

REVIEW OF STOCKPORT'S MILLS June 2017

Addressing the future of Stockport's historic textile related mills

Foreword by Councillor Graham Greenhalgh, Chair of the Scrutiny Review Panel

This review builds on the excellent work initiated in the report 'Towards a Mills Strategy' of 2005 and the subsequent review dated 2011.

Both reports recognised Stockport's Textile Mills as a continuing valuable resource and their place as a symbol of our local heritage and pride.

The original 2005 report summarised the aims most succinctly as 'to lay the foundations for a comprehensive Mills Strategy, designed to support key council objectives of regeneration, employment and enhancement of the housing available within our popular borough, married with genuine and sensible conservation'.

The aim of this 2017 review is to update our knowledge of the Historic Textile Mills stock, their present status and known future plans. As all of Stockport's Historic Textile Mills are in private hands we hope to promote, and where possible support, a successful future for them, their continued use, development, and improvements in the present tough financial environment.

This review is valid as a stand-alone document but can help inform broader works being undertaken by the council such as the Brown Field First and the Local Plan.

I thank officers and members for the successful completion of this document against a background of multiple demands on their time and energies with the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF), the Local Plan, Brown Field First and the support for the Greater Manchester Historic Mills Survey. The dedication by the officers to complete this review was exemplary. Furthermore, I thank the members of the Scrutiny Committee whose critical overview helped to define the objectives of the report and monitor its progress, bringing clarity and vision. This report represents a collegiate approach.

In the present rather fluid environment it will be necessary to monitor and update this report as changes demand.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Purpose

Stockport's mills remain a significant part of the economic and physical fabric of the town. They are an important asset, but one that needs to be managed carefully. Stockport has benefitted in recent years from a number of successful mill conversions providing both quality office accommodation, residential accommodation and space for other leisure uses. Others have been improved to house a mix of business uses in an accessible and affordable environment.

This report has been prepared in order to develop a strategic approach to considering the opportunities presented by Stockport's mill resource. The purpose of this report is to:

- (a) Outline the current position with regards the mill resource
- (b) Outline the key issues
- (c) Set out an action plan to review and guide the future development and more effective use of mill buildings within Stockport.

This report provides an important analysis of Stockport's mills resource and will form part of the wider review of Brownfield sites and properties across the borough, which seeks to identify new uses for redundant or underutilised land and buildings. This report should also be considered in light of information emerging from the Greater Manchester Historic Textile Mills Buildings at Risk Survey which is expected to provide more detailed information about particular properties that may be at risk and/or in need of restoration.

1.2 Definition of the mill resource

The report takes as its main focus historic textile mills, remaining from the 18th, 19th and early 20th century textile industry. Included are bleach, print, dye, machinery, rope works and warehouses associated with Stockport's cotton industry, plus Stockport's hat works and associated tannery and fur works of the same period. From here on the word 'mill' in this document should be taken to refer only to these works listed above and associated with Stockport's textile industry. This report does not cover Stockport's non textile production sites of a similar date which are varied in their form and function (e.g. breweries, food production sites, paper mills and engineering sites).

The textile industry was Stockport's earliest and main major industry during the process of industrialisation. Stockport also had a prominent

hatting industry which was a major employer in the town. Many of the town's other industrial processing and engineering sites grew up around and subsequent to these industries. This survey concentrates on the sites and standing buildings of former textile works for the following reasons:

- The textile and hatting industries are a significant part of Stockport's history and environment.
- Cotton mills share a common architecture.
- The architecture, location and lack of modern facilities within most textile mills require careful planning appraisal to identify sustainable and workable conversion of mill buildings for present day use.
- Later hat works were sometimes based within cotton mills or had large scale purpose built premises that share some similarities with cotton mills.
- Both early and later hat work sites are becoming increasingly rare in Stockport.

1.3 Mills Survey - Methodology

The Mills Development Plan 2005-2010 was adopted by the Council as a strategy document with a subsequent action plan. The Plan was later revised and extended to 2015.

In 2016 the decision was taken to review the plan, in order to improve the Council's understanding of the current mills resource and its potential, as a heritage asset, to contribute to the future development in the borough.

The 2005-15 Plan identified mill buildings as a significant element of Stockport's historic environment. Many textile sites have since been replaced by subsequent development, however, a number of the remaining buildings have now found other uses, following successful refurbishment.

This report builds on and updates information from the previous Plan with additional information from the Stockport Employment Land Review (identifying Stockport's key employment sites and locations) and the current Brownfield First study, which seeks to identify potential sites and premises that could unlock further redevelopment potential. The majority of the information has to date been gleaned from desk research, with some initial discussions instigated with a small number of mill owners. Further discussions with building owners will take place through delivery of the Action Plan.

A Brief History of Stockport's Textile Industries

1.4 Origins of Stockport's Cotton Industry

The weaving of wool and linen cloth was one of Stockport's earliest industries. The first textile factories in Stockport, however, were silk spinning mills. As early as 1732 a silk mill was built in Portwood. Stockport was one of the textile industry's earliest and leading centres in the industrial revolution. Mills grew up around the rivers of the Goyt, Tame and Mersey utilising water for power. By 1770 there were more than 12 silk mills in the town centre. By the 1780's when the cotton industry began to take off in Stockport, the slump in the silk industry provided a ready-made resource of empty mill buildings for conversion to cotton. In the early 19th century cotton spinning in Stockport was surpassed only by that of Manchester.

Two Stockport mill owners William Horrocks and Peter Marsland improved the design of the power loom developed in the 1780's. They each patented efficient steam powered looms in the early years of the 19th century. By 1806 there were 4 power loom factories in England 2 of which were in Stockport. By 1812 at least 6 Stockport firms were using power looms making Stockport the first centre of powerloom weaving. From the late 1780's onwards the manufacture of cotton textiles was Stockport's largest industry, with its wages supporting an estimated 75% of the town's population. In 1851 more than half the working population were employed in the industry. Between the late 18th century and early 20th century at least 95 cotton spinning, weaving and finishing factories were built in Stockport.

1.5 Hatting

There is written evidence for a small scale hatting industry in Stockport from the 1650's onwards. From the 1750's the prominence of Chester in the hatting industry faded. By the 19th century Stockport and Denton in neighbouring Tameside were at the centre of Britain's hatting industry producing hats for London based companies such as Christy and Co. In 1870 the full mechanisation of the hatting industry was achieved and Stockport's hatting industry appears to have peaked towards the end of the 19th century when it employed nearly 5,000 workers. Numerous works buildings and a limited number of large scale mills were built to house Stockport's third largest industry.

The main sources for the information provided above are Peter Arrowsmith's, 'History of Stockport', Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Community Services, 1997; and Penny McKnight's 'Stockport

Hatting', Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Community Services, 2000. These publications should be consulted for a more in depth view of the importance and role of these industries in Stockport.

1.6 Decline

The hatting industry declined from the 1920's, with the last working hat factory in Stockport being Christy and Co. on Hillgate which closed in 1997. There was a brief boom in the textile industry after World War I, however post World War II the textile industry faded and in 1959 Government subsidies were provided for companies exiting the industry.

The bulk of Stockport's textile mills ceased production by the 1970's, with Cataract Bridge Mills, Marple being the last working textile mill in Stockport, closing in 2004. This mill has subsequently been demolished and replaced by residential development.

A number of mill buildings were replaced by 1960's, 70's and 80's development for a variety of reasons, including the building of the M60 motorway. More recently, several mills have been demolished for residential development.

Today there are 48 textile mills remaining, although some may not be considered as having particular historic or architectural interest. Of the 48, most of the building complexes are still standing, and a number have undergone varying degrees of redevelopment. There has also been some extensive redevelopment and demolition of buildings within some sites and in others (such as Houldsworth Mill) additional, more modern buildings have been added.

2. THE MILL RESOURCE

2.1 Ownership and occupation

All of the 48 mills identified are in private ownership. Of which:

- 5 have been refurbished to provide employment related uses
- 6 have been converted to residential
- 2 have been refurbished to provide mixed residential with other uses (office/leisure)
- 11 are expected to be converted to residential (planning permission sought or granted)
- 24 are in use but there are no known plans for their future

Six mills are currently understood to be vacant, all of which are awaiting further development.

2.2 General condition

Mill premises are often substantial and have dominant physical features. Their continued existence is testament to high standards of construction. However, maintaining properties that are over 100 years old can be costly, and in several cases the condition of the property could be a cause for concern.

It's expected that the Stockport chapter of the 'Greater Manchester's Historic Textile Mills: Buildings at Risk Survey', due to be published during the summer of 2017, will provide additional and up to date information about the condition of several of Stockport's most architecturally significant mills. This will help inform future decision making and policy with respect to individual properties. This piece of work has been commissioned from the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service to review the condition of historic textile mills in GM. An assessment of Stockport's mills has recently commenced, with a draft report expected by August 2017. The completed report will form a supplement to the information contained in this document.

2.3 Heritage Value

Of the 48 mills, 9 have protection as statutorily listed buildings. A further 19 are locally listed, due to their local historic, architectural or other special interest.

Buildings that are locally listed have formal recognition in the planning system under Core Strategy Policy SIE-3 (Protecting Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment), which states:

“New uses will be permitted for statutorily or locally listed buildings if:

1. The use for which the building was designed is no longer viable in economic terms or cannot effectively be carried out without harming the architectural or historic interest of the building;
2. The proposed use would preserve the architectural or historic interest of the building, its fabric, interior and setting; and
3. The proposal would not detract from the amenities of the surrounding areas or cause traffic danger.

Where a new use is acceptable the Council may relax controls over land use, density, plot ratio and other matters of detail where this facilitates the preservation of the listed building.”

2.4 Use of floor space

Industrial

The majority of the 48 mill buildings are still used for manufacturing and industrial purposes and provide a source of relatively cheap floor space for a large number of Stockport's businesses. Upper floors tend to be less attractive for industrial uses due to access issues, leading to some mills being under occupied, and owners considering alternative uses for upper floors (e.g. Meadow Mill).

Finding alternative accommodation for former business occupiers can be challenging however, as there is relatively limited availability of suitable workshop/industrial space for small businesses in Stockport.

Office

A number of refurbished mills contain refurbished office accommodation. Broadstone Mill and Houldsworth Mill, for example, both contain serviced offices, providing flexible modern space for small businesses within a traditional setting. When attractively converted, these properties can be extremely attractive to small office based businesses.

Three of the smaller mills have been converted to provide office only accommodation for single users, providing attractive space, sometimes in rural settings, for growing businesses.

Residential

Seven of Stockport's mills have already been successfully converted for residential use (5 residential only and 2 mixed residential with other uses). A further eleven either have planning permission for conversion or would lend themselves to residential conversion, of which 8 are locally listed buildings. Between them these refurbished premises could create upwards of 500-600 residential units.

Leisure

Stockport mills are increasingly home to a variety of leisure uses. Stockport's Hat Works Museum is housed in Wellington Mill and there are artists' studios in Vernon Mill and Broadstone Mill. Houldsworth Mill provides a leisure club, swimming pool and gymnasium, whilst climbing centres and soft play centres are located in Pear Mill and Goyt Mill.

Retail

Retail uses are found in a small number of Stockport's mills. These include both retail and wholesale shopping notably in Houldsworth, Broadstone, Meadow, Vernon, Goyt and Pear mills.

Vacant Floor Space

Vacant floor space arises where either a whole building is standing empty or in occupied buildings generally on the upper floors (particularly in the larger spinning mill buildings where internal access arrangements can be poor e.g. no passenger and freight lifts) or furthest away from the buildings only or main stairwell. Seven premises are currently considered to be vacant, of which 5 are listed as having potential for residential refurbishment. The Council's 2015 Employment Land Review (paragraph 7.164) states the Mills Strategy identifies that almost a quarter (22%) of mill floorspace as remaining vacant.

3. ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

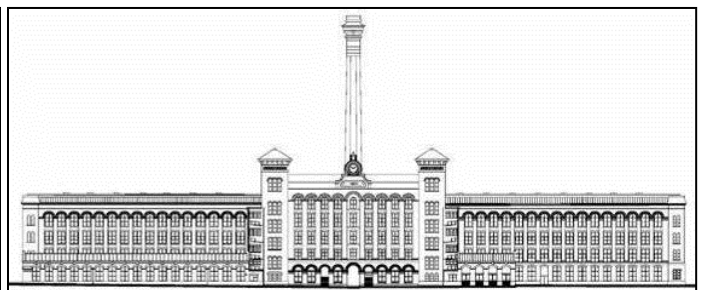
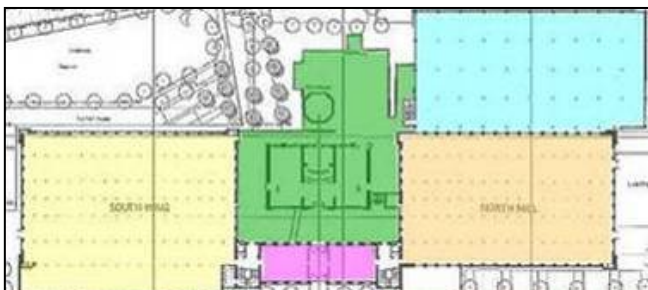
3.1 Conversion

The buildings included in this strategy are mainly cotton mills, the form of which is fairly consistent within this group. Even within this group construction methods changed over time to suit the function and machinery they needed to accommodate.

Generally the earlier fireproof mill buildings are the easiest buildings to convert. These buildings are both structurally strong, due to their iron framework, but also narrow with regularly spaced windows. This form allows natural light to flow into the centre of the building. Because of the relative ease of conversion, these buildings are likely to find new uses first. In Stockport such buildings include Woodley Mill, converted to residential and Wellington Mill, converted for residential and museum use.



By the late 19th century mill buildings had become wider in order to accommodate machinery. The larger double mills such as Houldsworth Mill in Reddish appeared, with large floor plates of around 40,000sqft, supported by numerous iron pillars.



At Houldsworth Mill a central engine house to the rear of the mill is flanked on either side by 2 blocks with a central link building to the front and middle of the building. This gives this double mill a symmetrical form and creates an impressive vista at the front of the mill. The building to the rear of the north mill is a later 20th century addition.

To enable regeneration and conversion to residential the south block at Houldsworth had an atrium inserted into the roof.



Inside Northern Counties residential development at Houldsworth Mill. An atrium allows natural light into the communal area of the development.

Early 20th century mill buildings such as Broadstone Mill and Vernon Mill represent the final stage in mill building development and have the broadest floor plans. Although they have much larger windows than the earlier buildings, wide floor plans at such mills will usually make division of the internal space into smaller units difficult. Where space is divided, units toward the centre of the mill will have no source of natural light. This means that unless an innovative approach, such as that outlined at Houldsworth Mill is possible and appropriate, it may be very difficult to use internal space. Here it may be necessary to consider use of space which does not require natural light e.g. storage, leisure or meeting space.

3.2 Conversion of other building forms

Where single storey weaving sheds are still standing, most have undergone conversion into separate industrial units.



Avondale Works are an example of weaving sheds that have undergone modern conversion to provide individual industrial units.

Stockport's hat work buildings were in the main developed on a smaller scale. The notable exceptions of large scale designed works are the former Christies Hat Works and the former Woodrow's Hat Works on Shaw Heath. Both these sites have now been demolished and the sites redeveloped for residential units.

3.3 The Future for Stockport's Mills

In the recent past, it has been possible to identify public sector (European) funding to bridge a funding gap when regenerating historic buildings such as at Houldsworth Mill or Wellington Mill. It is becoming increasingly difficult to access public funding to secure regeneration, and an increasing reliance on private sector funds means that full conversions are likely to be exceptional and will only happen where there is a clear business case that demonstrates economic viability.

In a number of cases, environmental and traffic problems are caused by the location of industrial premises within mainly residential areas. On sites where the former industrial use is now redundant and buildings are unsuitable for conversion, some form of mitigation should be considered in order to enable regeneration including demolition where there is no viable alternative.

The issues affecting mill buildings as a resource can be summarised as:

- Historically a lack of capital investment by the landlord;
- Poor physical condition and access arrangements at a significant proportion of the sites;
- Planning policy constraints (such as listed buildings);
- Lack of structured management regimes at some sites;
- Impact of the property on their adjacent environment and neighbours
- Finding appropriate alternative premises for former mill occupants

Mill buildings are undoubtedly costly to maintain and refurbish, requiring often specialist advice and support to consider appropriate uses for often underutilised floorspace. A fundamental issue for mill owners is also return on investment, as poor quality space attracts low rental values and often insufficient income to cover the full cost of maintaining and improving the property.

If the priority for Stockport is to retain the character and substance of its historic mills, then particular attention and support may be required to assist mill owners in identifying the most appropriate future for mills where appropriate. Supporting redevelopment and renovation would achieve the goal of generating an appropriate return on investment for the mill owner, whilst also bringing redundant floor space

back into use, maintaining Stockport's important heritage assets and improving the built environment.

3.4 The value of Stockport's mill resource

Despite the problems and threats facing Stockport's mill buildings, they continue to provide a valuable resource forming a distinctive part of our historic environment. Stockport's former textile works are a physical record of Britain's historic cotton textile industry. In several cases they provide a quality of architecture rarely replicated in modern developments. Mill buildings give the landscape of Stockport a distinctive local character; and large scale hat works, in particular, are peculiar to this area.

In the past, significant physical investment was made to build mills in Stockport. This previous investment, and more recent adaptations, allow mill buildings to continue to contribute to Stockport's economy. Today mill buildings can provide opportunities for sustainable development on brownfield sites. Appropriate reuse of mill buildings can contribute to achieving the Council's overall planning framework, whilst helping to reduce pressure on green belt and open land development (although some large mills such as Pear Mill, Welkin Mill, Compstall Mills and Unity Mill are located in the green belt where Green Belt policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework still applies).

3.5 Environmental Value/Sustainability

The fabric of Stockport's mill buildings also represents an existing expenditure of resources. Expended energy and materials should be recognised and respected. In environmental terms it is likely to be more economic to reinvest in the existing resource rather than demolition. Building demolition contributes to landfill, sourcing new building materials usually involves the quarrying of new materials and energy is expended in processing these materials. Where conversion is feasible the investment in and reuse of existing buildings can support Stockport Council's Environmental Action Programme's priority areas by reducing consumption of resources and waste.

3.6 Development Opportunities

Mills can provide space for residential conversion, providing significant regeneration benefit, and an opportunity to retain historic features within the mill building. There is also potential for further mixed-use development of mill buildings, retaining a range of employment uses and ensuring the borough maintains an adequate supply of employment land. This could assist in supporting Stockport's economy by safeguarding existing jobs and assisting the growth of new businesses in flexible and affordable accommodation. The need to maintain existing business start-up rates in Stockport is acknowledged in the Stockport Economic Development Strategy 2012-17 (Objective 3).

3.7 Towards a strategic approach

In considering the future of our mill sites it is necessary to strike a clear balance between the needs of the environment and the economy. Some mills are of such historic value that innovative regeneration proposals are needed in order to give the buildings new uses and so retain them for future generations. Other buildings have an important role to play in supporting the future of local businesses, jobs and housing. It is important to review each property in the context of current policy objectives and conservation requirements, some of which is in the process of being reviewed as a result of ongoing work on the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) and Local Plan.

The current draft iteration of the GMSF in Policy GM20 states:

“The quality of Greater Manchester’s heritage will be maximised by:

Maximising the positive contribution of Greater Manchester’s industrial heritage such as its canals and mills”

Stockport’s on-going Brownfield First Development Programme includes the Employment Land Review (2015) and has identified 8 mill buildings where the Council will seek to assist or intervene in order to bring forward development. All have the potential for conversion into residential, subject to further development work and the planning process and have therefore been identified in the ongoing Housing Summit list. In most cases, this just requires a watching brief, due to the existence of active owners or developers, but Weir Mill in particular is receiving more pro-active direct support in order to progress the mill for redevelopment. Initial assessment suggests these mills are priorities for conversion or development, based on factors including growth outcomes, deliverability, number of units created, location, and heritage and condition status.

The Council’s Brownfield First Development Programme is seeking to ensure that all brownfield sites in the borough are identified in order to explore and exhaust their development potential before considering greenfield/green belt sites. Mill buildings are a significant component of this programme of work. If the mills identified above are not progressed by the owners under market forces then the Council will seek to intervene where it can to de-risk and help unlock development. This will be through a range of scalable feasibility work such as assisting with development options, outline financial appraisals, planning advice, solutions to on-site constraints and access / parking considerations and business relocation options among others. This work would be subject to resources and priorities as part of the wider Brownfield First Development Programme.

There are, in addition, a small number of mills where applications have been made for planning permission for development as mixed use or residential, without intervention from the Council, such as Meadow Mill, Elisabeth Mills and Springmount Mill.

‘Greater Manchester’s Historic Textile Mills: Buildings at Risk Survey’, when published, will also, as mentioned above, help to inform future decision making and policy with respect to individual mill properties.

4. ACTION PLAN 2017

Stockport has benefited in recent years from a number of successful mill conversions providing both quality office accommodation and residential accommodation. Others have been improved to house a mix of business uses in an accessible and affordable environment.

Several of Stockport's textile mills, however, have not been refurbished and remain in need of investment. Whilst they provide a useful proportion of Stockport's affordable business space, this often tends to be low in value, in poor condition and difficult to access. Upper levels are harder to let and often remain vacant, so whilst providing a valuable resource to small businesses, they tend to be under occupied and fail to meet their economic potential.

The borough's remaining mill resource has been identified as having further development potential for both residential and employment; either through conversion of the existing buildings or demolition and redevelopment where appropriate.

The following Action Plan will seek to monitor the development and protection of Stockport's mill resource, where appropriate, in order to promote the most effective and economic use of the resource. Actions differentiate between mills prioritised within the Brownfield First programme for further intervention, and those currently not prioritised. This does not rule out further intervention or support with respect to any property, but it does allow the Council to focus proactive support towards a small number of key locations.

4.1 Priority Sites

In addition to the objectives outlined above the Council has identified a number of key sites where the regeneration of the mill buildings or site is a regeneration priority as part of the Brownfield First Development Programme. Buildings have been prioritised in relation to their geographic location in terms of Council regeneration priorities, the buildings architectural and heritage value, development potential, state of repair and level of occupation.

The Council has previously carried out work in partnership with the building owners and will endeavour to support the sustainable regeneration of the key sites listed below:

- Weir Mill
- Compstall Road Mill
- Compstall Mill II
- Elisabeth Mill and Friedland Building
- Hempshaw Lane/Battersby Mill
- Springmount Mill
- The Rope Works Mill

4.2 Objectives

Stockport Council recognises the importance of the unique mill asset for the borough and will work with owners, developers, businesses, development agencies and heritage organisations to secure appropriate sustainable uses for mill buildings and sites, based on the following objectives.

- 1) Unlock the development potential of former mill buildings
- 2) Support redevelopment, refurbishment and re-use of mills in line with Council planning policy and conservation requirements
- 3) Assist mill owners in assessing future options for their property in terms of identifying sources of finance, addressing issues and supporting the relocation of existing tenants, focusing on those identified as priority mills within the Brownfield First programme.

The following action plan is suggested, building on the key objectives stated above.

4.3 Mills Review Action Plan

Action	Measure	Target Date	Progress to Date
PRIORITY MILLS – BROWNFIELD FIRST			
1) Incorporate the findings of this report into the Brownfield First Development Programme, through which the Council will consider and action a range of measures of active intervention where necessary to bring forward the redevelopment of priority mill buildings (and other sites), where an appropriate business case can be made.	Various as appropriate to each mill	Ongoing	Brownfield First Development Programme in progress; see report to Economy & Environment Scrutiny Committee 2nd March 2017; update report to Economy & Environment Scrutiny Committee 21 st September 2017.
2) Maintain and monitor the list of priority (and other) mills within the Brownfield First programme, amending the list as necessary in response to changes in information or communication with mill owners, or other developments or opportunities.	Quarterly reviews regarding progress and information in relation to priority mills	Ongoing	Ongoing communication and information sharing between the Brownfield First programme and the Mill Strategy Review to ensure the list of priority mills is maintained and reviewed.
3) Seek to unlock the development potential of priority mills, making more effective use of underutilised floor space and sites and enhancing the built environment.	Identify a range of potential, suitable outcomes for priority mills	Ongoing	Draft planning briefs in place but in need of revision. Priority buildings identified through the Brownfield First programme for active intervention.
4) Target support towards ensuring a future for priority mills, providing advice to mill owners as appropriate regarding future options, and signposting towards sources of information and assistance.	As required	Ongoing	Active discussions in progress with owners of priority mills
5) Where appropriate assist in identifying potential funding opportunities that may assist in improving the viability of priority mills.	Various as appropriate to each mill	Ongoing	Active discussions in progress with owners of priority mills; funding opportunities under consideration,

			including heritage and GMCA
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Action	Measure	Target Date	Progress to Date
GENERAL MILL RESOURCE			
6) Incorporate and respond as appropriate to the 'Greater Manchester's Historic Textile Mills: Buildings at Risk Survey'. Ensure these findings are attached as an appendix to this report and further inform the Brownfield First programme.	Response submitted and appropriate findings built into the Brownfield First programme	From July 17	Draft report received; embargoed until September 2017; contents being reviewed and incorporated into the Mills Strategy and Brownfield Development Programme
7) Raise awareness of regeneration and development opportunities in Stockport's mills through promotion of Stockport town centre and brownfield development opportunities	Publicity achieved for mill development opportunities. Mills progressing for redevelopment and/or intensification of use	Ongoing	Investing in Growth and Brownfield communications plans developed and being delivered; Stockport place marketing campaign in development
8) Include a review of planning policy with respect to mill buildings as part of the revised Local Plan.	Policies addressing mills development within the Local Plan	Issues consultation during Summer 2017	Consultation currently taking place
9) Ensure mill owners are aware of the range of information and guidance available on historic building maintenance to mill owners in Stockport – ensure links to relevant web sites are provided.	Mill owners/developers signposted to relevant sources of information and supported where possible and for priority mills	Ongoing	Council web site has pages dedicated to conservation and heritage projects. Active support offered to priority mill owners.
10) In consultation with mill owners, consider options for mills that are semi-derelict, vacant, under-occupied and of no heritage merit. Consider realistically the long term viability of the property/site and its impact	Alternative development explored of sites/mill buildings that are of	Ongoing	Active discussions in progress with owners of priority mills

on both the local economy and built environment.	limited heritage merit		
11) Apply the Council's powers under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as appropriate, to serve urgent works and repairs notices	As required	Ongoing	As required on a priority basis.