

**An Archaeological Standing Building
Survey Of The Former Lace Factory,
Oxford Street/Regent Street, Long Eaton,
Derbyshire (SK 48960 33771).**

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DRAFT

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An Archaeological Standing Building Survey Of The Former Lace Factory, Oxford Street/Regent Street, Long Eaton, Derbyshire (SK 48960 33771).

Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned to undertake an archaeological standing building survey of the former Fredrick Mansfield lace factory on Oxford Street, Long Eaton. The survey indicated that the site was originally two separate lace factories, the Oxford Street Works of Fredrick Mansfield to the north of the site and New Mills of James Allen to the south, the factories were built in 1908 and 1912, respectively.

Both factories are single storey buildings of red brick with north light roofs; there is a two-storied range on both factories fronting Fletcher Street to the west. This is a mono-pitched roof and was originally used for offices and workshops. To the west of the site there is a three storied concrete and steel building dating from the 1970's

With the exception of the partial demolition of the Oxford Street Works, the factories have remained largely unaltered and are a good example of the later single storey lace factories which replaced the multi-storey tenement factories within Long Eaton at the turn of the Twentieth century.

1. Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by RBE Pension Fund to undertake an archaeological standing building survey of the former Fredrick Mansfield lace factory, Oxford Street, Long Eaton, Derbyshire (SK 48960 33771). Outline planning permission has been granted to demolish the buildings and redevelop site for residential use (Planning Application Ref ERE/0505/0057). An archaeological desk-based assessment (ULAS Report 2005-170) identified the factory as being of architectural interest and a vital part of the historic character of Long Eaton. The Development Control Archaeologist for Erewash Borough Council recommended that a standing building survey be undertaken prior to demolition being carried out.

All work will follow the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing buildings or Structures*. The Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) *Recording Historic Buildings: a Descriptive Specification* (3rd edition, 1996) has been used as a basis for defining levels of recording.

A Standing Building Survey Of The Former Lace Factory, Oxford Street/Regent Street, Long Eaton.

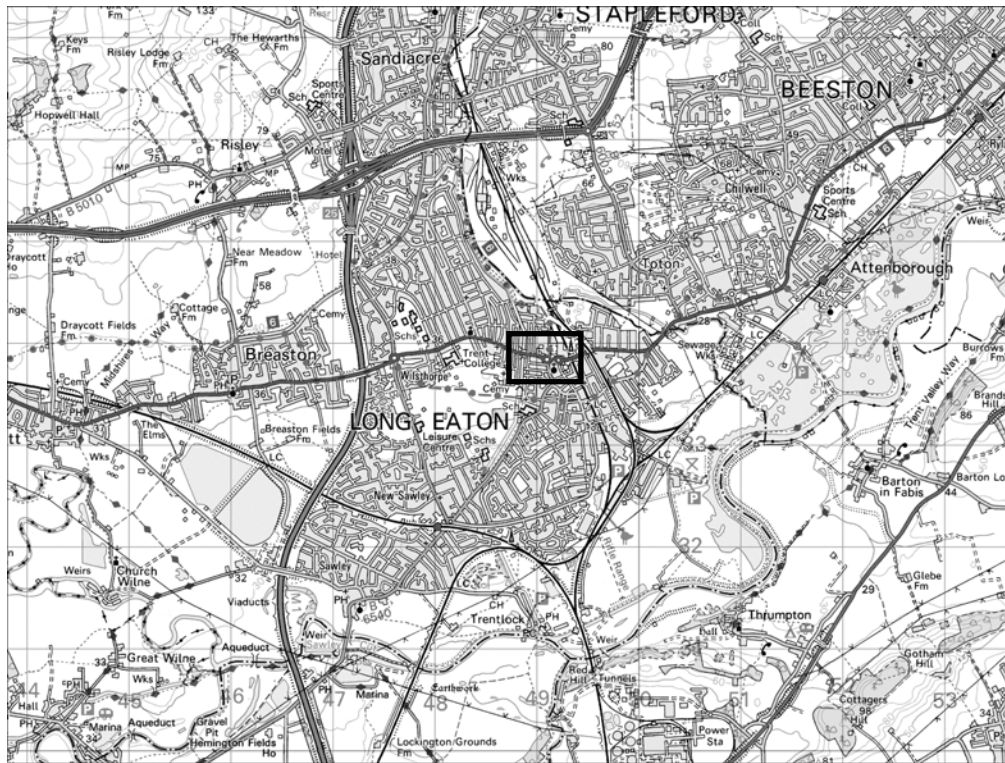


Figure 1. Site location Scale 1:50000

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Long Eaton developed as a centre of lace production during the later part of the nineteenth as a result of its proximity to Nottingham, a well-established centre of lace manufacture. As result of increased mechanisation and the introduction of larger machines, the traditional workshops of Nottingham were becoming obsolete, this forced owners to relocate to purpose-built factories in the surrounding villages, Long Eaton, undoubtedly benefited from this movement. By the outbreak of the Great War there were 1,400 lace machines in operation, directly employing 4,000 people out of a total population of 20,000.

The advent of electricity in Long Eaton in 1902 saw the end of the construction of the large multi-storey lace factory and the building of single storey shed-type factories, like those within the proposed development area. These factories were able to use electricity more economically than the multi-storey factories and the machinery was now all on a single ground level factory floor.

The inter-war years saw the collapse of the lace industry in Long Eaton, the market for cotton collapsed and there was a radical change in lady's fashion. There was also a considerable loss of overseas markets. By 1931 fourteen lace factories had either completely or partially abandoned lace manufacture. By 1979 there were only eight manufacturers remaining, the last of which closed in 2001.

Briefly the proposed development area originally housed two lace making factories, originally dating from the early twentieth century. Oxford Street Lace Works was

built fronting Oxford Street in 1908 for F. Mansfield and was used for lace manufacture until 1938. New Mills was built later in 1912, fronting Regent Street for James Allen and continued manufacture until the 1950s. New Mills originally contained 8 machines, the original architects plans records no boiler room, suggesting that process steam was piped in from an adjacent factory, possibly Oxford Street Lace Works.

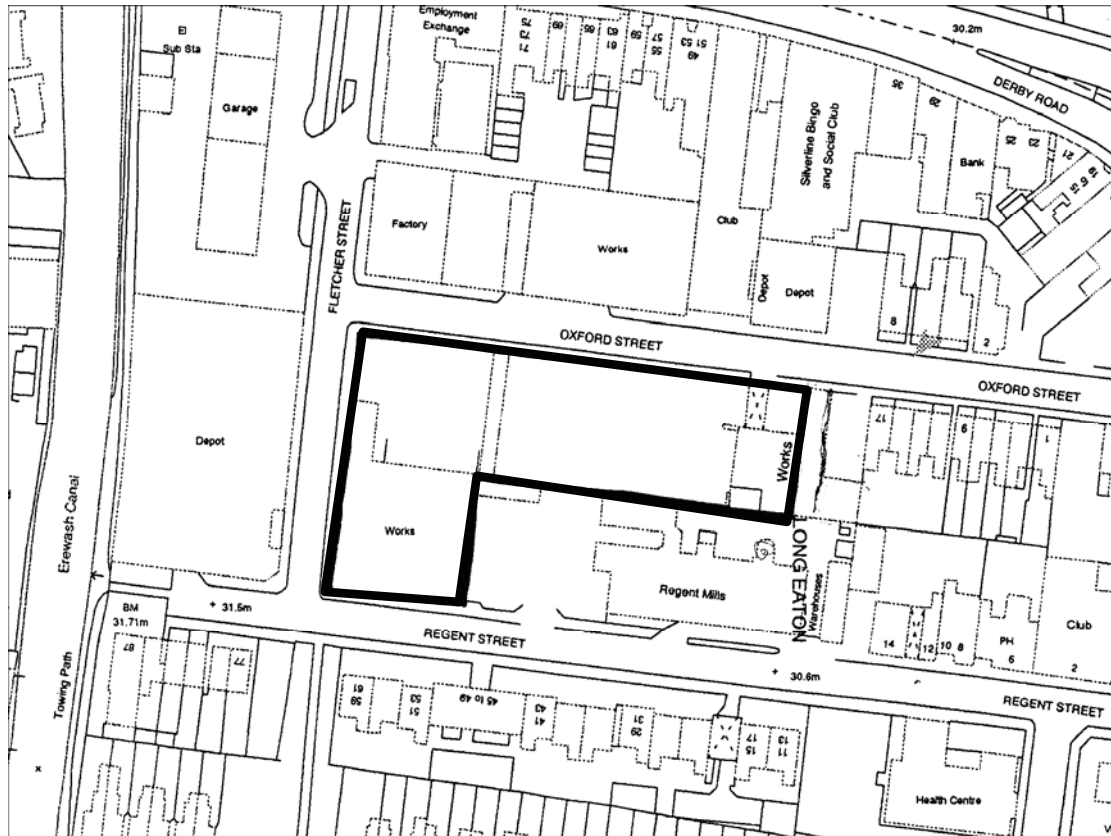


Figure 2. Location of the development area, supplied by developer. Scale unknown.

2. Methodology

The building survey was undertaken by Gerwyn Richards of ULAS between December 6th 2005 and March 14th 2006. Photographs were in 35mm monochrome negative and colour positive (slide) formats.

The objective of the standing building survey is:

- To seek to understand the history and development of a building or site.
- To compile a lasting record of the building ahead of demolition or alteration.
- To disseminate the results of the recording and analysis

3. Standing Building Survey

The proposed development area currently consists of four significant buildings. Each building has been allocated a number for identification purposes and a letter where internal sub-division is also required. The buildings are arranged in an approximate 'L' shape with Oxford Street to the north, in the following notes the 'front' elevation

is that which faces Oxford Street. The terms 'left', 'right', 'rear' and 'back' are used in relation to the front elevation of each range.

3.1 Building 1

The first of the recorded buildings (*Building 01*) fronted onto Oxford Street on the northern edge of the proposed development. The building is a single storey red brick building with a north light roof of Welsh slate. The Oxford Street frontage is rather ornate in appearance, with large arched windows, decorative blue brick detailing and red brick corbelling and English bond brickwork.

The windows themselves are steel framed semi-circular arched windows with a central four light opening resting atop carved sandstone sills, almost full length. Of which, thirteen still remain intact. There is a single course of decorative blue headers included within the arch above the window. At ground level there is a blue brick plinth six courses deep with a splay header top course. At eaves level there is two courses of red brick corbelling. Towards the centre of the existing frontage a double

door pedestrian entrance, set back of the pavement, has replaced one of the windows.



Figure 3. Oxford Street Works c.1907 (Photograph Supplied By K. Reedman).

Internally building 1 has been stripped out, leaving almost nothing of architectural significance. The

building is three bays front to back, each bay measuring 3000mm by 8000mm. The roof is the main identifiable feature; it is a north light construction of 250mm (10inch) steel RSJ header beam sat atop cast iron circular columns, the trusses are of a composite design consisting of 100mm (4inch) angle iron, stressed horizontally and vertically by 45mm (1^{3/4} inch) wrought iron tensioning rods. The remains of the factory floor sprinkler system is still *in-situ*.

There are three doorways on the left wall; the first, nearest the front of the building is a modern fire door, inserted into a partially bricked up earlier double doorway. The central doorway appears to be original, there is cambered arched brick lintel above, there appeared to be some machinery beyond the door, although further access was not possible. The final door again was newly inserted fire door, beyond which, there was no further access.

To the far left of building 1 is the boiler room and chimney, the chimney itself is not included within the proposed development and is to be preserved. The boiler room itself was inaccessible during the survey; however, it was possible to observe that there were still two boilers *in-situ*, the boilers themselves were Calpac multi fuel models, manufactured by Thompson & Cochrane. Probably dating from the 1970s.

The building itself was a single storey brick built building with a flat roof, externally rendered abutting the chimney in the back left hand side. It was not possible to carry out an internal survey, although it appeared that glazed bricks had been used on one of the internal walls, other walls were painted, it is possible, however, that the other walls are also glazed bricks. The boiler room did not align correctly with the chimney and the exposed brick work did not match that within building 1; it is likely, therefore, that the boiler room is a newer addition, probably replacing an earlier boiler room, probably built when the new boilers were installed.



Figure 4. Oxford Street Frontage (Building 2).

The right side of building 1 (on the corner of Oxford Street & Fletcher Street) was demolished approximately 5 or 6 years (K. Reedman, *pers comm.*). The original building plan can still be seen at ground level. Further evidence of this can be observed

in the ragged edge of the current building. Modern corrugated steel cladding has been erected along the edge of the demolition, leaving a covered area, one bay wide.

3.2 Building 2

Building 2 is set back from Oxford Street, fronting Fletcher Street and was originally New Mills; what is now the front of the building originally abutted the rear of Oxford Street Works. As with the Oxford Street Works, New Mills is a single storey red brick building with a north light roof of Welsh slate; it is much less ornate than Oxford Street Works, but still aesthetically pleasing. The brickwork is Flemish bond with decorative corbelling and cambered arched windows with splayed blue brick sills, three courses deep and a blue brick plinth with a splayed top course. There are six intact steel framed windows with a central four light opening, a seventh window, to the left has been partially blocked and a door inserted.



Figure 5. Regent Street Frontage (Building 2)

Internally, the building is much altered and is currently used as Regency Tyres & Exhausts and currently houses all the equipment associated with this type of business. The two front bays are used as the workshop while the rear

bay is used for storage and a timber mezzanine floor has been inserted at 4500mm above the current ground floor level. There are three bays, measuring 3000mm by 8000mm. Once again the roof is a north light construction, there is 250mm (10inch) steel RSJ header beam, sat atop 250mm (10inch) RSJ columns. The header beam was manufactured by Lane & Dudley Steel, the trusses are 100mm (4inch) angle iron.

There are a number of noteworthy details within building 2, firstly the substantial valve gear in the rear right corner of the building. The original architects plans do not include an engine house for New Mills, process steam was produced elsewhere and piped on to site, it is possible therefore that this valve gear is the remains of this. Secondly there is a small bricked up opening within the left hand wall, this wall originally abutted the Regent Street Works before it was partially demolished. This opening suggests that the two factories may have been linked or at least shared some common resource at some stage.

3.3 Building 3

For the purposes of this survey building 3 has been identified as a single building and subdivided as *3a* and *3b*, it is clear, however, that building 3 is two separate buildings. Building *3a* was originally part of the Oxford Street Works (Building 1), however, since demolition it is no longer attached and now abuts building *3b*, part of New Mills.

Building 3a

Building *3a* consists of a two storied red brick building with a mono-pitched roof of Welsh Slate. Stylistically the exterior of the building is identical to building 1, the only difference being the windows are timber sash, one of which has been blocked at ground floor level. Only approximately half of the building remains, the gable and rear wall have recently been clad in corrugated steel sheets.

Internally the building is much altered at ground floor level. The whole of the first floor has been extensively modernised and is used as a reception area and offices for Regency Tyres & Exhausts, all walls have been over boarded with plasterboard, as have the ceilings, all doors have also been replaced. With the exception of the original windows there is nothing of architectural significance visible within this part of the building.



Figure 6. Fletcher Street Frontage (Building 3a).

First floor access to building *3a* is via a stairway within building *3b*, the doorway between the two buildings appears to be contemporary suggesting the two buildings were originally connected this part of the building appears to be largely unaltered, and however, serious

pigeon infestation prevented a detailed investigation. There was a large opening within the Oxford Street gable, the exact purpose of which is unclear; it is possible it is merely the result of the recent demolition. Over boarding prevented a closer examination of the roof, although, given the age of the building it is more than likely to be a simple timber roof.

Building 3b

Building 3b was originally part of New Mills and unlike building 3a and appears to have remained largely unaltered. Stylistically it is identical to building 2, and again much less ornate than building 3a. What appears to have been the original pedestrian entrance on the Regent Street gable has been recently bricked up, as has a first floor entrance directly above.



Figure 7. Fletcher Street Frontage (Building 3b).

The original factory entrance was via a centrally located double door on the Fletcher Street frontage leading into a lobby, directly ahead is an original double door leading onto the factory floor (Building 2). To the right at the rear of there are stairs leading to the first floor, opposite which is a four panelled door (probably original) leading to another room. The room is currently used as a storeroom; there is nothing visible to indicate the room's original function. Other ground floor rooms are accessed via doors within building 2; on the far right hand side of 3b (The Regent Street gable) there is a small room, currently used as a workshop, the left partition wall is of breeze block and appears to be a modern insertion. An examination of the architects plans; however, indicate that this partition is original and the room is described as a workshop. Between this room and the lobby is a much larger room, currently used as a mess room, again, there is nothing visible to indicate the room's original function.

The first floor is reached via the stairway from the lobby, unlike the ground floor, the first floor has been modernised. Modern over boarding of both the ceiling and the walls have concealed anything of architectural significance; the only significant feature are the circular cast iron tie plates left exposed on the wall between 3b and building 2. The lay out is a single full-length room with recently constructed male and female W.C's to the left, adjacent to which is the sole remaining access to the first floor of building 3a. Access to the mezzanine floor within building 2 is via a recently inserted door adjacent to the top of the stairs.

Although there was no visible evidence at the time of the survey, the floor may have been fireproofed, it did not sound like a wooden floor and the staircase was definitely concrete. Some missing polystyrene allowed a limited view of the roof, it was a timber structure, unfortunately, the exact design could not be determined, although a king post was the common type at the time the factory was built.

3.4 Building 4

The final building within the proposed development area is building 4; a three storied building fronting Oxford Street, to the left of building 1. The building itself dates from the 1970's and is of concrete and steel frame construction with a half glazed frontage and flat roof. The ground floor is a loading bay over which are two floors of offices.



Figure 8. Oxford Street Frontage (Building 4).

The building was in a very derelict condition with serious pigeon infestation no close internal inspection was carried out. An external examination indicated that the ground floor acted as a loading bay; vehicle access was via three steel roller shutter doors to the left and there was a pedestrian entrance on the right, first floor access was via a stairway on the right hand side of the building. What was visible of the upper stories were in a very poor state of repair with very little in the way of identifiable architectural features; other than the ceilings, which were of suspended polystyrene tiles.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this standing building survey is to provide a permanent record of the building in their present state, prior to their conversion/demolition comprising both a written record and a visual record. The work confirmed that the building is a good example of the modern single storey factory buildings, which replaced the multi-storied tenement buildings, which housed Long Eaton's lace factories up until the later nineteenth century. Although not directly within the conservation area, there are plans to eventually include this area within the adjacent conservation area.

Although some of the buildings are in a near derelict condition and partial demolition of the Oxford Street Lace Works, the original style and design is still apparent in the surviving facades, most notably on Oxford Street. Unfortunately the interiors of all the buildings have been much altered and little or nothing remains of architectural significance. It is difficult therefore, to establish how closely the two were connected; the evidence does suggest that the two factories utilized the same boiler for process steam. The chimney of which is not included in the planned demolition.

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