

Case Name: Kirk Mill and its associated mill ponds retaining walls, outflow and stone-built leat

Case Number: 464606

Background

English Heritage has received a request to assess Kirk Mill, Chipping, for listing.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	EH Recommendation
1	1401593	Kirk Mill and its associated mill ponds retaining walls, outflow and stone-built leat	Listing	Add to List

Visits

Date	Visit Type
24 March 2010	Full inspection

Context

English Heritage has received a request to assess Kirk Mill, Chipping, for listing. The application was prompted by the company owning the mill going into administration and the mill closing. The local authority is aware of information suggesting talks are taking place on the possibility of converting the mill into a hotel; however, no planning applications have been submitted. Since closure Kirk Mill, its mill pond and the surrounding industrial hamlet was designated as the Kirk Mill Conservation Area in February 2010.

Assessment

CONSULTATION

Two consultation responses were received. One reply noted that the interest of the site extends beyond the mill and includes the mill pond and its containing wall. The other reply noted that the mill pond, its water supply and the foot race should be considered for inclusion in the listing assessment. Further minor edits were suggested by one consultee, which were taken forward where appropriate.

ASSESSMENT

The rapid evolution of industry from the late C18 represents one of the most dynamic periods in England's history. It created a huge range of new building types, and new urban and rural landscapes. Although initially based on pre-industrial age buildings such as water-powered mills, forges and furnaces, the scale and complexity of specialist industrial buildings in dominant technologies such as textile manufacture, coal mining, iron and steel manufacture and engineering rapidly eclipsed those of their vernacular antecedents. As such many new manufactories expressed specialist function in their architecture, in distinctive plan forms, and in the coherent arrangement of related buildings on multiple-process sites.

English Heritage's Industrial Buildings Selection Guide (2007) identifies numerous key issues to address when considering industrial buildings for designation. Those most relevant to Kirk Mill include:

a) Integrated sites. Where the process to which a building is related involved numerous components, then the issue of completeness becomes overriding.

- b) Architecture and process. Where an industrial building should normally reflect in its design the specific function it was designed to fulfil
- c) Technological innovation. Where some buildings may have been the site of the early use of important processes, techniques or factory systems, or where the technological significance may reside in the building itself rather than the industrial process it housed.
- d) Historic interest. Where physical evidence of important elements of industrial history survive well then a high grade may be justified. Where survival is less good there may still be a case for designation but judgement will be required. In some cases historical association with notable achievements may be sufficient to list: much will depend on the force of the historical claims and the significance of the person or products involved at the site in question.
- e) Rebuilding and repair. In assessment for listing a high level of reconstruction is sometimes the basis for a decision not to list. With industrial buildings partial rebuilding and repair is often related to the industrial process and provides evidence for the technological change that may in itself be significant enough to warrant protection: alteration can thus have a positive value.

Each of these criteria will be addressed in turn:

a) Kirk Mill cotton spinning factory is an integrated site that originally comprised the mill together with the mill pond which contained the water to power the mill, the short mill leat that carried the water from the pond to the waterwheel, and the tailrace which took away the used water. Shortly after the mill opened the Grade II listed Kirk House was built and the small hamlet of industrial worker's cottages known as The Grove and Grove Square were built. These buildings, like the mill and its pond, leat and tailrace are included within the Kirk Mill Conservation Area.

b) Despite some C19 and C20 additions Kirk Mill still clearly retains in its design its origins as a late C18 cotton spinning mill. It survives to its full original height, retains its windows and floors, its waterwheel and wheelpit and its associated water management system.

c) Despite C19 conversion to a chair-making factory the building still retains clear internal evidence for drive shaft beam slots. Together with the waterwheel and its array of associated driving gears such evidence illustrates well how the combination of waterwheel, gears, drive shafts and belts drove the machinery within the building.

d) During the C18 the establishment of the newly powered textile industry in the north-west caused a dramatic change in the region's economy from one based on marginal agricultural subsistence to one based on industrial prosperity. Richard Arkwright's invention of the Water Frame in 1769 led quickly to the adoption of the factory system, and the opening of Kirk Mill in 1785 - itself closely based on the designs of Arkwright's Grade I listed Cromford Mill (1771), his other Grade II* and Grade II listed mills also at Cromford (1783 and late C18) and his Grade II* listed Haarlem Mill at Wirksworth (1777-80) - coincided with the patent on Arkwright's Water Frame lapsing in 1785. At this date and afterwards many entrepreneurs, realising the opportunities in utilising the newly-released cotton spinning technology, invested in the building of cotton factories in substantial numbers. Kirk Mill is thus one of the oldest surviving Arkwright-type cotton mills in the north-west.

e) The extension to the original building undertaken after a change of ownership in the 1790s clearly demonstrates the early success of cotton spinning at Kirk Mill. The building is therefore a rare example of a cotton mill displaying two C18 phases of development.

In summary Kirk Mill is one of the north-west's oldest surviving cotton mills and is a rare example of an Arkwright-type mill. The layout of its earliest phase is still clearly legible as is its subsequent development to a larger C18 mill. Despite the C19 change of use from cotton spinning to chair manufacture the building still retains many original or early features and its associated contemporary water management features are an integral part of the whole.

Kirk Mill and its contemporary associated mill pond retaining walls, outflow and stone-built leat connecting the pond to the mill, should be listed at Grade II. The underground tailrace from where it emerges from beneath the building to where it flows into Chipping Brook is appropriately protected by being included in the Kirk Mill Conservation Area, as are the adjacent cottages forming The Grove and Grove Square.

CONCLUSION

Kirk Mill, the mill pond's retaining walls, outflow and stone-built leat meet the criteria for listing at Grade II as buildings of special architectural or historic interest in a national context. However, C20 additions are of lesser interest.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION

Kirk Mill, a former cotton spinning mill of 1785 in Chipping, and its associated mill pond's retaining walls, outflow and stone-built leat are recommended for designation at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * **Rarity:** It is a rare surviving example in the north-west of an Arkwright-type cotton spinning mill that exhibits two phases of C18 development
- * **Intactness:** It retains its contemporary water management system comprising the mill pond retaining walls, outflow and leat
- * **Survival of original and early features:** It retains many windows and doors, the wheelpit and the waterwheel and its driving gears, together with evidence of how associated drive shafts and belts powered the early machinery
- * **Historical.** Kirk Mill was built in 1785: It is one of the oldest surviving cotton spinning mills in the north-west and thus represents one of the earliest examples of a textile factory that soon became a crucial component of the Industrial Revolution.
- * **Layout:** The mill's development over its two hundred year history remains clearly legible.

Countersigning comments:

Agreed. Kirk Mill despite its change of use in the 19th century is a well -preserved 18th century Arkwright-type cotton mill. It fully merits designation in the national context.

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Annex 1

Proposed List Entry

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: Kirk Mill and its associated mill ponds retaining walls, outflow and stone-built leat

List Entry Number: 1401593

Location

Kirk Mill and its associated mill ponds retaining walls, outflow and stone-built leat,
MALT KILN BROW,

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

There is no County, District, Parish information for this application/case.

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 13 May 2011

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System:

Legacy Number:

Asset Groupings

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List Entry Description

Summary of Building

Kirk Mill is a former cotton spinning mill of 1785 with its associated mill pond's retaining walls, outflow and stone-built leat.

Reasons for Designation

Kirk Mill, a former cotton spinning mill of 1785 and its associated mill pond's retaining walls, outflow and stone-built leat are designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * **Rarity:** it is a rare surviving example in the north-west of an Arkwright-type cotton spinning mill that exhibits two phases of C18 development
- * **Intactness:** it retains its contemporary water management system comprising the mill pond's retaining walls, outflow and leat
- * **Survival of original and early features:** it retains many windows and doors, the wheelpit and the waterwheel and its driving gears, together with evidence of how associated drive shafts and belts powered the early machinery
- * **Historical:** Kirk Mill was built in 1785. It is one of the oldest surviving cotton spinning mills in the north-west and thus represents one of the earliest examples of a textile factory that soon became a crucial component of the Industrial Revolution.
- * **Layout:** the mill's development over its two hundred year history remains clearly legible.

History

In 1785 Hugh Stirrup, Richard Salisbury, John Shakeshaft and William Barrow bought a C17 disused corn mill and built on its site a spinning mill, Kirk Mill, that was powered by an external waterwheel. This early Arkwright-type mill is one of the oldest of its kind in the country. It measured about 21m by 8m and housed 20 spinning frames with 1032 spindles and machinery for six more frames of 48 spindles.

Richard Arkwright (1732-92) invented the Water Frame in 1769, a machine using rollers to stretch cotton threads to produce a yarn stronger than that previously available. This machine was a big instrument that needed power to drive it. Its invention meant the setting up of mills or factories and if any one invention may be the prime cause of the modern factory age it was the development of the Water Frame. Where the power used was water the mills tended to be built in isolated places in the countryside such as Arkwright's mills at Cromford, (Derbys.) or this one here at Chipping, but when steam was later introduced they tended to be grouped together on the coalfields.

By 1790 the mill was in new ownership and during this decade the mill was enlarged at the west end to take extra machinery. Ownership changed on several occasions during the C19 and gas lighting was installed together with a steam engine which was used occasionally during water shortages. The Cotton Famine during the American Civil War brought an end to cotton spinning at Kirk Mill and in 1866 the building was sold together with two steam engines, 25 carding engines, 31 throstle frames and a 32ft diameter waterwheel.

The mill and many auxiliary buildings were sold to Thomas Marsland who rented it to chairmakers. In the 1880s Berry's took over the mill for chairmaking and the breast shot waterwheel was the sole means of power until 1932 when an oil-powered engine was installed to provide supplementary power. The mill was extended to provide kitchen and canteen facilities and the present waterwheel, the third known at the site and in operation until 1943, was partly removed to create a side entrance.

The mill pond was enlarged to its present size in 1785. In 1948 a piece of the mill pond wall was removed to enable machine access to dredge the pond. In 1982 part of the mill pond's high wall near the factory end of the pond was pulled down and rebuilt.

In 2010 H J Berry & Sons, the company owning Kirk Mill, went into administration and the mill closed.

Details

Kirk Mill, a former cotton spinning mill of 1785 with later additions, and its associated water management system.

MATERIALS: The mill is built largely of coursed stone with stone dressings beneath roofs of slate and corrugated sheeting. The water management features are built largely of coursed stone.

PLAN: The mill is linear in plan with projections to the north and south. The water management features lie to the north of the mill.

EXTERIOR: The south face has a central range of ten bays flanked by projecting wings of two bays at either end, with the wing to the west obscured on all but its upper storey by later buildings and lean-to roofs while the wing to the right is built of stone at its ground and first-floor level but brick above. A later rendered brick-built flat-roofed extension rising to just above eaves height has been added to the front of the building between the sixth and eighth bays. Two modern roller shutter doors have been inserted at ground-floor level while a modern canopy projects forward at first-floor level to the right of the wider door. Windows have

glazing bars with dressed stone surrounds to the central range and west wing and dressed lintels and sills to the east wing.

The west face has two doors and windows with glazing bars and dressed stone surrounds to all floors.

The western end of the rear elevation is of six bays with the end two bays forming the rear of the west wing. A two-storey gabled staircase range topped by a tall former belfry and an attached lower two-storey range forms the centre of the rear elevation while a two-storey range at the east end completes the rear elevation. Windows and surrounds largely match those on the front and west elevations.

The east face comprises two gables each of two storeys that, because of the slope, form the second and third floor of the mill building. The left gable is of two bays and forms the east face of the south-projecting east wing. The right gable has been extended north and has a door beneath the gable's apex above which is an upper floor warehouse door. Above this there is a blocked warehouse-type opening to a former attic level. Windows and surrounds are consistent with those elsewhere.

Roofs are pitched with lights to the former attic.

To the rear of the mill there is a large mill pond contained within a sandstone retaining wall. A stone-built outlet at the north end of the pond empties into an adjacent stream. A short sandstone bridge or leat connecting the pond and mill formerly carried water from the pond to power the waterwheel. Used water left the mill via an underground tailrace to empty into Chipping Brook some way downstream from the mill.

INTERIOR: Access via the east door from the adjacent road leads into a vestibule at first floor level off which there are storerooms and a timber staircase connecting the first and second floors. A narrow passageway passes the enclosed wheelpit, waterwheel and driving gears. The waterwheel has timber spokes of pitch pine and was breastshot, with water entering at a high level. The narrow passageway leads into the mill's wooden-floored first floor which is now occupied by chairmaking machinery. Iron and timber posts support timber ceiling beams, some of which display drive beam slots relating to the former powering of the cotton spinning machines. A wooden staircase near the north-west corner of the first floor gives access to the ground and second floors and a spiral stone staircase off the rear wall gives access to the second floor.

The ground floor has a concrete floor and retains some machinery associated with chair manufacture. Some modern steel ceiling beams and supporting posts have been inserted.

The south-east corner of the second floor has latterly been used as a staff kitchen. The remainder of this floor was used recently as a showroom. As with the first floor the second floor is of timber with iron and timber posts supporting timber ceiling beams. Although ceiling beams remain in situ the floor of a former attic level has been removed leaving the second floor open to the pitched roof.

The stone spiral staircase leads upward to a storeroom and a door formerly giving access to the attic level.

Selected Sources

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Hill, C, P, British Economic and Social History, 1700-1939, (1961)

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Ribble Valley Borough Council, Report to Plannign and Development Committee: Proposed Kirk Mill Conservation Area, 4 Feb 2010

Map

National Grid Reference: SD6193043650



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The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - 1401593_1.pdf