

Land at Malt Kiln Brow, Chipping, PR3 2GP (includes Kirk Mill, Grade II listed)

Application No 3/2014/0226 (listed building)

The Association for Industrial Archaeology welcomes the intention to re-use this important former cotton mill. The archaeological report by Oxford Archaeology North confirms that the mill is a rare and surprisingly well preserved example of an Arkwright type water powered cotton mill of 1785, despite its subsequent re-use and the resultant alterations and additions. Most importantly the water wheel survives together with some gearing. The proposals include its retention but they are less clear about a future maintenance plan. There is evidence of the way the mill was worked in the form of surviving evidence of line shafting. There is also surviving evidence of its construction in the form of masons' marks, and carpenters' construction marks. There are other interesting features such as the inserted columns with their unusual octagonal bases. Externally, there is the interesting derrick crane recorded in the Archaeological Building Survey.

Given the importance of this mill it is essential that it remains "readable", and that includes being able to identify the original building and its extensions. (The later use was a long standing one.) It is also essential that not just the water wheel is retained but maintained and that as many small features such as evidence of the line shafting are included so that users of the building can see how it functioned both externally and internally. The setting of the mill and its water management system are also of importance and therefore these too need to be retained and maintained so that the mill's setting is understood and appreciated. Also could not the derrick crane be retained in the grounds? Features which cannot be retained *in situ* or at least on site should be offered to an appropriate home.

Any features revealed as a result of the conversion works will need to be recorded at the appropriate level (paragraph 141 of the NPPF applies).

Therefore, although the Association for Industrial Archaeology considers that this re-use of the mill is good in principle, some further detail is needed in these proposals.

Amber Patrick,
Endangered Sites Officer,
Association for Industrial Archaeology,
The Ironbridge Institute,
Ironbridge Gorge Museum,
Coalbrookdale, TF8 7DX .