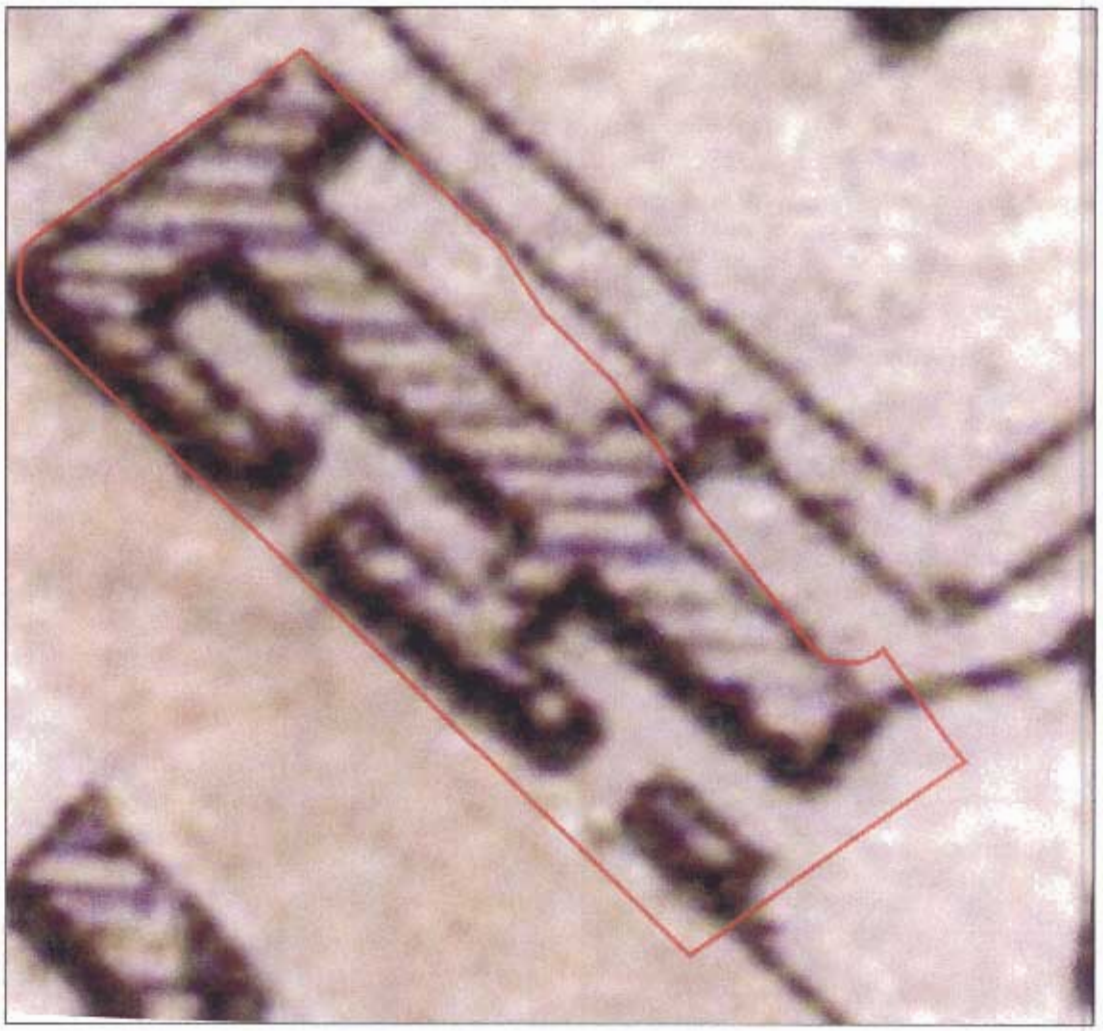

Figure 3. Detail of Johnson's map of the parish of Manchester, 1818-19, with study area outlined. Scale approx 1:1000.

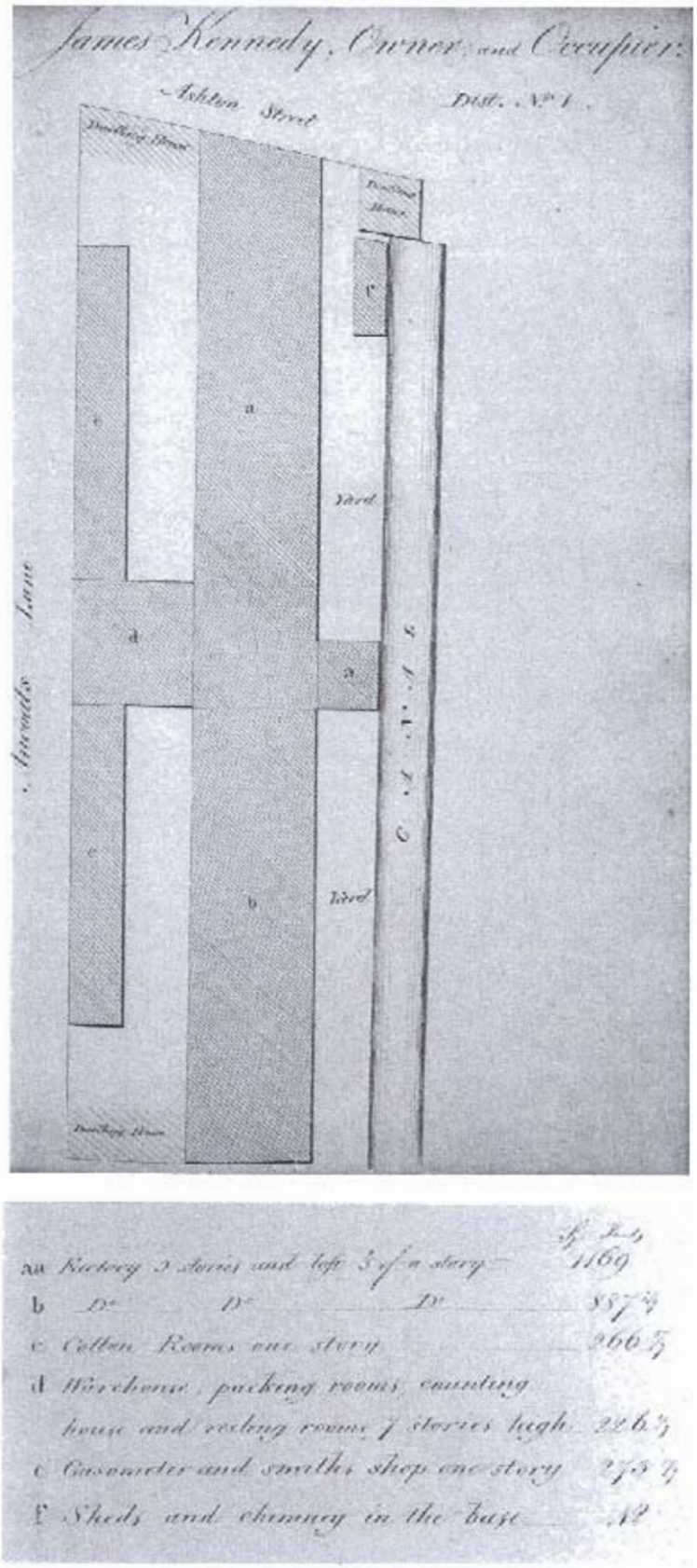

Figure 4. A plan of the site dating to *c.* 1822 (John Rylands University Library of Manchester).

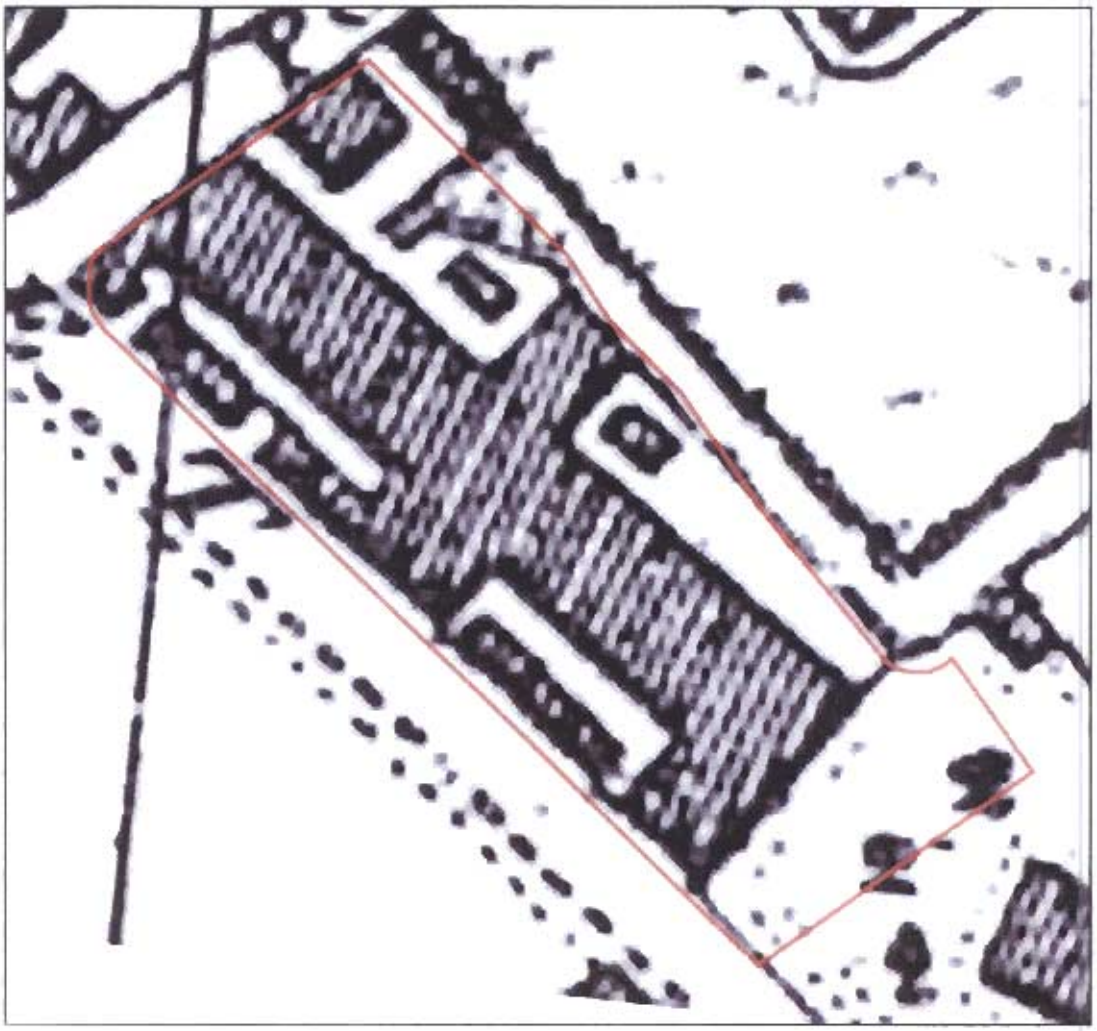

Figure 5. Detail of Swire's map of Manchester and Salford, 1824, with study area outlined. Scale approx. 1:1000.

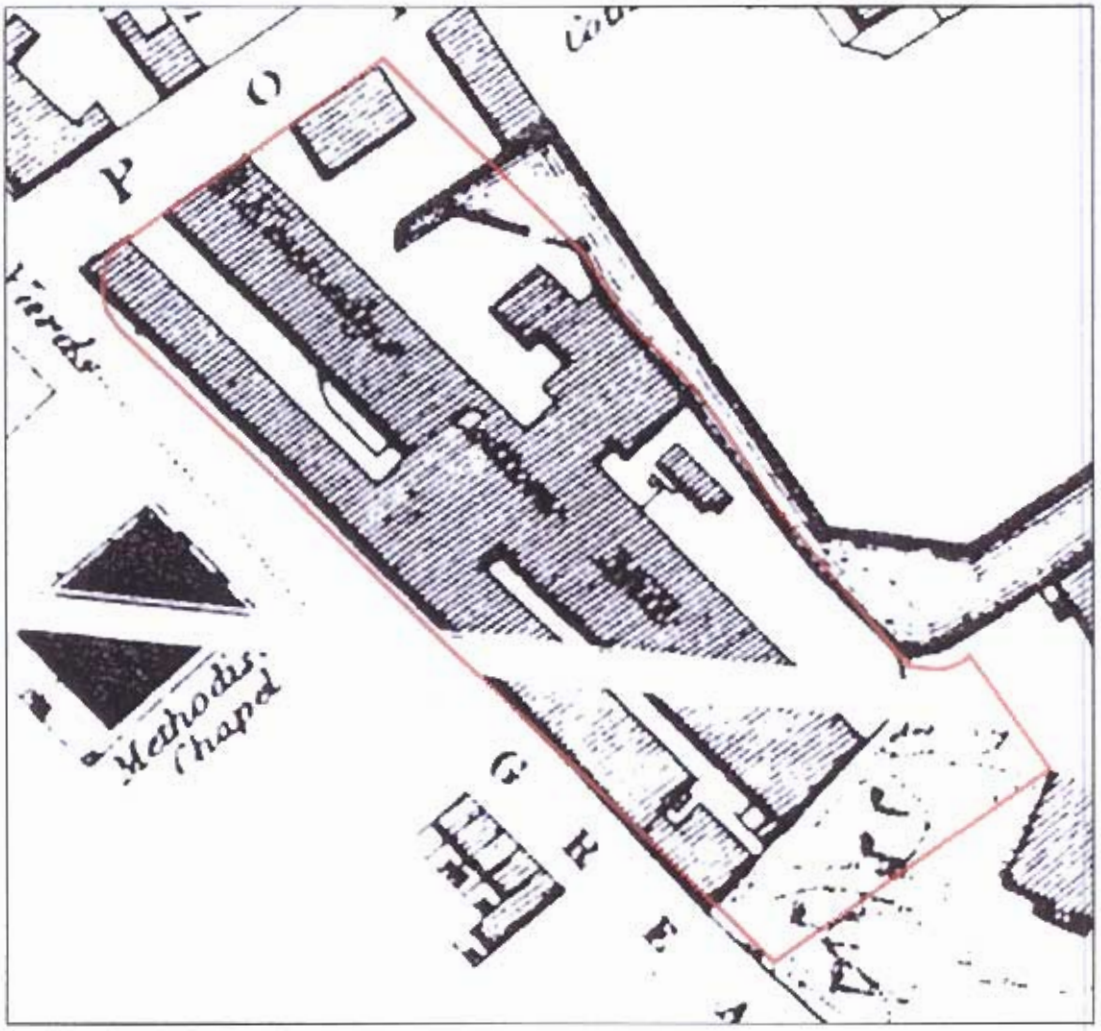

Figure 6. Detail of Bancks & Co's map of Manchester and Salford, 1831, with study area outlined. Scale approx 1:1000.

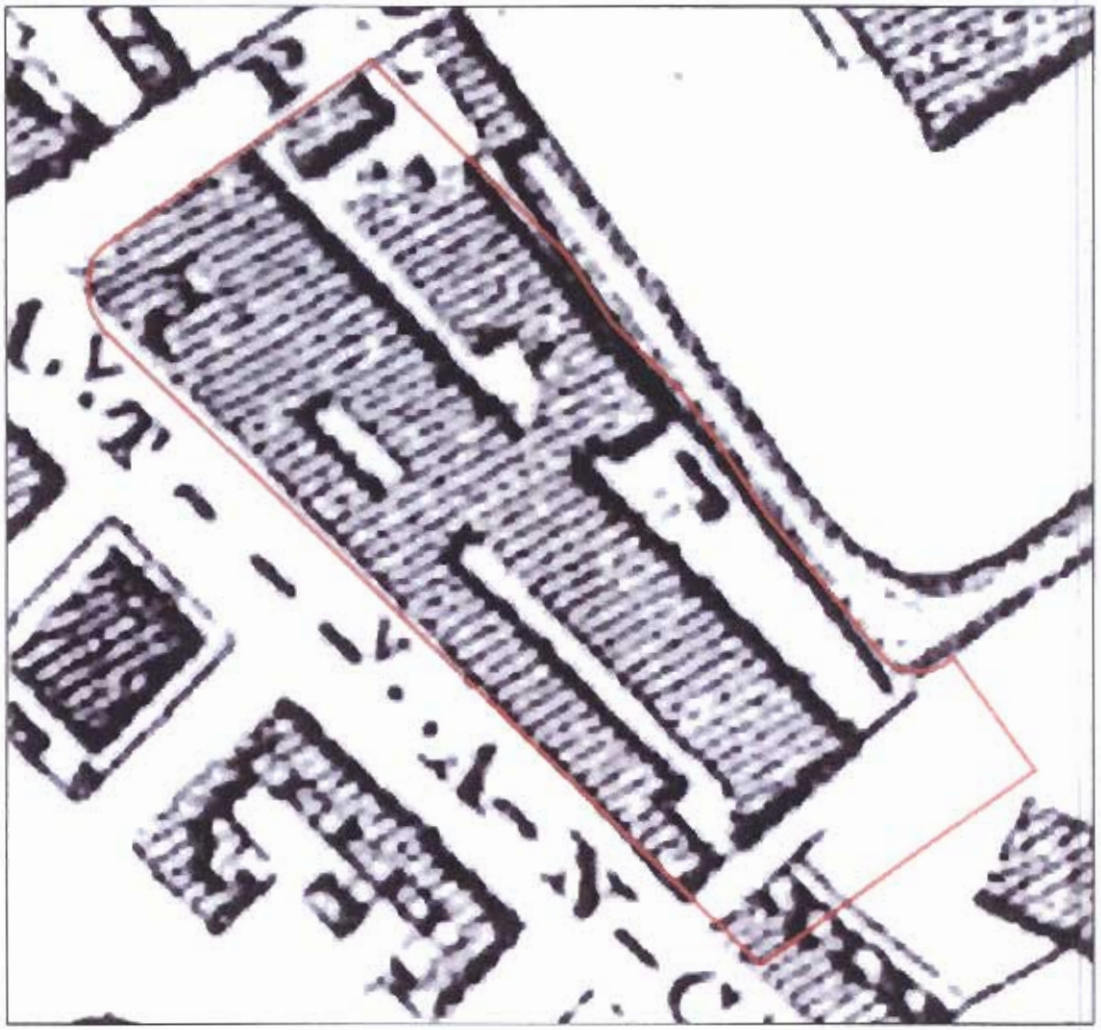

Figure 7. Detail of OS 6in to 1 mile Manchester and Salford sheet 104, surveyed 1845, published 1848, with study area outlined. Scale 1:1000.

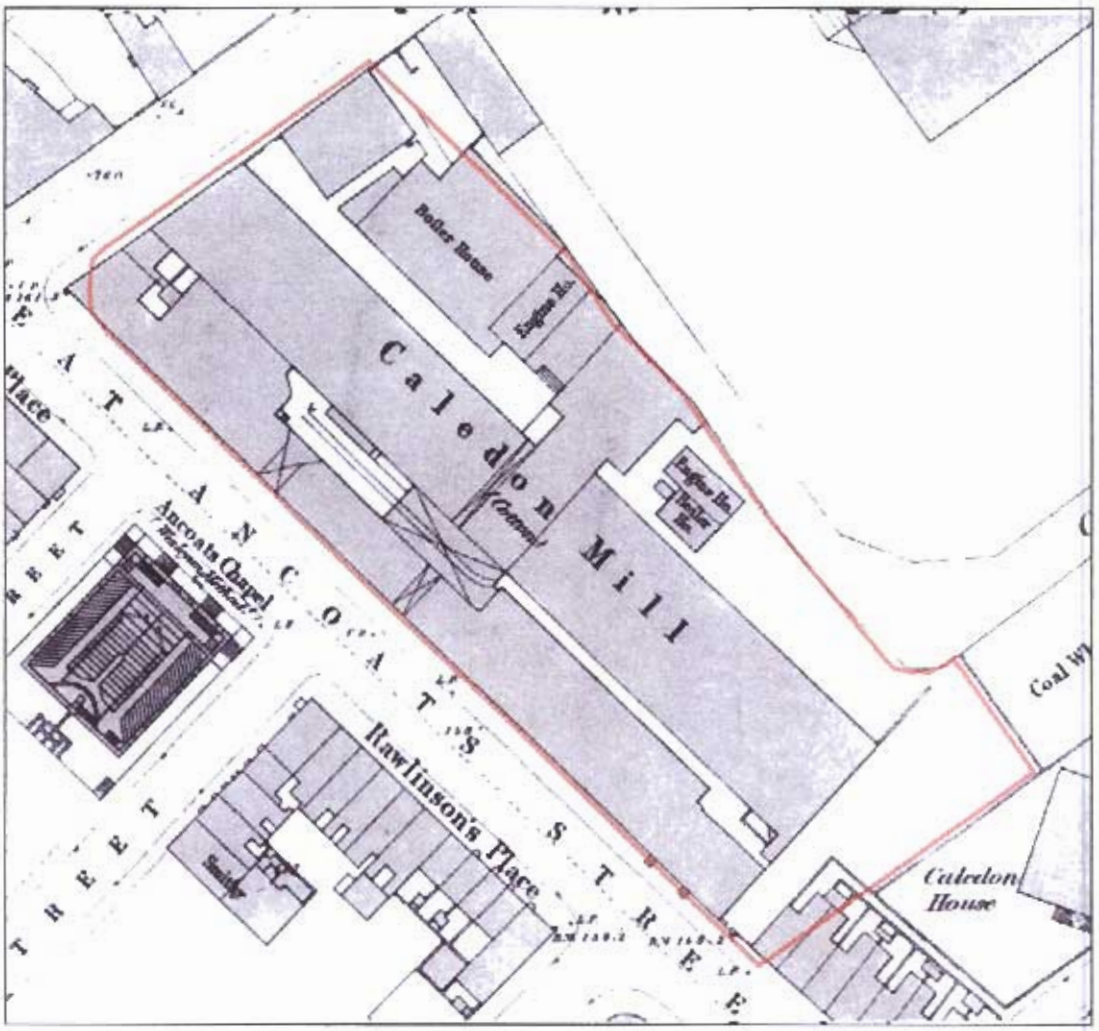

Figure 8. Detail of OS 60in to 1 mile Manchester and Salford sheet 30, surveyed 1849, published 1851, with study area outlined. Scale 1:1000.

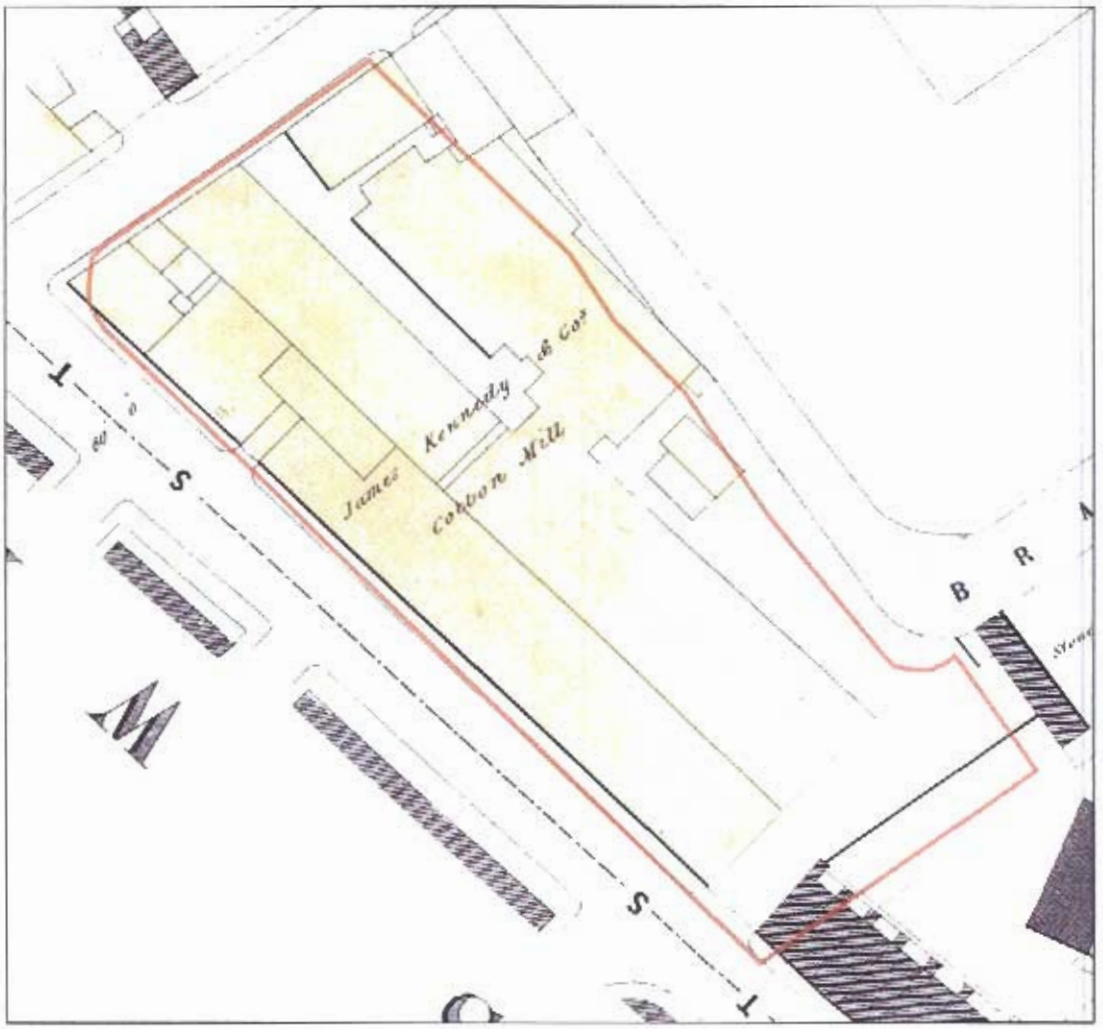

Figure 9. Detail of Adshead's map of the Township of Manchester, 1850, with study area outlined. Scale approx 1:1000.

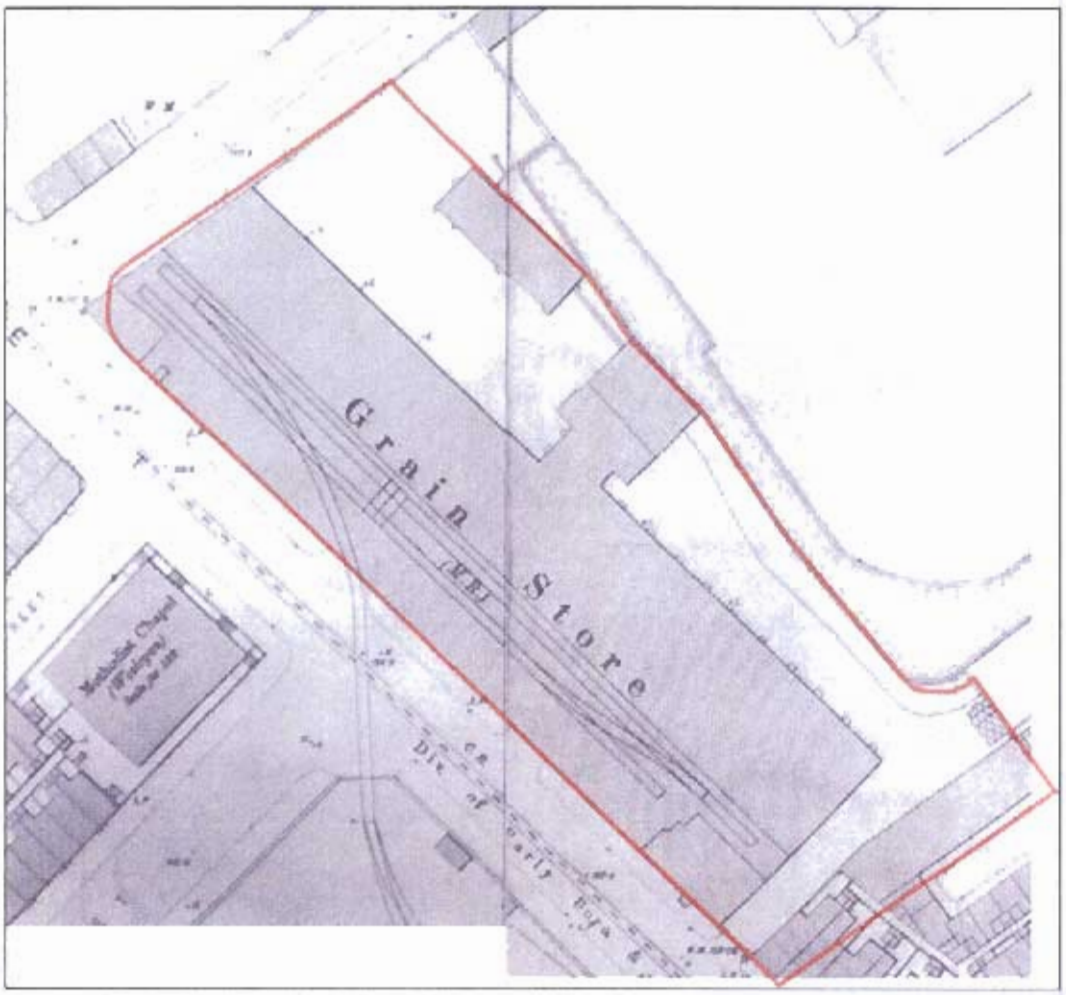

Figure 10. Detail of the OS 10ft to 1 mile First Edition 1888-91, Lancashire sheet CIV.11.2 and CIV.11.3 surveyed 1888, published 1891, with study area outlined. Scale 1:1000.

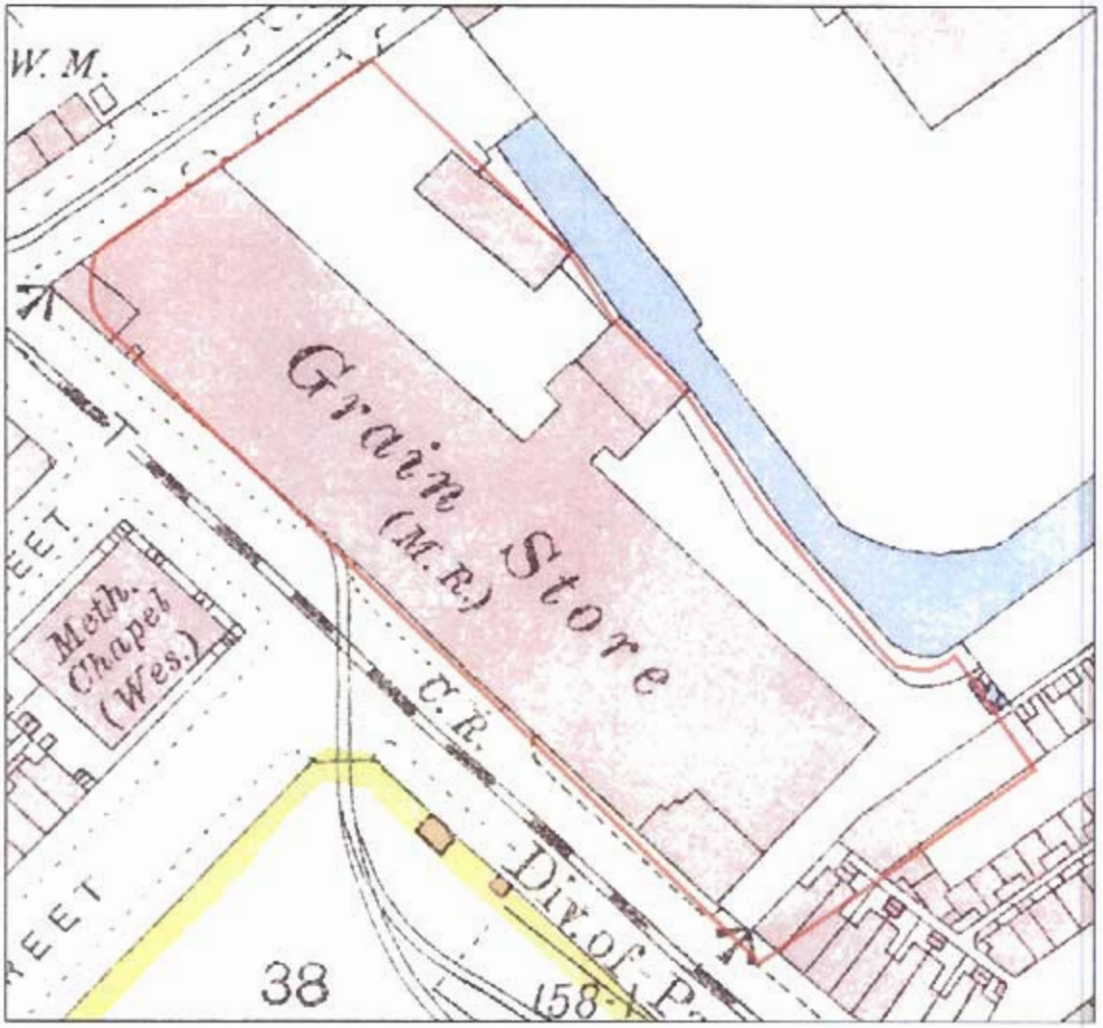

Figure 11. Detail of the OS 1:2500 First Edition, Lancashire CIV.11 surveyed 1888-9, published 1893, with study area outlined. Scale 1:1000.



Figure 12. Detail of OS 1:2500 Edition of 1908, Lancashire sheet CIV.11, revised 1905, with study area outlined. Scale 1:1000.

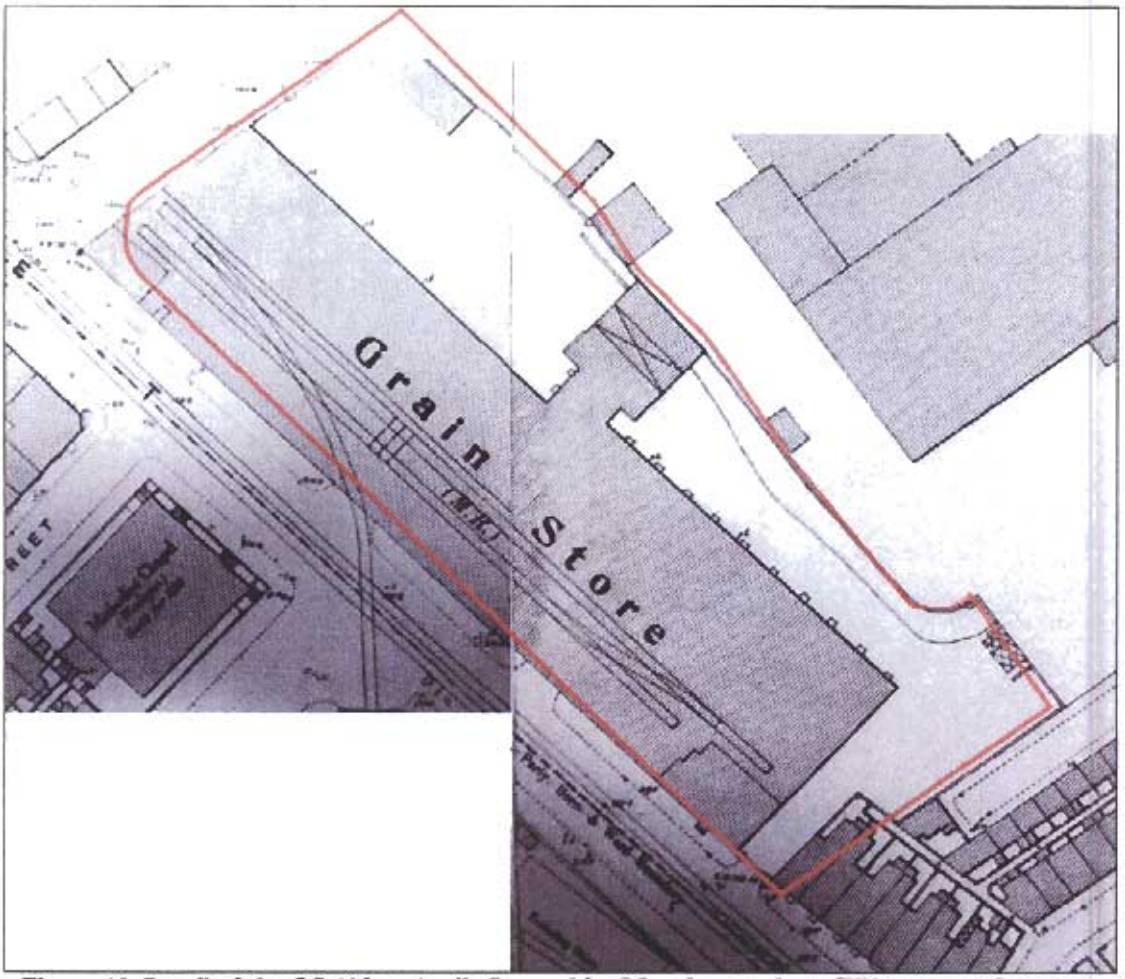

Figure 13. Detail of the OS 10ft to 1 mile Lancashire Manchester sheet CIV.11.2 and CIV.11.3, revised 1911, with study area outlined. Scale 1:1000.

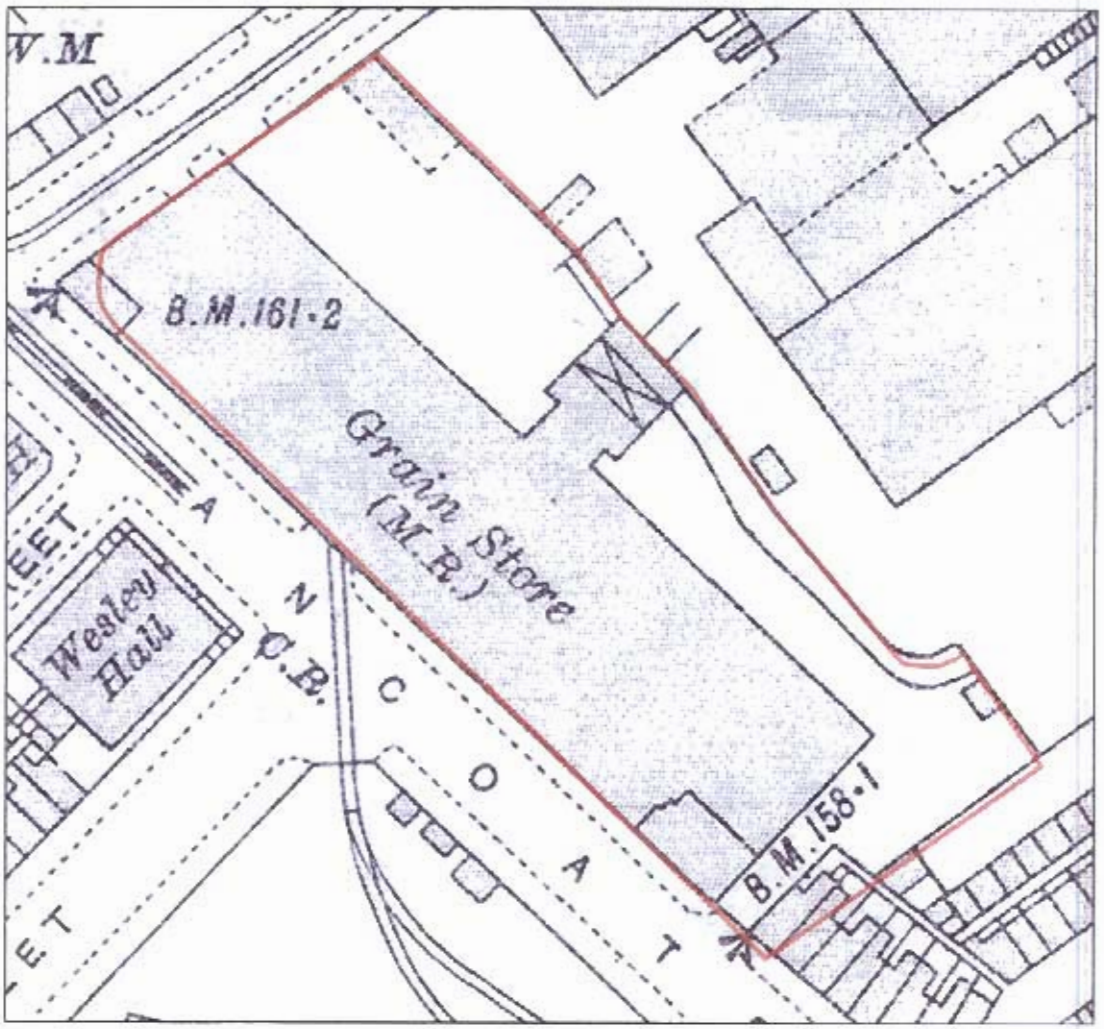

Figure 14. Detail of OS 1:2500 Edition of 1922, Lancashire sheet CIV.11, revised 1915, with study area outlined. Scale 1:1000.

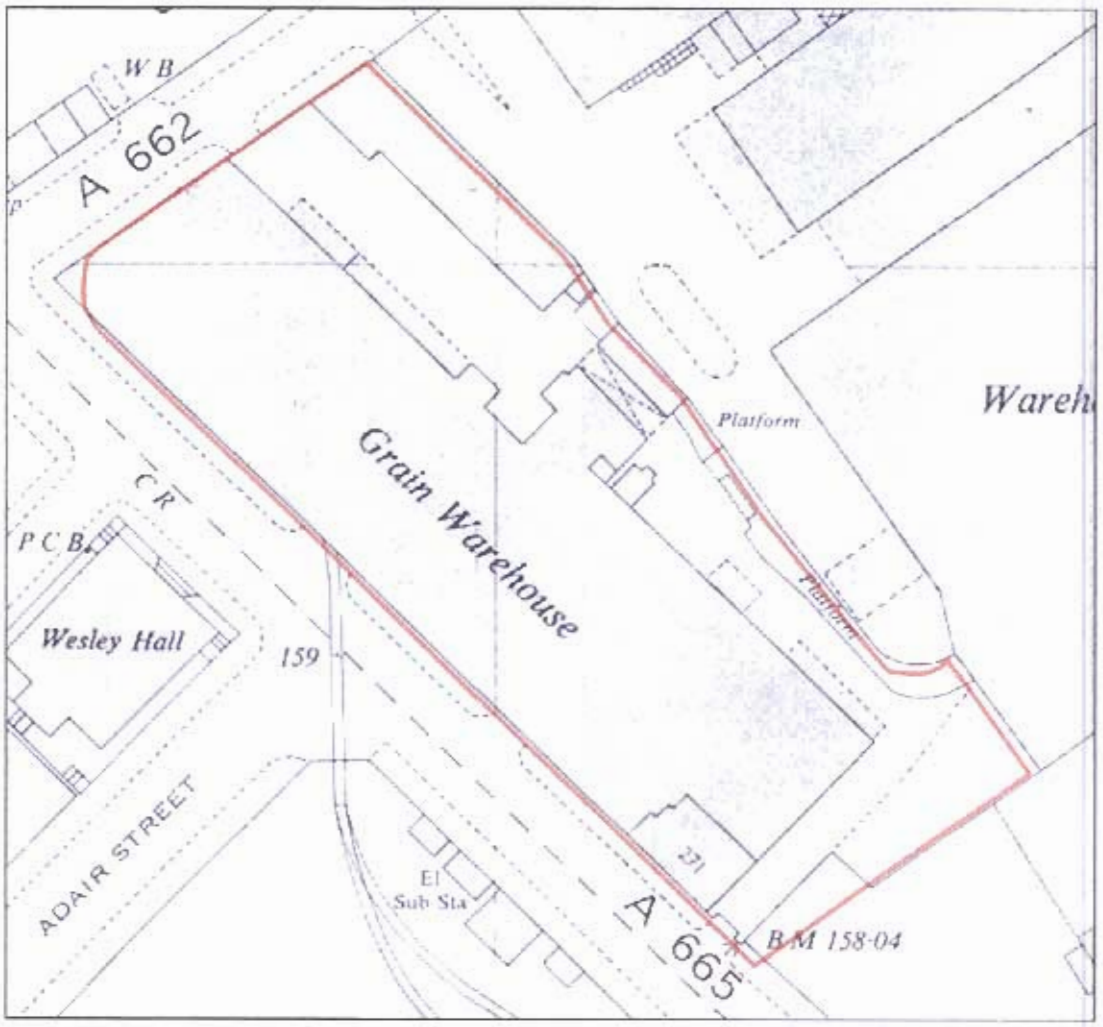

Figure 16. Detail of the OS 1:2500 SJ 8498 & SJ 8598,1965, with study area outlined. Scale 1:1000. Reproduced from modern OS mapping by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number WL8021.

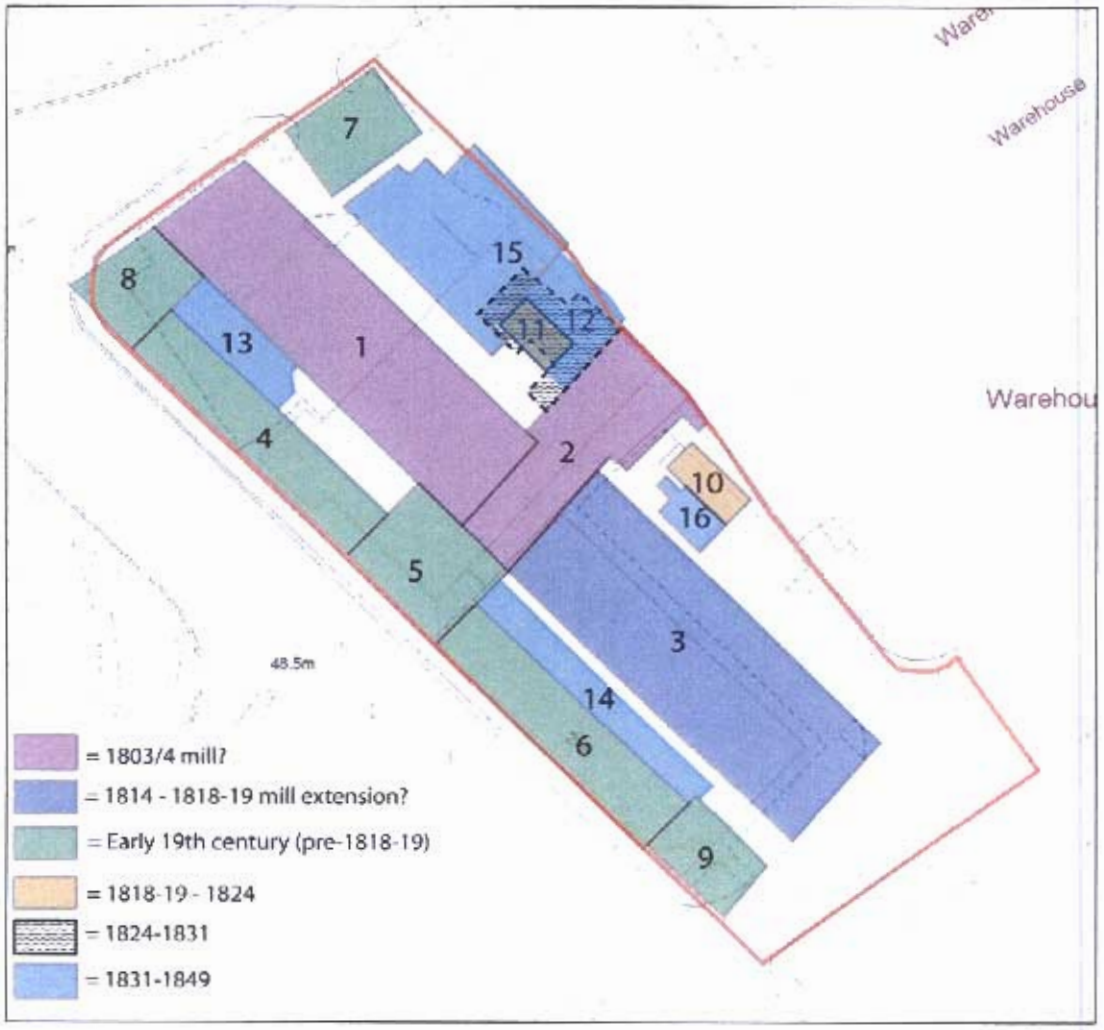

Figure 17. Provisional phasing of the early to mid-nineteenth century mill. Scale 1:1000. Based on modern OS mapping by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number WL8021.